Work-Life Balance Model among Female Engineers: PLS-SEM Analysis

Ummu Sakinah Subri, Ridzwan Che' Rus, Ramlee Mustapha, and Zaliza Hanapi

Abstract: In the process of learning and developing careers, women can't avoid facing the challenge of achieving life balance and resistance before successfully mastering the skills to the highest level. In response to this issue, this study aims to build a work-life balance model that caters the demand for work-life balance among women in the century. The model comprises four independent constructs namely flexible career, childcare, leaves and family support. Meanwhile, the dependent construct of this study is work-life balance conflict faces by women. The scope of the study comprises female engineers with families and 211 respondents were selected to answer the questionnaire. The data obtained were analyzed using the PLS-SEM 2.0 software via the algorithm, bootstrapping and blindfolding method. The construction process of this model involves two tests including the construction of the measurement model and the structure model. Testing the measurement model involves internal consistency namely (a) convergent validity and (b) discriminant validity in which these two legitimates have six analyses; (i) external loading, (ii) composite reliability, (iii) average variance extracted (AVE), (iv) Fornell-Larcker, (v) cross loading and (vi) Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). Meanwhile, the structural model testing involves the analysis of (i) Multicolinearity (Inner VIF), (ii) Path Coefficient (T), (iii) R square (R^2), (iv) size effect (f^2) and (v) Predictive Relevance (Q^2). The results of this study indicate that the instrument of research has fulfilled the criteria for measurement and structural model requirement. The findings also indicate that flexible career and family support have significant relationships in influencing work-life balance conflict. Hence, this model is expected to contribute new knowledge to the literature in HRM.

Index Terms: work-life balance, female engineers, PLS-SEM, career, model, flexible career, childcare, leaves, family support.

1. INTRODUCTION

THe involvement of women in the career pathways has given rise to new economies in the economy, especially to low-income families and those living in rural areas, as it improves the economic status of families and the local community. However, in the process of learning and developing careers, women can't avoid facing the challenge of achieving life balance and resistance before successfully mastering the skills to the highest level. The difficulty of finding a good balance of life has put mental pressure on [1]. As a result, women are more likely to leave the job sector due to a crisis of career and personal commitments in the household. This was proofed in 2016 which saw a decline in the number of female workers aged between 35 to 64 years compared with female workers in the age group of 25 to 35 years [2]. The main reason for leaving a career among women in this age group is because of their priorities in family matters, especially in the care of children [2]. Hence, it is not surprising that women's participation in engineering careers is significantly lower than the number of female students in engineering costs at institutions [3]. Therefore, new career models that are appropriate for today's female engineers need to be developed [3,4].

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The job of an engineer involves change and development to our environment and has a very wide range of careers that shape the life pattern of a very busy engineer. Work-life balance conflicts or WLB occur when responsibilities are difficult to execute fairly when demand is needed in both career and personal life. The concept of life balance is a common focus on career and family equality [5] and is an issue in the automotive industry in terms of organizational effectiveness and occupational health itself [6]. Hence, four key factors of WLB among female engineers have been identified by researchers, namely flexible career, childcare, leaves and family support. The main factor leading to a loss of life and work balance is a lack flexible career. The main categories of flexible work arrangements are flexible schedules and location flexibility because these flexible methods provide an opportunity to strike a balance between work life activities and family responsibilities [7]. Long working hours and tight schedules make it difficult for these engineers to make time for themselves and their families. Lack of flexible work rules in the workplace can encourage workers to work under stress [8]. Flexible work is the best way for an organization to offer work and life balance to its employees [9]. Therefore, inconsistent work patterns influence their lives to balance their lives. Childcare issues are a second factor in achieving the work life balance of female engineers where the cozy place with high protection of children is their highest priority. Reports of increasing numbers of child abuse cases in the media have raised worrying and concerns among parents to put their children under the care of non-family members. The issue of security, suitability of the childcare center and the level of experience among the caretakers are issues that must be considered before handing the child over. In addition, the limited flexible timing of child care also makes it complicates for mothers to manage delivery and pick up their children at the appointed time when they need to do more work or doing overtime [11]. In fact, the location of children's daycare centers located far away from the work area also makes it difficult for them to fulfill their baby's direct feeding schedule [12]. The difficulty of finding a satisfactory childcare center has prompted female engineers to quit their jobs to look after

children at home [13]. Therefore, the facilities of a childcare center that meet the needs and requirements of female engineers can help them achieve a balanced life. The third conflict is a leave approval. In reality, most employees have the responsibility to assist their families whether it be their spouse, children, or parents. Thus, as female engineer who have other roles as child, wife and mother, they are more likely to take a lot of leave to care for sick family members [14] than to male workers. In addition, it is also an obligation for women to take maternity leave so that they have sufficient rest and recovery time after birth [15,16]. There are reports shows that 36% of women's workers in the technical field do not get proper maternity leave [17,18]. In addition, the difficulty of leave approval is also due to work patterns and the frequency which engineers are required to work on weekends as well [19]. Hence, its affects women's emotions and mentality to perform dual-responsibility in their household as well as their career. Last factor is family support which is the intolerance of those around the family such as spouse (parents), parents, and children. Family support is very helpful in balancing work and family management [20,21]. No social support outside of work, especially support by spouse has a negative effect on career development [22]. However, social support for couples is a very difficult thing for these working women to achieve in their work and family success. The forms of support that women or wives need are a willingness to take on the demands of childcare management, parenting (parents), and personal life issues [23]. Thus, the lack of support from the family presents a challenge for women to continue working hard. In conclusion, this WLB model is necessary as new information to the related parties as it provides a guideline for helping female engineers continue to work.

2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses the modified Delphi technique which is based on the use of previous research and the Delphi expert interview at the beginning of the study. As a result of the interview, the researcher presented a questionnaire instrument that was adapted according to the suitability of the scope study. The population of respondents has been identified based on the number of female engineers registered with the Board of Engineers of Malaysia in 2017, which 454 were registered. According to the Krejcie Morgan Table [24], the minimum sample size required is 210. Therefore, a total of 211 female engineers in Malaysia who have their own families were involved in this study. The data obtained were analyzed by algorithm, bootstrapping and blindfolding method using the PLS-SEM software. Testing the measurement or testing model is the first step in the data analysis procedure that uses the PLS-Path Modeling approach it is a procedure that should be followed in most study [25,26]. It involves internal consistencies of (a) convergent validity and (b) discriminant validity. The aspect of convergence validity can be seen at the values of (i) outer loading, (ii) composite reliability and (iii) average variance extracted (AVE). Whereas, discriminant validity can be seen in (i) Fornell-Larcker, (ii) cross loading and (iii) Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). The algorithm method is used for this step. Measuring Convergent Validity. Outer loading is the standard load that connects the factor to the indicator variable. The load is important to show the state of the measurement model because the large load represents a robust and reliable measurement model. Load is also an indication of an item reliability coefficient for the reflective model where values closer to 1.0 are more reliable than latent variables. Furthermore, the load value is varies between 0.00 and 1.00 because the data is automatically standardized in the SmartPLS. Therefore, the load value should be >0.70 [26]. However, any load value within the range of 0.50 to 0.70 should be considered as long as the AVE value is >0.50 [25,27]. Composite reliability is an alternative to Crobach's alpha as a convergent validity test in a reflective model. Based on previous studies, composite reliability has been used in PLS research as a measure of reliability as Crobach's alpha underestimates composite reliability and composite reliability which can lead to higher estimates of actual reliability. The composite reliability may be equal to or >0.60 [28,29]; and equal to or >0.70 for a validation model [29]. Therefore, the Crobach's alpha should be >0.70. Furthermore, the AVE can also be used as a test of convergent and differentiated legitimacy. It reflects the average value of each latent factor in the reflective model. In the reflective model, the AVE should be >0.50 [26,30] and greater than the cross load. The error variance is beyond the variation described when AVE is <0.50. The reliability of the indicator can be interpreted as the measurement scale in which 0.708 = 0.50 [25]. Therefore, the reliability of AVE should be >0.50. In the early stage of the convergent legality analysis involving the independent constructs with the work-life balance as dependent construct, the AVE value does not meet the requirement where the value of the flexible career, leave and family support constructs were <0.50 (refer Table 1). Hence, items with an outer loading value of <0.50 in each construct needs to be eliminated to increase the AVE value to >0.50 [30]. Table 1 also shows the items in the constructs that need to be eliminated, including three items in the flexible career construct (F2, F8 and F10), one item in the leave construct (L19) and two items in the family support construct (S25 and S26). Such elimination of items is necessary for the convergence validity requirements to be fulfilled.

TABLE 1
OUTER LOADING VALUE, COMPOSITE RELIABILITY AND AVE

Construct	Item	Outer Loading > 0.50	Composite Reliability > 0.70	AVE > 0.50
Flexible Career	F1	0.698	0.865	0.388
	F2	0.032		
	F3	0.761		
	F4	0.720		
	F5	0.684		
	F6	0.763		
	F7	0.656		
	F8	0.209		
	F9	0.701		
	F10	0.222		
	F11	0.745		
	F12	0.669		
Childcare	C13	0.720	0.907	0.621
	C14	0.759		
	C15	0.895		
	C16	0.756		
	C17	0.675		
	C18	0.896		
Leave	L19	0.375	0.807	0.473
	L20	0.785		

	L21	0.808		
	L22	0.517		
	L23	0.830		
Family Support	S24	0.598	0.810	0.445
	S25	0.415		
	S26	0.270		
	S27	0.865		
	S28	0.792		
	S29	0.832		

Table 2 shows the analysis results after all items <0.50 were eliminated. Thus, all outer loading values, composite reliability and AVE for each construct have fulfilled the requirements of the load value >0.50, composite reliability >0.70 and AVE >0.50. Therefore, the findings show that the instrument has fulfilled the criteria of convergent validity.

TABLE 2
OUTER LOADING VALUE, COMPOSITE RELIABILITY AND AVE

Construct	Item	Outer Loading > 0.50	Composite Reliability > 0.70	AVE > 0.50
Flexible Career	F1	0.704	0.904	0.511
	F3	0.764		
	F4	0.722		
	F5	0.683		
	F6	0.765		
	F7	0.659		
	F9	0.705		
	F11	0.746		
	F12	0.676		
Childcare	C13	0.718	0.907	0.622
	C14	0.764		
	C15	0.893		
	C16	0.759		
	C17	0.676		
	C18	0.895		
Leave	L20	0.805	0.844	0.582
	L21	0.837		
	L22	0.529		
	L23	0.837		
Family Support	S24	0.559	0.874	0.642
	S27	0.91		
	S28	0.809		
	S29	0.879		

Measuring Discriminant Validity Numbers. The discriminant validity can be proved on the AVE values by referring to the Fornell-Larcker criteria [31]. According to the Fornell-Larcker criteria, the primary value of AVE should be higher than its correlation with other variables. This means that for each variable, the variance shared with the indicator block is greater than the variance shared by the other variables. Referring to the output in the Fornell-Larcker criterion table, the main value of AVE appears inside diagonal cells and the correlation appears below it. Thus, it can be conclude that the top number (which is the prime value of the AVE) in any factor column is higher than the number (correlation) below, indicates that there is a discriminant validity. Table 3 shows that all the major AVE values for each construct are higher than the constructs below. Therefore, these value proves that Fornell Lacker's criteria have been met.

TABLE 3
FORNELL LACKER VALUE ANALYSIS (AVE > R)

Construct	Childcare	Flexible Career	Leave	Family Support
Childcare	0.784			
Flexible Career	0.079	0.715		
Leave	0.173	-0.023	0.758	
Family Support	0.101	0.142	0.115	0.800

Cross loading is a good loading indicator to clearly measure for the intended factors and other unintended factors. The determinant value for loading factor is >0.70 [26] but it can still acceptable for values between 0.50 to 0.70 [25,29]. Whereas, the determinant for cross loading should be <0.30 [26] or <0.40 [29]. There in widespread opinion that cross loading is an alternative to AVE. Hence, if the cross loading value is not eligible, it is still acceptable if the AVE value meets the requirements, AVE >0.50 [29]. Table 4 shows that all cross loading values reach the criteria of cross loading which the values are <0.40.

TABLE 4
CROSS LOADING VALUE ANALYSIS

Item	Childcare	Flexible Career	Leave	Family Support
C13	0.732	0.035	0.029	0.047
C14	0.858	0.095	-0.080	0.035
C15	0.564	-0.074	0.035	0.045
C16	0.769	0.004	-0.116	0.005
C17	0.703	-0.002	0.013	0.068
C18	0.846	0.054	-0.081	0.047
F1	0.006	0.704	-0.001	0.220
F3	0.043	0.746	0.047	0.190
F4	0.145	0.676	0.002	0.307
F5	0.003	0.764	0.166	0.195
F6	0.071	0.722	0.006	0.207
F7	-0.036	0.683	0.136	0.219
F9	0.006	0.765	0.044	0.247
F11	0.075	0.659	0.014	0.107
F12	0.107	0.705	0.038	0.315
L20	-0.060	0.066	0.803	0.166
L21	0.007	0.077	0.836	0.004
L22	-0.074	0.061	0.532	0.047
L23	-0.076	-0.001	0.839	0.091
S24	-0.034	0.266	0.036	0.559
S27	-0.004	0.136	0.214	0.518
S28	0.071	0.263	0.099	0.910
S29	0.040	0.254	0.120	0.809

The HTMT ratio is the geometric mean value for the Heterotrait-Monotrait correlation (correlation indicator across different phenomena) divided by the average correlation of Heterotrait-Monotrait (correlation indicator in the same construction). The use of an average geometric is required as there are two monotrat-heteromethod that establish correlation in construct [30]. In oder to show that the model ia appropriate, the Heterotrait correlation should be smaller than the Monotrait

correlation where the HTMT ratio should be <1.00 [26]. On other hand, the value of Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio should be <0.90 [27,28,30] but there is also Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio with the requirement of <0.85 [31]. Therefore, Table 5 shows that the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio in this study has been achieved with all values being <1.00.

TABLE 5
HETEROTRAIT-MONOTRAIT (HTMT) RATIO ANALYSIS

Construct	Childcare	Flexible Career	Leave	Family Support
Childcare				
Flexible Career	0.106			
Leave	0.122	0.117		
Family Support	0.096	0.377	0.147	

Testing of structural models in PLS-SEM. The second step that uses the PLS-Path Modeling approach is to evaluate the structure model. Structural model testing involves the analysis of (i) multicolinearrity (Inner VIF), (ii) structural model coefficient (T), (iii) determination coefficient (R square, R2), (iv) size effect (f2) and (v) predictive relevance (Q2) [25,30]. Bootstrapping and blindfolding methods in the PLS-SEM are used to evaluate the value. Multicollinearity (Inner VIF) test were conducted to determine whether the independent variables were redundant to one another [25]. Collinearity is said to exist when the value of VIF <5.00 [25,29]. The results of multilcollinearity analysis in this study shows that all VIF test values are <5.00 as shown in Table 6. Therefore, each variable has met the VIF criteria.

TABLE 6
VIF INNER VALUE (< 5.00)

Construct	Work-life Balance
Flexible Career	1.126
Childcare	1.006
Leave	1.031
Family Support	1.148

Path Coefficients (β) shows the expected variation in the dependent variable with a single variable variation unit [25]. The hypothesis of β value of each route in the model are calculated; the greater the value of β, the more significant the impact on endogenous latent construction. However, the β values need to be verified for their significance through the T-statistical tests where T value should be >1.645 for one tailed study. Hence, Table 7 shows that the T value of all the constructs is >1.645. For the hypotheses reading, the predicted hypotheses of this study were (i) Ho1, the flexible career has significant relationship in affecting WLB, (ii) Ho2, the childcare has significant relationship in affecting WLB, (iii) Ho3, leave has significant relationship in influencing WLB and (iv) Ho4, the family support has significant relationship in affecting WLB. Table 7 shows the results of the analysis where only Ho1 and Ho4 are accepted which confirms that the flexible career and family support factors have significant relationship in affecting WLB, with p <0.05. Whereas, Ho2 and Ho3 have no significant relationship in affecting WLB, with p >0.05.

TABLE 7
PATH COEFFICIENT VALUE

Hypo-thesis	Relation-ship	Sample Mean (M) / Beta (β)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values Sig <0.05
Ho1	Flexible Career > WLB	0.815	0.092	9.152	0.000
Ho2	Childcare > WLB	0.140	0.042	1.667	0.492
Ho3	Leave > WLB	0.100	0.055	1.855	0.064
Ho4	Family Support > WLB	0.277	0.067	4.403	0.000

R square (R^2) is to see the contribution value of all variables. It has been determines that the R^2 value class of $R^2 > 0.67$ is strong, $R^2 > 0.33$ is moderate and $R^2 > 0.19$ is weak [29]. The result of the data analysis show that the model of this study has a strong predictive power value of $R^2 > 0.67$. Based on Table 8 shows that $R^2 = 0.994$ where the value of free extract contribution is strong. This also means that the R^2 value suggests that 99.4% variants can be explained by the independent variable towards the dependent variable of the research.

TABLE 8
R SQUARE (R^2) VALUE

Construct	R Square
Work-life balance (WLB)	0.994

The Effect Size (f^2) is determined by the value of R Square (R^2). The purpose of assessing the effect of size (f^2) is to see the effect of the variable's dependence impact on other variables [29]. The value of R^2 as the independent variable is removed from the path of the model and it will also determine whether the formation of exogenous latent has a significant effect on the value of the latent endogenous construction. The calculation of the size effects towards the construct is based on the following formula:

$$f^2 = (R^2 \text{ included} – R^2 \text{ excluded}) / (1- R^2 \text{ included}) \quad (1)$$

Scale of the size effects were evaluated in three sizes, where $0.00 \le f^2 < 0.15$ is small, $0.15 \le f^2 < 0.35$ is moderate and $f^2 \ge 0.35$ is large. Based on the Table 9, the analysis result show that factors of flexible career ($f^2 = 1.500$) and family support ($f^2 = 1.167$) have a strong effects on WLB, with the value of $f^2 \ge 0.35$. On other hand, childcare and leave factors have a moderate effect of $f^2 = 0.333$ and $f^2 = 0.167$ which is $0.15 \le f^2 <0.35$.

TABLE 9
SIZE EFFECTS CONSTRUCT (F^2)

Factor (exogenous)	Endogenous	R^2 included	R^2 excluded	Size Effects (f^2)
Flexible career	WLB	0.994	0.985	1.500
Childcare	WLB	0.994	0.992	0.333
Leave	WLB	0.994	0.993	0.167
Family support	WLB	0.994	0.987	1.167

Predictive Relevance (Q^2) were analyzed using blindfolding method. The criteria to be met for measured Q^2 value must be greater than zero for specific endogenous latent construction [25]. Therefore, Table 10 shows the result of the blindfolding analysis for Q^2 = 0.202 and this value meets the criteria of Q^2 > 0. The value of Q^2>0 also proves that the built model has a predictive relevance. The structural model of the Work-life Balance Model that has been developed is shown in Fig. 1.

TABLE 10
PREDICTIVE RELEVANCE (Q^2) VALUE

Construct	SSO	SSE	Q^2 (= 1-SSE/SSO)
Work-life balance	4,623.00	3,690.91	0.202

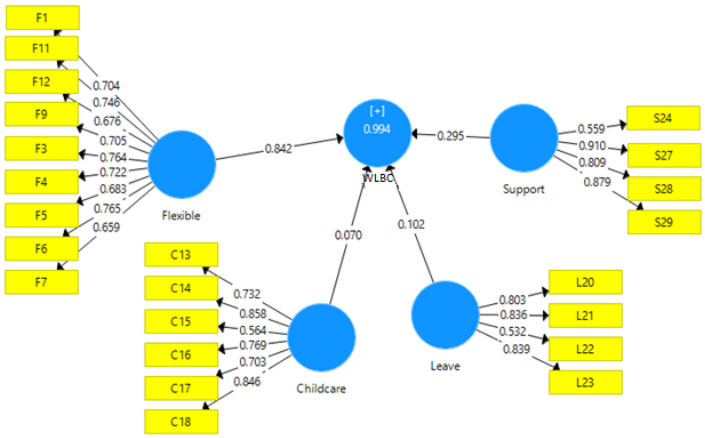

FIG. 1
WORK-LIFE BALANCE MODEL

3 RESULT

The overall analysis results for the measurement model show that the value of outer loading, composite reliability and AVE has met the criteria. The results of this study also indicate that the instrument of research has fulfilled the criteria of convergent validity. While the value of Fornell Lacker's, cross loading and the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio also reach for the criteria of discriminant validity. For the test results of testing structural model have shown that each variable has met the appropriate VIF criteria. In fact, the model has a predictive relevance (Q^2) where the value of R^2 shows that 99.4% variation with the effect size (f^2) in flexible careers and family support factors has a strong impact on WLB. In addition, the results also indicate that flexible career and family support factors are significantly associated with influencing WLB. All tables and figures will be processed as images. You need to embed the images in the paper itself. Please don't send the images as separate files.

4 SUMMARY

The development of the WLB Model for female engineers who are has shown that this model has predictable viability. This study found that flexible career and family support factors have significant relationships in influencing work-life balance. This is supported previous studies which report that flexible career affects work-life balance among women [32,33]. Other studies also explain that lack family support affects their work-life balance [21,23]. To improve organizational performance is one of the main goals of the Human Resource Management (HRM). Therefore, the results of this research are expected to add new information on the workforce where work balance for female engineers can be conceptualized based on four key factors namely flexible career, child care, leave and family support. The results of this study also provide the benefits of the Industrial Relation who involved as policy makers in order to consider and streamline workers' policies more professionally and effectively in assisting workers regardless of gender. To expend this model in further, further research is proposed to explore new factors that contribute to the conflict of work-life balance among women in various fields so that a perfect life balance model can be developed specifically for working women.

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