The Role of Work-Life Balance on Faculty Retention in UAE Higher Education Sector

دور التوازن بين العمل والحياة في الاحتفاظ بأعضاء هيئة التدريس في قطاع التعليم العالي في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة

by

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Abstract

The purpose of this study explores the role of work-life balance on faculty retention in the UAE. Using qualitative research method, a sample of HR representatives of a number of universities in the UAE were interviewed to gain insight into their perspectives of work-life balance, importance, and challenges faced while attempting to improve it for faculty. Similarly, interviews with faculty members were conducted to obtain a better understanding of their perspectives.

In a diverse culture present in the UAE, the study revealed that both faculty and HR representative were aware of the meaning of work-life balance and its challenges. They also discussed ways to improve it. However, the role of work-life balance on faculty retention in the UAE was inconclusive which can be due to the socio-cultural and economic factors.

Abstract in Arabic   ملخص الدراسة

الغرض من هذه الدراسة هو استكشاف دور التوازن بين العمل والحياة في الاحتفاظ بأعضاءهيئة التدريس في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة. عن طريق اساليب البحث النوعية، تم إجراء مقابلة مع عينة من ممثلي الموارد البشرية في عدد من الجامعات في الإمارات للتعرف على وجهات نظرهم حول التوازن بين العمل والحياة والأهمية والتحديات التي تواجههم أثناء محاولتهم تحسينها لأعضاء هيئة التدريس. وبالمثل، أجريت مقابلات مع أعضاء هيئة التدريس للحصول على فهم أفضل لوجهات نظرهم.

في ثقافة متنوعة موجودة في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة كشفت الدراسة أن كل من أعضاء هيئة التدريس وممثلي الموارد البشرية على بينة من معنى التوازن بين العمل والحياة، وتحدياته. كما ناقشوا طرق تحسينه. ومع ذلك ، فإن دور التوازن بين العمل والحياة في الاحتفاظ بأعضاء هيئة التدريس في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة كان غير حاسم والذي يمكن أن يعزى إلى العوامل الاجتماعية الثقافية والاقتصادية.

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Chapter One: Introduction

The purpose of this study is to outline the role of work-life balance on faculty retention in the UAE higher education sector. Education sector is affected by global economy and other external and internal factors similar to any other industry. With the increased popularity of the profit-seeking ideology (Connell 2013), educational institutions have become pressurised to adopt more profit-driven values. This pressure cascades down to its faculty to maximise output, thus leading to work-life imbalance. This makes work-life balance important in the higher education sector due to the uniqueness of the industry and the products that it offers. Educators require a set of skills that is difficult to replace quickly. Losing faculty that are hard to replace jeopardises the stability of educational institutions and the services/products that they offer. This chapter introduces the background of work-life balance in the higher education sector and highlights the significance, scope and objectives of the study.

1.1 Research Background

Work-life balance has emerged to the attention of HR professionals in the recent years due to many reasons that include both external and internal factors. External factors such as unstable economy resulting in fierce competition on the market (Hughes & Bozionelos 2007), while internal ones such as the change of work culture and the widely-spread practices at workplace (Eikhof, Warhurst & Haunschild 2007).

Those factors in turn apply pressure on both organisations and employees, and require intense performance to cope with (Hughes & Bozionelos 2007). As a result, employees are expected to offer more commitment by working longer hours to meet their work objectives, which may result in compromising personal and family life. Moreover, work dynamics, globalisation and extensive use of technology have contributed to work-life imbalance by applying a lot of pressure on employees to be contactable even after working hours. Subsequently, quality of personal time becomes compromised due to being accessible around the clock (Guest 2002). This work-life imbalance can lead to many negative outcomes that any organisation need to strive to avoid, such as burnout, health complications, absenteeism, decline of motivation and satisfaction, and eventually turnover (Deery & Jago 2015). These undesirable outcomes can in turn result in great set-backs for organisations in times of high competition and need for great efficiency.

Higher educational institutions have been subjected to various tides of change. With the shift to neoliberalism and managerialism which brought changes to ideology, the strive of universities to obtain high ranking, the emphasis on research, the competition to increase student enrolment and the change of contractual terms for faculty are among many others.

Universities are typically categorised as either private or public. Some of them are for profit universities, while other are non-for-profit. In the work of Chen and Chen (2013), universities are then mainly sub-categorised as research-intensive, teaching-intensive and research and teaching-intensive universities. Each type of university has its own characteristics resulting from its area of emphasis. Traditionally, universities enjoy government funding. However, there has been a change of fund streams as governments off load the burden onto students (Broecke 2015).

This has led to the change that universities have witnessed in management style. Universities have adopted managerialism, which is an ideology that brings private-sector business practices into educational institutions. This includes coping with market trends and seeking sources of funds other than government subsidies (Anderson 2008). A similar ideology which is offered by Connell (2013) is neoliberalism, which also promotes profit-seeking and cost-cutting as the ideal ideology. Lynch (2014) describes managerialism as the operating arm of neoliberalism, which has been adopted by all types of universities (Taberner 2018). Hence, the two of them focus on a money-generating, cost-cutting ideology to compensate for the decrease of government funding. Now that there has been a change of funding sources, with more governments moving away from subsiding education and instead off-loading the costs onto students (Broecke 2015).

With this concept in mind, competition between universities over students' enrolment has increased as they have become a source of income (Connell 2013). As a result, the greater the number of student enrolment, the greater the funding a university secures. This commercial context turns students into consumers and education into a commodity (Lynch 2014). The increase of competition among universities has cascaded the pressure to faculty (Hendel & Horn 2008). Shing and Jung (2014) relate the change of faculty job duties and volume to the change of ideology in universities. According to Jacobs and Winslow (2004), faculty find themselves stuck between expectations on the professional level and expectations on the institutional level. Hence, in addition to the increase of teaching workload, more paperwork is required and more participation in

community services (Shing & Jung 2014). As a result, faculty are spending more of their personal time doing work to fulfil those obligations.

Also, with the increased cost of education, emphasis on teaching has aroused. Faculty are expected to spend more time in class and devote more time to students' guidance. In addition to the increase their numbers, students have acquired a consumer behaviour towards education and developed higher expectations from their teachers in terms of availability and support. Moreover, with the increased emphasis on teaching, comes the increased emphasis on research (Shing & Jung 2014).

Additionally, in the attempts of universities to cut costs, universities resorted to hire cheaper part time seasonal employees (Connell 2013; Shin & Jung 2014), also known as adjuncts. In Shin and Jung (2014) point of view, this trend increases the burden on full time faculty from two different angles. Firstly, it intensifies competition to secure a full-time position. Secondly, as part-time faculty are not required to meet any administrative responsibilities, the burden is left for full-time faculty to bear.

Furthermore, during the past thirty years, ranking of universities has emerged and has become an indication of quality of education, reputation and prestige (Pusser and Marginson 2013). Globally, there are three main systems for university rankings in addition to national ones (Fowles, Frederickson & Koppell 2016). A university ranking is determined based on academic standing, resources, quality of its faculty and research output of faculty. This in turn requires superior quality of teachers, research output and facilities (Marconi & Ritzen 2015). University ranking has become very important as it determines the ability of an educational institution to sustain its resources and to continue to survive. Within higher education, there are three main global ranking systems, in addition to eight rankers world-wide and fifty national ranking systems (Fowles, Frederickson & Koppell 2016).

The move of a university ranking up or down has direct impact on number of student applications (Fowles, Frederickson & Koppell 2016; Broecke 2015), which in turn links to its ability to secure funding via student tuition fees. It is recognised to the extent that a one-rank improvement for a university results in one percent increase in the number of student applications (Fowles, Frederickson & Koppell 2016). In contrast, universities that move down in ranking witness a decline in student applications (Broecke 2015). Securing a high ranking for universities requires

meeting various criteria that involve facilities, academic standing, resources, quality of faculty and their research output (Marconi & Ritzen 2015). This concept of raking universities has resulted in fierce competition to meet required criteria (Pusser and Marginson 2013), and subsequently increase student enrolment. Ranking therefore becomes of paramount importance to universities in order to attract more students and secure funding. One of the criteria for universities to receive high ranking is publication productivity (Bartkowski, Deem & Ellison 2015). As a result, all faculty are expected to have rich publication activities, which is not an easy endeavour for faculty since academic journals are becoming more and more selective (Bartkowski, Deem & Ellison 2015). Research output also has a direct impact on both the job security and career progression of faculty (Taberner 2018), hence faculty give it a great deal of importance and priority.

With both of the change of ideology (Shing & Jung 2014) and the increase of competition between universities (Hendel & Horn 2008), the pressure on faculty has intensified. Workload has increased in volume and duties have also increased in types (Shing & Jung 2014). Hence, faculty spend their time fulfilling various job tasks, teaching in class, preparation of course materials, marking and grading students' work, administrative responsibilities, attending departmental meetings and working on increasing research output. As a result, faculty spend more of their personal time working in order to meet job expectations and obligations (Jacobs & Winslow 2004), thus widening the gap between work and life (Hendel and Horn 2008). Latz and Rediger (2015) describe the responsibilities and work of faculty as endless. Undoubtedly, numerous activities and obligations of such nature entail that they work outside the standard office hours and subsequently their work overlaps with their life (Sallee 2014). Kinman and Jones (2008) even note that working during evenings and during weekends has become the norm.

Work-life balance is important to educational institutions as much as it is in other industries. Not only does it promote well-being and quality of life, but also the reduction of stress and the improvement of performance (Greenhaus, Collins & Shaw 2003). Moreover, Bubb and Earley (2004) raise concerns over teaching faculty workload and how this may affect their retention. In addition to turnover, Bubb and Earley (2004), include many other negative outcomes that may result from the lack of work-life balance; such as burnout, health complications, absenteeism, and decline of motivation and employee satisfaction. Similarly, O'Meara, Lounder and Campbell (2014) link direct and indirect reasons to faculty decision to leave, among which is poor work-life

balance. These undesirable outcomes can translate into great set-backs for universities in times of high competition and need for great efficiency.

Subsequently, educational institutions have come to realise that in order to sustain their success and continuation, retaining high quality faculty is paramount. To achieve that, serious attempts need to be put towards their recruitment and retention (Ackelsberg et al. 2004). Lester (2013) argues that educational institutions that facilitate work-life balance for its faculty will be perceived as supportive, even if the flexibility of work-life balance policies are not utilised. The availability of the flexibility itself is perceived to foster the culture of the institution and can enhance retention rates. Mas-Machuca, Berbegal-Mirabent and Alegre (2016) echo the same viewpoint that employees' behaviour and attitude towards an organisation are formed by their perception of how an organisation is supportive to its employees.

From an HR perspective, work-life balance has great significance for HR professionals as it impacts all functions of Human Resources. HR professionals should therefore put into considerations the needs of their employees for a balance between career and personal life. However, this cannot be achieved without first establishing an organisational culture that supports such approach (Muna & Mansour 2009). Therefore, this has made HR professionals put work-life balance into consideration while devising policies, practices and strategies that support work-life balance.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Bubb and Earley (2004) assert that employees in the educational profession suffer great levels of work-life imbalance as a result of being overworked. The imbalance between work and life leads to absenteeism, withdrawal and eventually turnover. They also argue that their recruitment and retention have become more challenging due to the hardships of the job and the non-compatible rewards. From a financial view, turnover and recruitment of employees in general is costly, let alone those with a specific skill-set and knowledge such as faculty. Educational institutions that do not focus on the retention of their skilled faculty lose the best among them.

While Marsden (2016) differentiates between four types of turnover, the one this study is concerned with is the dysfunctional one, which is the turnover of employees with high performance and difficult to replace skills. This type of turnover is the undesirable one that causes most damage

to any organisation. Turnover not only results in the loss of talented workforce along with their valuable knowledge, but also in other hidden costs. Seminal references such as Diemer (1917) indicate that employee turnover can be costly as it includes various indirect costs such as those associated with time taken to backfill a vacant position and training the new hire. Levy et al. (2012) expand hidden costs to include the value of the time needed by new hires to develop the learning curve necessary to perform their jobs at optimum level. Furthermore, the distribution of workload over the remaining employees adds to their burden and result in the decline of their morale and performance.

Watanabe and Falci (2014) confirm that lack of work-life balance for faculty can predict turnover intentions. In educational institutions such as those subject of this study, the loss of faculty members has grave consequences. It is not the knowledge of the study materials a faculty member teaches, but rather the familiarity with the curriculum, various platforms and work dynamics. In addition, university ranking and accreditation relies on the quality of faculty members as well as their publications activities. Moreover, the loss of talented faculty members does not only affect the organisation, but also the students they teach. The revenue an educational institution generates can decrease if dissatisfied students choose to transfer elsewhere. It is therefore imperative that special attention is given to work-life balance and its implementations in the higher education sector in the UAE as a preventive measure to avoid this from happening.

Undoubtedly, it is also important to understand the type and nature of employees to tailor-make work-life balance strategies that meet their needs. Various work-life balance strategies will be more effective than others depending on the type of occupations, employee demography, and nature of business (Muna & Mansour 2009).

1.3 The Context of the Study

This study focuses on work-life balance in Middle Eastern context, particularly the higher education sector in the United Arab Emirates. This setting of the study is interesting due to the heterogeneous demography of the region. The UAE continues to experience growth in different fields including infrastructure, development, economy, industry, tourism and education among others. This causes the UAE to attract people from all over the world, who in turn bring with them different backgrounds and cultures into the UAE. Having people come from various parts of the world may bring new perspectives to HR practices in the region when compared to the practices

of homogeneous societies. Moreover, the majority of universities in the UAE are private and therefore operate for-profit (Austin et al. 2014). Hence, they are more demanding compared to universities in the west where the majority of them are government funded.

In the UAE, Austin et al. (2014) break down universities into three main types: (1) Federal universities which are non-for-profit. (2) Semi-government universities which are for-profit and (3) Free-zone universities which are for profit and are mainly branches of international universities. The demography of faculty working in UAE universities is unique. As the UAE does not have sufficient population within employable age brackets, it relies heavily on foreign employees. Hence the majority of faculty working in all three main types of universities are expatriates coming from different parts of the world. While this may seem to be a convenient and quick way to meet the needs of universities in terms of providing teaching faculty, local employment practices, policies and culture may have great influence on faculty working conditions and turnover intentions. It is therefore imperative to understand the local context that contributes to the shaping of the nature of academic work in the UAE.

Faculty in the UAE are subject to regulations pertaining to visas and labour laws. They are employed on renewable short-term contract basis and therefore cannot achieve tenure status. Tenure status is often offered to Emirati faculty as means of achieving Emiratisation, a government plan to increase the number of UAE citizens working for both private and government sectors (Austin et al. 2014).

Research does not appear to be a priority amongst the research sample in Austin et al. (2014). However, Austin et al. (2014) indicate that as universities in the UAE are competing to meet international standards, more focus on research started emerging in the recent years in federal government universities as the leaders of the UAE emphasise the country's position as a knowledge-based economy. Nevertheless, other semi-government and free-zone universities reported less emphasis on research. This means that faculty who continued to do research and seek publications did that on their accord and in order to maintain their international reputation, professional identity and to remain able to move internationally (Austin et al. 2014). Whether research was enforced by universities in the UAE or not, faculty members who focus on research were doing it as means to secure possible future career plans and career progression opportunities.

This evidently strains faculty for their time, particularly if they are not given course release to allow the time to carry our research activities. Also, it means that HR professionals and/or academic administrators in universities may not be fully aware of the full spectrum of faculty activities.

The perception of HR professionals working in universities seems to be absent from literature. Instead, literature provides an ample array of definitions for work-life balance. Lockwood (2003) offers the point of the employer on work-life balance and its ROI to employers. Various other literature materials discuss gender differences (Fox, Fonseca & Bao 2011), cultural awareness (Smidt, Pétursdóttir and Einarsdóttir 2017) and policies to facilitate family-friendly work environment (Tower et al. 2015). Even the description of faculty work experience in the UAE by Austin et al. (2014) does not extend to include the perception of HR professionals and their awareness of faculty workload and struggle to strike a balance between work and life. Moreover, not many existing studies have explored faculty work-life balance in such multicultural settings as the UAE.

This study explores the role of work-life balance on faculty retention by focusing on a sample of HR representatives of a number of universities in the UAE to gain insights into their perspectives of work-life balance and its importance. Interviews with faculty members will be conducted to obtain a better understanding of employees' perspectives as well.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Higher education institutions have a great role to play in society. They develop countries by developing knowledge capital and nurturing its youth who will take leadership in the growth and progression of the nation. Universities are also responsible for knowledge production used to advance humanity and to educate future generations (Elliott 2003). With the adoption of neoliberalism by universities, universities are expected not to rely on government funding, but rather secure other fund streams. At the same time, universities are expected to compete over improving their ranking which also increases its numbers of student enrolment and collected student tuition fees.

Subsequently, this has led to changes in the job nature of faculty in terms of workload and intensity. As a result, faculty find themselves required to work far beyond office hours in order to meet

various deadlines and career objectives (Latz & Rediger 2015), which in turn interferes with work-life balance. This pressure poses as a threat to higher educational institutions should competent faculty choose to leave. Turnover among high performing university faculty compromises the overall performance of the educational institutions (Ramasamy & Abdullah 2017) and hence their ability to sustain funds and continue to offer services.

Very specific competencies are required from those working in the teaching profession (Sanford & Kinch 2016). This in turn limits the pool of candidates available to hire in educational institutions in the UAE, whether from local job market or internationally. The numbers of qualified faculty who are willing to conduct research in addition to teaching responsibilities, whether already locally in the UAE or prepared to move to the UAE, are limited. Combined with the costs of recruitment, training, time taken to develop a learning curve and increase performance, has put a lot of importance on retaining competent faculty instead of backfilling their vacant positions.

Literature search did not yield ample studies focused on work-life balance and its role on faculty turnover in Middle Eastern context. On the contrary, most of the studies were conducted in Western contexts (Vloeberghs 2002). Moreover, previous studies on faculty were focusses on other areas of HR; such as motivation, performance, financial compensation, satisfaction, etc., but not much studies were done in the areas of work-life balance and turnover intentions (Rosser 2004).

Since there are cultural and demographical differences between Western and Middle Eastern contexts, this study aims to study the role work-life balance has on faculty turnover in the United Arab Emirates higher education sector, where the environment is commercial, multi-cultural and transient as described by (Alserhan, Forstenlechner & Al-Nakeeb 2009). Also, the study will aim to understand the perceptions of HR professionals in the higher education sector of the UAE to evaluate their awareness of the amount of pressure and workload of faculty. By doing so, HR professionals will be offered better understanding of what is considered the most effective approach towards retaining faculty via fostering work-life balance in Middle Eastern context.

1.5 Research Objectives

To deal with the above-stated problem and offer to bridge the gap in research identified. The aim of this research is to gain insight into the perception of both HR professionals and faculty in the higher education sector in the UAE. The objectives of this study are:

- How do HR professionals in the higher education sector in the UAE understand work-life balance and its importance?
- How faculty in the higher education sector in the UAE perceive work-life balance and what they would consider most appropriate to their needs?
- What is the role of work-life balance on faculty retention?
- How to better retain faculty by applying best HR practices to improve work-life balance in the higher education sector in the UAE?

After meeting the objectives of the study, the researcher will conclude by summarizing the role of work-life balance has on employee retention in the higher education sector in the UAE, with reference to the perception of both HR professionals and employees.

1.6 Structure of the Study

This thesis consists of six chapters. The first chapter introduces the subject of the role work-life balances on faculty retention and briefly discusses its background. It also offers the scope and significance of the study, the research gap, and objectives. Chapter two reviews the existing literature related to the role of work-life balance on faculty retention.

After that, chapter three puts forward the design of the study. It details the methodology used in the research and provides details on the study population and sample, data collection methods and data analysis. Chapter four focuses on the principal outcomes of the study. These outcomes are discussed in chapter five afterwards. Chapter five also explains how the findings relate to the literature review. Chapter six is the last chapter of the study and it offers the main conclusions, recommendations and limitations. References and appendices are at the end of the thesis.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Work-life balance has become a popular research topic in various fields, including HR. Despite the ample research the topic has undergone, only a few have researched it within higher education (Lester 2015). This chapter aims to offer a synthesis of literature on the subject of work-life balance in order to establish a conceptual framework and link it to the importance of the research.

2.1 Conceptualising and Defining Work-Life Balance

The first assumption about work-life balance is that "work" is a negative perception that must be separated from "life". However, Khallash and Kruse (2012) argue that there should not be any conflict between work and life roles. According to them, life is facilitated via work and therefore "work" should be a positive perception. Also, many employees derive satisfaction and fulfilment from work itself, whether that is because they enjoy it, or because they get a sense of achievement from work (Eikhof, Warhurst & Haunschild 2007). Similarly, Guest (2002) affirms that workaholics are satisfied with their work and their life more than those who are working less hours. Nevertheless, Hughes and Bozionelos (2007) argue that some employees continue to feel that work is overtaking their lives and feel the guilt of not meeting other obligations towards their families, particularly women who are often considered primary caregivers to children. In contrast, the word "life" often pertains to care towards families and children and is therefore associated with females (Eikhof, Warhurst & Haunschild 2007). However, Hughes and Bozionelos (2007) add that "life" should not only be associated with family care, but also with personal time spent doing activities that are not related to work, and therefore must not be associated with gender.

In the context of higher education, faculty are expected to meet various demanding objectives that eventually interfere with their personal life. Sallee (2014) attributes the lack of the presence of work-life balance in many educational institutions to gendered cultures. Expectedly, gender and culture norms play a major role in the utilisation of work-life balance policies among faculty in academic settings. On the one hand, it is culturally embedded that men do not have to focus on work-life balance and should focus on their career instead. On the other hand, females are the ones who feel obliged to balance work and family responsibilities (O'Meara & Campbell 2011). Another angle is offered by Sallee (2014), where it is argued that both male and female faculty equally experience work-life imbalance. However, the source of the sense of imbalance between the two

genders is different; for females it is rooted to their family obligations, while for males it is rooted to being criticised at work for not prioritising their careers.

Literature, however, does not differentiate between genders when it comes to the stigma of utilising work-life balance policies in academic settings. Female faculty admit that they do not avail of established work-life policies lest it interferes with their career advancement, and that they only begin to utilise this flexibility after they have attained certain career achievements, such as securing grants and publication of their work (O'Meara & Campbell 2011). Sallee (2014) expands the stigma to include male faculty who refrain from utilising work-life balance policies available to them just because of expectations. Male faculty are expected to separate their career from their personal life and prioritise it over everything else.

Additionally, hyperconnectivity increases the imbalance between work and life. Employees become accessible all the time via various technological devices and are expected to be responsive to their emails and/or phone calls even when they are not physically at work. This has resulted in blurring the line between work and life (Ross, Intindola & Boje 2017). When this is considered in conjunction with the nature of job duties of faculty nowadays, they are required to use various platforms to upload grades, communicate with students, and retain course materials on a common digital repository. All of these platforms can be accessed remotely and therefore are done from home after office hours, which eventually causes work to seep into personal life.

While work-life balance is a topic that is researched widely, it remains elusive and lacks consensus on a clear definition (Kalliath & Brough 2008; Guest 2002). It is also noteworthy that many scholars define work-family balance in their attempts to define work-life balance (Fahlén 2012). This in turn makes the definitions in literature broad as they are associated with other concepts. Moreover, the concept of balance itself is inconsistent in definitions and measuring it is difficult (Greenhaus, Collins & Shaw 2003).

Also, the change of the meaning of life can justify the difficulty of defining work-life balance. Previously, life was associated with family responsibilities and hence applicable to a certain group of employees with families, and more particularly females, but recently the meaning broadened to include other activities that are not necessarily associated with family obligations, such as social life and various leisure activities. Hence linking work-life balance to not only family time, but also to quality of life itself (Kalliath & Brough 2008; Fahlén 2012). Consistent with this view, Guest

(2002) relates this inconsistency to the different dimensions the concept of work-life balance is applied to, such as: policy level, the organisational level in terms of practices, and the socio-psychological level relating to conflict between roles.

Kalliath and Brough (2008) contend that the inconsistency of a definition rather stifle advancement for HR professionals. Therefore, instead of trying to seek consensus on a definition, Kalliath and Brough (2008) focus on segregating various definitions of work-life balance available in literature into various concepts in order to reach a general understanding. Thus, offering six conceptualisations of work-life balance: (1) multiple roles; (2) equity across multiple roles; (3) satisfaction between multiple roles; (4) fulfilment of multiple roles; (5) the relationship between conflict and facilitation; and (6) perceived control between multiple roles.

The lack of consistency in defining work-life balance includes the absence of context. Fahlén (2012) criticises many of the definitions offered in literature as they do not offer insights into context, and that they describe work-family balance instead of work-life. Furthermore, scholars tend to offer alternatives to the term work-life balance when attempting to define it. For example, Ross, Intindola and Boje (2017) introduce the term work-life flexibility rather than balance and offer it as a solution to the dilemma. From their point of view, employees do not want to achieve work-life balance. Instead, they want the flexibility that enables them to meet the obligations of their various roles. Additionally, Michel and Michel (2012) offer work-family enrichment as an alternative and identify it as the extent to which each role benefits from the other and improves life.

Additionally, work-life balance is individualistic in its nature as it is related to varying circumstances of various individuals, and that it is up to the individual to give priority and decide on the amount of time spent working or doing other activities (Smidt, Pétursdóttir & Einarsdóttir 2017; Lester 2015). Interestingly, according to the studies by Smidt, Pétursdóttir and Einarsdóttir (2017); the use to which flexible time was put varied according to gender. Academic flexibility was used to fulfil family obligations by females, while males used it to work even more.

The below table provides a few of work-life balance definitions available in literature:

Table 1: Definitions of Work-Life Balance

No.	Definitions
1	"Work–life balance is the individual perception that work and non-work activities are compatible and promote growth in accordance with an individual's current life priorities" (Kalliath & Brough 2008, p. 326).
2	"a form of interrole conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect" (Greenhaus and Beutell 1985, p.77)
3	"the tendency to become fully engaged in the performance of every role in one's total role system, to approach every typical role and role partner with an attitude of attentiveness and care" (Marks & MacDermid 1996, p. 421)
4	"the extent to which an individual is equally engaged in – and equally satisfied with – his or her work role and family role" (Greenhaus, Collins & Shaw 2003, p. 513)
5	"when organizational structures facilitate substantial time for involvement both at work and at home in a way that seeks to challenge existing gendered hierarchies in the organization and society more broadly" (Smidt, Pétursdóttir & Einarsdóttir 2017, p. 127)
6	"the relationship between the institutional and cultural times and spaces of work and non-work in societies where income is predominantly generated and distributed through labour markets" (Gregory & Milner 2009, p. 1)

From the above, it can be concluded that it is not easy to reach concurrence on a definition of work-life balance due to its subjective nature. Various interpretations such as culture, individual and family circumstances play a role in defining work-life balance (Khallash & Kruse 2012).

"Life" is inaccurately perceived as directly linked to family responsibilities, while it spans in scope to include other personal and social activities (Eikhof, Warhurst & Haunschild 2007). Also, the narrow perception that work-life imbalance pertains to females (O'Meara and Campbell 2011), makes it difficult to make work-life balance inclusive to both genders. In fact, work-life balance is often confused with work-family balance (Fahlén 2012), which is a narrower concept. Moreover, the concept of "balance" itself has been inconsistently defined and is difficult to measure (Greenhaus, Collins & Shaw 2003). Furthermore, Sallee (2014) refers to the individualistic nature of imbalance between genders where the grounds upon which each gender senses the imbalance between work and life are different.

From an HR perspective, the inconsistency of work-life balance definition can be attributed to the various dimensions of the concept. For example: policy and practice levels, as well as culture and associated stigma (Guest 2002; Sallee 2014).

2.2 Significance of Work-Life Balance

Literature provides evidence of the importance of work-life balance. The importance of work-life balance stems from its desirable outcomes for any organisation, ranging from better recruitment process, high performance, motivation, engagement and retention of employees (Lester 2013; Dunne & Teg 2007). From an HR perspective, work-life balance can be one of the most effective tools for HR (Dunne & Teg 2007). Not only does it benefit employees, but also benefits the employer (Khan and Fazili 2016). Although there may be limitations depending on industry type, it is important for HR professionals to fully grasp the significance of work-life balance.

According to Khan and Fazili (2016), researchers have found positive relationships between work-life balance and employee performance, job satisfaction, employee commitment and productivity. In contrast, they also found negative relationships between work-life balance and employee intention to leave and employee well-being. Vloeberghs (2002) also confirms that organisations that offer work-life balance to its employees have lower turnover rates.

As more companies aim at reducing their spending, HR professionals can contribute to saving costs by establishing and promoting work-life balance practices (Lockwood 2003). Since work-life imbalance can cause organisations to incur high costs due to employee absenteeism and decline in performance, companies can show commitment to work-life balance and reduce rates of employee absenteeism and improve their performance.

Work-life imbalance does not only affect current employees, it may also affect future attempts of acquiring new employees. According to Hughes and Bozionelos (2007), organizations can suffer a poor image that will make it challenging for them to attract high-calibre potential candidates in the future. Without being able to hire and retain those high-calibre employees, organisations will not be able to perform.

2.3 Models of Work-Life Balance

As discussed above, work-life balance as a concept remains elusive and broad despite its popularity and abundance of research on the topic in literature. In their attempt to study and research the relation between work and life, scholars identified various models to help better capture the essence of this elusive concept. Five models of work-life balance will be briefly discussed: the segmentation model, the spillover model, the compensation model, the instrumental model and the conflict model (Guest 2002).

2.3.1 The Segmentation Model

According to Michel and Hargis (2008), segmentation is defined as "the degree to which work and family domains are kept separate from one another". This model proposes that work and life are two separate and segregated roles and do not have any effect on each other (Guest 2002). Bulger, Matthews and Hoffman (2007) add that this segmentation depends on different elements such as relationship with colleagues, nature of job and family situation and therefore it only happens when there is no flexibility between the switch from one role to the other. While application of the segmentation model may be difficult, Michel, Bosch and Rexroth (2014) examine mindfulness; an approach of creating boundaries between work and life, as a solution to improve work-life balance. They identify strategies to enforce segmentation such as: (1) having separate personal and work emails, (2) scheduling private time, (3) physically separating spaces for work and home, (4) communicating to others personal preferences regarding receiving work-related calls during personal time.

2.3.2 The Spillover Model

This model contrasts with the segmentation model, where one role can influence the other in either a negative or a positive manner (Guest 2002), thus it is bidirectional (Lourel et al. 2009). Bulger, Matthews and Hoffman (2007) describe the spillover model as the process when emotions, cognition and energy cross from one role to the other. Thompson and Bunderson (2001) contend that despite the negative perception of spillover has, it is argued that work and life can rather enrich each other if harmonious relationships are established. In contrast, Sanz-Vergel, Rodrıguez-Munoz and Nielsen (2015) offer evidence that spillover can also occur from family to work, which is connected to discontentment on the family level.

2.3.3 The Compensation Model

This model proposes that deficient areas in one's life are compensated in other areas (Guest 2002) and that it complements the spillover theory (Clark 2000). It can also be bidirectional depending on individual's identity affirmation (Thompson & Bunderson 2001).

This model can explain that employees' career achievements compensate for lacking balance in their personal lives as they find themselves pressured to invest more time and effort in this sphere. However, Clark (2000) warns that investing in one sphere at the expense of another can cause damage, as work and life are interdependent and can influence each other. Eventually, a sense of incompatibility will arise and the domain that is not given preference will be perceived as a burden (Thompson & Bunderson 2001).

2.3.4 The Instrumental Model

This model proposes that achievements in one area enable the success another (Guest 2002). An example is when an employee puts extra time towards work, so that more financial stability is available to the family (Elliott 2003), which makes work an instrument to facilitate a better life. Sanz-Vergel, Rodrıguez-Munoz and Nielsen (2015) associate this direction of interaction between work and life with certain personality traits such as extraversion. The opposite direction can also occur when support from family helps reduce the amount of work-life conflict (Premeaux, Adkins & Mossholder 2007). Therefore, this model can be bidirectional.

2.3.5 The Conflict Model

This model proposes that with extreme demands coming from various domains, conflict will take place (Guest 2002), and occurs when the work-related emotions and cognitions seep into personal life (Bulger, Matthews & Hoffman 2007). It can be bidirectional. However, Sanz-Vergel, Rodrıguez-Munoz and Nielsen (2015) describe life to work conflict as the less studied direction.

Most research done on work-life balance adopts this model (Thompson & Bunderson 2001). Conflict can be in the form of time, where time is not sufficient to fulfil the demands of various roles; or it can be in the form of strain, which results in stress, exhaustion and burnout (Premeaux, Adkins & Mossholder 2007; Kinman & Jones 2008).

In conclusion to the above attempts to define work-life balance, it is evident that it is one of the most difficult concepts to reach an agreement on its definition (Clark 2000). While the models discussed above help better understand the dynamics between work and life, they are lacking some other perspectives. They do not extend in scope to explain how individuals think (Thompson and Bunderson 2001) and do not offer solutions on how to solve problems faced by them (Clark 2000). Moreover, while the above models explain how work and life interact, they do not discuss the relationship between employees, employers and families. Furthermore, they do not offer linkage to the emotions and attitudes of employees and the value an employee places on different domains (Clark 2000). Further research is necessary to identify a definition for work-life balance that meets concurrence.

2.4 The Concept of Work-life Balance within Universities

According to Hendel and Horn (2008), faculty are subjected to various sources of stressors that widen the gap between work and life. First and foremost, time remains a main factor of stress. According to Jacobs & Winslow (2004), faculty in the US work an average of fifty hours per week irrespective to their academic rank. While the average hours per week remain the same, the distribution of time to fulfil different tasks and responsibilities may differ. Hence, their time is spent between various job duties, administrative tasks, faculty meetings, required research output in reputable journals, meeting various performance indicators and evaluation necessary for career progression into professorship and gaining tenure status. As for those faculty who actively publish research work, the average is sixty hours per week. Jacobs and Winslow (2004) also concur that faculty work long hours, which range between fifty to sixty hours per week. According to them, faculty in research-focussed universities work longer hours. Similarly, rank does not make any difference to faculty total working hours per week. However, there is a minimal decline in number of hours worked by faculty post tenure. Evidently, it is difficult to maintain sixty working hours per week. Fox, Fonseca and Bao (2011) argue that junior faculty need to take up more teaching workload in aspiration of career progression and tenure status. Hence, academic rank also contributes to the imbalance between work and life.

According to Bartkowski, Deem and Ellison (2015), all universities expect their faculty to demonstrate publication activity, including the ones that are classified as teaching-oriented. A minimum requirement of a Ph.D, teaching qualification, and a considerable amount of publication

is required to start an academic career (Taberner 2018). Typically, junior faculty are put on probation for the first seven years. During the sixth year, they are evaluated. Based on evaluation, they are either promoted to associate professor and get tenure status or get guided to exit the university (Jacobs & Winslow 2004). This approach of either "get promoted or exit" puts a lot of pressure on them to work longer hours, take up more workload, continue to do research in aspiration of getting published in reputable academic journals. Bartkowski, Deem and Ellison (2015) affirm that getting published has become more difficult as journals are careful with choices of articles, where about eighty to ninety percent of submissions are rejected. Taberner (2018) adds that even permanent faculty members are expected to publish between three to four articles over three to four-year period. Otherwise, they may have their jobs jeopardised or even get demoted.

Another change in academia is ranking of universities. Given the importance of education in the development of nations, universities are ranked based on comparison of performance (Marconi & Ritzen 2015). According to Pusser and Marginson (2013), ranking of universities has become particularly noticeable in the past thirty years and is considered an indication of its status, reputation and impact. It has become popular due to its ability to standardise formal benchmarking (Fowles, Frederickson & Koppell 2016). A university ranking is determined based on academic standing, resources, quality of its faculty and research output of faculty. This in turn requires superior quality of teachers, research output and facilities (Marconi & Ritzen 2015). Within higher education, there are three main global ranking systems, in addition to eight rankers world-wide and fifty national ranking systems (Fowles, Frederickson & Koppell 2016).

University ranking is an important factor for students when choosing which university to attend as it is an indicator of quality of education (Marconi & Ritzen 2015). It is recognised to the extent that a one-rank improvement for a university results in one percent increase in the number of student applications (Fowles, Frederickson & Koppell 2016). In contrast, universities that move down in ranking witness a decline in student applications (Broecke 2015). This concept of raking universities has resulted in fierce competition to meet required criteria (Pusser and Marginson 2013), and subsequently increase student enrolment. Ranking therefore becomes of paramount importance to universities in order to attract more students and secure funding. One of the criteria for universities to receive high ranking is publication productivity (Bartkowski, Deem & Ellison 2015).

As previously discussed, it is imperative that universities retain their faculty by protecting them from job stress and maintaining their well-being, which in turn links to the overall performance of the organization and reducing possible turnover intentions. This can only be achieved by understanding the nature of the job of faculty and enabling work-life balance.

Understanding the nature of the job of faculty and the various demands help shed light on the sources of work-life imbalance in academia. Traditionally, it is believed that academics enjoy job autonomy and flexibility to a great extent as they enjoy job control (Veld, van der Heijden & Semeijn 2016; Watanabe & Falci 2014). Some also are under the impression that faculty only work during the hours they spend in classrooms, without recognising the time and effort they spend working outside of classrooms (Sullivan 2014). A closer look at their jobs duties and responsibilities may prove otherwise. Work environment has changed, and faculty workload has drastically increased as a result, leading to increased work-life imbalance (Hendel & Horn 2008).

With neoliberalism being adopted in universities, workload to fulfil responsibilities has increased in the recent years. Gillespie et al. (2001) attribute the increase of student registrations and subsequent increase in number of classes and/or student: teacher ratio. Also, the use of new technologies has blurred boundaries between work and life (Woodward 2007) and resulted in making faculty hyper connected by having to use various platforms whether to communicate and promptly respond to others, or to update various web-based contents. Even student submission and grading are done via online portals. This has increased the workload of faculty thus increasing the intensity of work (Woodward 2007). Moreover, Deadlines remain tight for faculty at certain times of the academic year thus increase intensity of work (Gillespie et al. 2001). For instance, they are required to finalise students grades promptly despite the increase in student numbers.

Balancing work and life can be more difficult in academia than other jobs. This can be explained by exploring the perceptions offered by Fox, Fonseca and Bao (2011). They contend that the first perception in academia is that faculty give utmost priority to their work in order to meet high expectations. In other words, faculty are expected not to have any outside distractions and therefore should only focus on their work and research. This makes universities "greedy" institutions by default (Sullivan 2014).

Universities, similar to any other industry, are subject to ample pressures and demands to increase both productivity and services and decreases costs (Sullivan 2014). In order for universities to remain competitive on the market and to secure sufficient student enrolment, whether in private or non-for-profit universities, a lot of the pressure is cascaded to faculty (Sullivan 2014). As a result, evaluation systems that are put in place to evaluate faculty tend to apply pressure on them to intensify their endeavours towards career achievement (Fox, Fonseca & Bao 2011). Coupled with that is the perception of self-identification by faculty, where they derive their sense of self-value from their career achievements. Hence becoming their top priority and objective (Fox, Fonseca & Bao 2011). Organisational culture also plays a role in work life imbalance in academia, where universities expect workaholism from its faculty members as evidence of their commitment (Woodward 2007).

The perception of work-life imbalance seems to differ between male and female faculty. While both male and female faculty equally refrain from using flexible working schemes as means of balancing between life and work lest the negative impact on their career (Woodward 2007), gender differences remain present in studies on work-life balance in academia (Fox, Fonseca & Bao 2011). According to the studies of Fox, Fonseca and Bao 2011, women reported higher levels of family to work conflict as female faculty continue to be the primary caregivers and the ones to share bigger responsibilities at home.

Moreover, family model can influence work-life balance. According to Fox, Fonseca and Bao (2011), it was found that the profession of the spouse has an impact on work-life balance. Faculty who are married to spouses of the same or similar profession have a less probability of having work-life balance as they are synchronised. It is also noteworthy that the prime of a faculty member's career coincides with the prime of personal life. Faculty in average receive their Ph.D.'s in their early to mid-thirties hence it conflicts with child care phase of one's life (Sullivan 2014). As a result, some faculty choose to put off having children until they secure tenure status (Jacobs & Winslow 2004).

According to Shin and Jung (20140), work and life can be balanced if work demands are not excessive. Apparently, the demands of academia have become excessive that it has become

challenging for faculty to become successful at work while also meeting other life responsibilities and obligations.

2.5 Studies on Work-Life Balance within Universities

Many studies have been conducted to better understand work-life balance issues within universities in response to the changes in educational institutions that impact faculty. The below is a summary of various perspectives of studies on work-life balance in universities.

2.5.1 Policies

Having realised the importance of work-life balance and how it can help improve recruitment and retention, many Australian universities are adopting practices and policies to allow faculty a balance between work and life such as flexible work environment and family-friendly policies (Doherty & Manfredi 2006). However, there is evident inconsistency of how these policies and practices appear as some universities have standalone policies dedicated to work-life balance, while others incorporate work-life balances under employee well-being policies, and some others include work-life balance under diversity and equal opportunities policies (Saltmarsh & Randell-Moon 2015). According to Saltmarsh and Randell-Moon (2015), this is because universities require return from faculty in terms of productivity and are concerned about the possible misuse of work-life balance policies. Hence, the offering of work-life balance policies remains temporary for as long as faculty members are meeting their performance objectives.

Lester (2015) affirms that changes in policies need to be supported by cultural changes in order to facilitate the embrace of new policies. According to him, with more females joining workforce, including academia, universities began implementing policies to allow the balance between work and life. However, it appears that only a small number of employees utilise such policies for various reasons that are linked to culture. He concludes that policies are not the right tool to introduce change in culture. Instead shared beliefs are what could possibly change cultures and can be achieved by eliminating ambiguities, and inclusion of various individual circumstances. Tower et al. (2015) echo the same point of view about the importance of cultural change in embracing policy changes in their studies. They add that using "organisational catalysts", who are colleagues and administrators who take the role of identifying and clarifying cultural ambiguities, can accelerate cultural change in educational institutions.

In contrast, another study by Woodward (2007) reported improvement in faculty overall attitude and retention in both Leeds Metropolitan University and Oxford Brookes University as examples of adopting work-life policies and increasing employee awareness about work-life balance. Nevertheless, these policies did not seem to offer much help to faculty, particularly females, as they still had to meet deadlines and achieve goals. Instead, it only made it possible for them to work during different times and locations thus allowing them to be able to manage other life responsibilities.

Having policies that support enough job flexibility may seem to be the logical solution to work-life balance. However, in the studies of Rafnsdóttir and Heijstra (2013) about academics in Iceland, they argue that flexibility can be a double-edged weapon. While it gives faculty the ability to organise their day and be able to spend more time with their family, it also brings their work to their homes. Winefield, Boyd and Winefield (2014) further argue that bringing work to home increases work instead of balancing work-life balance. Barrett and Barrett (2010), explain that bringing work to home becomes an extension to work done from office. Currie and Eveline (2011) even raise the question whether job flexibility is advantageous to faculty or to universities. According to them, jobs that are autonomous and need no direct supervision are the ones that have greater flexibility and hence are the ones who end working more hours from home. As a result, they emphasise that setting boundaries between life and work are necessary.

Getting tenure status is a major milestone in academia and many faculty members strive to attain it. As career progression in academia coincides with the same time of establishing families and caring for children, some universities have adopted "tenure clock stop" policies to allow their faculty to look after their family responsibilities (Sullivan 2014). While this policy may be helpful to faculty with new born children, Sallee (2012) recommends further policies such as teaching load decrease for the period after having a new-born child. Nevertheless, faculty members remain reluctant to avail of such opportunities for fear of possible bias, delay in career progression, and tarnishing their academic reputation. This resonates with the studies of Sullivan (2014) which were conducted in the UK in 2002. In those studies, faculty responded to a survey that they did not take advantage of work-life balance initiatives despite their interest in those policies for various reasons. Among those reasons was the culture of working for long hours, possible impact on career progression and lack of support from colleagues and supervisors. Similarly, studies by Jacobs and

Winslow (2004) indicate that female faculty oftentimes postpone having children until they attain tenure status for fear that having children will slow down their career pursuits. As a result, female faculty tend to have children at an older age than their male counterparts. As for male faculty, although they do not have to bear child care responsibilities, Sallee (2012) reported in her studies that males also struggle to balance their career and their families due to cultural roles norms, where they act as the main breadwinner and hence need to focus on their careers. They also struggle due to policies that mainly focuss on major life events such as child birth and severe illness of family members.

2.5.2 Work Environment

While faculty enjoy job flexibility and autonomy, there are increased expectations from them (Winefield, Boyd & Winefield 2014). With the adoption of managerialism and neoliberalism, universities are now looking at ways to increase profit and decrease costs (Anderson 2008; Connell 2013). As a result, faculty are subjected to ample pressures at work. Ranging from tight deadlines to fulfil various tasks, keep up with increasing workload, while progressing academically by conducting research, attracting grants, and attaining tenure (Winefield, Boyd & Winefield 2014).

Some studies link work-life conflict to the types of universities and departments where faculty are employed. Fox, Fonseca and Bao (2011) argue that private universities in general have more flexibility in offering work-life balance policies to its faculty, versus public universities who are governed by external policies made by regulatory bodies and authorities. In contrast, the work of Shin and Jung (2014) compares various stress factors among faculty working across four main groups of universities in nineteen different countries. The universities are categorised into four groups based on certain characteristics such as level of system development, management system, teaching focus or research focus. According to them, one of the most recurring factors in all four university groups is teaching workload. This increased workload results in the conflict between work and life. In addition to the increase of workload, there has been a change of the demography of faculty from tenured and/or full time, to casual faculty (Connell 2013). This in turn create severely competitive culture where faculty need to exert maximum efforts at work to ensure job security and potentially securing regular employment terms.

The struggle with work-life conflict remains the same internationally; the same issues seem to be consistent among faculty from various parts of the world irrespective of cultures. The study of Ren & Caudle (2016) draws a comparison between work-life conflict among academics in both the UK, a highly individualistic culture, and China where the culture is highly collective. The study does not touch upon how academics manage the conflict, but it concludes that while faculty strive to balance between work and life on their own, their institutions need to offer support.

2.5.3 Gender

With the increase of awareness and efforts to retain and recruit faculty, many universities developed policies that aim to enable faculty to strike a balance between work and life. The policies range between stopping tenure clock to reduction of workload after the birth of a child. Nevertheless, the policies are focused on the needs of females and target only major life events (Sallee 2012). According to both Sallee (2012) and O'Meara & Campbell (2011), gender roles expect from men to be the main breadwinners and hence give priority to their career, while women are in charge of other life and family responsibilities. She further argues that despite women joining the workforce, they still shoulder the majority of family responsibilities and as a result they regularly work from home to keep up with their work responsibilities. According to Sallee (2014), both male and female faculty equally struggle with balancing work and life. Nevertheless, Sallee (2012) refers to studies conducted in the United States and Scandinavian countries and compares the level of support for fathers to avail of father-friendly benefits that enable males to take an active role in caregiving responsibilities. Moreover, stigma appears to be a common factor between the two genders when it comes to the utilisation of work-life balance policies although the reasons for the stigma varies between the two genders. For males, it is social and role expectations (Sallee 2014), while for females it is career advancement opportunities (O'Meara & Campbell 2011).

2.5.4 Career Life Course and Family Formation

In the study of Jacobs and Winslow (2004), they attempt to find out whether full time faculty are enabled to start families. In their attempt, they consider the life course of faculty on both the professional and family side. This perspective is seconded by Sullivan (2014), who affirms that academic career build-up coincides with family formation peak years for faculty. From the data gathered by Jacobs and Winslow (2004), they establish evidence that female faculty tend to have

children at an older age than their male counterparts. In another study, also by Jacobs and Winslow (2004), they establish that faculty spend an average fifty to sixty hours per week working to meet their career life course of promotions and getting tenured. Hence, balancing work and life can be problematic and sometimes leads to female faculty delaying starting families until after tenure status is secured. With the majority of faculty attaining tenure in their early to mid-forties, female faculty take the risk of not having any children at all due to this delay (Mason & Goulden 2002). Barrett and Barrett (2010) explain that as an alternative, a significant percentage of 42% of female faculty in the UK opt to take the slow lane and work part time to accommodate family formation and thus delay their career progression. They further offer another investigated example from Australia where female faculty fall five years behind their male counterparts in terms of peak of academic career. Tower et al. (2015) even debate that academic trajectory plans are in conflict with family formation and that they are designed for the male faculty.

While this delay can primarily affect female faculty, males may also be affected. With the wide-spread of dual earning families, family responsibilities get divided between both parents. As a result, male faculty also find themselves struggling to fulfil their family obligations while meeting their career objectives. This is evident from the comparison of the number of hours worked per week by married and single faculty in the analysis offered by Jacobs and Winslow (2004). According to them, married male faculty cut back an average of two hours per week to meet family obligations. As for females, single ones spend four more hours working compared to married ones, which makes it more evident that females are more impacted by family formation, which also conflicts with the life course of their career. Hence, while male faculty may not be as directly affected with career life cycle and family formation, they remain similarly affected by the strain resulting from work-life conflict.

From the above, it is apparent that irrespective of what influences work-life imbalance in academia, educational institutions have increasingly become aware of the importance of fostering work-life balance for its faculty to maintain their well-being and to retain them (Ackelsberg et al. 2004).

2.6 Conceptual Framework

From the above literature review, the below conceptual framework is proposed (Figure 1). It offers an illustration of the various pressures that faculty need to balance between work and life. Each

component of the various pressures has sub components. For the purpose of illustration, they are grouped together as detailed below:

2.6.1 Work Pressures

The adoption of neoliberalism and managerialism has intensified job demands. Irrespective of university type, these demands include workload and tight deadlines. Hyper connectivity can also be included in this category as it is required from faculty to use technological platforms to fulfil their jobs and meet deadlines and objectives.

2.6.2 Career progression

Promotion and tenure status is imperative to a career in academia. To achieve this, faculty are required to secure research grants, actively carry out research and get their work published in academic journals. The reputation of the academic journals also contributes to the value of the research. However, it is noteworthy that getting published in those journals is not an easy endeavour. Research and getting work published can be a component of career progression and work demands as universities are shifting focus towards more research.

2.6.3 Family Obligations

This type of life pressure, irrespective of faculty gender, includes family support, child care, elderly care, household responsibilities and other family obligations. Family model and individual circumstances determine the types of family obligations one is exposed to.

2.6.4 Quality of Life

This type includes social life, leisure activities, hobbies and well-being.

2.6.5 Time

Time is of essence on both sides of the scale; work and life. Time is required to fulfil any obligations and responsibilities. How faculty distribute time determines which side of the scale is the one that tips.

2.6.6 Organisational Culture

The type of organisational culture plays an important role in enabling work-life balance. A culture that offers flexibility and family-friendly policies is perceived as supportive to its employees by offering them the means of balancing their work and life. It is noteworthy that organisational culture is not created and fostered by policies only. Support by managers and colleagues also help shape that culture. A supportive organisational culture would also be inclusive of gender differences and associated expectations from faculty of either gender. It also would not enforce the pre-perception of the ideal worker and the stigma associated with utilisation of policies promoting job flexibility and work-life balance.

2.6.7 Managerialism

With the decrease of government funds, many universities are moving towards managerialism, which is an ideology that brings private-sector business practices into higher education. This includes coping with market trends and seeking sources of funds other than government subsidies. Moreover, the competition between universities to improve ranking and subsequently attract more students who will generate funds has intensified. With the change of ideology and fierce competition, the pressure is cascaded to faculty. This is translated into increased work volume and type of duties. As a result, faculty have no choice but to spend substantial amounts of time in order to fulfil various job tasks and meet deadlines.

2.6.8 Resources Constraints

Not only did decline of government funding change the ideology of universities to seek alternative funding sources, but also it has limited the available ones. Spending on various attempts to facilitate work-life balance may be restricted due to budget allocations. This translates into additional pressures to achieve more with less spending.

2.6.9 University Policies and Procedures

While there is ample presence of work-life balance policies, there is not enough awareness regarding them by faculty. Also, inconsistency of how these policies are incorporated is present where they are sometimes included under employee well-being, diversity and inclusion or even sometimes as standalone policies. For example, even if flexible working arrangements that allow

faculty to work from home are in place, their job demands require their physical presence to teach or to offer guidance to students, hence restricting their ability to utilise flexible work arrangement policies.

Faculty WLB Pressures
- Career progression
- Work pressures
- Family obligations
- Quality of life
- Time management

HR & Organisation WLB Pressures
- Organisational culture
- Managerialism
- Resource contraints
- University policies and procedures

Challenges of faculty WLB in the UAE

Best practices for WLB in the UAE
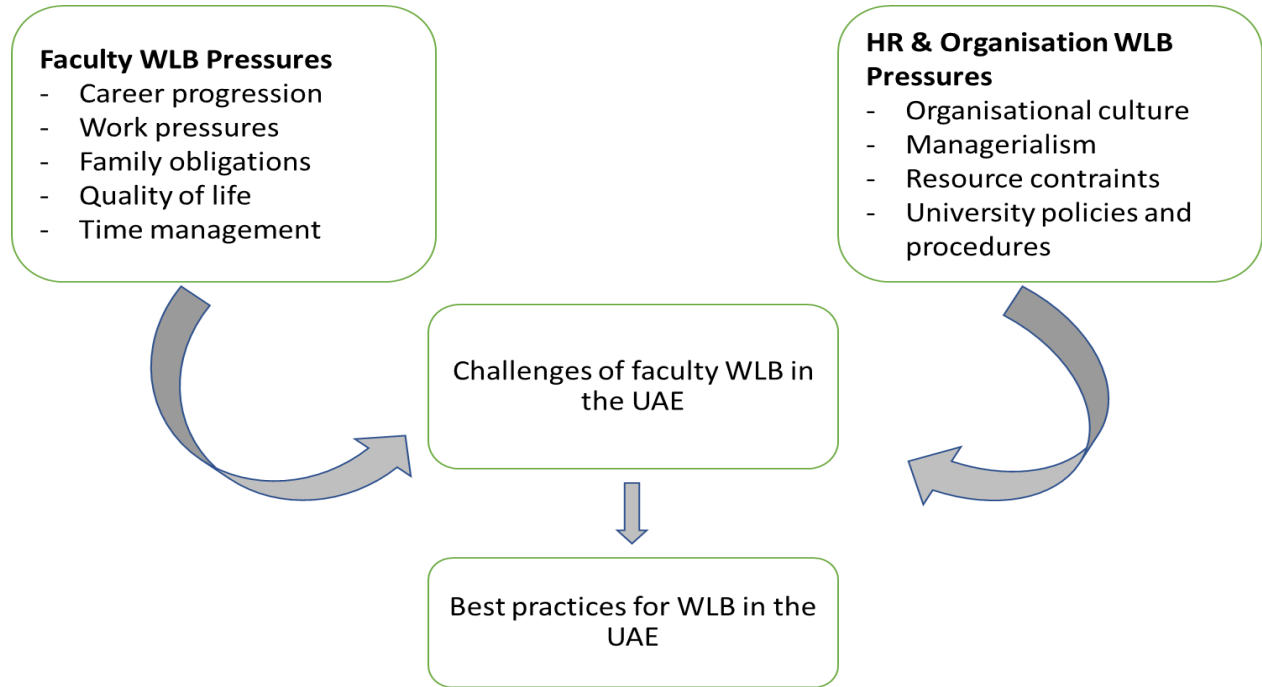
Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Chapter Three: Methodology

This chapter will present the design of the study by initially discussing the research approach and questions. After that, study population and sampling description, followed by data collection method followed by data analysis methods. In conclusion, the chapter discusses validity, reliability and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Approach

Traditionally, scholars had to choose between two types of research; either qualitative or quantitative (Leech & Onwuegbuzie 2007). Silverman (2005) explains that there is no research method that is better than the other, but it is rather what the researcher is attempting to discover and achieve. According to Savenye and Robinson (2005), quantitative research method is

considered the traditional method and stems from sciences of physics and biology, while qualitative research method is obtained from anthropology and sociology. This means that qualitative research is undertaken in its natural surroundings to explain facts and is used to understand human and cultural interactions. This gives qualitative data collection method flexibility in its nature (Robson 2014). According to Woo, O'Boyle and Spector (2017), qualitative research is also referred to as inductive research, which looks for patterns in data that can be used to establish a generalisation and is therefore exploratory.

With time, there has been an increase in mixed methods research studies that combined both qualitative and qualitative methods as it offers far greater diversity. In such instances, methods can be partially or fully mixed and can be equally used, or one of them can be dominant over the other. Also, when combining the two methods in a research, the researcher can use both methods concurrently or consecutively (Leech & Onwuegbuzie 2007). Contrary to some views, qualitative research can use numbers and is thus mixed with quantitative method. For example, counting frequency of an action or an occurrence (Savenye & Robinson 2005).

There is not a one correct method to conduct research. Choosing between research methods is determined by the nature and purpose of the study. Since Savenye and Robinson (2005) contend that interviews are the most frequently used method to obtain views of educators, the researcher in this study opted for qualitative method which uses interviews for data collection. Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006) also explain that qualitative research is important as it reveals how people make their decisions.

The aim of this study was to explore how faculty in the higher education sector in the UAE perceive work-life balance and what they would consider most appropriate to their needs to enable their retention. In conjunction with that, comes the perception of HR professionals in the higher education sector towards their understanding of work-life balance, its importance and how to better retain faculty by applying best HR practices to improve work-life balance for faculty.

According to Ambrose, Huston and Norman (2005), most of studies on faculty retention were quantitative and used survey data. While this can be convenient for the researcher in terms of analysis, it limits responses to pre-defined options and does not include contexts that shaped them. Hence, along these lines, the researcher in this study has opted to collect qualitative data in the form of narratives from faculty and HR representatives, thus giving both meaning and context to

collected data. While multiple case study was an available option, the researcher chose not to take it as the two sides of the phenomenon, i.e. HR and faculty, could not be combined. HR representatives may have different viewpoint than those of faculty, hence the affirmation to take a narrative approach instead.

Narrative inquiry is a doorway to how he human mind thinks and is an essential way to understand how human behaviour is structured. Coghlan and Brydon-Miller (2014) emphasise that narrative inquiry should remain transparent and inclusive and offer a model that starts with developing research questions which are later used to outline semi-structured interviews. Interviews can be audio-recorded and afterwards transcribed to form the raw transcript. This raw transcript is read a few times in order to put together the full picture, which is coded into themes. After that, Coghlan and Brydon-Miller (2014) indicate that a researcher can choose a method for data analysis. From among the offered methods of data analysis, thematic analysis is the one used in this study.

3.2 Research Questions

The study mainly aims to investigate the perceptions of work-life balance among faculty in the higher education sector in the UAE and whether work-life balance has a role on their turnover intention. In addition, the perception of work-life balance among HR professionals is investigated and how to better retain valuable faculty members using HR best practices in relation to work-life balance.

Thus, the study is designed to answer the following questions:

- How do HR professionals in the higher education sector in the UAE understand work-life balance and its importance?
- How faculty in the higher education sector in the UAE perceive work-life balance and what they would consider most appropriate to their needs?
- What is the role of work-life balance on faculty retention?
- How to better retain faculty by applying best HR practices to improve work-life balance in the higher education sector in the UAE?

By analysing the perceptions of faculty in conjunction with HR professionals, the study will compare and contrast how work-life balance is understood by both, how important it is on both ends; the employee and the employer. Moreover, it will offer understanding of the needs of faculty

and the role of work-life balance on faculty retention. Furthermore, the study will give insight to HR professionals to use appropriate best practices to improve faculty work-life balance as means of faculty retention.

3.3 Sampling and Study Population

Sampling is a great concern for researchers as it determines how successful the outcomes of the research will be. Qualitative research is not focussed on statistically supported generalisation, counting the number of occurrences or number of individuals. Instead, it is focussed on discovering the various and variable opinions of participants to identify the different dimensions of a phenomenon (O'Reilly & Parker 2012).

As proposed by Savenye and Robinson (2005), and with the aim of providing insight into perspectives of the participants, the sample was not selected randomly, but rather purposefully, to capture the perceptions representative of the population. The sample is not large in number but is thoroughly described due to the intensity of the data collection. In this research, faculty from both genders working for different universities, teaching different disciplines who hold different professional ranks, have different marital status and come from different cultural backgrounds were selected. The richness of data gathered through interviewing makes it difficult to include a larger sample. Therefore, the sample in this study was small on both faculty and HR side. This viewpoint is supported by Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) where it is contended that small samples are sufficient in qualitative research to identify patterns and reach saturation.

Based on this, a total of five participants were selected to represent the study population from the side of HR. From the side of faculty, a total of ten participants were selected. The selected faculty participants were made to capture the multinational aspect of employees within the UAE. Hence two participants each were selected from different backgrounds: Arab, Indian, Western and Asians using snowball sampling, sometimes also called convenience sampling. For those acquiring citizenships other than their original nationality, they were asked how they culturally identified themselves at the beginning of the interview.

The logic behind selecting the faculty sample in such manner was to incorporate the multinational aspect of employees in the UAE and to find out if they shared the same perceptions regarding work-life balance, then compare that with the perceptions of HR representatives. On the other

hand, the sample of HR representatives were not classified according to nationality or cultural background as they were not considered variables in this study. The selected sample was considered sufficient because in qualitative research the number of participants is not the objective. The objective is to gain in-depth knowledge sufficient to describe the phenomenon subject of the study.

3.4 Demographics of Participants

Participants from faculty side were both from both genders although females were slightly more in number, with 6 females and 4 males.

Marital status of faculty was also captured. Noting that single marital status included those who broke out of wedlock. i.e. single mother and single father. Married faculty participants represent 6 versus 4 who were either single or single parent.

Moreover, faculty were further broken down by their rank. Among the sample, there were 3 Instructors, 2 Professors and 5 Assistant professors. It is noteworthy that some other faculty ranks that did not appear in this sample, such as senior instructor. This is explainable as the participants of this study were a convenient sample.

It is worth mentioning that the majority of faculty in this study have been living in the UAE for 5 years or less. Only three of them have been living in the UAE for more than 5 years.

As for HR participants, the most relevant element to this study is the number of HR years of experience within higher education in the UAE. Only one of them had three years of experience within higher education while the remaining four had more than five years of experience.

3.5 Characteristics of Participants

Interviewees from the faculty side had some common characteristics. They were all well-educated and held master's and PhD degrees from various universities from different parts of the world. All of them were above 40 years of age and had extensive years of experience in higher education teaching.

While 6 of the faculty sample were married, some of the faculty who were categorised as single were actually single parents. During interviews with faculty members, the number of children was

inquired after. However, some of them reported grown up children or children studying for their undergraduate and are no longer residing with them.

As for the participants on the HR side, while a minority of them had less than five years of HR experience within higher education in the UAE, they still had extensive HR experience in other industries. This can be an added fresh perspective to the study due to the variation of industry background.

3.6 Data Collection Methods

As previously mentioned, this study uses qualitative interviewing in the form of narrative inquiry. Qualitative interviewing was chosen in this is study as it gives readers the means of understanding the different viewpoints of interviewees thus giving those points of views realistic standing (Silverman 2011). As explained by Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006), it can result in exploratory, descriptive and explanatory data. In this method, interviewees are treated as source of information, and therefore active listening is required. Moreover, asking probing questions while attempting to identify patterns is necessary. It is also extremely beneficial to use interviews in this study as the purpose of interviews is to gather ample data from the viewpoint of the participants on a particular topic.

Following the recommendations of Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006), the interviews were semi-structured, where some of the questions were pre-set to initiate the conversation and to keep it flowing spontaneously thus allowing interviewees the flexibility of talking about what is most important to them. This way, they may reveal to the researcher new dimensions that were not available beforehand. Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006) also recommend piloting the interviews in order to have an opportunity to test and ensure effectiveness. Unfortunately, this was not possible in this study due to time constraints.

Savenye and Robinson (2005) advocate that interviews have been the most frequently used to obtain views of educators. During interviews, a voice recorder was used after informing the interviewee and obtaining consent to record the interview. Extensive hand-written notes were also taken and transcribed verbatim at the earliest opportunity post interview. The age, gender, nationality and marital status of interviewees were also noted. On a few occasions, the interviewee did not give consent to use the voice recorder, in which case only hand-written notes were taken.

Using semi-structured interviews, interview questions were open-ended and were based on research questions. Faculty interviewees were asked about their personal experiences of balancing work and life, the challenges they face if any, and how they manage to balance between academic career and life. They were also asked whether the challenges they faced while balancing between work and life may result in their intention to turnover. On the other hand, HR representatives were asked about their perception of the importance of work-life balance, what their organisations do in order to facilitate it and what more they could recommend as means of improving faculty work-life balance and their retention. Open-ended semi-structured interviews allow the flexibility to gather data, while maintaining the focus of the interview. As interviewees were talking about their experiences, markers and probes were used to dig deeper into the responses of the interviewees. Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006) differentiate between markers and probes. As they explain, probes should be used throughout the interview to get the interviewees to carry on with their narrative and explain further, while a marker is a piece of information that is dropped by the interviewee while talking about something else. They need to be noted down and can be later used after the interviewee completes his/her response to further extract information.

All interviews were conducted between the third week of August and first week of September 2018 and at times which best worked for the interviewees. Each interviewee was interviewed once. Interviews lasted about 30-40 minutes long and were voice recorded, unless interviewee did not grant consent. The Table 2 below summarizes the interviewee details:

Table 2: Interview Cases

No.	Interviewee Type	Date of interview	Duration of interview	Marital Status	Nationality	Interviewee Alphabet
1	HR	14 Aug 2018	45 minutes	N/A	N/A	D
2	HR	15 Aug 2018	30 minutes	N/A	N/A	E
3	HR	16 Aug 2018	35 minutes	N/A	N/A	F
4	HR	26 Aug 2018	35 minutes	N/A	N/A	G
5	HR	26 Aug 2018	45 minutes	N/A	N/A	T
6	Faculty	14 Aug 2018	40 minutes	Married	France	A
7	Faculty	15 Aug 2018	40 minutes	Married	Germany	B
8	Faculty	16 Aug 2018	35 minutes	Single	USA	C

9	Faculty	27 Aug 2018	45 minutes	Single	China	H
10	Faculty	28 Aug 2018	45 minutes	Single	USA	J
11	Faculty	30 Aug 2018	30 minutes	Single	India	K
12	Faculty	2 Sept 2018	30 minutes	Married	India	L
13	Faculty	2 Sept 2018	30 minutes	Married	Germany	N
14	Faculty	3 Sept 2018	40 minutes	Married	Canada	P
15	Faculty	6 Sept 2018	35 minutes	Married	Iraq	Q

3.7 Data Analysis Methods

Qualitative research requires continuous analysis throughout the data gathering phase by using an inductive approach rather than a deductive one in order to find meanings and identify patterns. It was initially used to document the perceptions of participants.

Qualitative research involves massive amount of data. Along the lines of Savenye and Robinson (2005), data management is the biggest challenge while conducting this type of research. As the answers a researcher obtains rely on the questions being asked (Robson 2014), the researcher focussed on obtaining responses to a group of narrow research questions and undertook to regularly analyse what was recorded to refine observations. Interviews were transcribed immediately, word for word. However, while Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006) refer to other non-verbal elements of discourse analysis such as poses and intonation, those were disregarded as the transcription of interviews will contain the data to be analysed, and also to avoid subjective interpretations by the researcher. Thus maintaining objectivity while analysing the data.

Thematic analysis of data was used. Which is, as put by Guest, MacQueen and Namey (2012), a combination of common approaches and procedures such as grounded theory, phenomenology, positivism and interpretivism. They also describe this approach as an inductive one that uses a group of procedures to recognise themes from gathered data. It is further defined by Clarke and Braun (2016, p.297) as "method for identifying, analysing, and interpreting patterns of meaning ('themes') within qualitative data". Within this research, thematic analysis offers flexibility as it can be used with small and large amounts of data, as well as with both homogenous and heterogeneous samples (Clarke and Braun 2016). Willig and Stainton-Rogers (2017) offer another advantage of flexibility to thematic analysis, which is the ability to move back and forth between the phases of analysis as research work progresses.

Willig and Stainton-Rogers (2017) offer a version of six phases of thematic analysis. The first phase occurs during data collection as the researcher becomes familiar with it. After the transcription of interviews, they were summarised in order to reduce the data. Then the data was coded, which corresponds to the second phase of thematic analysis. Summarising and coding were done after some data was collected instead of waiting until all interviews were carried out (Silverman 2005). This technique is widely used in data synthesis. The below table offers an example of the codes that emerged during the second phase of analysis:

Table 3: Sample of Emerging Codes

Code	Relevant Narratives
Guilt	*"My son has special needs, and needs to be constantly taken care of. We could not find external help so my husband had to stay at home and look after him. I feel guilty that he had to sacrifice his career, but it was the logical thing to do because I was earning the bigger income".* Interviewee B. *"I feel guilty for not being able to give enough care and attention to things as I would like to do. I am juggling too many balls and cannot give each one of them the time it needs. There isn't enough time to do everything so I do everything in a hurry"* – Interviewee H *"Having a live-in nanny is a blessing, but there is a price to pay……… so I try to overcompensate for that when I am there".* Interviewee P. *"I feel guilty for not spending enough time with my son".* Interviewee J. *"I feel guilty all the time. When I am spending time with my family, I feel guilty for not working on the so many things that need to be done. When I am working during the time I should be spending with my family, I feel guilty for not giving them enough attention and quality time. Even during summer break when there is no teaching and I can focus on my research, I feel guilty for not spending*

	this time with my family, and I feel guilty for not focusing on my research that will allow me to keep my job" – Interviewee L.

After that, data was put into themes based on relevance. According to Willig and Stainton-Rogers (2017), constructing, reviewing and defining themes is imperative, hence they take the third, fourth and fifth phase of thematic analysis. While some themes were initially expected, new ones emerged with the progress of the interviews. The codes were later put into memos to help with the identification of patterns (Hesse-Biber & Leavy 2006; Robson 2014), while irrelevant responses that went off topic were disregarded (Robson 2014). The final step was to conceptualise the data to create an understanding (Robson 2014) before reaching the final phase of producing the report.

Consideration was given to include a colleague in the analysis of data. Robson (2014) recommends this approach to ensure integrity and provide cross-cultivation. However, this was not possible in this research due to the lack of a volunteer and due to time restrictions. Moreover, the number of interviews was not large hence could be managed single-handedly. Similarly, computer software was not employed to assist with data analysis for two reasons. Firstly, the number of interviewees was not large. Secondly, because the research captured the viewpoint of both sides, i.e. faculty and HR representatives, hence the use of software for analysis may confuse the outcomes.

3.8 Validity and Reliability

While doing research, objectivity is imperative. It involves reliability which is the testing of how truthful the analysis of findings is, and validity which involves the interpretations by the researcher (Silverman 2011).

Qualitative research using interviews can oftentimes be subject to bias of the researcher. It occurs when the researcher becomes a participant in the research through interaction. As a result, as qualitative research is descriptive of the surrounding environment, the findings should not be generalised (Savenye & Robinson 2005).

Silverman (2011) further raises another concern in qualitative research using interviews, which is whether the responses provided by the interviewees are based on their personal experience and opinion, or whether they are an outcome of the interview situation itself.

To overcome those challenges, Bazeley (2013) explains that there is not an absolute agreement on what constitutes truth in qualitative research hence absolute representation may not be possible. However, what is required from a research is that it demonstrates credibility. To achieve this, Bazeley (2013) offers four quality checkpoints to be followed while conducting qualitative research. They are: (1) Quality of data which involves the sample, presence of the researcher during interviews and the contextual information available to the researcher. (2) Quality of process which cover areas of procedures, methods, coding and memo writing. (3) Quality of product which includes the usefulness of findings, their consistency and structure. (4) Quality of outcomes which contribute to knowledge.

The researcher followed Bazeley (2013) recommendations of using triangulation as an approach to confirm validity by gathering data from different sources. This method was used by collecting data via interviews of both faculty and HR representatives in order to compare and contrast their perceptions. Moreover, the researcher took precautions to eliminate bias. One of these precautions was the degree of involvement. While the researcher was keen on obtaining accurate perceptions from participants, it was imperative not to get involved or influence participants responses. The researcher did not attempt to analyse the discourse of the interviewees beyond its face value. Hence, poses, gestures, intonations were disregarded as they may be subject to biased interpretations. Furthermore, the researcher offered transparency on the process of data analysis which explain how data was processed from its raw state all the way to drawing conclusions. The researcher also reported on negative cases where interviewees had different perceptions and viewpoints that varied from the majority. Moreover, the researcher shared with the interviewees extracts from interviews that were relevant to the study and used as quotations to ensure agreement on interpretations.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Gorard (2013) emphasises that ethical considerations must be kept throughout the research. With the main principle of not causing harm to the participants in mind, Gorard (2013) provides a group of methods to ensure the protection of participants, such as transparency of procedures, obtaining consent from participants to record their perceptions and report it in the research, allowing them to withdraw at any point of time, and ensuring their anonymity. Ultimately, it was optional for participants to take part in the study. The researcher spared no efforts to maintain the

confidentiality of information of participants. While every attempt was taken to maintain accuracy of information, some individualistic details were omitted to maintain anonymity of participants.

Another issue to be further considered while conducting any research is conflict of interest (Gorard 2013). Based on this, the focus of the researcher was to find answers to the research questions, without any concern towards how the findings turn out. However, sample size in this research can be an ethical issue in qualitative research as it will not be ethical to engage participants, gather data from them, and not appropriately utilize this data for analysis (O'Reilly & Parker 2012).

Chapter Four: Findings

This chapter showcases the results from the qualitative data gathered during interviews. The results will be further expanded in chapter five. During interviews with HR representatives, the interviews investigated their perceptions of the importance of work-life balance and its role on faculty retention. How to better retain faculty by improving their work-life balance.

Interviews with faculty were similarly along the same lines but asking for their perceptions of work-life balance from the other side of the equilibrium. Faculty were invited to discuss how important work-life balance was for them and what posed as the most important tool to facilitate work-life balance. They were also asked about how would work-life balance have an impact on their intention to turnover.

4.1 Describing Work-Life Balance

Interviewees from both sides, faculty and HR representatives, were asked to describe work-life balance. They gave similar perceptions that share certain meanings such as being able to meet life responsibilities, apart from work. To some, it was about having the time to do the things you enjoy doing, and to some others it was the ability to have the time to improve one's self. Interviewee B, a Western married female faculty, mother of two young children described work-life balance as:

"Having enough time to achieve various objectives in one's career, one's personal life goals and yet meeting one's family obligations".

Interviewee C., a Western single male faculty without children added the element of quality of life when he mentioned described work-life balance as:

"*having enough opportunity to do the things I enjoy in life. I enjoy traveling the most and not only that it is for my personal enjoyment, but it also helps me with my research about cultures, history and arts. I make use of every semester break to travel to different parts of the world, so I can experience new cultures and learn about their art and history. As a matter of fact, much of my published research is an outcome of my travels*".

On the other side, it is noteworthy that HR representatives described work-life balance in a more detailed manner using concepts such as compartmentalising each domain and being able to fulfill each role. They also mentioned temporal and spatial segregation between work and life as description of the balance between the two. This can be attributed to their specialty in HR, their awareness of the concept and their familiarity with HR genre. An example is the use of segmentation model by interviewee D, an HR professional with twelve years of experience within the UAE higher education sector:

"*taking off the jacket of your work suit at the doorsteps of the office on your way out at the end of the day, and only wearing it back on your way into the office the next morning*"

4.2 Work-Life Balance Challenges Facing Faculty

After obtaining description of work-life balance by both faculty and HR representative, faculty participants were asked about the challenges that they face while trying to maintain a balance between work and life. Participants' responses varied from one individual to the other. Therefore, responses collected from faculty interviewees in this study were put into three themes: (1) managerialism (2) family and life (3) the feeling of guilt. The table below offers information on the narrative themes and narrative subthemes.

Table 4: Interview Data Analysis Results: Narrative Themes with Sub Narratives

Narrative Themes	Narrative Subthemes
Managerialism	Workload, hyperconnectivity, research and career prospects, job security
Family and Life	Attitude towards workload, childcare responsibilities
The feeling of guilt	Guilt towards family, children, spouses and towards career efforts.

4.2.1 Managerialism

With more universities looking at ways to generate more money while simultaneously cutting costs, there intensity of competition for students has increased and with that striving to improve and/or maintain university ranking to secure more students. These pressures have subsequently cascaded to faculty and increased workload in volume and in scope.

4.2.1.1 Workload

Workload appeared to be a consistently common challenge among faculty that created either a role conflict or spillover or both of them simultaneously. All faculty participants stressed that teaching was the focus of their career and that it was the aspect of their job that they enjoyed the most. However, other aspects of their job were less enjoyable, particularly administrative tasks. In addition to teaching responsibilities and related activities, they were required to upload course materials on certain platforms that were accessible by students. There were also other platforms used for quality assurance and compliance purposes which required faculty to update and upload materials per individual student. This obviously can become a challenging task for faculty who had bigger classes and greater student enrollment as it was time consuming.

Interviewee A is a female faculty who has been teaching in an UAE federal university for four years and has two children. She has mixed feelings towards the increased number of students' enrollment. She enjoys teaching and cannot deny any student the opportunity to learn, but on the other hand is feeling concerned about the amount of workload and administrative tasks that the increased number of students will entail.

"I can't turn down the request from a student to enroll in my class even if the maximum number is reached. Teaching is what I am here for and is what I enjoy doing. If students want an opportunity to learn, they should be allowed one. So whenever student enrollment department ask a student to check with me if I will allow their late enrollment, I never turn down their request even if I know that at the end I will have a bigger number of students to give feedback to, assignments to grade, exams to mark, and then upload all of that on the system".

From the above narrative, managerial approach is apparent by the university. It is in their advantage accept late student enrollment as this will generate more funds. However, faculty are put in an awkward position as they cannot deny students the late enrollment although they are the ones who bear the consequences of having excessively large classes.

Besides workload pressures, academics expressed concerns stemming from increasing pressures of hyperconnectivity, which shall be discussed in more detail next.

4.2.1.2 Hyperconnectivity

Technology also plays a role in blurring the line between work and life. In other words, it creates a negative spillover from work to life where one role affects the other. While in essence the purpose of technology is to smoothen processes and save time, it can be a double-edged weapon. This is because technology makes faculty accessible all the time via emails. It also gives them access to various platforms and hence they use their personal time to finish off their job tasks such as uploading materials or adding student grades.

Interviewee J is a western faculty and single father to a teenage son. He recently got promoted to professorship and mentions the time he spends from home doing course uploads and grading online. He feels that such tasks are tedious but unavoidable hence he prefers to complete them from home where he is not interrupted by students knocking on his office door. He explains in his below statement:

"The work has to be done, so I dedicate evening time so I can sit quietly and get it over with. It is tedious but necessary for academic compliance".

Interviewee L, feels he is in a more intense situation when it comes to working from home. He is a male faculty who recently got course release to enable him to look after an administrative appointment. He is a father of two children and feels that being on call round the clock is disruptive to his family life. His family keeps telling him that he is constantly distracted and that he needs to spend more time with them. He struggles with both role conflict and negative spillover as explained in his following statement:

"Even when we are spending time together, I keep getting phone calls or important emails that need my immediate attention. It has become stressful not only for me, but also for my family who ask me to focus on them during family time which is very little as it is".

From the above, it shows that while technology can be helpful in offering job flexibility and managing work-life balance. For instance, faculty do not need to remain physically on campus can complete their work from home. However, it can cause negative spillover from work to home when used in excess from home to keep up with workload.

In addition to hyperconnectivity, research and career prospects also increase faculty stress as discussed in the below narrative subtheme.

4.2.1.3 Research and Career Prospects

Research did not appear to be the focus of faculty when compared to teaching, although it has come to the foreground during the last few years. As the majority of faculty working in the UAE universities are expatriate, the context within which they work may be different than faculty working for universities at their home countries. First, they cannot get tenure status. Instead, they are given renewable limited-term employment contracts. Contract renewals depend on faculty performance, research activity and university needs. During the few last years, there has been a shift of emphasis towards research activity and publication. Not getting any research published during contract period may result in contract non-renewal. Moreover, research activity is factored in while deciding on faculty eligibility for promotion. While there is more apparent focus on

research by universities in the last few years, the criteria for the amount of required research activity and promotion eligibility appear to be lenient when compared to other parts of the world.

Interviewee J is a Western faculty member who recently got promoted to professorship compared the required criteria for promotion eligibility in UAE universities with the criteria in the USA in his below comment:

"I would have never gotten promoted to professor at this point of my career and at this age. Normally, those who get it, they get it towards the end of their career before their retirement. Some don't even get professorship until their retirement. The criteria here is much more lenient than in the US. If I ever go back, I will be applying to assistant professor jobs and will not even try to apply using my professor title here"

However, interviewee N has a different approach to research. He is a male Western faculty whose wife also works in academia, and both of them share responsibilities of their home and two children. He believes that he needs to keep the saw sharp by being active in the domain of research and publication as this will enable him to maintain his academic reputation and to make the next career move when the opportunity comes. He explains this in his following statement:

"I give research a lot of my time as I would like to keep publishing in top journals. Maybe I am more active than what is required by the university, but I feel that I need it more than the university. It is important for me because it will help me to be recognised in the field, and possibly help me with my next career move".

From the above, research appears to be a topic that takes a considerable amount of time and effort. Whether faculty suffice with the bare minimum research activities required by their universities, or aspire to achieve more, research appears to be a topic that creates a lot of stress for faculty. Another factor that contributes to the stress for faculty is job security as discussed in the below narrative subtheme.

4.2.1.4 Job Security

The majority of faculty working in the UAE are expatriates. They do not get tenure status and are hired on limited duration contracts that are renewable. Some factors contribute to renewal decision such as performance, research activity, number of publications, and the needs of universities. As a result, a general sense of lack of job security emerged when faculty members expressed concerns related to their contract renewal decision and the ramifications of not getting renewed.

Interviewee L is a male faculty who recently got course release to enable him to look after an administrative appointment. He expressed that he spared no effort when it came to his job and that he was willing to accept any additional work, although this had become quite intense for him and for his family. He wished he did not have to take on the additional projects at work that required a lot of additional time and effort in his statement:

"Sometimes I wish I could say no to certain additional projects and focus on my responsibilities, but then it will not be collegial of me to turn them down. Also, it may be taken against me when the time for my contract renewal comes".

Interviewee C on the other hand, expressed concern that he is no longer competitive with the standards of academia in his home country, should his contract be not renewed. He is a single Western male faculty who admits that after working in the UAE higher education for 13 years, he had gotten so used to the lenient standards that he cannot compete on the job market in the USA, his home country. According to him, the problem is:

"You get too comfortable in your job that you don't put any additional effort to increase your research productivity and make do with the minimum required. After a few years you get stuck in a rut and you can't go back because you are no longer able to compete on the job market".

With universities adopting managerialism, oftentimes the decision not renew faculty members is not resulting from their poor performance. Instead, it may be due to restructuring within

departments, shutting down certain educational programs, or even poor student enrollment. With that, more universities are moving towards hiring adjuncts to avoid long-term commitment. Which is an approach that further increases faculty general sense of job insecurity.

In addition to managerialism, family and life have emerged as a narrative theme in the study which is discussed next.

4.2.2 Family and life

Family and life aspects were another main narrative theme identified that has a number of subthemes which are discussed next.

4.2.2.1 Attitude towards working from home

When faculty were asked how they managed their workload, they all agreed that they worked from home. However, their attitude towards working from home varied. The majority of them had to do it because the work needed to be done, even if that resulted in working outside office hours and interfered with their personal life. One faculty participant, on the contrary, welcomed working from home as it kept her busy.

Interviewee K is a single female faculty who has been living in the UAE for two decades. Her grown up children do not live in the UAE and thus she lives on her own. She enjoys working from home as it keeps her occupied which similar to the compensation model of work-life balance. She describes this in her below statement:

"Working from home is what keeps me going. I have been living in the UAE for 20 years and have seen everything to be seen. My children are adults and live and work back home and I don't have any family here. I am not interested in going to malls and eating at restaurants anymore so spending my time working at home is what keeps me busy".

The above narrative signals the difference of attitude resulting from different life circumstances. Where the interviewee appreciated and welcomed working from home in contrast to the rest of the participants who felt that work interfered and conflicted with their life.

Another aspect of work-life balance challenges is childcare, which is discussed next.

4.2.2.2 Childcare

Childcare, although oftentimes mentioned in literature, did not seem to be a major issue to faculty in the UAE. Family models for married participants were either dual income family or with a stay-at-home spouse. Where both partners had full time jobs, they had the privilege of being able to afford domestic help whether live-in full-time, or part-time.

Interviewee P is a married female Western faculty from Canada. Her spouse also has a full-time job. She has two very young children and mentions domestic help as the solution to her family situation, although not a common solution in her country of origin. She commented that:

"I don't need to worry about house chores and childcare. I return home and everything is organized and clean, the kids are fed and changed. All I have to do is spend some quality time with my children before bedtime".

Domestic help was also mentioned by interviewee Q who is a female Middle Eastern faculty with young children and spouse in full time job. She justified the need for domestic help due to the lack of a support network system in the UAE as an alternative in her below statement:

"In my home country, we have a support network system. I can leave my children with my mother or mother-in-law, or they can come to my house and look after the children when I am at work, but here I have no one to offer this kind of support and so I have no choice but to hire a nanny".

In contrast, interviewee H was able to get help from extended family. She is a Far Asian single mother of one child and teaches as faculty in a federal university in the UAE for three years. She feels satisfied with the arrangement of leaving her daughter in the care of her sister while she is at work. She explains this in her following statement:

"My sister lives near me and is a stay-at-home mom. We have come to the arrangement that my daughter's school bus drops her at my sister's place after school, and I pick my daughter up on my way home after work".

Interviewee B, however, had a different family situation that domestic help can not assist with. Instead, she relies heavily on her stay at home husband. She is a Western faculty with two children, one of which has special needs. She and her husband felt destressed being unable to secure domestic help to assist with the care of their special child. As an alternative, the husband, whose salary was less than hers had to sacrifice his career in order to stay home and look after their children. She explains that this arrangement allows her to focus on her job. However, she still feels stressed because of the workload that does not allow her to help with childcare. She is looking forward to retirement although she has not yet reached the age and has financial concerns being the sole breadwinner. She describes her family situation as follows:

"My son has special needs, and needs to be constantly taken care of. We could not find external help so my husband had to stay at home and look after him".

Another example is a dual income family model with a Western couple who both work as faculty and have young children. As they both work for the same institution, they are able to internally arrange their classes to be opposite so that one of them is available to look after their two young children. They are able to maintain this arrangement since the birth of their first son three years ago. Interviewee N is the male partner who has been interviewed in this study and he emphasises the importance of being extremely organised in order to maintain this arrangement as follows:

"we share the responsibilities of looking after the kids, dropping them to nursery and picking them up in the afternoon, and everything else. Even house chores are shared between us. This keeps us very busy and we must be well-organised all the time, but it makes us able to manage our family affairs without needing outside help".

When asked about how they deal with emergency situations, when one of the children catches a cold for example. Interviewee N explained that his and his wife's classes were opposite so one of them was still able to take care of the children. In worst case scenario, one of them would take the day off and internally arrange within the department for classes coverage.

Another theme that appeared to be quite common between faculty participants was the feeling of guilt, which is discussed next.

4.2.3 The Feeling of Guilt

The feeling of guilt was mentioned repeatedly by faculty, mainly by married females who have children, one female single mother, one single father to a teenager son, and one married male with young children. However, the reasons for the feeling of guilt varied.

Interviewee B is a Western faculty with two children, one of which has special needs. As her child required close monitoring and specific type of care, she was not able to secure external help with her family situation. As a result, one of the parents had to sacrifice his/her career and stay at home to look after the child. According to her, they agreed that the one with the higher salary continues to provide for the family, while the other stayed at home to look after the children. In this situation, the husband's salary was less than hers so he quit his job to stay home and look after their children. This arrangement, although practical and was agreed upon by both partners, made her feel guilty that her husband had to sacrifice his career. She also felt stressed because of the financial burden that was placed on her due to being the sole breadwinner of the family.

"My son has special needs, and needs to be constantly taken care of. We could not find external help so my husband had to stay at home and look after him. I feel guilty that he had to sacrifice his career, but it was the logical thing to do because I was earning the bigger income".

Another example is interviewee H who is a Far Asian single mother faculty to one daughter and who has been living in the UAE for three years. She has an arrangement with her stay-at-home sister to look after her daughter while she worked, but still felt guilty in the general sense towards

different aspects of her life. She complained about not having enough time to give the care and attention to various things in her life, including her career, research, personal time and her daughter. She explained the situation using the metaphor of juggling balls as follows:

"I feel guilty for not being able to give enough care and attention to things as I would like to do. I am juggling too many balls and cannot give each one of them the time it needs. There isn't enough time to do everything so I do everything in a hurry".

Another single parent in this study is interviewee J who is a Western faculty. His son is a teenager and therefore does not require the care a young child needs. Nevertheless, he feels that his work is overtaking his personal time as he must meet administrative responsibilities. He describes them as tedious and unavoidable hence he prefers to complete them from home where he is not constantly interrupted. This situation has resulted in widening the gap between him and his teenage son and makes him feel that he is not spending enough time with his son at such a critical age.

"I feel guilty for not spending enough time with my son. He is a teenager and is more independent. I should be his friend at this stage so I can offer him my guidance before he grows older and goes to university".

Interviewee P is a married female Western faculty. She has two young children and both her and her husband work full time. She is pleased with the privilege of being able to hire a full-time live-in nanny to look after her young children which is not a common approach in her home country. Nevertheless, she peaks of the price she has to pay as described below:

"Having a live-in nanny is a blessing, but there is a price to pay, like not being there to for my children and not being able to witness major milestones like their first words and first steps. I try to overcompensate for that when I am home with them".

The above participants were either married females with children or single parents. The only participant who did not match this description was interviewee L. Interviewee L is a married male faculty of Asian origin and has two young children. He recently got an administrative appointment that has resulted in creating more work for him which is in addition to his teaching responsibilities, research and the additional projects within the department. His feelings can be summarised that he felt guilty for everything he did, and everything that he was not able to fulfil in a situation of role conflict (Guest 2002). The below narrative he describes his feelings of guilt:

"work is endless. I teach fifteen credit hours per semester and this takes a lot of time. Not only in class, but also outside class and from home. Recently I got course release as I got an administrative position, but it turned out that it was more work. Now in addition to teaching and everything related, I am on call all the time to solve others' problems. Even my family are complaining that I am constantly distracted by my phone trying to respond to emails and calls. I feel guilty all the time. When I am spending time with my family, I feel guilty for not working on the so many things that need to be done. When I am working during the time I should be spending with my family, I feel guilty for not giving them enough attention and quality time. Even during summer break when there is no teaching and I can focus on my research, I feel guilty for not spending this time with my family, and I feel guilty for not focusing on my research that will allow me to keep my job"..

From the above, the feeling of guilt was the most intense and common sentiment amongst participants. Towards whom they felt the guilt varied, depending on their situation.

4.3 Overcoming the Challenges - Faculty

When faculty were asked how they overcome the challenges of work-life balance, their responses also varied. Domestic help, whether fulltime or part-time, was mentioned by females. It is noteworthy that domestic help is a privilege for UAE residents as this option may not be very popular and affordable in other parts of the world.

According to interviewee P who is a married female Western faculty with two young children. The best option for her family situation was to hire a full-time nanny since she and her husband worked full-time. She explains as follows:

"at least I don't worry if I am a bit late at work as I know my young children are being taken care of while I am away, and when I reach home I don't have to worry about chores. It is true that hiring domestic help is costly, but this is the best way for me to keep my job and make sure that my children get the care that they need".

Interviewee B, is a Western faculty with two children, one of which has special needs. She feels that she needs to contribute to childcare responsibilities. Hence, she came up with a simple and straight forward approach to balance work and life, which is dedicating fixed time to work and fixed time to life. This approach is along the lines of Michel and Hargis (2008) segmentation model of work-life balance and helps her with her particular situation and special needs child. She explains this in her below comment:

"I work fixed hours in the office and fixed number of hours from home to give myself the opportunity to have time to do the things that I need to do. Whether that be looking after family responsibilities, reading, or just taking some rest".

Family model also played a role in overcoming the challenges. Dual earning couples seemed to be the ones facing the most challenges as each of them had a full-time job. In contrast, faculty with stay-at-home spouses did not complain as much of domestic and childcare responsibilities as they were taken care of by their spouses. They complained about feelings of guilt nevertheless as previously discussed.

When it came to how faculty dealt with workload, the responses varied depending on the family situation. An example is interviewee K who is an Asian single female faculty and has been living in the UAE for two decades. She lives in the UAE on her own while her grown up children live

and work back home. She enjoys working from home as she has nothing else to keep her busy. Others were strained by the workload and looking forward to their retirement such as interviewee B, a Western married female faculty, mother of two young children, one of which has special needs. She explains her feelings in the below statement:

"Sometimes I consider retirement although I did not reach the age, or a complete change of career because this is no longer fun and I have to constantly work. If I am to continue in this career, the only other choice is that I move to part-time teaching and this will not be rewarding for me financially and personally".

It is understandable that interviewee B is not only strained by her workload, but also her family situation and her special needs son. She is the sole breadwinner of the family and it appears that she has too many battles to fight; at work, at home, the feeling of guilt, caring for her children and supporting her family financially. Even the idea of leaving her job does not feel appealing to her, although it has definitely occurred to her mind.

In contrast with interviewee B who is the only female faculty who expressed turnover intentions despite her family and financial situation, male faculty interviewees did not mention any turnover intentions, early retirement or part-time jobs as an alternative to lack of work-life balance.

When faculty participants were asked about ways in their opinion to improve work-life balance. They concurred that reducing workload was essential for them as a first approach to improve work-life balance. This way, they will not be required to bring their work home and will be allowed to spend time with family and do the things they enjoy in life. Thus, avoiding work to life negative spillover model (Guest 2002) and enforcing segmentation model of work-life balance (Michel and Hargis 2008).

Interviewee Q, female Middle Eastern faculty with young children and spouse in full time job explains how this will work as follows:

"If office hours are sufficient to fulfil my job responsibilities, then I won't need to work from home. The problem is that the workload is massive that office hours are not enough. If this workload is reduced to the right amount, this will solve the problem".

However, interviewee A, a female faculty who has been teaching in an UAE federal university for four years and has two children and a strong passion for teaching. She argues that even if workload was decreased, faculty will still work from home in her below statement:

"Reducing workload will help me limit the time worked from home for sure, but it will not stop it. I have a strong passion for my job and it will take me a lot of self-control not to work from home. Even if I will not be preparing lectures materials or grade papers, I will use the time to work on research".

From the above, it appears that reducing workload is not the only answer to the equation. Self-restraint by faculty will be required.

Chapter Five: Discussion

This chapter reflects on the main findings of the research in terms of faculty perception of work-life balance, its challenges, importance and its role on turnover intentions.

5.1 Understanding of Work-Life Balance

When asked to describe what work-life balance meant to them, there was an apparent variation based on gender. Female faculty appeared to demonstrate the misconception described by Eikhof, Warhurst and Haunschild (2007) of work-life balance being related to family responsibilities and childcare.

Three males in the sample referred to childcare responsibilities as a challenge to work-life balance challenges. The only one of the male faculty who expanded the concept to include other activities and interests that were not necessarily associated with family care was the single male participants. Although this perception of expanding the meaning of life is consistent with Hughes and

Bozionelos (2007) and is not necessarily linked to gender, the only mention of this perception was from the single male faculty without children.

Individuality is also worth mentioning when trying to understand work-life balance from the perspective of faculty. According to Smidt, Pétursdóttir and Einarsdóttir (2017); Lester (2015), work-life balance is individualistic as it relates to different circumstances that individuals experience. Based on this, it was observed that all faculty participants mentioned the challenges of work-life balance, but not all of them shared the same sentiment towards spillover from work to life. Passion for teaching and for their job was often mentioned instead. The spillover was part of the package. Some even welcomed working from home as it was their way to keep busy. This can be due to being workaholics and derive satisfaction from work (Guest 2002), or due to their family structure, where faculty are away from their families and need to keep themselves occupied by work. Both Lockwood (2003) and Latz and Rediger (2015) link these variations to the fact that different people have different needs and priorities.

On the other side, HR representatives have naturally demonstrated more in-depth knowledge and understanding of work-life balance. They used HR terminology and concepts such as keeping separate domains in order to achieve the required balance. They also mentioned available resources for faculty to utilise and improve their work-life balance, and made recommendations of what can be done in the future. One of the sound recommendations that were made by HR representatives was to include other departments such as faculty affairs and deans of the colleges in a collaboration to put together the best approach of balancing work and life for faculty. This recommendations was similarly made in literature by Parakandi and Behery (2016) where the importance of management buy-in was emphasised. The reason for this collaboration, as explained by HR interviewees, was that there are more aspects and non-HR policies that are managed and addressed separately. i.e. faculty affairs, within colleges, etc. This collaboration between HR and management could foster a supportive culture that will enable and improve work-life balance (Lockwood 2003). HR representatives also made reference to the advantages of enabling work-life balance to their employees such as improved performance, quality of teaching, job satisfaction, and most relevant to this study, employee retention.

5.2 Models of Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance proved to be indeed an elusive concept to define (Kalliath & Brough 2008; Guest 2002). However, it was observed during this study that work-life models as explained by Guest (2002) were present. Faculty participants did not know about the theoretical models of work-life balance, yet their description of their situations and feelings included the components of various models of work-life balance. Such as: the segmentation model, the spillover model, the compensation model, the instrumental model and the conflict model (Guest 2002).

Although faculty participants had varying family situations and demographic backgrounds, they were all able to unknowingly describe models of work-life balance. The majority suffered from role conflict and spillover from work to life. Some of them demonstrated that their life arrangements matched the compensation model, where they used one domain to compensate for the other. Moreover, success in career domain can be considered as an instrumental model where it enables better life due to financial security. Segmentation model was described by faculty when they were referring to how they would overcome the challenges of work-life balance.

The participants also highlighted various challenges that hindered the achievement of work-life balance, such as time, family obligations and financial concerns. Varying degrees of challenges were detected from faculty participants, but the most intense challenges were faced by the ones with young children. Similarly, the feeling of guilt also varied in intensity among faculty participants. The feeling of guilt towards family members, either children or spouses, were the most intense. Female faculty participants expressed the feeling of guilt more than males, which can be explained according to O'Meara and Campbell (2011), who confirm that females are the ones who feel responsible to give care to their families, and that they try to balance those responsibilities with their careers.

5.2 Work-Life Balance – Faculty Perceptions

The challenges faced by faculty interviewees in this study were situated within literature, with workload being the chief challenge (Winefield, Boyd & Winefield 2014; Saltmarsh and Randell-Moon 2015). Workload was a challenge as it was considered as either a negative spillover that is overtaking their personal time and their ability to spend enough time doing the things they wanted to, among which was meeting family responsibilities. Moreover, workload was causing role

conflict as faculty had different roles that they wanted to fulfil. In the survey results reported by Lockwood (2003), 90% of participants reported insufficient time to spend with family. When breaking it down by gender, Lockwood (2003) indicated that both females and males reported family responsibilities as the top of their work-life balance concerns with a majority of 80% of participants. However, this is consistent in the situation of this study in the UAE where female participants reported similar concerns, but male participants did not refer to family responsibilities as their main concern except by three participants which is in contradiction with Lockwood (2003).

With universities in the UAE focusing more attention towards research in the past few years (Austin et al. 2014), faculty are encouraged and required to be more active in the research front. Research was mentioned by participants as time consuming and causing a challenge balancing work and life. It was also mentioned as essential for their promotion and job security. However, it was not confirmed to be as intense as in other parts of the world. On the contrary, productivity standards appeared to be more lenient as explained by one of the participants.

As the meaning of life broadened in literature, more activities that are not associated with family responsibilities were present, such as leisure activities and community services (Kalliath & Brough 2008; Fahlén 2012). In that context, quality of life was mentioned by participants as having the opportunity to do what they enjoyed in life such as traveling. Another participant associated it with the standards of living in the UAE which assured the availability of resources and means to make life easier and smoother. In both occasions, faculty identification of quality of life in the UAE resonated with literature in terms of meaning and was appreciated.

5.3 Work-Life Balance – HR Perceptions

The nature of academia seems to make the challenges facing HR rather unique in nature. Known approaches of facilitating work-life balance include flexible working hours and providing well-being facilities can be helpful (Saltmarsh & Randell-Moon 2015), but may not be sufficient in the case of faculty due to the unique nature of their job. In agreement with Barrett and Barrett (2010) observation, it was evident that faculty in the UAE did not work standard business hours only, but used their own personal time as an extension to fulfil their job requirements, which leads to work-life balance issues.

The types of pressures faced by HR were also consistent with literature. Pressures that affect faculty such as fierce competition for students, compliance with regulatory bodies and increased research activities (Saltmarsh & Randell-Moon 2015) were present in the UAE and were cascaded to both faculty and HR. Overall, these requirements apply pressure on faculty to work more, and equally apply pressure on HR in their attempts facilitate better work-life balance for faculty when developing relevant strategies and policies. For example, if university policies offer a flexible work arrangement, faculty remain managed by objectives according to other policies pertaining to employee performance. Therefore, it remains their responsibility to meet those objectives and deadlines, which pressurises them to work even more hours from home. Thus, stifling HR attempts to improve work-life balance due to the collide of policies. This situation in UAE universities showed similarity to the explanation offered by Saltmarsh and Randell-Moon (2015).

Changes in management style of university appear to have taken their toll on HR. While there wasn't any explicit mention of managerialism, HR representatives acknowledged budgetary constraints and emphasis on cost cutting which can be interpreted to signal managerialism. These constraints oftentimes stifle their attempts to improve work-life balance for faculty. For example, there are budgetary restrictions on the hiring of additional regular contract faculty to ease the workload. As a result, HR resort to hiring adjuncts who do not cost as much according to (Connell 2013; Shin & Jung 2014). The drawback identified by HR was that adjuncts do not show long-term commitment and can decide to leave by giving a short notice period. It is interesting that HR here did not touch upon the other drawbacks mentioned by both Connell (2013) and Shin and Jung (2014) such as increasing the burden on regular faculty who are still required to fulfil administrative responsibilities that adjuncts are exempted from.

5.4 Work-Life Balance and Turnover Intention

Turnover was mentioned as one of the challenges facing HR as a subsequent outcome to work-life imbalance. Although HR representatives acknowledged during interviews that fostering a culture that enabled work-life balance had a positive impact on employee retention (Lester 2013; Dunne & Teg 2007), they demonstrated more emphasis on costs associated with faculty turnover. This may be due to their inability to control some aspects of faculty work life, such as workload and other academic policies related to research. Nevertheless, HR were aware of the need to form a collaboration between HR, deans of the colleges, and faculty affairs in order to facilitate better

work-life balance for faculty. They were also aware that changes in culture similar to those described by Lester (2015) and echoed by Tower et al. (2015). In their studies, culture could not be changed via policies, but rather via members of the organisation management who promote the culture. Therefore, leaders such as the deans of the colleges play a major role in fostering this supportive culture.

When asked about their perception on the role of work-life balance and its impact on faculty turnover, HR representatives did not strongly feel that work-life imbalance was the main reason behind faculty turnover. Instead, they referred to data gathered from exit interviews and detailed other reasons for departure such as pursuing further educational degrees, further developing career or better prospective with another employer. On the few occasions work-life balance was listed as reason for leaving, it was mainly by females who also referred to family reasons during their exit interviews. This behaviour was confirmed in literature that females were the ones who often feel the obligation of balancing between work and family roles (O'Meara & Campbell 2011). Similarly, the only faculty interviewee in this study who referred turnover intention was a female, although she was the sole breadwinner of the family. Males on the other hand, did not declare any turnover intentions.

This absence of turnover intention among interviewees can be due to confidentiality reasons where they did not want to disclose their future plans. It could also be the case that they were not considering turnover due to any other reasons such as financial obligations. Thus adopting the instrumental model of work-life balance.

5.5 Is the UAE Context Unique?

The UAE has a heterogeneous society structure with people coming to the country from different parts of the world. Expatriates form 80% of the country's total population and with this diverse workforce, employees have a varying array of preferences, requirements and anticipations (Parakandi & Behery 2016). According to Parakandi and Behery (2016), many of the expatriate workforce come to the UAE to make financial gains. This phenomenon was present among some of faculty interviewees as they confirmed their willing to put up with work-life imbalance in exchange of those financial gains and better life standards. Nevertheless, this viewpoint could not be generalised as those who expressed interest in financial gains were a minority. Moreover, it contradicts the point of view is offered by Richardson and McKenna (2002) where expatriates seek

personal development and life enrichment from working abroad. Thus, it could be a simple matter of different persons being motivated by different things. This diversity of nationalities, backgrounds, cultures, household structures and reasons for coming to work in the UAE makes it difficult to formulate the best strategy to facilitate better work-life balance. There is no one-size fit-all work-life balance approach (Parakandi & Behery 2016).

The sample of this study confirms Özbilgin et al. (2011) explanation that there were variations of perceptions of work-life balance that may be attributed to diversity. For example, how work-life balance challenges were dealt with in this study varied depending on background and family structure. Similarly, the perception of the amount of work that caused work-life imbalance varied depending on background variations. Participants coming from Western backgrounds did not feel that the workload in the UAE was as intense when compared to workload in their home countries. Other participants also welcomed working from home and considered it as part of their job nature.

Although relevant, this study was not designed to investigate diversity of workforce in the UAE. Therefore, it is perhaps prudent to treat it with some degree of caution until further research and deeper investigation were conducted before a generalisation can be made.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

This final chapter of the study concludes by deducing main conclusions, making recommendations. It also discusses the limitation to the study and the implications for future research.

6.1 Main Conclusions

The results from this study supported the components of work-life balance. This section is organised around the research questions of the research and the narrative themes and narrative subthemes that emerged from the responses of the participants.

6.1.1 How do HR professionals in the higher education sector in the UAE understand work-life balance and its importance?

HR representatives were able to describe work-life balance more details than faculty. They used concepts such as compartmentalising each domain and being able to fulfill each role. They were also able to include temporal and spatial segregation between work and life. This can be attributed to their specialty in HR subject matter and their awareness of the concept. Moreover, HR

professionals in this study were able to identify "life" to include aspects beyond family responsibilities which can be resultant from their knowledge, experience and education on the subject matter.

They were also able to demonstrate awareness of the importance of work-life balance stemming from its desirable outcomes, such as better recruitment process, improved employee performance, motivation, engagement and retention of employees (Lester 2013; Dunne & Teg 2007). They also mentioned some of the undesirable outcomes of work-life imbalance such as burnout, health complications, decline in motivation and performance (Bubb and Earley 2004).

Nevertheless, it was found that they were facing numerous challenges in their attempts to improve work-life balance for faculty. The first one of those challenges was the conflict with organisational objectives. The goals that various departments needed to attain resulted in the cascade of pressure on faculty to accept more workload, meet research standards, and carry out administrative responsibilities which all require ample time to be fulfilled. Accommodating work-life balance for faculty will pose as an obstacle on the path of fulfilling these goals. Another challenge faced by HR was budgetary and financial contracts, which oftentimes were found stifling to their attempts of improving work-life balance conditions for faculty. To decrease the workload for faculty required hiring additional employees, which was not always an available option. Hiring adjuncts was cost-effective, but not as effective when it came to long-term commitment.

Other initiatives taken by HR to improve work-life balance included facilitating access to nursery and gym facilities, which indeed take care of two aspects of work-life balance challenges: childcare and well-being. However, this approach seemed to tackle work-life balance and not tackle the long hours required to perform job responsibilities. Moreover, how appropriate are those initiatives to the demography and nature of the workforce? The answer to this question could not be established from this research sample and needs to be put into consideration for further research when HR design such initiatives.

6.1.2 How faculty in the higher education sector in the UAE perceive work-life balance and what they would consider most appropriate to their needs?

Literature oftentimes refers to "life" in connection to responsibilities, which are for the most part family responsibilities and which are associated with females. The development of the concept of life to include other aspects of life such as leisure was also available in literature. When compared

to the sample of this study, "life" was primarily identified along the lines of literature, but with variations based on gender. Married females immediately connected work-life balance to life responsibilities. In contrast, male faculty included other "life" activities in addition to family responsibilities; such as time to carry out research and develop oneself, which still connected to their careers.

Work-life balance remain to be an ongoing challenge for faculty despite the autonomous nature of their job. Most of the faculty sample interviewed in this study confirmed the pressures of meeting deadlines and various career objectives that subsequently led to work-life balance challenges. Personal circumstances, however, play a role in the perception of work-life balance as a challenge. A minority of the interviewees did not perceive workload, which is associated with work-life balance, as a challenge. Instead, it was welcomed as it kept them busy and productive.

In response to the most appropriate solution to this dilemma, there was concurrence that decreasing workload was necessary in order for them to better perform their jobs, focus on their research and be able to manage other aspects of their life.

6.1.3 What is the role of work-life balance on faculty retention?

It was not established from the sample of this research that work-life balance will lead to turnover intentions. Participants from the faculty side acknowledged challenges of work-life balance. However, the majority did not confirm that it would be their main reason to turnover.

Similarly, HR did not confirm that work-life balance was the main reason behind faculty voluntary turnover in their universities according to gathered exit interview information. Instead, they mentioned better career prospects, pursuing further degrees, and occasionally family reasons.

This makes the finding of the absence of a link between work-life balance and turnover intention in contradiction with literature. Therefore, this finding needs to be treated with caution until further investigation and research were carried out.

6.1.4 How to better retain faculty by applying best HR practices to improve work-life balance in the higher education sector in the UAE?

HR need to be aware of the nature of their employees when devising work-life balance and wellbeing policies to ensure they are inclusive of all employees, particularly in a diverse population such as the one in the UAE. According to Lockwood (2003), people have needs that vary

depending on their stage in life. Based on this, it is difficult for HR to come up with a solution that suits the needs of all employees. Therefore, HR professionals need to understand the nature, demography of their employees and the issues facing them and devise appropriate approaches and strategies. Gathering such information can be done via employee satisfaction surveys and exit interviews. The exchange between faculty and dean during performance evaluation sessions can also indicate areas of struggle for faculty and improvement for HR and universities.

6.2 Recommendations

Although literature indicate that work-life balance an important factor in the retention of employees, there is still a lot of assessment of the effectiveness of various strategies that can be implemented to decrease work-life balance issues (Deery & Jago 2015). Based on the conceptual framework of this study and the findings of this study, the researcher offers the following recommendations:

- Along the lines of Winefield, Boyd and Winefield (2014), find ways to reduce faculty workload as this may improve their well-being, instil commitment, and improve performance and subsequently retention.

- Consistently gather exit interview data regarding faculty reasons for leaving and analyse those in conjunction with data gathered from employee satisfaction survey.

- HR initiatives need to give careful considerations to the diversity of faculty in order to come up with effective strategies that are suitable for the population of employees (Özbilgin et al. 2011).

- Include academic administrators, deans and management perspective and gain their buy-in to support work-life balance initiatives.

- HR to get a better understanding on how things operate on the academic side to be able to come up with more suitable approaches on how to improve work-life balance for faculty. For example, research needs and criteria could not be probed during interviews with HR representatives as it was handled by another department that has its own evaluation system and policies.

- Along the recommendations made by Bubb and Earley (2004), HR in conjunction with the academic side, need to use remodelling to decrease workload for faculty. In their recommendations, this can be done by removing administrative tasks from faculty and

appointing staff to assist with those tasks. Also, to give faculty non-teaching time to allow them to plan for lecture martials.

6.3 Limitations of the Study

While qualitative research provides better understanding on human behaviour and developing theory, it is often criticised for the lack of generalisability due to the massive amount of data it generates about one single phenomenon. It is also time consuming due to the large amount of data it generates.

Similarly, the outcomes of this study cannot be generalised although it could identify significant findings and conclusions about work-life balance for faculty in the UAE and its role on their turnover intentions. The reason for this is that there is much more to be researched. The size of the sample in this research was relatively small. A bigger sample would have yielded much richer data, confirmed behavioural trends and offered more detailed findings. This would have resulted in massive amount of data that could not have been handled due to time restrictions and word count of this dissertation.

Moreover, the sample of this study was limited to the perceptions of faculty and HR, but it appeared necessary to consider additional perceptions of others. Such as management, deans of the colleges and faculty affairs to get a better appreciation of the full picture. Comparing and contrasting those perceptions would have added more insight to this study.

Furthermore, the sample did not include any faculty who were UAE nationals. Although they are a minority of 20% of the entire population of the UAE and even less in academia as per Parakandi and Behery (2016), it would have been a good idea to include them and find out about the challenges faced by them and compare them to those of expats.

6.4 Implications for Future Research

This study is significant due to various reasons that include the unique composition of workforce population in the UAE, and the financial ramifications of turnover in a country where the majority of its workforce is expatriate.

This study explores an under-studied Middle-Eastern context with a hetrogeneous population. Most of work-life balance studies were conducted in Western contexts. Due to the unique nature

of workforce in the UAE, it would be interesting to better understand the dynamics of such a heterogeneous and diverse population.

With the adoption of neoliberalism, employers need to look at ways to cut costs and increase output. Hiring costs in a country where the majority of its workforce is rather expensive due to the expatriate allowances employees receive. For example, employers are obliged by the law to provide expatriate employees with repatriation tickets upon conclusion of employment. Similarly, many employers provide relocation tickets at the beginning of employment along with shipping allowance and hospitality benefits. These costs add up when there is a high rate of faculty turnover. Hence retaining talent can translate into cutting costs which are conventionally associated with turnover, and also saving costs of international hiring of expatriates.

However, it is recommended that more studies with a bigger sample be carried out on work-life balance for faculty in the UAE as it can offer great insights into turnover intention and how to prevent it. Moreover, a larger sample would have yielded more detailed findings. It may also be useful to include the perspectives of management and academic policy makers to gain more insight into the challenges facing the facilitation of work-life balance for faculty.

6.5 Personal Reflections

Literature mentioned the amount of work that goes into qualitative research, but the researcher did not realise how great this amount of work was until interviews were carried out. Also, during interviews, it was psychologically exhausting to be informed about participants personal life circumstances, their emotions and their frustrations. Getting emotionally involved was a concern for the researcher lest bias may develop.

Another challenge was faced during data analysis phase as it was challenging to decide what to include and what not to include in the study. With a large amount of data that was populated in this study, making such a decision was difficult as the researcher wanted to convey the information in detail, yet remain relevant to the topic.

An interesting observation from the interviews was how different genders expressed themselves differently. Female participants were more able to relay feelings, whether through body language or articulation. They also gave lengthy detailed narratives that sometimes drifted away from the main topic. In contrast, male participants were more reserved and concise in their responses.

Overall, it was enjoyable to engage in conversation about a topic that is common and to get to understand some aspects of human behaviour.

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Appendix 1: Interview Schedule - Faculty

Describing work-life balance:
How would you describe work-life balance?
How do you manage work-life balance?
Work-life balance Challenges:
What are the challenges that you face with work-life balance?
How do you feel about those challenges?
Overcoming the Challenges:
How do you deal with work-life balance challenges?
In your opinion, what can be done to improve your work-life balance?
Work-life balance and turnover intentions:
Hypothetically speaking, what would be the reason for you to resign from your job?
In your opinion, how could work-life balance challenges lead to your decision to resign?
Improving Work-Life Balance:
In your opinion, what could your employer do to improve work-life balance challenges for you?

Appendix 2: Interview Schedule - HR

Describing work-life balance:
How would you describe work-life balance?
Work-life balance Challenges:
What are the challenges that you face with facilitating work-life balance?
Overcoming the Challenges –:
What are the challenges faced by HR while attempting to facilitate work-life balance?
In your opinion, what can be done to improve your work-life balance for faculty?
Work-life balance and turnover intentions:
From your information, what is the most common reason for faculty turnover?
In your opinion, how could work-life balance challenges lead to faculty decision to resign?
Improving Work-Life Balance:
In your opinion, what could your university do to improve work-life balance challenges for faculty?