The Role of Work-Life Balance among Working Students with Families in Improving Human Resource Quality in the Digital Era

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the role of work-life balance among working students with families in enhancing the quality of human resources in the digital era. The research employs a descriptive qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews with five respondents who simultaneously fulfill roles as employees, students, and family members. The findings reveal that work-life balance is a dynamic process involving the ability to manage time, regulate emotions, and utilize digital technology effectively. Respondents emphasized that planned scheduling, prioritization, and support from partners or family members play crucial roles in helping them fulfill their academic, professional, and domestic responsibilities efficiently. The use of technologies such as Google Calendar, WhatsApp, and Zoom provides flexibility and efficiency in communication and activity management. Moreover, emotional stability and positive communication within the family contribute to psychological well-being and productivity. These findings highlight that work-life balance not only reduces stress and role conflict but also enhances self-discipline, adaptability, and digital competence, key elements in improving human resource quality. Therefore, maintaining a balance between work, study, and family serves as an essential strategy in developing resilient, innovative, and competitive individuals in the era of digital transformation.

Keywords:
Work-life balance, working students, digital era, human resource quality, stress management.

Introduction

The rapid development of digital technology in today's era of globalization has brought significant changes in various aspects of life, including the worlds of work and education. Digital transformation demands individuals to possess a high level of adaptability, mastery of information technology, and strong interpersonal competencies in order to remain competitive in an increasingly dynamic work environment (Apryanto, 2022). Amidst these demands, a phenomenon has emerged involving working students with families—individuals who simultaneously fulfill roles as employees, students, and family members. This condition presents unique

challenges in maintaining work-life balance so that all roles can be carried out optimally.

Work-life balance is a crucial factor in maintaining productivity, mental health, and the overall quality of human resources. Working students with families often face time pressures, heavy responsibilities, and role conflicts between work, study, and family obligations (Mafruh, 2025). An imbalance in managing these roles can negatively affect academic performance, job satisfaction, and even family harmony. Conversely, when balance is achieved, individuals are more capable of managing stress, increasing motivation, and continuously developing their potential.

In the context of improving human resource quality in the digital era, work-life balance plays a vital role not only in maintaining psychological and social well-being but also in supporting the development of strong character and digital competence. Working students who can balance professional, academic, and personal demands tend to possess higher adaptive advantages and competitiveness. Therefore, studying the role of work-life balance among working students with families is essential to understand how this factor contributes to enhancing the quality of human resources in today's fast-paced and challenging digital era (Mansyur, 2024).

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze how work-life balance influences the improvement of human resource quality among working students with families, as well as to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors in achieving such balance in the current digital era.

Theoretical Framework

Work-life balance is a concept that emphasizes an individual's ability to manage and harmonize responsibilities across various life roles, such as work, education, and family (Hendra, 2023). For working students with families, maintaining work-life balance is essential for sustaining optimal performance in all roles they undertake. The Role Conflict and Role Balance Theory proposed by Marks and MacDermid (1996) explains that a person's success in managing multiple roles depends on their ability to handle role conflicts and create harmony among different life domains (Syam, 2022).

Furthermore, the Work-Family Enrichment Theory by Greenhaus and Powell (2006), as cited in Kuntari (2015), highlights that positive experiences in one domain (such as work or study) can enrich another domain. Thus, balance is not merely about avoiding

conflict but also about creating synergy among roles. In the context of the digital era, advancements in information technology facilitate role integration through flexible schedules and online learning access, yet they may also increase cognitive load and stress if not managed properly.

The quality of human resources in the digital era is characterized by critical thinking skills, digital literacy, and emotional and social balance. Work-life balance serves as a key determinant in enhancing productivity, creativity, and individual commitment to self-development (Darmawan, 2023). Therefore, work-life balance functions as an influential variable in improving human resource quality, particularly for working students with families who must navigate the simultaneous demands of work, study, and household life.

Previous studies have shown that work-life balance has a positive correlation with performance and psychological well-being (Andrade, 2024; Lee, 2024). However, research focusing on the role of work-life balance in the context of working students with families in the digital era remains limited. This research gap underscores the need for a more in-depth examination of how work-life balance contributes to improving human resource quality within complex and digitally driven multi-role situations.

Method

This study employed a descriptive qualitative method using semi-structured interviews to explore the experiences of working students with families in maintaining work-life balance in the digital era. The research involved five respondents selected through purposive sampling based on specific criteria: being enrolled as students, employed, and having a family. Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews focusing on aspects such as time management, social support, stress control, and the utilization of digital technology. The collected data were analyzed thematically through a process of reduction, categorization, and conclusion drawing to understand the role of work-life balance in enhancing the quality of human resources.

Table 1. Research Indicator

Indicator	Semi-Structured Interview Questions	
Time and Priority Management	1.	What do you usually do to keep your studies, work, and family matters balanced?

Indicator		Semi-Structured Interview Questions
	2.	Who helps you the most in managing all these roles? What kind of support do they provide?
	3.	When and where do you usually organize your time to ensure all activities remain balanced?
	4.	How do you set priorities when study, work, and family tasks compete with each other?
	5.	Can you describe concrete strategies you use when your schedule becomes overwhelming?
Stress and Emotion Control	1.	How do you manage stress and emotions when the demands of your roles increase?
	2.	When do you usually take breaks or rest, and what do you do during that time?
	3.	Who provides emotional support for you, and in what form?
	4.	Do you have certain routines (e.g., sleep, exercise, relaxation) that help maintain your psychological well-
Indicator		**Semi-Structured Interview Questions**
		being? Please explain
	5.	In your opinion, how does stress management affect your academic/work performance and family relationships?
Technology Utilization	1.	What technologies or applications do you usually use to organize your activities?
	2.	Who do you often coordinate with using technology, and how does your communication pattern look like?
	3.	When and where do you usually use technology to complete tasks or coordinate activities?
	4.	How does technology help you maintain role balance? Please give concrete examples.
	5.	Have you ever experienced difficulties in using technology?
	6.	How did you overcome them?

Results

a. Time Management and Prioritization

Based on interviews with five respondents, it was found that the ability to manage time is the most fundamental aspect in maintaining balance among academic, professional, and family responsibilities. All respondents stated that without a well-planned time allocation, these activities tend to overlap and cause stress. Therefore, they implement systematic time management strategies, such as creating daily or weekly schedules, utilizing free time in the morning or evening, and setting priorities based on the urgency of tasks.

The first and second respondents, for example, explained that they create daily schedules to ensure each activity has its designated time. Meanwhile, the third respondent emphasized the importance of maintaining focus and energy so that all responsibilities can be completed one by one without neglecting any of them. The fourth and fifth respondents also mentioned that support from their spouses greatly helps in managing their dual roles.

From the interviews, it was identified that working students with families have a high awareness of the importance of time planning and proportional role distribution. They view work-life balance not merely as dividing time but also as managing energy, work rhythm, and priorities so that all responsibilities can be carried out effectively. This strategy plays a crucial role in maintaining productivity and mental health while supporting the enhancement of human resource quality that is adaptive to the demands of the digital era.

b. Stress and Emotional Control
   The interview results also revealed that work-life balance is influenced not only by time management but also by an individual's ability to manage stress and emotions. Respondents stated that the demands of work, study, and family responsibilities often create considerable psychological pressure. However, each respondent has their own way of coping with it, such as taking rest breaks, engaging in relaxation activities, communicating with their spouse, or seeking emotional support from family members.

   Several respondents admitted that spousal support, particularly from husbands plays a decisive role in maintaining emotional stability. One respondent even mentioned that her main motivation to endure the pressure is the desire to set a good example for her children. Thus, social support and healthy interpersonal communication have been proven to help them maintain psychological balance amid   multiple   role   demands.

The interpretation of these findings indicates that stress and emotional control serve as a foundation for sustaining academic and professional performance. When individuals can manage pressure effectively, they become calmer, more focused, and more resilient in facing challenges. Therefore, emotional balance plays a vital role in shaping human resource quality that is stable, resilient, and oriented toward continuous self-development in the digital era.

c. Utilization of Technology

Another prominent aspect emerging from the interview findings is the role of digital technology as a primary tool supporting work-life balance among working students with families. All respondents stated that they use various digital applications to facilitate activity management, communication, and learning. The most frequently used applications include WhatsApp, Google Calendar, Zoom, Google Drive, as well as note-taking and reminder apps on their smartphones.

Technology provides respondents with a high degree of flexibility to stay connected to their work and academic activities without neglecting family responsibilities. Most respondents mentioned that they complete their coursework from home, especially at night after household duties are finished. Technology also enables quick and efficient coordination with colleagues, lecturers, and classmates. In addition, the use of digital scheduling applications helps them manage their work rhythm, remember important appointments, and reduce the risk of delays or neglected tasks.

The interview results reinforce the view that digital transformation not only influences the way people work and study but also creates new opportunities to achieve a more dynamic form of work-life balance. The effective use of technology allows respondents to optimize their time, minimize stress caused by time constraints, and enhance productivity without sacrificing family roles. Therefore, in the context of improving human resource quality, digital literacy and technological proficiency have become key competencies that working students must develop in the modern era.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that work-life balance among working students with families results from their ability to manage time, control stress and emotions, and optimally utilize digital technology. These findings align with the theoretical

framework of Work-Life Balance proposed by Greenhaus and Allen (2011), which explains that balance between work and personal life can be achieved when individuals are able to allocate their time and energy according to the demands of each role. In the context of this study, working students with families achieved balance through adaptive strategies in managing their multiple roles.

Theoretically, this research supports the Role Balance Theory by Marks and MacDermid (1996), which emphasizes the importance of harmonizing different life roles to prevent psychological conflict. Respondents demonstrated that success in managing multiple responsibilities depends on self-awareness in setting priorities and the ability to handle emotional pressure. When such balance is achieved, individuals tend to experience inner peace and strong motivation for self-development, ultimately contributing to the improvement of human resource quality.

Furthermore, these results reinforce the Work-Family Enrichment Theory proposed by Greenhaus and Powell (2006), which states that positive experiences in one life domain can enrich another. The use of digital technologies such as WhatsApp, Google Calendar, and Zoom serves as concrete evidence of how technological advancement can bridge professional, academic, and family roles. Working students can organize study schedules, complete work tasks, and stay connected with their families without losing efficiency. This demonstrates that digitalization not only adds workload but also creates opportunities for achieving a more flexible and productive form of worklife balance.

From an empirical perspective, these findings are consistent with the study by Haar et al. (2014), which revealed that work-life balance positively contributes to psychological well-being and individual performance. Similarly, Rantanen et al. (2011) emphasized that the ability to manage stress and maintain clear role boundaries is essential for preventing emotional exhaustion (burnout). In the context of working students, achieving balance is even more complex due to the emotional and time demands of family roles. Nevertheless, the interviews confirmed that spousal support and effective use of technology strengthen their adaptive resilience in coping with multi-role pressures.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that work-life balance among working students with families is influenced by their ability to manage time and priorities, control stress and emotions, and effectively utilize digital technology. These three factors work together

to help individuals balance academic, professional, and family responsibilities amid the demands of the digital era. Spousal and social support also play a crucial role in maintaining emotional stability and productivity. The results affirm that work-life balance is not merely a psychological factor but also an adaptive strategy that enhances the development of resilient, flexible, and competitive human resources in the modern era.

Acknowledgments

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