

Relationship Between Work-Life Balance and Mental Health Among Academic Staff in Selected Universities in Nairobi, Kenya

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DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.91100025>

Received: 07 November 2025; Accepted: 14 November 2025; Published: 27 November 2025

ABSTRACT

Work-life balance is an important aspect of a healthy fast changing working environment. Increased working hours have adverse impact on the lifestyle of a huge number of employees, which ultimately affects their social and psychological well-being. Maintaining work-life balance helps reduce stress and prevents burnout in the workplace. Chronic stress is one of the most common health issues in the workplace. This has negatively impacted on mental health because it is linked to higher risk of depression, anxiety and insomnia. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between work-life balance and mental health of employees in an organization. Work-life balance has become an important area for employers, government and researchers for providing innovative ways to improve employee morale, retain them and provision of conducive working environment. This study investigated the relationship between work life balance and mental health among academic staff in selected public universities in Nairobi, Kenya. Data was collected using desk review and key informant interviews. Data was collected from twenty -eight academic staff from two public universities and two private universities in Nairobi County. Data analysis was based on the thematic areas reflected in the study objectives. The possible effect of gender difference on the level of stress was considered in this study. Study results revealed gender differences on the levels of stress; males had a relatively higher level of work life balance and mental health. It was also revealed that job satisfaction was associated with life satisfaction in males whereas; mental health was reported more among females. The study concluded that effective work life balance for both gender in the workplace leads to greater improvement in mental health which in turn increases their productivity. The study recommends that universities should have programmes that allow their staff both male and female to have work life balance which in turn will enhance their mental health and productivity in the workplace.

Keywords: Work-life balance, mental health, chronic stress, gender, productivity, workplace

Abbreviations And Acronyms

ILO	International Labor Organization
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
UK	United Kingdom
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Authority
WHO	World Health Organization
WLB	Work Life Balance
WRS	Work Related Stress

INTRODUCTION

A work-life balance is an organizational concept that empowers employees to split time and energy between work and other important areas of their life successfully. It also refers to an effective management or striking a balance between the work which is remunerated and the personal or social responsibilities which an individual is expected to perform. According to Sirgy and Lee, (2018) 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. Okon, *et al.*, (2024) refer work-life balance as the extent to which an individual's effectiveness and satisfaction in work and family roles are compatible with the individual's life role priorities at a given point in time.

The word balance implies an equal separation or a 50-50 division of work and non-work which is not necessarily realistic or doable however, one should make sure he/she feels fulfilled and content in both areas in life (Sirgy and Lee, 2018). A healthy balance might look like meeting deadlines at work while having enough time to sleep properly and eat well, another can be not worrying about work when you're at home. Over the past years there has been an increase in large proportion of employees working long hours in many developed countries. According to Messenger(2018) the proportion of workers working short or part time hours is substantially higher in developed countries than in developing countries thus permitting employees to work more hours or days in high seasons. Reports of high levels of work stress and stress related illness for example depression are common place that is associated with high rates of unemployment and there is a perception that the workplace is becoming even more stressful (Giorgi *et. al*, 2020).

According to Jurakulovich, (2025) mental health is the state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. According to Longo, *et al.*, (2020) there are three components of mental health: emotional well-being, psychological well-being and social well-being. Emotional well-being includes happiness, interest in life, and satisfaction; psychological well-being includes liking most parts of one's own personality, being good at managing the responsibilities of daily life, having good relationships with others, and being satisfied with one's own life; social well-being refers to positive functioning and involves having something to contribute to society (social contribution), feeling part of a community (social integration), believing that society is becoming a better place for all people (social actualization), and that the way society works makes sense to them (social coherence). Mental health affects how humans think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how one handles stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood (Koenig, *et. al.*, 2025).

The relationship between work-life balance and mental health in the workplace is significant in terms of employee satisfaction and productivity. Organizations need to enact mental health policies to protect the wellbeing of their employees. Poor mental health and stress can negatively affect employee's performance, productivity, and engagement with one's work, communication with coworkers, physical capability and daily functioning. As there is no accepted definition of what constitutes a work-life balance practice, Koon, (2022) defined it as deliberate organizational changes in programs or organizational culture that are designed to reduce work-life conflict and enable employees to be more effective at work and in other roles. Other practices include flexible work hours (e.g., flextime, which permits workers to vary their start and finish times provided a certain number of hours is worked; compressed work week, in which employees work a full week's worth of hours in four days and take the fifth off), working from home (telework), sharing a full-time job between two employees (job sharing), family leave programs (e.g., parental leave, adoption leave, compassionate leave), on-site childcare, and financial and/or informational assistance with childcare, caretaker services, gym subsidies and eldercare services (Shockley *et. al.*, 2017)

Several studies have been conducted in various industry such as hospitality and tourism industry in regards to work life balance. For example, according to Chandran and Abulkhalifeh (2021) in a study conducted on worklife balance in the hospitality industry since millennium in South Korea, found out that in the hospitality and tourism industry, there is unhealthy acceptance of long working hours which adversely affect the work-life

balance and mental health of employees within the particular industry. Husin *et. al.*, (2018) conducted a study of work-life balance of Malaysian lecturers and found that 30.5% of WLB among lecturers in Malaysian was explained by family factor, work factor and flexible hours mediated by health factor. They concluded that work factor and flexible hours factor contribute a small effect while family factor and health factor contributed a large effect on the work-life balance and mental health.

Work-related stress (WRS) is described as a physiological and psychological reaction to the harmful aspects of workplace content (Kinman, 2019). It is a growing concern around the world that affects not only the health and well-being of employees but also productivity of organizations. Work-related stress is the response people may have when presented with work demands and pressures that are not matched to their knowledge and abilities and which challenge their ability to cope. WRS was commonly recognized as a source of stress among the working population, including academics (Guyasa, *et al.*, 2020). Beside WHO and ILO reports, recent studies have also shown that the academic world is a highly stressful occupation (Newberry and Allsop, 2017). For example, a study in the UK reported that a large proportion of academic and related staff found their work stressful (Wray, 2018). Report from China indicated that almost all of the academic staffs were stressed (Meng and Wang, 2018)

As of 2016, Kenya has 16001 academic staff working in both private and public universities (Commission for University Education, 2016, p.66). During this period, Kenya had over 539,749 students in private and public universities, with 86% of students enrolled in public universities (Commission for University Education, 2016, p. 28). The public university system has a high academic staff to student ratio of approximately 1: 30, which is below the recommended 1:18 to 1:10 range. The number of students enrolled in universities continue to increase each year. According to Jayman *et al.* (2022), academics are busier than ever due to the growing number of students and resulting classes (p. 2). Apart from this, staff must work faster; concentrating on what they do instead of reflecting on who they are. This in turn, compromises on academic staff work-life balance and their overall mental health.

1.1 Problem Statement

Job stress in institutions of higher learning around the world has been on the uptrend, resulting in health issues and a decline in overall well-being, thereby influencing the lecturer's contribution towards students' learning experience, and in worst cases disturb students' intellectual and social abilities (Ahsan *et al.*, 2009). The work of academics is often highly salient to their personal identity, which leads to increased responsiveness to the demands of their work settings because professional success and rewards are essential to them. This is worsened with the non-work demand that might intensify the situation, especially in the form of work-life balance.

Work related stress among Kenyan lecturers is significant, with studies showing high rates of burnout, particularly due to high workloads (up to 79.3%) and emotional exhaustion (up to 66.3%). It has been noted that lecturers in public universities experience higher burnout levels compared to those in private ones, and while gender differences are minor, factors like the demands of online teaching and administrative burdens contribute heavily to stress and negatively affect work-life balance (Lawer, 2021). It is against this background that the study was done to investigate the relationship between work-life balance and mental health among academic staff in selected universities in Nairobi, Kenya.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

1.2.1 General Objective

The general objective of the study was to determine the relationship between work-life balance and mental health among academic staff in selected university in Nairobi, Kenya.

1.2.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study include the following:

1. To assess the work-life patterns and practices among academic staff in selected public Universities in Nairobi
2. To determine the existing policies in the organization that promote work life balance and mental health in selected public Universities in Nairobi
3. To determine the proportion of academic staff with work related stress in public universities in Nairobi.

1.2.3 Research Questions

1. What are the work-life patterns and practices among academic staff in selected public universities in Nairobi?
2. What are the existing policies that promote work life balance and mental health in selected public universities in Nairobi?
3. What is the proportion of academic staff with work related stress in public universities in Nairobi?

1.3 Significance of the Study

The study was useful to public universities in Nairobi to know how they can improve the welfare of its employees in terms of their work life balance and mental health. This will in turn improve their performance and organizational productivity. Organizations that invest in employee well-being build a resilient, loyal and high performing workforce thereby ensuring long term organizational success and sustainability.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study was academic staff in selected public universities in Nairobi, Kenya. It targeted lecturers, professors, tutorial fellows and graduate assistants who formed part of academic staff. A sample however, was used in this study.

1.5 The Limitation of Study

The limitation of the study included the following: funds, area coverage, time and uncooperative respondents. There were limited funds which hindered the effectiveness and the coverage of the study. There was limited time for the study to be carried out.

2.0 Literature Review

In this paper we shall look at theoretical framework using several theories that will bring more insight on worklife balance and mental health among academic staff in public universities in Nairobi. The study shall look at three theories which include: Conflict Theory, Segmentation Theory and Spill over theory

2.1 Conflict Theory

Conflict theory is a social theory that posits that society is in a state of perpetual conflict because of competition for limited resources (Edwards and Rothbard, 2000). Conflict theories were popular in early sociology, and accordingly often date back to the early 1900s, particularly ideas of Karl Marx. Marxist conflict theory sees society as divided along lines of economic class between the proletarian working class and the bourgeois ruling class. It views social and economic institutions as tools in the struggle among groups or classes, used to maintain inequality and dominance of the ruling class. The bourgeoisie, a group that represented members of society who hold the majority of the wealth and means while the proletariat comprised of those considered

working-class or poor. The bourgeoisie would force acceptance of the current conditions by the proletariat. Conflict theory assumes that the elite will set up systems of laws, traditions, and other societal structures in order to further support their own dominance while preventing others from joining their ranks (Higley, 2010).

As the working class and poor were subjected to worsening conditions, a collective consciousness would raise more awareness about inequality, and this would potentially result in revolt. If, after the revolt, conditions were adjusted to favor the concerns of the proletariat, the conflict circle would eventually repeat but in the opposite direction. The bourgeoisie would eventually become the aggressor and revolter, grasping for the return of the structures that formerly maintained their dominance. Apart from the socio-economic perspective, conflict theory can also be looked at using work life balance. Therefore, conflict arises when the demands of work and home roles clash, making it difficult to fulfill the requirements of one area (work or home) without compromising the other. The conflict model proposes that with high levels of demand in all spheres of life, some difficult choices have to be made and some conflicts and possibly some significant overload on an individual occur (Sirgy and Lee, 2018), i.e., satisfaction in one environment entails sacrifices in the other due to the fact that these two environments are incompatible because each of them has own norms and requirements (Kuranga, et al., 2020).

The right balance depends on every individual and is influenced by many factors. Zivcicová, Bulková, & Masárová, (2017) also suggests that it might be helpful to make a distinction between objective and subjective indicators. He adds that any objective indicators (e.g. working hours) reflect the subjective social values and that any use of subjective indicators may benefit from some kind of stakeholder analysis. In other words what may seem like balance to one individual may not do so to his or her partner or boss.

Most notably, the conflict perspective maintains that high involvement in one sphere entails sacrifices in the other. The main premise of this approach is that while interconnected, the two spheres are inherently incompatible, given their differing demands, responsibilities, expectations and norms. For example, this approach would suggest that satisfying demanding work expectations may result in not meeting expectations in one's non-work life (Mullens and Glorieux, 2024).

2.2 Segmentation Theory

The theory views work and life as separate domains that do not influence each other, with individuals actively creating psychological and physical boundaries to maintain this separation. This separate domain can be defined as segments. This was because the subjects were able to compartmentalize or segment different spheres of their lives to minimize strain arising from multiple roles. This perspective suggests that a person can keep their professional and personal lives distinct through behaviors like suppressing work-related thoughts at home and vice versa (Rincy and Panchanatham, 2014). Stated otherwise, work has no impact on the family unit, nor has the family unit any influence on work life. For example, a person in a very stressful job might feel overwhelmed by work and as such might want to build a wall to separate work from the family unit. The segmentation theory involves two attributes mainly work attributes and family attributes. The attributes of the work environment, defined as role conflict, role ambiguity and role overload were related to job satisfaction, but not to family satisfaction. Family conflict and parenthood were found to be related to family satisfaction but no to job satisfaction. Thus, this study demonstrates a true separation between work life and the family life.

According to Rincy and Panchanatham, (2014), segmentation theory refers to complete compartmentalization or fragmentation of work and family systems whereby the two domains are lived separately and have no influence on one another. Kaushik and Nair, (2020) argues that this model appears to be offered as a theoretical possibility rather than one with empirical support and it is considered to be the weakest one on the relationship between work and personal life.

2.3 Spill Over Theory

According to Kinnunen *et al.*, (2006) defines spillover as a positive relationship between work and family, whence positive work experiences would be associated with positive family experiences and negative work experiences would be associated with negative family experiences. As an example of negative spillover could

be a worker experiencing negative emotions from his/ her shift might be affected during the shift(work) and might continue being affected from the stressful shift in his/her home. In other words, the employees' reactions at work might be negatively affected from the problems carried over from his/ her home life. Joyful experiences in the work such as a promotion, or the feelings of elation once a project is completed can be passed on to the family life also just like positive family life experiences can enhance the work environment. In spillover theory work and family operate as one entity. "There is no boundary between the workplace and the home. Therefore, what happens at work will also happen at home"(Nippert-Eng, 2008).

According to Sok, *et al.*, (2014), Spillover in one domain can influence the other in either a positive or negative way. Positive spillover refers to the fact that satisfaction and achievement in one domain may bring along satisfaction and achievement in another domain. Negative spillover refers to the fact that difficulties and depression in one domain may bring along the same emotion in another domain (Xu, 2009).

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Study Design and methods of data collection

Cross sectional descriptive study design utilizing qualitative data was used in this study. This design was chosen because it gave accurate measurements of population, characteristics and attributes at particular point in time. Both Primary and secondary data were used.

3.1.1 Data collection

To collect primary data, key informant interviews were conducted. Secondary data was collected by use of intensive and extensive desk review. Information concerning work-life balance and mental health of employees in public universities in Nairobi, Kenya was collected at that point of time. Qualitative data helped to have a deeper understanding of the university staff concept of work-life balance.

3.1.2 Study population

According to Willie (2023) refer to target population as the entire group of individuals, events or objects having common observable characteristics to which the researcher will need to generalize the results of the study. The population of interest in this research consisted of all the university academic staff. The Deans of Schools and Heads of Departments served as key informants. Seven academic staff were selected from each university. Hence a total of 28 academic staff participated in the study

3.1.3 Sampling techniques

The study utilized purposive sampling to sample two public and two private universities. The selected public universities consisted of Jomo Kenyatta university and Kenyatta university. The private universities consisted of Kiriri University of Science and Technology and Mt Kenya university. The selected public universities were included in the study because they have the greatest number of students hence have a much higher workload compared to the rest. The private universities were selected because staff work under stressful conditions due to high expectations, heavy workloads, job insecurity. With regard to the selection of the individual participants, convenient sampling technique was used whereby sampling of participants was based on availability. Recruitment of participants as stopped when the researcher reached saturation point in terms of the information that was needed. At participant number 16 the study reached saturation point where no new information was coming out to address the research question. However, the researcher continued data collection while recognizing the pragmatic possibility of not reaching saturation point with this sample size, seeking additional participant perspectives up to 28 participants and found no new information from the participants

The study also utilized visual and self-assessment tools such as Wheel of Life and 8-8-8 rule. Ten respondents from each university were assessed using the Wheel of Life whereby their career, health, relationship, personal

growth, physical environment and finances were looked at and their satisfaction levels were rated in each area on a scale of 1 to 5. The resulting “wheel” visually highlighted areas they were thriving and those that need more attention, helping set goals and make changes to improve overall life satisfaction. The 8-8-8 rule was used to assess whether the academic staff achieve 8 hours of rest, 8 hours to work and 8 hours to enjoy. This assessment determined the proportion of employees with work related stress.

3.2 Data Analysis

Content and thematic analysis was used to analyse the data. Data was categorized into four themes which are the specific objectives of the study: a) work-life patterns and practices b) existing policies c) proportion of employees with work related stress

3.3 Results

3.3.1 Participants Characteristics

A total of 28 respondents participated in the study. They were seven from each university. Out of the 28 participants, 18 were males. The ages of the employees who took part in this study ranged from 25 to 70 years old, with an interquartile range of 36. Majority of the respondents 65% were single. In terms of education level, the majority had attended up to university/college education. A good number of respondents (60%) were lecturers followed by senior lecturers (20%) and the rest (Professors, Associate Professors, Tutorial Fellows and Graduate Assistants) had 5%. Business, applied science and engineering departments made up 55% of the academic staff.

3.3.2 Work-life patterns and practices

Results show that work-life patterns and practices among academic staff significantly influenced worklife balance and mental health. Fifty (50%) of the respondents indicated that work-life patterns and practices of academic staff such as teaching, research, consultancy and role modelling significantly influence work-life balance and mental health.

The work-life patterns and practices mentioned above for example teaching involves setting exams, marking, lecture delivery, exam invigilation. Research involves coming up with new knowledge or updating existing knowledge. Consultancy involves having short term research, advice or services usually provided at agreed fee while role modelling involves providing guidance and counselling, mentorship and supervision of students at different education levels.

The work-life patterns and practices affected academic staff work-life balance and mental health as they are supposed to meet strict deadlines, attend to large number of students especially undergraduate students, develop content on their units and programmes, develop supplementary exams and re-sits and finally especially part time lecturers are forced to wait for payment due to delayed salaries and wages remittance. These sometimes become overwhelming to academic staff and can lead to stress, depressions and burnout.

One of the participants observed that some of the challenges faced by academic staff in regards to work life balance: The lecturers face heavy workload and lack of adequate resources such as delayed salaries, meeting strict deadlines which affected their work-life balance and mental health (Employee 004)

Another employee stated that: Publications demand for promotion and have stagnated in one job group. (Employee 008)

Another employee stated that: There is usually inadequate consultancies and research funding projects hence many lecturers were unable to get funds for their universities and this ultimately affected their career progression. (Employee 015)

To mitigate these challenges, one of the respondents indicated that: There should be periodic training on work-life balance and mental health to indicate the positive aspects of having work-life balance and good mental health in an organization (Employee 020)

Another employee indicated that: There should be employee assistance programs such as guidance and counselling, retirement and pension scheme services, crisis management etc. (Employee 024)

3.3.3 Existing policies

The study finding indicated that majority of the universities (90%) had existing policies that promote work-life balance and mental health in their workplaces. Some of the policies that promote work-life balance and mental health include: remote working policy, breast feeding policy, human resource policy amongst other policies.

These policies were part of the requirement for performance contract and ISO certification that universities are required to comply with. ISO (International Organization for Standardization) develops and publishes a wide range of standards for various industries including universities, such as quality management (ISO 9001), environmental management (ISO 14001), and information security (ISO 27001). Some of these policies encourage employees to attain their work-life balance while also achieving organizational goals.

3.3.4 Proportion of Academic Staff with Work Related Stress

Results show that both male and female employees (60%) in public universities experienced ill-health due to work related stress. Chronic stress is not only among women but also among men. Job satisfaction was measured with a single item that asked respondents to rate their overall satisfaction with their job on a 5-point scale from 1 (not at all satisfied) to 5 (fully satisfied) using the Wheel of Life assessment tool. Study results revealed gender differences on the levels of stress; males had a relatively higher level of work life balance and mental health. It was also revealed that job satisfaction was associated with life satisfaction in males whereas; mental health was reported more among females. The effects of academic staff working in unconducive environment brings out high stress include but not limited to the following: burnout, insomnia, chronic stress, unable to meet deadlines amongst other illnesses. This ultimately affects their mental health and work-life balance. The findings also suggest that work-family conflicts affected the level of self-reported mental health, this negatively affects women than men.

DISCUSSION

4.1 Work-life patterns and practices

The findings of the study revealed that work-life patterns and practices significantly influenced the mental health of the university employees in the public universities in Kenya. This finding is similar to the study conducted by Medina-Garrido *et al.* (2017) who stressed the importance of achieving WLB between employees' work lives and personal lives. In addition, the finding is also similar to the findings of Mitra, (2015) who found that employees who have more experience have lesser organizational role stress and experience high level of work-life balance. He further declares that the higher the experience the lesser will be organizational role stress and the level of work-life balance will be high.

The working conditions of lecturers in the universities is full of challenges from tight time schedules that they are supposed to adhere to, conducting lectures, administration, invigilation and marking of exam, conducting research among other activities. These activities if not balanced well with the non-work activities can cause affect work-life balance and also in turn also affect the mental health of the academic staff in the university. The working condition also create work family conflict which occurs when an individual experiences incompatible demands between work and family roles, causing participation in both roles to become more difficult (Ee *et al.*, 2017). Most academic staff have extensive, irregular, or inflexible work hours, work overload and other forms of job stress, interpersonal conflict at work, extensive travel, career transitions, or an unsupportive supervisor or organization which affect their work family balance. These findings are similar to a study conducted by Adah et

al., (2025) on work-life balance in the construction industry found that some of the factors influencing WLB in the construction workforce include: organizational culture, salary earned, long working hours and inflexible working time.

Academic staff need to have some level of task autonomy that involves freedom to make decisions in relation to the job with limited control from supervisors. Most of the academic staff practice *laissez faire* style of leadership which encourages task autonomy and in turn this support wide range of task variety and schedule flexibility.

4.2 Existing policies

The study revealed that existing policies that promote work-life balance and mental health is significantly influence work-life balance and mental health of academic staff in the selected public universities in Nairobi, Kenya. This finding is similar to the study conducted by Schmitt, *et. al.*, (2008) who wrote a book on promoting health on working women found that working in an organization with family-friendly policies reduces stress and promotes work-life balance. Another study conducted by Muhammad (2023) found that organizational leaders need to implement policies or actions that can create or encourage a healthy work life balance.

Universities around the world operate under various policies that guide their activities. In Kenya, several Acts of Parliament provide the regulatory framework that universities must follow to remain compliant with government requirements, including the Universities Act, 2012; the Employment Act, 2007; the Occupational Safety and Health (OSHA) Act, 2007; and the Worker Injury Benefit Act, 2007. This Acts if implemented correctly will help improve work-life balance and mental health among employees in the universities especially academic staff. For example, under the Employment Act, 2007 it clearly states the terms of service of employees i.e. how many hours an employee is supposed to work on a particular type of work to ensure there is some sort of work-life balance.

4.3 Proportion of employees with work related stress

The study revealed that work related stress was associated with job demand. A significant proportion of employees (60%) both male and female experienced work-related stress due to their job demands. This finding was in line with the findings of other similar studies in Malaysia (Ismail, Abd Rahman, & Abidin, 2014) and Tanzania (Mkumbo, 2014). This could be due to the fact that intensive work prolongs the high workload, interferes with leisure activities and causes too much physical and mental fatigue to perform to the best of their abilities, thereby increasing stress hormones (Dahlgren, *et al.*, 2006). Workers who have some form of control over their balance in working tend to suffer less stress related ill-health (Obiageli, 2015).

CONCLUSION

Results indicate health specifically mental health as a fundamental domain in the work–life balance dynamic is important for university employees in Nairobi, Kenya. Researchers and practitioners should therefore consider the mental health domain when investigating the work–life balance. The study concluded that with effective work life balance for both gender in the workplace will greatly improve their mental health which will also increase their productivity

RECOMMENDATION

The universities management should provide flexible working arrangements that will provide lecturers with a degree of freedom to control their working time and manage their multiple working roles. Effective flexible working arrangements have a positive impact on work-life balance and mental health as it reduces the stress levels of lecturers in the selected universities researched on in Nairobi, Kenya. Some of the flexible working arrangements include: working from home, online and blended learning, remote working amongst other arrangements that can be adopted.

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Appendix One: Questionnaire Structured Questionnaire Section A: Socio-Economic and Demographic Characteristics

Kindly tick (✓) appropriately and explain where necessary

1. What is your gender?

☐ Male ☐ Female

2. What is your age (years)?

3. What is your marital status?

☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Separated/divorced ☐ Widowed

4. What is the level of your education?

☐ None ☐ Primary ☐ Secondary ☐ University/College

5. What is your job designation?

☐ Lecturer ☐ Senior Lecturer ☐ Associate Professor ☐ Professor

☐ Tutorial Fellow ☐ Graduate Assistant

6. Which department of the university do you work?

☐ Business ☐ Applied Sciences ☐ Engineering ☐ Hospitality

☐ Agriculture ☐ Information Technology

Section B: General Information on Work Life Balance And Mental Health

7. Do the academic staff in your university have work-life balance?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

8. If yes, how is the work-life balance experienced at your university?

a) Flexible working arrangement such as online working, remote working

b) Employee assistance programs such as counselling services

- c) Paid Time Off (PTO) and vacations
- d) Establishment of clubs and societies
- 9. If no, why does your institution not have work-life balance?
 - a) Ignorance
 - b) Insufficient funds to have work-life balance programs
 - c) Resistance to change
 - d) Ineffective systems of the institution

APPENDIX 2: Key informant interview guide

Key informant interviews will be done with academic staff (Deans and Head of Departments) who will help interviewer to know more about work-life balance and mental health among academic staff in the selected public universities in Nairobi, Kenya

Name of interviewee:

Organization: Position Held:

.....

Time interview started: Time ended:

Name of Interviewer: Sign

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the challenges faced by academic staff with regards to work-life balance and mental health?
2. In your own opinion what can your employer do to address these challenges?
3. To what extent does the work-life balance influence productivity in the university?
4. In your opinion to what extent does management in your university establish policies that improve worklife balance and mental health amongst academic staff?
5. Do academic staff in your university have knowledge on the various work-life balance they can utilize?
6. What are some of the sources of work stressors found in the universities among academic staff?
7. Does management provide training on work-life balance and mental health of its employees in your university?