



## **The Mediating Role of Chinese Values in the Satisfaction of Work-Life Balance among Chinese Bank Employees: A Case Study**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study explored the mediating role of Chinese Values in the relationship between antecedents of Work-Life Balance (including work involvement, work overload, work support, family involvement, family overload, and family support) and satisfaction among Chinese bank employees in Sarawak, Malaysia. A quantitative method was employed to gather data from 52 Chinese bank employees, which was then analysed using IBM SPSS version 25.0, Pearson Correlation Analysis, and the PROCESS Macro for mediation analysis. Findings reveal that Chinese Values play a significant mediator role in the relationship between some of the antecedent factors and satisfaction with Work-life Balance. It is recommended that some cultural aspects of Chinese values, which are commonly accepted by other ethnicities, be considered when developing and implementing Work-life Balance programmes in the banking sector. The study highlights the importance of considering cultural differences in the design of workplace programmes to improve Work-life Balance satisfaction among employees.

**Keywords:** Chinese values, satisfaction, work-life balance

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the banking sector competition in Asia has increased at a whirlwind speed. Thus, employees had to cope with the rapid changes and maintain their competitiveness in the market by sacrificing their own time to complete their work due to the increased workload. It is crucial to balance work and life as it has been the top social challenge for the past few decades (Chatra & Fahmy, 2018)

As work-life balance or work-life literature started to discuss broadly in the last decade, the gap between the work domain and life domain has become saturated. Since the research of work-life literature originated in Western countries, most work-life balance studies are in the context of Western perspectives. However, Western and Eastern countries view work and family differently regarding culture, as most Eastern countries are collectivistic. With that being said, few studies and researchers have expanded their viewpoint and focused on Chinese ethnicity; therefore, research on the Chinese cultural aspect is scarce.

Malaysia is well known for its multi-ethnic uniqueness as Malaysia has three main ethnicities, namely Malay/Bumiputera, Chinese and Indian (Kawangit *et al.*, 2012). Therefore, Malaysia has its culture gaps and has extraordinary cultural differences compared to Western countries. Chinese citizens in Malaysia comprised 23.4% and ranked as the second largest ethnic group in Malaysia after Malay. Malaysian Chinese, or "huaren" in Mandarin, bear the historical continuity of identities and values from China and transform themselves to localised in Malaysia (Tan, 1997). Malaysian Chinese adapted to the geographical and social environment. They evolved into a new Chinese identity easily distinguishable from Mainland China, Hong Kong Chinese, and Taiwan Chinese due to Malaysian Chinese persistence in practising their Chinese values and traditional beliefs, which is influenced by Malaysian culture and Westernization that has taken place in Malaysia for generations. Ng (2021) stated that Malaysian Chinese adapted to the new environment through business networking, making money guided by positive cultural values. Thus, in this case, there is still a lack of studies that examine the cultural aspect, such as the identity and values of the Chinese ethnicity in Malaysia.

Current research on work-life balance in Mainland China focuses on Chinese who live on the mainland. However, Malaysian Chinese is influenced by Malaysian culture and Westernization that has taken place in Malaysia for generations. Malaysian Chinese differs from Chinese in Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. Malaysia has three main ethnic groups: Malay, Chinese and Indian. These three ethnic groups have their practices, identity, and values, making them unique. In this case, there is still a lack of studies that examine the cultural aspect, such as the identity and values of the Chinese ethnicity in Malaysia.

It is crucial to understand first what Chinese identity all is about. According to Fung (1948), Chinese identity includes Chinese values as an alternative perspective of Chinese philosophy that is fundamental to Chinese culture and human concerns regarding philosophical reflections. Hofstede (2011) stated that culture distinguishes people of a category or a group from others based on some specific collective information. Therefore, culture and values are closely related.

According to Tan (1997), the Chinese in Malaysia are descendants of migrants from different parts of China. The biggest wave of Chinese immigrated from China occurred in the early 19th century due to economic instability resulting from the political volatility of the downfall of the Qing Dynasty and the civil war. Lee and Tan (2000) stated that there are a few speech groups of Chinese in Malaysia, such as Hokkien, Hakka, Foochow, Cantonese, and Hainanese, which all of the speech groups carry their traditional practices, and they continue to bear with the historical continuity of identities and localise themselves in Malaysia. Lee and Tan (2000) referred to the numerous speech groups as "Chinese religions" as they inherited religious beliefs from China and incorporated local religious beliefs, forming new identities in Malaysia. Malaysian Chinese still uses dialects diversely. However, they use mandarin as a standard Chinese language in Chinese education (Tan, 1997). As Confucianism influences the Chinese, Malaysian Chinese is the only country outside China with a complete Chinese education system from primary school to higher education, with Mandarin as the medium. Lee (2019) stated that Chinese Values could be influenced through education in which Chinese philosophy and culture can be transferred to the next generation via co-curriculum.

Malaysian Chinese do not regard themselves as "Huaqiao" as "Huaqiao" means Oversea Chinese who resides outside China temporarily. Instead, the Chinese born and raised in Malaysia refer to themselves as "huaren", which reflects the localisation process but emphasises their Chinese identity. Chineseness can be used to understand Chinese who reside outside China. Wang (2009) stated that Chinese who reside outside China had adjusted to their host societies' historical paradigm. There are two types of emigrant Chinese. Firstly, the old generation used the mega-history paradigm to resist the local nationality. Secondly is the new generation of Chinese born as nationality to the local country, who do not look at Chinese history but emphasise family bonding to establish community bonds and business networking (Wang, 2009).

In the context of Malaysia, Chinese are regarded as socialised as Chinese as every Malaysian is expected to have their own ethnic identities, such as Malay, Chinese, Indian, Iban, and Bidayuh. Abdullah (1996) stated that intercultural Malays, Chinese, Indians, and other ethnicities are more likely to observe similar values of the collectivist community, such as relationship orientation, religion, and pursuit of success. Malaysia is a very collectivist country concerned with maintaining a harmonious lifestyle, having high power distance, and respecting the elderly and people in high positions.

In this study, work-family balance is perceived synonymously with work-life balance. The word "balance" indicates that it aims to bring about a fair adjustment between two variables in this study involving work and family responsibilities. In short, work-life balance includes roles and responsibilities, including work and non-work. Hughes and Bozionelos (2007) state that work-life balance can effectively mix people's work and family lives. All employees, single or married, with no children, are incorporated into the work-life balance.

In order to understand well the meaning behind the satisfaction of work-life balance, it is best to understand it from various perspectives. Kirchmeyer (2000) discussed the importance of "achieving satisfying experiences among all life domains". Kofodimos (1993) viewed work-life balance as effectiveness and satisfaction among multiple roles and further discussed that balance

characteristics are "a satisfying, healthy, productive life that induces work, play and love". According to Greenhaus, Collin, and Shaw (2003), a work-life balance consists of three components: Time balance, Involvement balance and Satisfaction balance. In addition, Greenhaus, Collin, and Shaw (2003) also stated that "for individuals who invested substantial time in their combined work and family role, those who spent more time on family than work experienced a higher quality of life than balanced individuals". Therefore, a positive work-family interaction enhances one's satisfaction towards work-life balance. Greenhaus and Powell (2006) further explained that work-family balance is an extent to which experiences in one role improve satisfaction in the other, as work and family roles are interdependent. Work-life balance is not merely defined by dividing time and energy equally between work and non-work. It depends on one's perspective on work-life balance and expectations for how they organise their work and life.

Nowadays, as economic globalisation occurs in the workplace, the workload given to employees increases tremendously. Thus, they are involved a lot at work. Since 1996, Adams, King, and King have identified work involvement as one of the significant predictors of satisfaction with work-life balance satisfaction. Lodahl and Kejner (1965) described work involvement as the internalisation of values about the goodness of work or the importance of work in the individual's worth. Dubin (1956) defined work involvement as the degree to which the job situation is a central life interest, where the individual perceives his job as the primary source for satisfying essential needs. It shows that the more one is involved in work, the more one can gain confidence and be more satisfied with themselves. It reflects how important work is to people as some put work in their centre of life, the target or aim they were chasing. The research showed that work involvement is related to work-family conflict, and family-work conflict as work involvement preoccupies one's concentration in the work role and makes one unable to perform tasks or responsibilities of another role. However, Thakur and Kumar (2015) reported no significant relationship between work involvement and WLB in their study among 96 executives in a Multinational Company. The inconsistent findings trigger this study to examine this work involvement and WLB further.

Work overload is one of the earliest and most important factors contributing to work-life imbalance (Hall & Richter, 1988, Aryee et al., 2005, Poulouse & Dhal, 2020). It describes that one experiences everyday work overloading too frequently, which is only manageable with very high effort. Hall and Richter (1988) further explained how work overload affects the life role of a person because "people started to think about work task before they leave the house and, on the other hand, people do not think about the home until they leave work", which is then led to work-life conflict because there are no clear boundaries. Work overload is negatively associated with work-life balance and positively associated with work-family / family-work conflict (Aryee, Srinivas, and Tan, 2005). According to Hall and Richter (1988), it is said that the greater the effort one puts into a work role, the greater the possibility of him bringing adverse work-related problems to the home. Work overload as one of the job demands is said to be affecting work-life balance and causing work-family conflict as high job demands require more time, energy, and commitment at work, and it is difficult for an employee to prevent stress and pressure from the workplace (Hassan & Hamidi, 2012; Poulouse & Dhal, 2020).

Work support is the support given by people surrounding the workplace. There are several types of work support in the context of organisational, supervisor, and co-worker support. House (1981)

defined work support as an interpersonal transaction of emotional concern, instrumental aid, information, or evaluation that can reduce stress and facilitate well-being. Frone, Yardley and Markel (1997) have reported that work support is negatively associated with work-family conflict. Jain and Nair (2017) stated that the more the organisation supports their employees, the higher their job satisfaction will be. Siu and Phillips (2007) revealed that one of the top five factors that hinder Chinese employees from utilising Family Friendly Policies and Practices that benefit them was "fear of being seen by the boss as less committed." Support is another resource that helps employees manage stress at work. Employees tend to seek psychological support, thoughtful advice and help with family problems from co-workers (Lu, Siu, Specter & Shi, 2009).

Frone, Rusell and Cooper (1992) conceptualised family involvement as a commitment and engagement in the family work interface. It is reported that family involvement is associated with family work and work-family conflict. The degree of participation in the family helps one to gain satisfaction, which also reflects the importance of family to oneself. It shows that the more one participates in the family, the more critical it is to themselves. High family involvement helps to improve relationships with family members and friends. According to Aryee, Srinivas, and Tan (2005), the quality of relationships with family members and friends can improve support, increasing one's satisfaction towards work-life balance. Greenhaus and Powell (2006) stated that experience with the family has additive effects on satisfaction on work-life balance. Greenhaus and Parasuraman (1999) stated that family involvement might help gain additional knowledge and skills, which can further facilitate other roles, such as work. It enables facilitating the integration of work and family roles.

Unlike work overload, family overload is not heavily investigated, as much research focuses on the work domain. Aryee, Srinivas, and Tan (2005) defined family overload as an individual undermining his or her ability to integrate work and family and prevent an individual from gaining satisfaction from the family role, which refers to one feeling that having too many everyday families matters to do and do not have adequate time to do them. Duxbury, Stevenson, & Higgins (2018) also found that family role overload contributed to stress and is more vital for women than men. Gender still plays a role in the work-life balance equation, particularly in the Asian context, primarily in the traditional gender role ideology.

House (1981) defined family support as the perception and actuality that one cares for can receive assistance from family members and friends, which is part of a supportive social network. It is generally conceived as a stress-coping mechanism. Frone, Yardley, and Markel (1997) have reported that family support is negatively associated with family-work conflict. Etzion (1984) stated that a good relationship with family members could account for less stress in the family role. Encouragement, information, and advice obtained from family members can integrate one's work role and reduce stress at work. The quality of relationship with family members and family members' degree of paying attention to one can affect one's satisfaction towards work-life balance satisfaction. It is consistent with Jain and Nair's (2017) study, which reported that family support is a significant predictor of family work enrichment as the positive experiences in one role improve the quality of the other role and vice versa.

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensional Theory is chosen as the theory for this study. However, not all aspects of the theory are considered. Hofstede's Cultural Dimension Theory is interrelated to this study, providing a framework for cross-cultural communication. Hofstede (1979) identified systemic differences in national cultural values on four main cultural dimensions, which are power distance (PDI), Individualism (IDV), Uncertainty avoidance (UAI) and Masculinity (MAS). Hofstede (1991) further adds a fifth dimension to his model: Long Term Orientation versus Short Term Orientation, also known as Confucian dynamism. The fifth dimension was obtained from Chinese scholars (Chinese Culture Connection, 1987), renamed, and included in Hofstede's Cultural Dimension Theory.

The first cultural dimension is the Power Distance (PDI). Hofstede (2011) defined Power Distance as the extent to which the less powerful group of people accept the inequality distributed power. All societies are not equal, but some possess greater inequality, reflecting the consequences of power inequality at the authority level. Malaysia generally has a high-power distance and accepts hierarchy, which is an existential inequality in authority level in the country compared to China and Hong Kong, which have a relatively lower power distance. The second cultural dimension is Individualism vs Collectivism. This dimension describes the relationships individuals have in each culture. On the individualist side, individuals are expected to look after themselves and their immediate family only. On the collectivist side, individuals are expected to integrate into the family as culture is deeply rooted and extended family (such as uncles and aunts) in order to exchange loyalty. In this context, Malaysian Chinese is a collectivist society as they practice the rooted culture sincerely, whereas Chinese from Mainland China and Hong Kong are more individualist due to the fast-paced economic growth these years.

The third cultural dimension is the avoidance of uncertainty. Uncertainty avoidance is indicated as "a culture programs its members to feel either uncomfortable or comfortable in unstructured situations. It is the level of tolerance towards uncertain situations or differences. The fourth cultural dimension is masculinity versus femininity. Masculinity values as competitive, achievement-oriented and dominant compared to femininity values (discretion or modesty). Malaysia contains both masculine and feminine values. China and Hong Kong are a masculine society that is competitive and achievement-oriented. It shows that China and Hong Kong perceive leisure time as not as important as achieving their achievement. The fifth dimension is Long Term Orientation versus Short Term Orientation which reflects Confucianism dynamics. It is indicated that Long Term Orientation is a pragmatic society whereas Short Term Orientation is a normative society whereby traditions are honoured and continue to keep. It is identified that a long-term orientation society will adopt and possess problem-solving skills, allowing them to continue to develop into a better society. Malaysia is a short-term orientation country, whereas China and Hong Kong are long-term orientation countries, showing that Malaysia is a normative society that traditions are honoured to continue to keep. In contrast, China and Hong Kong can adapt traditions quickly to changed conditions and invest to achieve desired results.

## **2 METHODS AND MATERIALS**

Fifty-two Chinese respondents participated in this study working in one of the banks in Kuching. In this case study, 33 out of 52 participants (63.5%) were female. There are four age groups which

are 21 to 30 years old, 31 to 40 years old, 41 to 50 years old and 50 years old and older. The highest frequency of the age group is 41-50 years old, consisting of 17 of 52 respondents (32.7%). This section also asked about the highest qualification of bank employees, divided into five categories: SPM/O level, STPM/A level, Diploma, First Degree, and Master/PhD. The category with the highest frequency is Diploma which makes up 39.54% or 19 out of 52 respondents. Regarding religions, there are five categories listed in the questionnaire: Buddhist, Christian, Confucianism/Taoism, Islam, and Others. The highest number of respondents for religion is Buddhist, with 32 out of 52 respondents (61.2%). This section also asked about respondents' length of service, and it has been divided into four categories of length of service which are 1 to 2 years, 3 to 5 years, 6 to 10 years and above ten years. Most respondents are 30 out of 52 (57.7%) with more than ten years of experience. Lastly, most of the respondents were married, consisting of 32 out of 52 respondents (61.5%). In this study, age, gender and religion, qualification, years of experience and length of service were not set as the controlled variable.

One questionnaire was used; there were four sections in the questionnaire: Section A, Section B, Section C, and Section D contains 81 items. Section A is on demographic information consisting of 6 items, including gender, age, religion, the highest level of education, duration of service, and marital status. Section B consisted of 40 questions which assessed the degree of importance of Chinese Values to oneself and were adapted from Chinese Cultural Connection (1987).

Section C consisted of 30 questions to measure the antecedents of work-life balance from a work and family perspective: work involvement, work overload, work support, family involvement, family overload and family support. Participants answered the question with a 5-point Likert Scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). Work involvement measure is adapted from 5 item scale from Lodahl and Kejner (1965). The measure of work overload is adapted from Reilly (1982). Six items work support scale was adapted from Etzion (1984). The family involvement measure scale was adapted from 5 item scale from Lodahl and Kejner (1965). The measure of family overload is adapted from Reilly (1982). Six items family support scale is adapted from Etzion (1984). Section D consists of five questions to measure the satisfaction of Chinese bank employees with work-life balance. The items for this section are adopted from Valcour (2007). In this section, participants answered the question using a 5-point Likert Scale (1=Very Dissatisfied, 5= Very Satisfied).

PROCESS was used to test mediation. Data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0. Eight elements were tested for Reliability Test using Cronbach Alpha. The alpha coefficient value is Chinese (0.959), Work Involvement (0.743), work overload (0.729), work support (0.872), family involvement (0.854), family overload (0.799), family support (0.903) and satisfaction of work-life balance (SWLB) (0.960). It is an indicator that the items in each element are reliable.

### **3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The first hypothesis proposed that the relationship between Work Involvement and Satisfaction is mediated by Chinese values (Table 1). This relationship was also supported (indirect effect,  $b =$

.4495; the direct effect was,  $b = .2327$ ,  $p < .001$ , total effect  $b = .2169$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The mediation is also significant, as the indirect effect's confidence intervals do not include zero (CI 95%, LLCI = -.0023, ULCI = .4888). The finding fulfils one of the Chinese values, Industry, which means working hard. Also, Chinese bank employees must work hard in the banking industry because the private sector requires them to contribute their time and effort to get rewards and succeed. Abdullah (1996) explained that Chinese communities see success equated with prosperity, which signifies a secure and happy future with the family. Therefore, Ha 1 failed to be rejected, and Chinese values fully mediated the relationship between Work Involvement and work-life balance satisfaction.

**H1:** *The relationship between work involvement and Satisfaction of Work-Life Balance is mediated by Chinese values*

**Table 1.** The total effect, direct effect, and indirect effect for work involvement and SWLB.

	<i>b</i>	<i>s.e.</i>	<i>p-value</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Estimate the total effect between X and Y	.4495	.1495	.0041	.1492	.7499
Estimate the direct effect between X and Y	.2327	.1122	.0434	.0071	.4582
Estimate and test indirect effect for statistical significance	.2169	.1267		-.0023	.4888

The second hypothesis proposed that Chinese values mediate the relationship between work overload and Satisfaction with Work-Life Balance. These results are reported in Table 2. This relationship was also supported (indirect effect,  $b = -.3329$ , and direct effect was  $b = -.1320$ ,  $p < .001$ , total effect  $b = -.2009$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The mediation is also significant, as the indirect effect's confidence intervals do not include zero (CI 95%, LLCI = -.3577, ULCI = -.0379). The results showed that the strength of the relationship between work overload and satisfaction with work-life balance decreased when Chinese values were included in the analysis, an indication of the mediating effect of Chinese values in the relationship. This finding is supported by past research where work overload is a significant predictor for work-life balance satisfaction (Aryee, Srinivas, and Tan., 2005; Frone, Russell, and Cooper, 1992;). Therefore, Ha 2 failed to be rejected, and Chinese values fully mediated the relationship between work overload and work-life balance satisfaction. 0.044.

**H2:** *The relationship between work overload and Satisfaction of Work-Life Balance is mediated by Chinese values*



**Table 2.** The total effect, direct effect, and indirect effect of work overload and SWLB.

	<i>b</i>	<i>s.e.</i>	<i>p-value</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Estimate the total effect between X and Y	-.3329	.1218	.0087	-.5775	-.0882
Estimate the direct effect between X and Y	-.1320	.0934	.1638	-.3196	.0556
Estimate and test indirect effect for statistical significance	-.2009	.0794		-.3577	-.0379

The phenomenon may be explainable using Chinese values: Industry, which means working hard. Chinese bank employees who got used to working in the banking industry have contributed their time and effort to get rewards and achieve success. As they view success as prosperity, work overload becomes a factor in determining their satisfaction with work-life balance.

The third hypothesis proposed that Chinese values mediate the relationship between Work Support and Satisfaction with Work-Life Balance. These results are reported in Table 3. This relationship was also supported (indirect effect,  $b = .3654$ , and the direct effect were  $b = .0758$ ,  $p < .001$ , total effect  $b = .0280$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The mediation is also significant, as the indirect effect's confidence intervals do not include zero (CI 95%, LLCI = .0501, ULCI = .5691). The results showed that the strength of the relationship between work support and work-life balance satisfaction decreased when Chinese values were included in the analysis, indicating the mediating effect of Chinese values in the relationship. This result aligned with the study of Jain and Nair (2017) that work support leads to work-life balance satisfaction. Work support is said to be negatively associated with work-life balance satisfaction (Adam, King, and King, 1996). Therefore, Ha 3 failed to be rejected, and Chinese values fully mediated the relationship between work support and work-life balance satisfaction.

*H3: The relationship between Work Support and Satisfaction of Work-Life Balance is mediated by Chinese values*

**Table 3.** The total effect, direct effect, and indirect effect for work support and SWLB.

Mediation Steps (Baron & Kenny, 1986)	<i>b</i>	<i>s.e.</i>	<i>p-value</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Estimate the total effect between X and Y	.3654	.1614	.0280	.0412	.6896
Estimate the direct effect between X and Y	.0758	.1242	.5444	-.1738	.3254
Estimate and test indirect effect for statistical significance	.2895	.1350		.0501	.5691

The fourth hypothesis proposed that Chinese values mediate the relationship between Family Involvement and Satisfaction with Work-Life Balance. These results are reported in Table 4. This relationship is not supported (indirect effect,  $b = .2895$ , and the direct effect were  $b = .0758$ ,  $p > .001$ , total effect  $b = .3654$ ,  $p > .001$ ). The mediation is not significant, as the indirect effect's confidence intervals include zero (CI 95%, LLCI =  $-.0190$ , ULCI =  $.4903$ ), indicating no mediating effect of Chinese values in the relationship. The finding contradicted previous research that claimed that high involvement in the family role would tend to lead to a family-work conflict, as high involvement in one role causes one to be stressed. Abdullah (1996) stated that Chinese communities generally work harder because they see success as prosperity, which means a secure future for the family and gaining face in the family. However, Chinese Values do not explain the relationship between family involvement and SWLB in these banking employees.

*H4: the relationship between Family Involvement and Satisfaction of Work-Life Balance is mediated by Chinese values*

**Table 4.** The total effect, direct effect, and indirect effect for family involvement and SWLB.

Mediation Steps (Baron & Kenny, 1986)	<i>b</i>	<i>s.e.</i>	<i>p-value</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Estimate the total effect between X and Y	.4723	.1634	.0057	.1441	.8004
Estimate the direct effect between X and Y	.2309	.1230	.0665	-.0163	.4781
Estimate and test indirect effect for statistical significance	.2414	.1276		-.0190	.4903

The fifth hypothesis proposed that Chinese values mediate the relationship between Family Overload and Satisfaction with Work-Life Balance. These results are reported in Table 5. This relationship was not supported (indirect effect,  $b = -.1632$ , and direct effect was  $b = -.2300$ ,  $p < .001$ , total effect  $b = .3932$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The mediation is insignificant, as the indirect effect's confidence intervals include zero (CI 95%, LLCI =  $-.3422$ , ULCI =  $.0585$ ). Chinese values do not mediate family overload and work-life balance satisfaction, contradicting previous studies (e.g., Aryee, Srinivas, and Tan., 2005). Family overload leads to work-family and family-work conflicts (Frone, Russell and Cooper, 1992). One possible explanation is the Malaysian collectivist society, as work and family are more integrated than in western society. According to Hofstede's cultural dimension theory, a collectivist society sees family as important and extended family members such as uncles and aunts. Chinese have to perform filial duties and embark on philanthropic activities for the family and may not perceive responsibility in the family as a burden.

*H5: the relationship between Family Overload and Satisfaction with Work-Life Balance is mediated by Chinese values*

**Table 5.** The total effect, direct effect, and indirect effect for family overload and SWLB.

Mediation Steps (Baron & Kenny, 1986)	<i>b</i>	<i>s.e.</i>	<i>p-value</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Estimate the total effect between X and Y	-.3932	.1275	.0033	-.6493	-.1371
Estimate the direct effect between X and Y	-.2300	.0937	.0177	-.4182	-.0417
Estimate and test indirect effect for statistical significance	-.1632	.1030		-.3422	.0585

The sixth hypothesis proposed that the relationship between Family Support and Satisfaction with Work-Life Balance is mediated by Chinese values (Table 6). This relationship was supported (indirect effect,  $b = .2738$ , and the direct effect was  $b = .4294$ ,  $p < .001$ , total effect  $b = .7032$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The mediation is significant, as the indirect effect confidence intervals do not include zero (CI 95%, LLCI = .4895, ULCI = .9168). Based on Hofstede's cultural dimension theory and the questionnaire from the Chinese Cultural Dimension (1987), Chinese shows filial piety and maintain a good relationship with family members, which helps them cope with work stress. Malaysian Chinese maintain a good relationship with close family members and extended family, which makes them different from Mainland Chinese as China is gradually becoming an individualist country and undergoing social change due to fast-paced economic growth. They have no extra energy to care for extended family members (Hu, 2003).

**H6:** The relationship between Family Support and Satisfaction of Work-Life Balance is mediated by Chinese values

**Table 6.** The total effect, direct effect, and indirect effect for family support and SWLB.

Mediation Steps (Baron & Kenny, 1986)	<i>b</i>	<i>s.e.</i>	<i>p-value</i>	LLCI	ULCI
Estimate the total effect between X and Y	.7032	.1064	.0000	.4895	.9168
Estimate the direct effect between X and Y	.4294	.1005	.0001	.2274	.6313
Estimate and test indirect effect for statistical significance	.2738	.0827		.1255	.4491

In summary, this study revealed that Chinese values provide opportunities to increase work-life balance satisfaction, particularly for work involvement, work overload, work support, and family support. The work domain is more important than the family domain in influencing Chinese Values and work-life balance satisfaction. Chinese values, such as filial piety, tolerance of others, and ordering relationships by status and observing this order, are inculcated at home through socialisation.

Chinese Values mediated the relationship between work involvement and satisfaction of work-life balance. The more a Chinese employee is involved in his/ her work, the more satisfaction with work-life balance when Chinese values are used as their guide. However, the finding contradicts past research where the intensity of work involved is a significant predictor of satisfaction of work-life balance, high involvement in work role may lead to work-family conflict as it increases people's concentration within work role (Adams, King & King, 1996; Aryee et al., 2005). Thus, this study gives further insights and understanding of the influence of Chinese values and the need to consider it when designing a work-life balance program. A well-designed flexible work schedule that considers Chinese values such as "Industry – Working hard" and "Contentedness with one's position in life" will allow employees to control their intensity of work involvement, enhancing their satisfaction with work-life balance.

As Malaysian Chinese prioritise the work domain more than the family domain, thus work involvement, work overload, work support and only family support from the family domain are significantly mediated by Chinese values and work-life balance satisfaction. Malaysian Chinese are collectivist because work and family are more integrated than in western society. The Chinese are responsible for performing filial duties and embarking on philanthropic activities for the family. Therefore, it is normal for Chinese willing to devote much of their time and effort to work to ensure family prosperity. According to Hofstede's theory of the cultural dimension, a collectivist society sees family as essential. Interestingly, the family definition in a collectivist society includes extended family members such as grandmothers, grandfathers, uncles, and aunties. Similarly, Abdullah (1996) stated that Chinese communities generally work harder because they see success as prosperity, which means a secure future for the family and gaining face in the family.

This study shows that Chinese Values mediated the relationship between family support and work-life balance satisfaction. Malaysian Chinese are known to honour their traditions and are willing to practice them. The Chinese still practice the Chinese Value of "Reciprocation of greetings and favours, gifts" up to to-date. This short brief gathering moment serves as family support. Many Malaysian Chinese still practise annual gatherings during Chinese New Year. Encouragement, information, and advice obtained from family members can integrate one's work role and reduce stress at work.

As stated earlier, Chinese communities see success as prosperity, which means a secure future for the family and gaining face in the family. In order to be a success in their field/industry, one has to work hard. Moreover, since they have accepted this mindset, the Chinese bank employees considered long-term orientation and accepted long working hours and high-performing targets to exchange the rewards in terms of financial such as increased wages and paid holidays from employers.

This study shows that Chinese values mediate the relationship between work support and work-life balance satisfaction. It may be explained as Malaysian Chinese sees family as a big part of their life, and although they appreciate the support from people, the Chinese Values only teach the Chinese to be "loyalty to superior" and "humbleness". Therefore, Malaysian Chinese respect the relationship with colleagues and show filial piety towards superiors in the workplace.

This study revealed that Chinese Values provide opportunities to increase work-life balance satisfaction. Therefore, Chinese Values is a crucial factor when an organisation considers improvising organisation's current practices. Through this research, it is advised that organisations can "make good" their current practices by promoting flexible working arrangements, allowing Chinese bank employees to enjoy the benefits of work-life balance. For example, Chinese employees celebrate various festivals other than Chinese New Year. Thus, the management can be considerate by selecting one or two festivals as special paid hours leave to allow the Chinese bank employees to leave the workplace a few hours earlier to visit their extended family, as family support is essential. The flexible working arrangement also allows Chinese bank employees to work remotely during the pre- or post-festivals, especially for those who travel to West Malaysia or Sarawak/Sabah to visit their family members.

From the research findings, Chinese values such as "Industry – working hard", "Tolerance of others", and "Filial Piety" has a considerable influence towards satisfaction of work-life balance among Chinese bank employees, which can implicate Human Resource and allow them to draw attention towards the influence of cultural aspects on employees' satisfaction towards work-life balance. Therefore, Human resource practitioners should be alert to this factor and ensure the continued development of the readiness of tangible and intangible resources within the organisation that allows the development of a work-life balance plan. HR practitioners should also consider the cultural aspect of Chinese society and improve organisational policies that encourage employees to balance their work and personal life by designing a good plan, such as a flexible work schedule. A well-designed flexible work schedule will allow employees to control their intensity of work involvement by motivating them to optimise within the timeframe, which can enhance their work-life balance satisfaction.

On the other hand, it refers to the Chinese Value of "Solidarity with others" in order to improve work support among Chinese bank employees, HR resources shall allocate a coach, mentor, or supervisor that shares a similar ethnic background to guide work for employees who has less than five years experiences. For Chinese bank employees with more than ten years of experience, Human Resources can provide counselling sessions for the employees who need it, such as those who feel incredibly stressed at work and cannot manage work and family roles.

#### **4 CONCLUSION**

The present study sought to address the paucity of research on the cultural aspect of Malaysian Chinese ethnicity and its influence on Satisfaction with Work-Life Balance. The findings of this study demonstrate that Chinese Values play a crucial role in mediating the relationship between work involvement, work overload, work support, family support and satisfaction with Work-Life Balance. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of the role of Chinese values and highlights the importance of considering cultural differences in workplace programs aimed at improving employees' Work-Life Balance. In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into the influence of Chinese values on Work-Life Balance satisfaction among Chinese bank employees and emphasises the importance of considering cultural factors in designing and implementing Work-Life Balance programs.

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