

The Association between Work-Life Balance and Rewards towards Job Satisfaction amongst Employees at Private Universities in Klang Valley.

Zabedah Othman^{1*}, Noorhamizah Hamzah², Mariaton Safrina Baharuddin³, Annessa Natasha Zabidi⁴.

^{1,2,3}Unitar University College Kuala Lumpur

⁴University Teknologi MARA

*Corresponding Author

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.91100006>

Received: 08 November 2025; Accepted: 14 November 2025; Published: 27 November 2025

ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the effect of work-life balance and rewards towards job satisfaction amongst employees working at the private universities in Klang Valley. This study will employ a quantitative method by utilising self-managed questionnaires to collect the data from the employees working at the private universities. The questionnaire will assess key features of job satisfaction involving reward and work-life balance amongst the employees working in the private universities at Klang Valley.

By analysing the data collected, the descriptive statistics will provide an outline of the overall job satisfaction amongst the employees surveyed. In addition, inferential statistical techniques will be employed to identify significant correlations between the demographic elements such as age, gender, marital status and their job satisfaction. The findings from this study are projected to offer beneficial insights for the employees, policymakers and university administrators. By understanding the elements that drive job satisfaction, institutions can acquire targeted approaches to enhance employees' well-being and engagement. This could lead to enhanced organisational performance, increasing employees' retention, with a productive and positive and work settings within the competitive surroundings of private universities in Klang Valley.

Keywords: work-life balance, rewards, job satisfaction, private universities.

INTRODUCTION

Udin (2023) stated that employees that successfully balanced their job functions with their personal lives will normally reveal dedication, higher motivation and job satisfaction towards enhancing their performance. Work-life balance is considered as one of the essential elements to be focused on employees and management to ensure employees' welfare is sustained. Work-life balance is identified as the capacity to be in self-control, competitive and productive during work, maintaining a cheerful and healthful home life with adequate time for leisure time (Campo et al., 2021). An unbalanced relationship between reward and effort might generate poor performance, weakening and exhaustion in life situations. (Bataineh, 2019). To ensure high job productivity, positive work conditions is essential towards enhancing employees' productivity and retaining (Almarzooqi & Ab Wahid, 2024) and Wolor et al. (2020) mentioned that happiness and achievement can enhance work-life balance due to these elements could aid employees towards achieving their accomplishment. Theys and Barkhuizen (2022) mentioned that employees value plans which include direct and indirect financial rewards, workplace social interests, positive work features, career prospects, multiple services and conveniences. Armstrong and Taylor (2020) stated that employers must consider all attributes of the employees' work experience that hold their value when designing their reward schemes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Job satisfaction

Organisations that are ambitious towards achieving greater victory should prioritise multiple approaches that can facilitate employees achieving their job performance successfully. Thus, when employees' welfare is not

eased, it can lead to significant losses for the organisation (Jayanandana & Jayathilaka, 2023). Fidhdho and Larrasaty (2024) stated that employees in an organization surveyed underwent improved job satisfaction due to reinforcement balanced between their personal and skilled commitments especially in pressured environments. These studies highlighted that furthering work-life balance improves employees' job satisfaction, upgrading effectiveness, motivation, and job productivity. Retaining a healthy work-life balance develops employees' improvement, efficiency, engagement and job routine. Krishnan, (2018) mentioned that employees in a private university had strengthened job satisfaction and reduced turnover rates when they were reinforced by work-life balance strategies. In addition, Dousin (2019) stated that supportive management and flexibility arrangements in the hospitals enhanced employees' job satisfaction while improving their performance. Their study highlighted that job satisfaction mediates the association between task performance and work-life balance arrangements, proving that staff with constructive supervisor feedback while controlling their schedules will perform greater. Companies that focused on work-life balance encourage supportive settings, leading to elevated staff retention, satisfaction, and efficiency. Abdirahman, (2018) mentioned that employees with greater job satisfaction are found to be motivated, optimistic, and guided to improve their performance. Thus, companies can entice best talent while fostering an optimistic company's culture, developing their competitiveness and status in the employment position (Tkalych et al., 2020). In addition, companies having a balanced work-life system impacts on employees' creativity, collaboration, and innovation which promote organizational growth and victory. According to Sindhuja (2020), furthering work-life balance leads to an improved healthful and committed workforce, impacting towards the organisation's profitability, steadiness and sustainability. Ambrose et al. (2020) highlighted the vital function of flexible work measures, sharing of assignment and exhaustion avoidance towards furthering employee engagement. Establishing encouraging job settings that prioritises work-life balances increases job satisfaction, lessened the turnover rates and encourages long-term victory for companies. Rodríguez-Sánchez et al. (2020) and Aziz et al. (2023) studies showed that work-life balance proposals, such as telework and flexible times expand employees' satisfaction, retention, performance and commitment, leading to cost savings. These policies aid towards reducing turnover rates, lowering absenteeism, lowering training and recruitment costs. Therefore, organisations should foster work-life balance as it could decrease stressful health concerns, reduce healthcare expenses, and contribute towards a healthy, satisfied and constructive labor force.

Work-life balance

The expansion of digital technologies, such as laptops, smartphones, and cloud-based platforms, has made individuals able to be linked to work beyond the conventional office hours (Attaran, Attaran & Kirkland, 2019). A study done by Susanto (2022) consisting of 600 employees from small and medium-sized enterprises showed significant results of direct relationship of work-life balance towards job performance. These findings implied that work-life balance will enhance employees' capability to accomplish their job roles. The respondents stated their inclination to be flexible during work when requested and further highlighted that they were not inclined to give up their respective lives for their positions (Susanto et al., 2022). Results from previous study involving 293 Sri Lankan information technologies professionals that actively engaged in work-from-home showed that work-life balance significantly affects information technology remote employees perform their jobs (Jayanandana & Jayathilaka, 2023). The incorporation of work and personal life can affect burnout, stress and job satisfaction (Borowiec & Drygas, 2022). Personal approaches for accomplishing work-life balance embrace intentional attempts to manage work obligations while prioritising personal well-being. These strategies set clear limitations between individual time and work roles, arranging tasks, adopting flexible work arrangements and improving management of time to adapt towards individual needs (Zuhriatusobah et al., 2023). Flexible working provisions can extensively improve work-life balance by granting employees limit over their programs, leading towards reduced absences and improved performance (Angelici & Profeta, 2020). Maintaining work-life balance lessened stress, inhibits burnout, and increases general well-being, furthering a healthy and fulfilling daily life (De Klerk et al., 2021). Work-life balance reinforces family relations by enabling individuals to commit more time to their families, adopting better cohesion and communication (Aliasah et al., 2020). Subramaniam (2015) found that flexible working engagements expanded the changing aspects of Malaysian women, enhancing relations with their families, reducing stress and time restrictions. In addition, Husin et al. (2018) highlighted that Malaysian academic sector with better work-life balance conveyed greater family satisfaction and inclusive well-being. These studies highlighted that by offering flexible schedules, organisations could promote a positive work

environment, family harmony and employees' satisfaction eventually, enhancing productivity and lessening the turnover rates.

Rewards

Reward systems are divided into classifications which are extrinsic and intrinsic. Extrinsic or monetary rewards are benefits, salary, incentives, or status indications such as company vehicles. Intrinsic or non-monetary rewards provided to employees are encouraging feedback, independence and accountability, training and development or attribution of respectable positions (Jayawardena & Jayawardena, 2020; Manzoor et al., 2021). Reward management impacts employees' satisfaction and motivation, enhances retention, accelerates engagement of knowledge and influences towards the organisation's progression and productivity according to Beqiri and Aziri (2022). Inadequate reward system often directs to behaviours such as disinterest, dissatisfaction, detachment and discomfort amongst employees, compromising the level and superiority of performance (Almeida, 2021; Alrazehi et al., 2021). Elements such as promotion, compensation, culture, gratitude and work situation will ascertain the degree of satisfaction of employees. Decrease levels of satisfaction will have explicit influence on particular behaviour such as reduced productivity, less dedication, lack of independence with less innovative and creativeness (Hareendrakumar et al., 2020; Mabaso et al., 2021). Employees will reinforce their intention to stay in that organisation whenever their needs are fulfilled (Othman, 2019). It is overbearing that reward execution meets the certainties of the individuals to whom the rewards are projected, and the expansion are constructed on the elements of equity, clarity and transparency, portraying the reward system as dependable, reliable and reasonable (Shaheen et al., 2020; Silva et al., 2022). Thus, organisations are required to suitably assess employees' requirements and the consequences of their procedures or policies towards reward management since poor reward management will lead towards withdrawal behaviours.

Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses Development

Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory proposes that job satisfaction is inclined by two separate groups of elements which are hygiene elements which avoid disappointment if available, but do not inspire employees, and motivator elements which directly contribute towards job satisfaction and motivation when available. There are distinct sets of elements at the workplace settings that could provide either job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Motivators introduce employees to behave remarkably, while hygiene elements are vital to avoid any dissatisfaction (Herzberg, 1959). These elements initiate job satisfaction which are associated towards self-growth and self-actualisation. While motivators initiate job satisfaction, lack of hygiene factors could initiate job dissatisfaction. Herzberg (1959) stated that satisfaction and dissatisfaction should not be dependably evaluated on similar scale. Herzberg discovered elements in the workplace that influence either dissatisfaction or satisfaction. In addition, Herzberg linked the hygiene factors individual's need to evade irritation, while motivational elements were clearly linked with job satisfaction, guided by the condition for self-growth and self-actualisation. The satisfiers (motivational factors) and dissatisfiers (lack of hygiene factors), are dynamic, extremely modifying to differences, reasonable to the employees, and constantly interconnecting (Herzberg, 1959).

Proposed framework

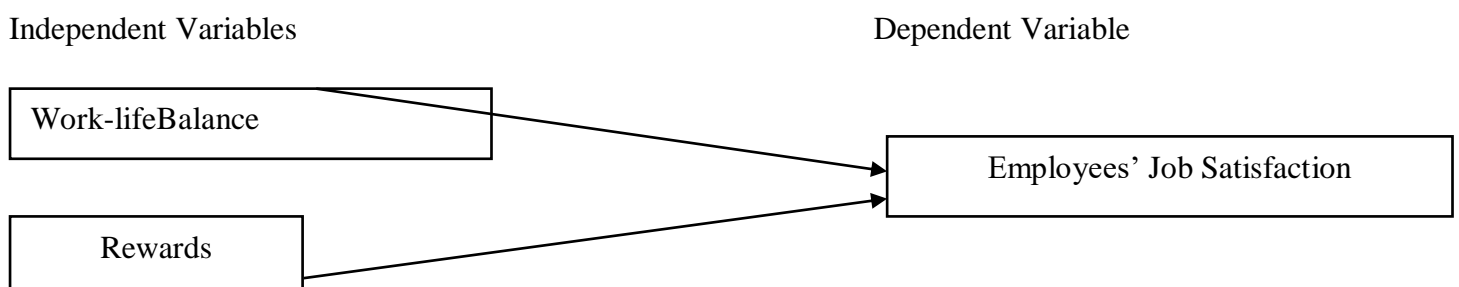


Figure 1: Proposed framework for the “The Association Between Work Life Balance and Rewards Towards Job Satisfaction Amongst Employees at Private Universities in Klang Valley, Malaysia.

Figure 1 defined the proposed framework for this study.

According to the framework, it was hypothesized that:

H1: There is a positive correlation between work-life balance towards job satisfaction amongst employees at private universities in Klang Valley.

H2: There is a positive correlation between rewards towards job satisfaction amongst employees at private universities in Klang Valley.

H3: There is an impact between work-life balance and rewards towards job satisfaction amongst employees at private universities in Klang Valley.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A quantitative method will be employed to explore the relationship between work-life balance and rewards towards employees' job satisfaction at private universities in Klang Valley. These variables are measured based on the instruments, and the primary data will be analysed by using statistical measures such as SPSS Version 30 and Smart PLS Version 4.0.

Population and Sampling

The population will consist of employees working in private universities in Klang Valley, regardless of their position or rank. Convenience sampling will be employed to gather the data from 200 employees working in the private education sector in Klang Valley, Malaysia.

Data Collection Procedures

The survey instruments will be used to collect data from 200 employees working in the private universities in Klang Valley. The questionnaire instrument comprises of statements for respondents ranging from: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Somewhat Agree, 4=Agree and 5=Strongly Agree.

Framework of questionnaire

The questions related to work-life balance are adapted from Validation of the Work-Life Balance Culture Scale (WLBCS) developed by Anika Nitzsche, Julia Jung, Christoph Kowalski and Holger Pfaff (2014) to measure the organizational culture construct of work-life balance from Sage Journals, 49(1):133-42. doi: 10.3233/WOR-131643.

The questions for work-life balance are adapted from Nur Suffia Sulaiman (2015) from the journal entitled "Assessing Quality of Working Life Among Malaysian Workers" from the Asia Pacific Journal of Public Health, 27(8), 94S-100S. doi: 10.1177/1010539515583331.

The section on rewards evaluates employees' satisfaction with the monetary and non-monetary rewards they receive. Questions are adapted from Nur Masriyah Hamzah and Syafawati Matkhairuddin (2023) from the journal "Impact of Non-Financial Rewards on Employees' Job Satisfaction". from e-Academia Journal of UiTM, 12 (2) 119-132.

The questions for job satisfaction are adapted from Spector, P., E. (1985). Measurement of human service staff satisfaction: Development of the Job Satisfaction Survey from American Journal of Community Psychology, 13, 693-713.

Data analysis

The primary data collected will be analysed by employing SPSS Version 30 and Smart PLS Version 4.0. Test performed will be for frequency analysis, reliability analysis, correlation and multi-regression.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for organisations

Organisations should nurture a culture that prioritises work-life balance. This can be done by classifying employee challenges and offering tailor-made resolutions such as flexible work arrangements, flexible locations, training for time management, and establishing clear limits between personal life and job. Policies regarding these strategies must be communicated, strengthened and formalised by conducting regular training and open programs where employees could share their concerns and needs. Thus, by addressing these attributes, organisations can boost employees' morale, increased their trust and commitment, lessened burnout and achieve long-term accomplishment by advancing for their employees' workforce benefits.

Recommendations for future research

For future studies, researchers could implement additional comprehensive method by engaging a greater and more varied respondents' group to have mixed viewpoints towards work-life balance across multiple organisational settings such as tourism, agriculture or financial sectors. With a greater sample, including a larger number of respondents, real distinctions will surface. Future studies could also apply other independent variables such as benefits or training. Discovering organisations with various workforces and conducting qualitative interviews may generate improved and authentic awareness. Future studies may also be performed to incorporate other careers, industries, government sector or non-profit companies as a comparison. In addition, longitudinal studies can be employed to measure the impact of work-life balance approaches on employees' satisfaction and organisational accomplishment, providing a meaningful understanding of their effectiveness.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors would like to thank Unitar University College Kuala Lumpur for supporting this study.

REFERENCES

1. Abdirahman, H. I. H., Najeemdeen, I. S., Abidemi, B. T., & Ahmad, R. (2018). The relationship between job satisfaction, work-life balance and organizational commitment on employee performance. ResearchGate, doi: 10.9790/487X-2005077681. <https://ir.uitm.edu.my/id/eprint/29378/1/29378.pdf>.
2. Aliasah, M. W. S., Abdullah, Z., & Shafee, S. (2020). The impact of the work-life balance on work motivation among the non-academic employees of public higher learning institutions in Malaysia. *The Malaysian Journal of Social Administration*, 14(2), 1–18. <https://jati.um.edu.my/index.php/mjsa/article/view/26984/12345>.
3. Almarzooqi, H.S. & Ab Wahid, H. (2024). The effect of organizational factors on employee happiness among millennials in the United Arab Emirates utility sector. *Information Sciences Letters: An International Journal*, 13(6), 1-11.
4. Almeida, D., Beuren, I., Monteiro, J. (2021). Reflexes of organizational values on the reward system in a family business. *Brazilian Business Review*, 18(2), 140-159.
5. Angelici, M., & Profeta, P. (2020). Smart-Working: Work flexibility without constraints. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3556304>.
6. Anika Nitzsche, Julia Jung, Christoph Kowalski & Holger Pfaff (2014). Work-Life balance culture scale (WLBCS) Sage Journals, 49(1):133-42. doi: 10.3233/WOR-131643.
7. Alrazehi, H.A.A.-W., Amirah, N. A., & Emam, A. S. M. (2021). The mediation effect of job satisfaction between reward system and training and development on employee retention in Yemen's banking sector. *International Journal of Innovative Research and Scientific Studies*, 4(4), 215–228. <https://doi.org/10.53894/ijirss.v4i4.100>.
8. Ambrose, D., Nazri, M., Khin, E. W. S., & Lee, S. T. (2020). The relationship between work-life balance and employees' retention among employees at Klang Valley area in Malaysia. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary and Current Educational Research (IJMCER)*. https://www.ijmcer.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/IJMCER_WW02504240426.pdf.

9. Armstrong, M., & Taylor, S. (2020). Handbook of human resource management practice, (15th Edition), Kogan Page. Retrieved from <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ujlink-ebooks/detail.action?docID=5995878>.
10. Attaran, M., Attaran, S., & Kirkland, D. (2019). The need for digital workplace. *International Journal of Enterprise Information Systems*, 15(1), 1–23. ResearchGate. <https://doi.org/10.4018/ijeis.2019010101>.
11. Aziz, N. N. A., Yazid, Z. N. A., Tarmuji, N. H., Samsudin, M. A., & Majid, A. A. (2021). The role of religiosity on work-family conflict, work-family enrichment and well-being among Muslim women academicians in Malaysia. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 11(3). <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarbss/v11-i3/8807>
12. Bataineh, K.A. (2019). Impact of work-life balance, happiness at work, on employee performance. *International Business Research*, 12(2), 99-112.
13. Beqiri, T., & Aziri, B. (2022). Impact of the total reward management on performance of employees in commercial banks. *Management: Journal of Contemporary Management Issues*, 27(1), 323–335. <https://doi.org/10.30924/mjcmi.27.1.18>.
14. Borowiec, A. A., & Drygas, W. (2022). Work–Life balance and mental and physical health among Warsaw specialists, managers and entrepreneurs. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 20(1), 492. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph20010492>
15. Campo, A. M. D. V., Avolio, B., & Carlier, S. I. (2021). The relationship between telework, job performance, work–life balance and family supportive supervisor behaviours in the context of COVID-19. *Global Business Review*, 09721509211049918.
16. De Klerk, J. J., Joubert, M., & Mosca, H. F. (2021). Is working from home the new workplace panacea? Lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic for the future world of work. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 47(1). <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajip.v47i0.1883>.
17. Dousin, O., Collins, N., & Kler, B. K. (2019). Work-Life balance, employee job performance and satisfaction among doctors and nurses in Malaysia. *International Journal of Human Resource Studies*, 9(4), 306. <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijhrs.v9i4.15697>.
18. Fidhdho, E. A., & Larrasaty, A. L. (2024). The effect of work life balance on job satisfaction moderated by work motivation. *Mantik Journal*, 7(4), 2685–4236. <https://www.ejournal.iocscience.org/index.php/mantik/article/view/4611>.
19. Herzberg, F., Mausner, B., & Snyderman, B. (1959). *The motivation to work* (2nd ed.). John Wiley.
20. Hareendrakumar, V. R., Subramoniam, S., & Nizar Hussain, M. (2020). Redesigning rewards for improved fairness perception and loyalty. *Vision*, 24(4), 481–495. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0972262920946142>.
21. Husin, N. A., Syafiq, A. S. M., Abdullah, N., & Hadi, M. I. A. (2018). Work-life balance of Malaysian lecturers. *Australian Academy of Business and Economics Review*, 4. https://www.academia.edu/download/63157062/WLB_Lecturers20200501-103118-lyzm638.pdf
22. Jayanandana, N. & Jayathilaka, R. (2023). Factors affecting job performance of Sri Lankan IT professionals working from home. *Plos One*, 18(12).
23. Jayawardena, N. S., & Jayawardena, D. (2020). The impact of extrinsic and intrinsic rewarding system on employee motivation in the context of Sri Lankan apparel sector. *International Journal of Business Executive*, 20(1), 51–69. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJBEX.2019.10017100>.
24. Krishnan, R., & Loon, K. W. (2018). The effects of job satisfaction and work-life balance on employee task performance. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 8(3). <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarbss/v8-i3/3956>.
25. Mabaso, C. M., Maja, M. T., Kavir, M., Lekwape, L., Makhasane, S. S., & Khumalo, M. T. (2021). Talent retention strategies: An exploratory study within the consulting industry in Gauteng province South Africa. *Acta Commercii*, 21(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.4102/ac.v21i1.885>.
26. Manzoor, F., Wei, L., & Asif, M. (2021). Intrinsic rewards and employee’s performance with the mediating mechanism of employee’s motivation. *Front Psychology*, 12, 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.563070>
27. Nur Masriyah Hamzah1 & Syafawati Matkhairuddin (2023). Impact of non-financial rewards on employees' job satisfaction. *e-Academia Journal of UiTM Cawangan Terengganu*, 12(2) 119-132.

28. Nur Suffia Sulaiman, Wan Yuen Choo, Abdul Rahim Mat Yassim, Darren Van Laar, Karuthan Chinna, Hazreen Abdul Majid. (2015). Assessing quality of working life among Malaysian workers. *Asia Pacific Journal of Public Health*, 27(8), 94S-100S. doi: 10.1177/1010539515583331.
29. Othman, Z. (2019). Impact of emotional needs on intention to stay and the mediating role of POS. An empirical study of Gen Y employees in the banking sector in Malaysia.
30. Proceeding 3rd Asia International Multidisciplinary Conference, 1st & 2nd May 2019 at UTM Johor Bahru. *International Journal of Recent Technology and Engineering (IJRTE)*. (2019), 8(259), 2278-3878.
31. Rodríguez-Sánchez, J.-L., González-Torres, T., Montero-Navarro, A., & Gallego-Losada, R. (2020). Investing time and resources for work–life balance: The effect on talent retention. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(6), 1920. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17061920>.
32. Shaheen, K., Waheed, A., Hashmi, A.W. (2020). Extrinsic rewards and creative performance syndrome: The mediating mechanism and interacting effects. *Thinking skills and Creativity*, 38, 100713.
33. Silva, M. S., Mendes, A. C. A., Beuren, I. M., Lunkes, R. J., & Kruger, S. D. (2022). Assessing the moderating and mediating role of affective commitment and procedural fairness in the relationship between rewards and job performance. *Journal of Accounting, Education and Research*, 16(2), 103–123. <https://doi.org/10.17524/repec.v16i2.3079>.
34. Sindhuja, K., & Subramanian, S. S. (2020). Impact of work-life balance on employee retention: A study on banking sector. *Shanlax International Journal of Management*, 7(3), 78–81. <https://doi.org/10.34293/management.v7i3.1629>.
35. Spector, P., E. (1985). Measurement of human service staff satisfaction: Development of the job satisfaction survey. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 13, 693-713.
36. Subramaniam, A. G., Overton, B. J., & Maniam, C. B. (2015). Flexible working arrangements, work life balance and women in Malaysia. *International Journal of Social Science and Humanity*, 5(1), 34–38. <https://doi.org/10.7763/ijssh.2015.v5.417>
37. Susanto, P., Hoque, M. E., Jannat, T., Emely, B., Zona, M. A., & Islam, M. A. (2022). Work-life balance, job satisfaction, and job performance of SMES employees: The moderating role of family-supportive supervisor behaviors. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13.
38. Theys, N.A., & Barkhuizen, E.N. (2022). The development of an employee value proposition framework for the South African water board sector. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 20, 14. <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajhrm.v20i0.1944>
39. Tkalych, M., Snyadanko, I., Guba, N., & Zhelezniakova, Y. (2020). Social and psychological support for personnel in organisations: Work-life balance programmes. *Journal of Intellectual Disability–Diagnosis and Treatment*, 8(2), 159–166. <https://doi.org/10.6000/2292-2598.2020.08.02.10>.
40. Udin, U. (2023). The impact of work-life balance on employee performance: mediating role of affective commitment and job satisfaction. *International Journal of Sustainable Development & Planning*, 18(11).
41. Wolor, C. W., Solikhah, S., Fidhyallah, N. F., & Lestari, D. P. (2020). Effectiveness of E-training, E-leadership, and work life balance on employee performance during COVID-19. *The Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business*, 7(10), 443–450. <https://doi.org/10.13106/jafeb.2020.vol7.no10.443>.
42. Zuhriatusobah, J., Yudha, E. K., Rahayu, Y., & Achmad, W. (2023). Work life balance strategy to improve employee performance at PT. XYZ. *Central European Management Journal*, 31(2). <https://doi.org/10.57030/23364890.cemj.31.2.11>.