

The Nexus between Time Management Behaviors and Work-Life Balance of Employees

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Abstract

This research is envisioned to explain the impact of individual time management behaviors on the work-life balance of banking employees. Using the positivist paradigm, a self-administered survey was chosen to collect responses from bank employees across Sindh, Pakistan. The presented hypotheses were supported by quantitative analytical techniques that tested causal links between all constructs. A total of 450 questionnaires were administered, out of which 320 valid responses were analyzed using PLS-SEM. The findings validated that individual time management behaviors do contribute to attaining work-life balance in the banking sector. Results revealed a positive effect of goal setting and priorities, time management mechanics, and organization preference on employees' work-life balance. Among all, mechanics of time management (MTM) substantially impact achieving work-life balance. This research will aid in the identification of time management practices that are better capable of balancing work and life.

Keywords:

goal setting and priorities; mechanics of time management; preference for organization; work-life balance

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INTRODUCTION

Our society is characterized by perpetual dynamics and transition. In recent decades, corporate practices have changed profoundly. Workplaces have altered dramatically as a result of structural changes and technology improvements (Zahoor et al., 2021). More than a capacity burden, uncertainty in the identification of roles and responsibilities, lack of ability to govern resources, loss of decision-making autonomy, and disparities in work and personal life are all consequences of these changes. Efficient businesses are concerned with recruiting, rewarding, and retaining better people who are preoccupied with doing their jobs well and adapting to changing work needs (Kirkland et al., 2017). Historical and modern work-life research has frequently highlighted that appropriate management of the interaction amid work and family life remains a critical motivator for employers and workers across many organizational settings (Le et al., 2020).

Work-life balance is about adjusting to specific circumstances to help people meet their commitments and goals that benefit the individual, business, and society at large. This implies that people should have some autonomy over their work schedules, locations, and methods (Chanie et al., 2020). Due to increased worldwide competitiveness and demands for immediate access to products and services, efficient time management has become an essential component of the work (Mukhtar et al., 2020). Individuals who engaged in specific time management behaviors free up their cognitive resources that can be utilized for other tasks and lessen the hoarding burdens of work and life responsibilities (Beigi et al., 2018). Effective time management is required to stay up with this competitive setting and achieve an ideal degree of work-life balance. Time management practices have received a lot of attention in the workplace during the last several decades (Azar, 2017). Individuals may utilize the approaches that fit them and their lifestyle to begin becoming incredible time managers by focusing on spending minutes and hours as efficiently as possible throughout the day (Channar et al., 2014). Time management may aid and increase people's learning and job productivity, as well as help to a work-life balance (Haralayya, 2021).

Time management is the activity of determinedly managing and measuring the time consumed on particular doings to work more wisely rather than furiously (Angelici & Profeta, 2020). Time management is inextricably tied to the effectiveness component rather than the efficiency component since effectiveness is defined as choosing the appropriate thing to accomplish at the right time, which is more essential than doing things correctly (Mukhtar et al., 2020). Individual time management strategies, both explicit and tacit, are a critical component of how professionals accomplish projects within their daily schedules (Grissom et al., 2015). Effective time management may be measured as a holistic concept, yet it involves a variety of distinct actions and attitudes that demonstrate good self-regulation abilities. Time management is a self-disciplined effort to use time in a relatively effectual manner to accomplish goals that promote the individualized approach and differences of these activities (Uğur & Güngör, 2021). This research looks at three distinct types of time management behaviors. Macan (1994) defines these behaviors as goal setting and prioritizing (GSP), time management mechanics (MTM), and preference for organization (PFO). Each of the three-time management behaviors is different and equally significant. As a result, all three-time management behaviors will be examined in this study.

Goals are arbitrary and indicate future outcomes that motivate people to put forth extra effort (Bajec, 2019). Personal success hinges on the achievement of a goal. The establishing of objectives concerning individual needs or desires and the prioritization of actions needed to attain these goals is how time-based behavior may be characterized in terms of goal setting and priorities (Macan, 1994). Goal setting is a sort of time management in which objectives are clarified, managed, and translated into time-management practices (Weintraub et al., 2021).

Planning is the first and most important criterion for good time management (Azar, 2017). Planning behavior may be thought of as a specific technique of goal setting. By providing distinct targets for people's energy, goals can improve effort and attention (Dulas, 2021). Because it is difficult to rewind or restore time, preparation can assist to reduce errors and deficiencies. A comprehensive examination of the literature reveals that goal-setting/planning behavior is critical in time management. Without goal-setting techniques, a time management system is insufficient (Bajec, 2019). Prioritization is linked to planning. Prioritizing means making a list of activities to do and ranking them in order of priority, and then devote more time to the most important ones (Dimitrova & Mancheva-Ali, 2018). People should be mindful of their priorities so that they can utilize their productive time to do the critical or most important tasks. Persistent planning and time management results in higher work quality, a better social life, and a more structured personality (Aeon & Aguinis, 2017). For this research, planning refers to the method of reaching the desired results through establishing objectives. It entails breaking down large activities into smaller manageable tasks and assessing individual work efficiency (Azar, 2017; Chanie et al., 2020; Dulas, 2021).

Another aspect of time management behaviors is time management mechanics. The actions commonly linked with managing time, such as making lists, scheduling, and planning (Macan, 1994). The mechanics of time management behaviors refer to the incorporation of time management activities taught via books and training (Wolters et al., 2017). To effectively manage time, it is necessary to first enhance time awareness. This may be accomplished by sticking to a timetable (Le et al., 2020). Creating a "To-do" list is one of the most effective ways to do this. Lists are a very helpful approach. Macan (2010) also emphasized the urgency and relevance of your To-do list tasks. It's crucial to remember that the items on your to-do list must be prioritized. A to-do list should be reasonable and not overly extensive (Dhas, 2015). A to-do list is an important time management tool that allows employees at the managerial, supervisory, and operational levels to manage all activities to boost job efficiency and reduce stress.

Technology is among the important aspect of time management mechanics. The basic premise of time management has stayed the same, but with the advent of technology, it has been simpler to manage time, such as with cell phones. Calendars, reminders, PDAs, mobile phones, and smartphones are just a few of the devices on the market that helps with good time management. Smart employees may complete the same tasks and activities as ordinary workers and achieve the same set of objectives and outcomes by utilizing technology while choosing a workspace and schedule that is more convenient for both the job at hand and their personal needs (Gillespie et al., 2012). Time and space

flexibility provides a new work structure that is centered on outcomes rather than office presence and works during specific hours (Angelici & Profeta, 2020). Cijan et al. (2019) support the idea that technology increases people's autonomy and the functioning of work, as well as allows them to successfully integrate numerous life roles. Time management tools and approaches help employees perform better at work by allowing them more time to complete higher-priority activities (Kayen et al., 2012). The mechanics of time management are largely behavioral, reflecting one's adoption of certain time management strategies. Mechanics of time management are more inclined towards actions that may result in maintaining harmony between the conflicting domains of work and personal matters (Angelici & Profeta, 2020).

Preference for organization is one of the factors that create and increase Time Management (Adams & Blair, 2019). There are two main components to organization: arranging things and managing time. Both are required to reach your goals. It's difficult to tell the difference between vital and simple chores. One of the most important aspects of the organization is scheduling. If one can learn to organize life to some extent then he/she will be more driven to achieve in the long run (Macan et al., 2010). The preference for organization is mainly holding an attitudinal nature that reflects individual differences towards completing activities in a structured manner. Various studies have shown that people who maintain order and organization preferably use better time.

This research study laid its theoretical foundation on self-efficacy theory. Self-efficacy theory refers to a person's conviction of his/her capability to complete tasks, accomplish their goals, and obtain what they or desires. This theory posits that individual behaviors and beliefs influence one's capabilities to act in a certain way. The current study focuses on the notion that keeping a balance in work and life domains is a self-management competency (Beigi et al., 2018). This research focuses on people's core beliefs about themselves, including their ability to manage their time to strike a balance between job and life. Although the positive impact of work-life balance is well documented in the literature, little attention has been given to the self-regulation strategies and competencies that can influence and predict this balance. According to the integrative review done by Sirgy & Lee (2018), individual characteristics and cultural beliefs are determinants of work-life balance. Macan (2010) also mentioned that time management distinctly impacts individuals.

Several studies mentioned the importance of coping behaviors in shaping work-life balance (Adkins & Premeaux, 2019; Azar, 2017; Bley, 2015; Caringal-Go et al., 2022). Caringal-Go et al. (2022) also highlighted the need to delineate the impact of coping behaviors (e.g. time management) in crafting work-life balance. Time management as a self-regulatory method may be connected to work-life balance under domain-specific conditions. Consistent with theories claiming that WLB is domain sensitive, the cross-cultural differences in work-life balance are frequently mentioned in WLB literature (Soomro et al., 2018). This is another contribution of this study. As work and life challenges are not exclusive to the West; Pakistan, as a developing country, has no exception (Soomro et al., 2018). The majority of WLB research has been conducted in Anglo-Saxon and Western European nations. The way eastern nations, particularly those in Asia, regard work and family differs from how western countries perceive them. This

is related to cultural variations, family arrangements, and social institutions (Le et al., 2020). It is necessary to investigate work-life balance in greater depth so that the findings of the studies can be applied to the Pakistani context. Besides this, current study focused on individual time management behaviors rather considering it as a holistic construct.

Although the relationship between time management and work-life balance has been researched extensively earlier studies have considered time management as a composite factor and did not focus on individual behaviors. Few latest research work also emphasized the importance of individual time management behaviors (i.e. goal setting and priorities, mechanics of time management, preference for organization) toward the attainment of specific objectives (Adkins & Premeaux, 2019; Aeon & Aguinis, 2017; Beigi et al., 2018; Haralayya, 2021). This emerges the need to conduct this study. This will provide a true picture concerning the behaviors that contribute to work-life balance. Therefore, the current study is intended to examine the impact of individual time management behaviors on work-life balance in the banking sector of Pakistan. The findings of the current study will have implications for organizational leaders and HR practitioners to better cope with the challenges and changing requirements of the workplace.

METHODS

The current study's approach is based on positivist ideology (Rahi, 2017). The quantitative technique was used for empirical testing since the link between the variables is hypothesized and variables exist in prior research and theories. This research study used a cross-sectional method to collect data using a self-administered questionnaire. Employees of the banking sector were the unit of analysis. The reason for choosing banks as the target market is that work-life balance is a serious concern in this industry.

The study used the purposive sampling technique. Preexisting validated research instruments were applied to measure the research variables. The study's data were gathered using the GSP, MTM, PFO, and WLB scales. The ratings for each scale's items range from 1 to 5, with 5 being the strongest agreement. There are two sections to the survey questionnaire. The former is related to the demographic details of study participants. Gender, age, education level, job title, and tenure are all covered in this data. The latter consists of information related to the variables of the study. Scales of Goal setting and priorities (GSP), mechanics of time management (MTM), and preference for the organization (PFO) were adopted from the Time management behavior scale (TMBS) fabricated by Macan (1994). TMBS is a widely used questionnaire to assess the time management of individuals (Romero & Barberà, 2015).

A total of 361 (80.2%) questionnaires were obtained out of 450, which were used for final data analysis. After receiving consent from workers and ensuring confidentiality on the side of the participants, all surveys were completed. Furthermore, Harman's Single Factor test is utilized to discover biased replies in the surveys, as recommended by Podsakoff et al (2003). According to the test, the variance value was 33.45 percent, which was less than 50 percent, suggesting that the survey questionnaire data did not contain biased replies (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The proposed hypotheses

were examined using PLS-SEM. Smart PLS is an appropriate software to analyze survey questionnaires as it can provide latent variable scores, nullify small sample problems, as well as evaluate formative and reflective frameworks with multiple latent and manifest variables, the Smart-PLS is being used to analyze survey questionnaire data.

The Smart-PLS is used to assess survey questionnaire data because it can provide latent variable scores, eliminate small sample size issues, and estimate reflective and formative models with several latent and manifest variables (Henseler et al., 2009). The following is the data analysis method: Confirmatory factor analysis was used to confirm the instrument's validity and reliability. Second, standardized betas (β) and t-statistics were used to evaluate the structural model. Finally, the R2 value was used as a measure of the model's overall predictive power (Henseler et al., 2009).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

As shown in Table 1, the large percentage of survey participants, 260 (72.0 percent), were men. In terms of age, 47.1 percent of survey participants were between the ages of 31 and 40. Table 1 also revealed that 49.3 percent of respondents had Master's degrees. 35.4 percent of participants worked in banks for one to five years. A significant proportion of responders (54.0 percent) are officer-level employees.

Table 1. Respondents' Demographics Summary

	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	260	72.0
Female	101	28.0
Age		
21-30 years	117	32.4
31-40 years	170	47.1
41 and above	74	20.5
Qualification		
Undergraduate	68	18.8
Graduate	105	29.1
Masters	178	49.3
Others	10	2.8
Tenure		
Below 1 year	95	26.3
1 to 5 years	128	35.4
6 to 10 years	101	27.9
11 years and more	37	10.2
Designation		
Clerical Level	86	23.8
Officer Level	195	54.0
Executive Level	80	22.2

As proposed by Henseler et al. (2009), this study employed a two-layered analytical approach to evaluate and describe the results of the PLS-SEM path. This two-layered analytical approach first assesses the measurement model that is then followed to test the structural model. To evaluate the measurement model of the employed scales, individual item reliability, internal consistency, and discriminant and convergent validity are assessed (Hair et al., 2017; Henseler et al., 2009). The factor loadings for the variables in their respective constructs in the model were more than 0.70, indicating that all constructs fulfilled the convergent validity analysis criterion (Henseler et al., 2009).

The results of discriminant and convergent validity are displayed in Table 2. All of the constructs' average variance extracted (AVE) values above 0.5, demonstrating that they meet the necessary standard for convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Henseler et al., 2009). All constructs met the requirement for discriminant validity since their AVE square root values in the diagonal exceeded the squared correlation with other constructs in the off-diagonal (Henseler et al., 2009).

Table 2. Discriminant and Convergent Validity

Construct	AVE	1	2	3	4	5
GSP	0.59	0.768				
POS	0.622	0.206	0.765			
PFO	0.664	0.091	0.195	0.815		
MTM	0.585	0.230	0.561	0.078	0.789	
WLB	0.562	0.481	0.627	0.388	0.743	0.749

Table 3 presents descriptive statistics and VIF. The mean of the variables ranges between 3.60 and 4.25 having the standard deviation ranging from 0.65 to 0.88. The results of the variance inflation factor show values below 5.0 indicating that the data is not having multicollinearity issues (Hair et al., 2017). Additionally, the composite reliability is having values greater than the standard value of 0.8, representing that all the constructs possess high levels of internal consistency. Overall, the statistics validate that the measurement model has fulfilled the required validity and reliability criteria.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics, Collinearity Diagnostics and Reliability Analysis

Construct	Mean	Standard deviation	Variance Inflation Factor	Composite Reliability
GSP	4.21	0.68	1.209	0.935
MTM	3.80	0.88	1.501	0.948
PFO	3.61	0.85	1.047	0.941
WLB	3.76	0.73		0.950

The second stage is to examine the present study's structural model after examining it on a measurement basis. The current study employed the typical approach of bootstrapping using 5000 bootstrap samples for this aim. The significance value of the path coefficients

is determined using this bootstrapping approach (Hair et al., 2017). Table 5 displays the outcomes of the proposed model's hypothesis testing.

The first hypothesis predicted that GSP is positively related to employees' WLB. The findings (Table 4) show that both variables are positively related ($\beta= 0.287$, $t =10.495$, $p<0.05$). As a result, there is sufficient evidence to support Hypothesis (H1). These outcomes match with the existing studies that goal specificity provides a road map to achieving defined objectives (Gröpel & Kuhl, 2006). Evidence suggests that setting goals and priorities is a crucial step in sustaining one's wellbeing. When opposed to more generic "do your best" demands, specific objectives serve as both cognitive and behavioral ways of directing attention and effort toward activities related to achieving the goal and away from behaviors that are irrelevant to achieving the goal, therefore boosting work-life stability.

Table 4. Full Structural Model

		Beta	SD	t-stat	P-values	Results
H1	GSP →	0.269	0.026	10.244	0.00	Supported**
H2	MTM →	0.539	0.031	17.363	0.00	Supported**
H3	PFO →	0.263	0.025	10.544	0.00	Supported**

The second hypothesis anticipated that MTM had a significant relationship with WLB. The results (Table 5) show that TMB is directly correlated with employees' WLB ($\beta=0.539$, $t=17.363$, $p<0.05$), which supports Hypothesis (H2). The outcomes support the conclusions of (Bley, 2015), which explains that individuals can develop MTM skills as a means to handle the workload. Likewise, while assessing the impact of PFO on WLB (H3), the results revealed that preference for organization is significantly linked to employees' work-life balance ($\beta= 0.263$, $t =10.544$, $p<0.05$), thus supporting Hypothesis (H3). This finding of (H3) validates the point that maintaining a methodical and organized approach to work lessens the probability of work-related conflicts and thus contributes to WLB (Baltes et al., 2010; Soomro et al., 2018).

Moreover, R^2 and effect sizes are tested. The suggested model accounted for 77.8 percent of the total variation in WLB. This means that the three sets of predictors (GSP, MTM, and PFO) explain 77.8 percent of the variance in work-life balance. According to the results in Table 5, the effect sizes for GSP, MTM, and PFO on WLB were 0.345, 0.862, and 0.132, respectively. Consequently, according to Cohen's (1988) standards, the effect sizes of these three exogenous latent variables on an endogenous variable are moderate, large, and small, respectively.

Table 5. Effect Sizes of the Latent Variables on Cohen's (1988) Recommendation

Construct	f²	Effect Size
GSP	0.345	Moderate
MTM	0.862	Large
PFO	0.132	Small

This study has examined the relationship between individual TMB and WLB. According to the study findings, time is a crucial factor that requires immediate attention owing to its favorable impacts on keeping a healthy working environment. The blurring line between work and personal life is accelerating the use of time management strategies as the only way to respond to this issue. The study also supports the notion that certain behavioral techniques for managing one's time are strongly related to the cognitive activity of setting objectives and rating tasks in terms of priority. Individuals have both long-term and short-term priorities. In many cases, short-term chores or goals substitute long-term aspirations, causing people to never attain their life goals. In addition to completing urgent duties, it is critical to strive for long-term goals. In one's lifetime, one should elevate his goals to greater priority.

Its importance is magnified in a nation like Pakistan, where time is not regarded as an important factor. Time management tactics can assist you to handle work interference in your personal life as well as personal interference in your job. These can be used as a competitive strategy by organizations. Moreover, our results are stronger for time management mechanics. Consistently with Azar (2017) suggest that the flexibility introduced by using the mechanics to manage time may contribute to reducing work and life disparity.

This research also provides two major implications i.e. theoretical implications and practical implications. First, this research has presented theoretical implications by providing additional evidence on self-efficacy theory. Self-efficacy theory usually applies to a certain ability that is linked to the processes of self-regulation by selecting the appropriate goals or approach. The results of this study will help to extend the concept of self-efficacy in the time management context. Second, this research extends the theory by evaluating individual TMB. In particular, the ongoing study sought to determine how individual time management behaviors in Pakistan's banking industry help to attain a WLB. The study's findings have offered substantial support for major theoretical assumptions. Third, the dearth of literature in this domain is qualitative. Therefore, this study has provided useful insights by examining these relationships empirically.

As per practical implications, management to advance the work-life balance of employees may apply the results of this investigation. To attain this goal, management should focus on the following factors: First, organizations should arrange training programs to enhance the time management skills of employees. Second, employees value employers who empower them to manage their own time. Therefore, organizations can provide flexibility by engaging them in determining their work schedules. Additionally, organizations can help employees in managing their time by limiting interruptions. Pre-planned work schedules guide in determining the priorities so one can spend time on important tasks. Third, organizations should incorporate technology that can help balance time-related issues. Utilizing the available time in the best possible way seems to be a promising approach for a more efficient organization of work.

CONCLUSION

This study advances the contemporary realm of research on WLB. This article has notable implications since it discusses the linkage of individual time management behaviors and the work-life balance of banking employees of Pakistan. Following the findings of the study, a considerable positive association exists between time management behaviors and work-life balance. This research is particularly useful in terms of system, capacity, and pattern delivery recommendations, which may help with time management. Getting a better understanding of specific time management behaviors is vital to provide support to face the challenges of work and personal life misalignment. As a result, this study means demonstrating learning opportunities to spend resources efficiently. To conclude, organizations must work on their policies and practices regarding work-life balance by employing time management strategies on the individual and organizational levels. Also, time management training can be used as a constructive strategy. Organizations can help the employees through the inclusion of in-service training programs to enhance their ability to manage time.

Despite having a lot of strengths, this study has some limitations too. As management practices vary from organization to organization, the level of time management is also diverged across individuals belonging to different cultures. This leads to the generalizability issue of the study findings as it focused only banking sector in Pakistan. It is suggested that future research can be done on other industries in different geographical locations. Also, comparisons of several industries might give valuable insights into one country. Another limitation is due to the data collection method i.e. cross-sectional method; future studies can evaluate the model using time-lagged data.

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