

“Between College and Work: The Role of Work-Life Balance and Social Support on Students' Quality of Life”

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Abstract

Students who work while pursuing higher education experience difficulties in managing academic and work demands, which can affect their quality of life. This study aims to evaluate how work-life balance and social support affect the quality of life of working students. A quantitative method was applied by distributing questionnaires to 112 respondents who were working students, then the data was analyzed using simple and multiple linear regression through SPSS. The results of this study indicate that work-life balance has a positive and significant impact on the quality of life of students, showing that the better students are at balancing their academic and work roles, the higher their well-being. In addition, social support was also found to have a positive and significant effect on quality of life, confirming that emotional and practical support from family, friends, coworkers, and the campus environment can help students cope with the stress of juggling multiple roles. Simultaneous analysis indicates that both variables simultaneously have a significant contribution to improving quality of life, with the coefficient of determination value showing that most of the variation in quality of life can be explained through life balance and social support.

Keywords:

Work-life balance; Social support; Quality of life; Working students; Student well-being; Dual role; Higher education

Introduction

An increasing prevalence of individuals engaging in employment while pursuing higher education is observable. A multitude of students opt to work for a range of motivations, including addressing economic requirements, accumulating professional experience, and cultivating competencies beneficial for their subsequent career paths. Nevertheless, the harmonization of concurrent student and employee responsibilities presents a considerable challenge. The rigor of academic coursework, vocational demands, and constrained temporal availability frequently contribute to elevated stress levels, potentially impacting students' welfare and general life satisfaction. Consequently, an examination of elements that facilitate students in achieving equilibrium between their academic pursuits and employment commitments is crucial for enhancing their overall quality of life.

A significant determinant of the quality of life experienced by students is the equilibrium between professional obligations and personal pursuits. This equilibrium

involves the proficient allocation of time and resources across academic responsibilities and private life. Individuals who successfully achieve this balance typically report diminished stress, increased contentment with their circumstances, and a higher caliber of achievement in both their studies and future careers. Furthermore, the provision of social support is a critical component in augmenting students' overall quality of life. Assistance received from familial networks, peers, academic instructors, and professional colleagues can offer crucial emotional backing, encouragement, and tangible aid, enabling students to effectively navigate the demands of their diverse commitments.

This study aims to investigate how the balance between professional responsibilities and personal life, as well as the provision of social assistance, affects the overall well-being of individuals who are pursuing academic studies while working. The significance of this study lies in its ability to provide a deeper understanding of how these two elements affect student well-being. It is hoped that the results will serve as a valuable guide for academic institutions and related entities in designing support strategies and programs to help working students achieve a better balance in their lives and improve their overall quality of life.

Theoretical Framework

Students who work while pursuing higher education face complex challenges in dividing their time, energy, and attention between academic demands and work. This situation can cause psychological stress, fatigue, and imbalance in daily life. In this context, two important factors that are believed to play a major role in the well-being and quality of life of working students are work-life balance and social support.

The concept of work-life balance describes the extent to which a person can balance roles and responsibilities between work and non-work life (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011). For working students, "work" includes professional or part-time responsibilities, while "life" includes academic, social, and personal activities.

When this balance is disrupted, individuals may experience role conflict, which results in increased stress and a decline in quality of life. Frone (2003) explains that a good work-life balance is positively associated with life satisfaction, psychological well-being, and individual productivity. In the context of students, the ability to manage time, set priorities, and support from the workplace and campus environment greatly determine the extent to which this balance can be achieved. Research by Keene (2019) also found that students who have flexible work schedules and good time management skills tend to find it easier to achieve a balance between college and work.

In addition to work-life balance, social support is another factor that greatly influences the quality of life of working students. Social support is defined as emotional, informational, or instrumental assistance provided by other individuals, such as family, friends, coworkers, or lecturers (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Social support acts as a buffer against stress and helps individuals cope with the psychological pressure

arising from the dual demands of studying and working. Misra and McKean (2000) found that students who received high social support were better able to adapt to academic stress and showed better psychological well-being. Similarly, research by Diener et al. (1999) confirms that strong social relationships can increase life satisfaction and subjective happiness. In the context of students who work while studying, support from family, peers, and coworkers can improve their ability to manage time and stress, thereby maintaining their quality of life.

Quality of life is a multidimensional concept that reflects an individual's perception of their overall well-being, encompassing physical, psychological, social, and environmental aspects (WHOQOL, 1997). According to Diener (1984), quality of life is closely related to subjective well-being, which is the extent to which individuals feel satisfied, happy, and meaningful in their lives. Sirgy et al. (2001) emphasize that a balance between work and personal life, as well as adequate social support, directly contributes to an improved quality of life. Thus, working students who are able to maintain work-life balance and obtain sufficient social support tend to have better levels of well-being and quality of life.

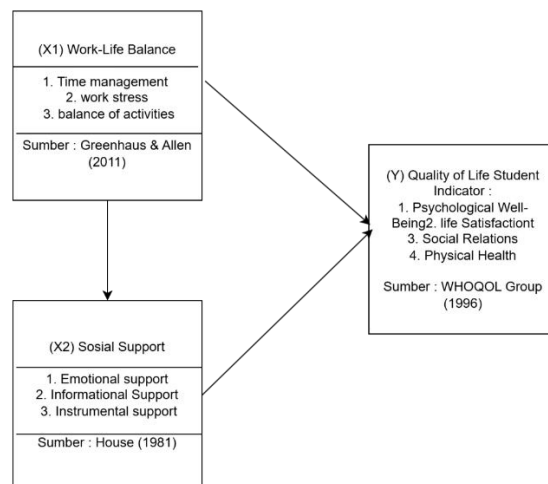
This study uses several main theories as a basis for explaining the relationship between variables. First, Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989) states that individuals strive to protect and maintain their resources, such as time, energy, social support, and emotional balance. When these resources are depleted due to academic and work burdens, stress increases and quality of life decreases. However, work-life balance and social support can function as protective resources that help individuals maintain psychological well-being. Second, Social Support Theory (Cohen & Wills, 1985) explains that social support has a buffering effect on stress, whereby the presence of support from the social environment can strengthen an individual's ability to cope with pressure. Third, the Work-Life Balance Model (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011) asserts that the balance between work and personal life has a direct impact on life satisfaction, mental health, and individual performance. These three theories together provide a conceptual framework that explains how work-life balance and social support can affect the quality of life of students who work while studying.

Although various studies have highlighted the importance of work-life balance and social support for individual well-being; most previous studies have focused on full-time employees or professionals (Nurhayati, 2022; Rahmawati, 2021). Research that specifically examines working students is still relatively limited, especially in the Indonesian social and cultural context. In addition, most previous studies have only examined the influence of one variable, rather than the simultaneous relationship between work-life balance and social support on students' quality of life. Therefore, this study attempts to fill this gap by analyzing the role of both variables simultaneously in improving the quality of life of students who work while studying. Based on the literature review and theoretical framework above, the research hypotheses are as follows:

- H1: Work-life balance has a positive effect on students' quality of life;
H2: Social support has a positive effect on students' quality of life; and
H3: Work-life balance and social support simultaneously have a positive effect on the quality of life of students who work while studying.

These three hypotheses are based on the assumption that a balance between academic and work roles is an important factor in maintaining student well-being. Students who are able to manage their time well, limit role conflicts, and still have time for personal needs tend to have lower stress levels and higher life satisfaction. In addition, the existence of social support from family, friends, lecturers, and co-workers acts as a source of emotional strength that helps students cope with the pressures arising from the double burden they carry.

In the context of students who work while studying, the interaction between work-life balance and social support is important because the two complement each other in influencing quality of life. Students who have a good life balance but lack social support may still face psychological difficulties.



Method

This study is based on several key theories that explain the relationship between work-life balance, social support, and quality of life among students who work while studying. The first theory is the work-life balance theory (greenhaus & allen, 2011), which explains how individuals try to balance the demands of work and personal life, including academic responsibilities. This balance can be achieved when individuals feel satisfied and function effectively in both roles without experiencing excessive conflict. In the context of working students, the ability to balance time, energy, and attention between college and work is very important. Imbalance can cause stress and a decline in well-being, while good balance can increase life satisfaction and overall quality of life.

Social Support Theory (Cobb, 1976) emphasizes that social support is how a person feels loved, valued, and connected to the people around them who care about them. This support can come from family, friends, coworkers, or the campus environment. According to this theory, social support acts as a buffer against stress, especially when a person faces challenges from various roles. In the case of working students, strong social support helps them cope better with their studies and work, thereby improving.

Furthermore, this study also refers to the Quality of Life Framework developed by the WHO (1997), in which quality of life is defined as how individuals view their position in life based on existing culture, values, goals, expectations, and standards of living.

The results of the normality test show that the residuals are not normally distributed. To address this issue and stabilize the data variance, a logarithmic transformation was performed on the independent variables. After the transformation process, the data showed a normal distribution pattern, which allowed regression analysis to be performed using the logarithmically transformed variables.

Results

The regression analysis was conducted using log-transformed variables ($LN X_1$ for Work-Life Balance and $LN X_2$ for Social Support) to ensure data normality and meet the assumptions of the classical linear regression model.

The results of the simple regression test show that Work-Life Balance ($LN X_1$) has a positive and significant effect on the Quality of Life of students. The better the balance between work demands and academic life that students have, the higher the level of quality of life they experience. These findings confirm that the ability to manage time and minimize role conflicts has a real impact on their well-being in carrying out daily activities.

Meanwhile, the results of a simple regression test on the Social Support ($LN X_2$) variable also show a significant effect on Quality of Life. Support from family, friends, coworkers, and even the university plays an important role as a source of emotional and instrumental reinforcement, enabling students to be better prepared to face the pressures of their dual roles. This condition encourages increased satisfaction, comfort, and happiness in their personal and academic lives.

Based on multiple regression analysis, both Work-Life Balance and Social Support variables simultaneously have a significant impact on students' Quality of Life. The significance test using the F test shows that the significance value is below 0.05, indicating a significant contribution of both variables. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (R^2) value shows that Work-Life Balance and Social Support can explain most of the variation in changes in Quality of Life, while the rest is influenced by other factors not examined in this study.

Overall, the findings of this study confirm that the quality of life of students who work while studying is greatly influenced by their success in managing their work-life balance and the strength of their social support network. Students who are able to effectively manage their time between work and study demands tend to have lower stress levels and feel more satisfied with their lives. This condition is supported by emotional and practical assistance from their immediate social environment, such as family, friends, co-workers, and even the university, which provides tangible support in dealing with various role pressures.

A balance of roles and adequate social support helps students maintain stable physical and psychological conditions, maintain motivation to study, and increase confidence in achieving academic and career goals. This shows that quality of life is not only influenced by individual factors, but is also greatly determined by social environments that are responsive to students' needs. Thus, these two factors are important aspects that educational institutions and work environments need to consider when developing support strategies for working students, so that they can optimally fulfill both roles without sacrificing their well-being.

Table 1. Simple Regression Test of Work-Life Balance (LN_{X1}) on Students' Quality of Life (Y)

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1							
	(Constant)	-35.377	5.999		-5.897	<,001	
	LN _{X1}	19.816	1.727	.738	11.475	<,001	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Kualitas Hidup Mahasiswa Yang Bekerja Sambil Kuliah

Source: Output SPSS (2025)

Based on the table above, the constant value is -35.377 and the regression coefficient for the Work Life Balance (LN_{X1}) variable is 19.816, resulting in the following regression equation:

$$Y = -35.377 + 19.816LN_{X1}$$

The significance value (Sig.) of < 0.001 (< 0.05) indicates that Work Life Balance has a positive and significant effect on the Quality of Life for students who work while studying. This means that the better a student's ability to balance work and academic life, the higher their level of quality of life.

Table 2. Simple Regression Test of Social Support Variable (LNX₂) on Students' Quality of Life (Y)

Coefficients ^a								
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients			Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error		Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-43.322	4.950		-8.752	<,001		
	LNX2	21.945	1.414	.828	15.516	<,001	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Kualitas Hidup Mahasiswa Yang Bekerja Sambil Kuliah

Source: Output SPSS (2025)

Based on the Coefficients table, it is known that the constant value in the regression model is -43.322, while the regression coefficient for the Social Support (LNX₂) variable is 21.945. This forms the following regression equation:

$$Y = -43.322 + 21.945LNX_2$$

The significance value (Sig.) of < 0.001 (< 0.05) indicates that social support has a positive and significant effect on the quality of life of students who work while studying. This means that the more social support students receive, the better their quality of life will be.

Table 3. Multiple Linear Regression Test of LNX1 and LNX2 Against Y

Coefficients ^a								
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients			Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error		Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-51.318	4.999		-10.265	<,001		
	LNX1	7.990	1.915	.298	4.173	<,001	.488	2.050
	LNX2	16.303	1.889	.615	8.629	<,001	.488	2.050

a. Dependent Variable: Kualitas Hidup Mahasiswa yang Bekerja Sambil Kuliah

Source: Output SPSS (2025)

Based on the table above, the constant value is -51.318, the regression coefficient for Work Life Balance (LNX₁) is 7.990, and Social Support (LNX₂) is 16.303. Therefore, the regression equation is:

$$Y = -53.318 + 7.990LNX_1 + 21.945LNX_2$$

The significance value for Work Life Balance (Sig. < 0.001 < 0.05) indicates that Work Life Balance has a positive and significant effect on the Quality of Life of students who work while studying.

Meanwhile, the significance value for Social Support < 0.001 (< 0.05) also indicates that Social Support has a positive and significant effect on the Quality of Life of working students.

Tabel 4. t-Test (Partial)

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-51.318	4.999		-10.265	<,001		
	LNx1	7.990	1.915	.298	4.173	<,001	.488	2.050
	LNx2	16.303	1.889	.615	8.629	<,001	.488	2.050

a. Dependent Variable: Kualitas Hidup Mahasiswa yang Bekerja Sambil Kuliah

Source: Output SPSS (2025)

The t-test results show that:

Work Life Balance (LNx1) has a calculated t-value of 4.173 with a significance value of < 0.001 (< 0.05), indicating a positive and significant influence on the Quality of Life of students who work while studying.

Social Support (LNx2) has a calculated t-value of 8.629 with a significance value of < 0.001 (< 0.05), indicating a positive and significant influence on the Quality of Life of students who work while studying.

This indicates that students who are able to maintain a good balance between work and study, and who receive strong social support from their environment, tend to have a higher quality of life while managing their dual responsibilities as workers and students.

Tabel 5. F Test (Simultaneous)

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2511.996	2	1255.998	147.033	<,001 ^b
	Residual	931.111	109	8.542		
	Total	3443.107	111			

a. Dependent Variable: Kualitas Hidup Mahasiswa yang Bekerja Sambil Kuliah

b. Predictors: (Constant), LNx2, LNx1

Source: Output SPSS (2025)

Based on the F test results, the calculated F value is 147.033 with a significance level of < 0.001 < 0.05 . This indicates that simultaneously, Work Life Balance (LNx1) and Social Support (LNx2) have a significant influence on the Quality of Life of students who work while studying (Y).

Tabel 6. Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

Model Summary^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.854 ^a	.730	.725	2.923	2.169

a. Predictors: (Constant), LNX2, LNX1

b. Dependent Variable: Kualitas Hidup Mahasiswa yang Bekerja Sambil Kuliah

Source: Output SPSS (2025)

The R^2 value of 0.730 indicates that 73.0% of the variation in the Quality of Life of students who work while studying can be explained by Work Life Balance (LNX1) and Social Support (LNX2) as the independent variables. Meanwhile, the remaining 27.0% is influenced by other factors outside this research model, such as financial conditions, academic pressure, campus environment, job demands, or personal health.

In presenting the results, tables must be numbered consecutively based on the order in which they appear in the text. The title of each table should be placed above the table and centered. Conversely, the title for each figure should be written below the figure and centered. All tables and figures should be referenced within the main text to ensure alignment between the explanation and the data presented.

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that work-life balance has a positive and significant effect on the quality of life of students who work while studying. This condition shows that students' ability to manage their time, reduce role conflicts, and maintain energy allocation between work and study directly contributes to reducing stress and increasing life satisfaction. These findings are in line with the views of Greenhaus and Allen (2011), who explain that role balance is the basis for an individual's psychological and social functioning. This study is also in line with Frone (2003), who asserts that role imbalance triggers a decline in well-being and academic achievement.

In addition, social support has been shown to have a significant positive impact on students' quality of life. Support from family, friends, colleagues, and even universities is a source of emotional and instrumental strength that helps students cope with dual demands in a more adaptive manner. This supports Cohen and Wills' (1985) theory of buffering effects, whereby social support reduces the impact of psychological stress on individuals. Research by Misra and McKean (2000) also shows that students with high social support tend to have better psychological well-being.

When tested together, these two factors have a significant impact on explaining changes in students' quality of life. The results of this study reveal that work-life

balance and social support not only complement each other, but also collaborate in strengthening the mental resilience of students who are studying while working. From the perspective of Resource Conservation Theory (Hobfoll, 1989), these two elements are crucial resources that help students avoid resource depletion due to the pressures of the two roles they play.

Scientifically, this study adds to the evidence regarding the significance of the balance between roles and social support in the situation of working students, a group that has often been overlooked in previous research that has focused more on full-time workers. From a practical standpoint, the findings of this study provide insights for educational institutions and workplaces to develop supportive policies and programs, such as flexible scheduling, academic guidance, supportive communities, and a more humane work environment for students.

However, this study has several limitations. The variables analyzed only cover two main factors, while students' quality of life can be influenced by other factors such as economic circumstances, health, academic workload, and job nature. In addition, this study is still bound to a specific social and cultural context, so caution is needed in generalizing the results. Future research should expand the variables studied and consider long-term analysis to better understand the dynamics of role balance.

Conclusion

The results of the study indicate that work-life balance and social support play a significant role in improving the quality of life for students who work while studying at university. Work-life balance helps students manage the demands of work and study, which in turn can reduce stress levels, increase life satisfaction, and support academic and career achievement. On the other hand, social support acts as a source of emotional and instrumental strength that helps students adjust to the pressures of their dual responsibilities.

Simultaneously, these two factors have been proven to have a positive and significant impact on improving the quality of life of working students. These results reinforce the notion that a good work-life balance and adequate social support are important elements in maintaining the physical and mental well-being of students. Therefore, educational institutions and work environments need to pay more attention to providing facilities, policies, and support that are responsive to the needs of working students.

This study emphasizes the importance of an adaptable social environment. A campus environment that offers flexibility in academics, counseling programs, and supportive communities can be a strong foundation for maintaining the resilience of working students. More flexible work policies in the workplace also need to be implemented in order to understand the limitations of students who have to divide their attention between study and work.

In addition, the findings of this study indicate that working students need to improve their time management skills and effective coping methods to maintain their life

balance. Social support can come not only from outside, but also can be built through positive relationships in campus organizations, workplaces, and friendships. Improving these two aspects is expected to enhance the overall well-being of students.

This study has several limitations, particularly regarding the scope of the variables studied and certain socio-cultural conditions that may affect the ability to generalize the findings. Future research should consider additional variables such as financial conditions, study load, and job characteristics, and utilize a longitudinal design to further explore changes in quality of life over time.

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