

Work-Life Balance in the Education Sector: A Bibliometric Analysis

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Abstract

The rapidly changes in work culture and working condition in education sector laid the foundation to know about the work-life balance among teachers, because teachers are the foundation pillar of the society as well as nations development. To know about work-life balance, the bibliometric analysis is used. The data has been taken from Scopus database during the period from 2004 to 2024. The aim of the study is to know the systematic growth, contribution, focused areas, and major countries where work-life balance gains much attention. The result shows that last 6 year have gained much more attention on this topic as well as developed and developing nation focus on it. The result also depicts that much more attention had been given to work-life balance of women in the changing landscape.

Keywords: Work-life balance, Teachers, Education Sector, Bibliometric Analysis, Working Condition.

Introduction

As the job market changes quickly, finding a way to balance work and life has become a major concern in all fields. Education is one of the fields where this problem is most obvious. Education has long been seen as a key part of social progress(Chung et al., 2010). Teachers are very important for shaping minds and encouraging intellectual growth, but their jobs often come with a lot of stress that can affect their health(Bauwens et al., 2020). The idea of work-life balance, which means finding the right balance between work and personal life, is becoming more important as both employees and employers realise how it affects productivity, job satisfaction, and mental health in general(Ganeshan et al., 2020). Achieving this kind of balance is both important and hard for teachers, who often have to deal with changing workloads, emotionally charged interactions, and administrative tasks(Lindfelt et al., 2018).

The education sector, which includes a wide range of jobs from primary school teachers to university professors and administrative staff, has its own set of challenges(Butt & Lance, 2005). Some of these are long hours, big classes, constant performance reviews, and changing curriculum requirements. Also, teachers have to do a lot of emotional work because they have to stay patient, motivated, and caring even when students act out or when the school has rules that make things hard(Sutton et al., 2014). Teaching is different from many other jobs because it often goes beyond the normal workday. Grading, planning lessons, and helping students are all things that teachers do in their free time(Mairitsch et al., 2021). As a result, the line between work and personal life becomes less and less clear, which can lead to burnout, lower job satisfaction, and strained relationships with others(Garwood et al., 2018).

Changes in society and technology over the past few decades have made the work-life balance in education even more difficult(Krukowski et al., 2021). Digital communication tools have made it easier for teachers to connect and come up with new ways to teach, but they have also brought the school day into teachers' homes. Emails, virtual meetings, and online tests have created a "always-on" culture in which teachers are expected to be available and responsive outside of school hours(Fernández-Batanero et al., 2021). This trend, which got worse when schools around the world switched to remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, has made people wonder if the current work structures in the sector can last. The pandemic also brought attention to the hard work of teachers, who quickly adapted to new ways of teaching while also taking care of their own health, household duties, and emotional health(Matulevicius et al., 2021).

Cultural and institutional expectations have a big impact on how well people balance work and life in education(Soomro et al., 2018). In a lot of cultures, teaching is seen as more than just a job; it's a calling that requires dedication, self-sacrifice, and an unwavering commitment to students. This way of thinking highlights the nobility of the profession, but it can also make teachers feel guilty and put pressure on themselves when they have trouble putting their own needs first. Also, the way schools and universities are run may make these pressures worse by having strict schedules, not allowing for flexible work hours, and not giving enough support for mental health and wellness(Johari et al., 2018). These problems are even worse for female teachers, who often have to take care of more than their fair share of things at home. This shows how different men and women are in terms of work-life outcomes.

Bad work-life balance doesn't just affect the teacher; it also affects students, schools, and the whole education system. Teachers who are burned out are less effective in the classroom, more likely to miss work, and more likely to leave their jobs—an issue that is becoming more important as there are fewer teachers around the world(He et al., 2021). Not taking care of work-life balance can hurt morale, make it harder for staff to work together, and make them feel less like a community at work. On the other hand, work environments that support well-being have been shown to make people happier at work, make teachers more effective, and help students do better. In this case, promoting a culture that values balance is not just good for employees; it is also necessary for schools to be great(Grawitch et al., 2007).

This paper aims to add to that body of knowledge by looking at how hard it is to balance work and life in the education sector. It looks at the different things that affect balance, such as the growth trend, major contributors, gender dynamics, and key areas.

Research Methodology

This study uses a bibliometric analysis to examine research trends, influential authors, and collaboration networks on work-life balance among academicians. Data were gathered from the Scopus database, which was chosen because of its comprehensive coverage of peer-reviewed literature across disciplines. To ensure the inclusion of relevant and high-quality publications, a well-defined search strategy was used, which included a search string TITLE-ABS-KEY (“work-life balance” OR “wlb” AND “academician*” OR “teacher*” OR “faculty*” OR “professor*”) AND (LIMIT-TO (PUBSTAGE, “final”)) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE, “English”)). The search looked for things that had these keywords in the title, abstract, or keywords. In this study, the years 2004 to 2024 are looked at, which is enough time for a full longitudinal investigation. The first search on Scopus turned up a wide range of documents, including articles, conference papers, reviews, and book chapters written in various languages. The search results also showed source titles, document types, keywords, affiliations, and organisations that provided the money. Publishing trends were looked at on the collected data to find important contributors, prolific writers, leading institutions, countries, the number of publications over time, citation patterns, and how research was spread across different sources. The search results were exported as CSV files, which are compatible with bibliometric analysis tools. The VOSviewer software was applied for bibliometric mapping and visualisation. It was also easier to analyse co-authorship and discover networks of researchers and institutions working together. And it helped to figure out major research topics and emerging topics by conducting keyword co-occurrence analysis. It also enabled the citation analysis to reveal the most frequently cited papers and the seminal works about work-life balance related to education. By focusing on important research themes and influential papers, major participants, and emerging trends, this methodology offered an in-depth examination of the research space. For this reason, it provided enlightening content about the development and current stage of work-life balance research in education.

Results and Discussions

Published Documents and Publication Trend

The Scopus search provided 926 final published documents related to work-life balance in the education sector. Figure 1. Explains the document types that include “Articles” (685), “Conference Review” (7), “Book Chapters” (61), “Book” (28), “Conference Paper” (72), “Reviews” (60), and “Editorials” (13). The investigation identifies the four most popular document types in this area. Where “Articles” are the most common type of publication, contributing 74% of the total documents. After that, “Conference Papers”, “Reviews”, and “Book Chapter” account for 7.8%, 6.5%, and 6.6% respectively of the total documents; these documents are helpful in providing insights on work-life balance.

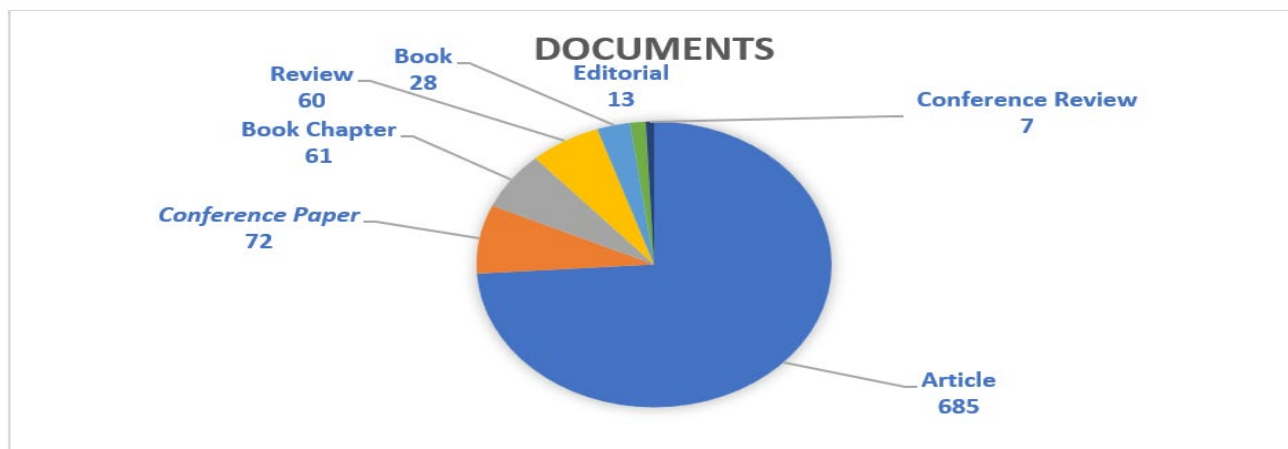


Figure 1: Document Type
Source: Author's Compilation

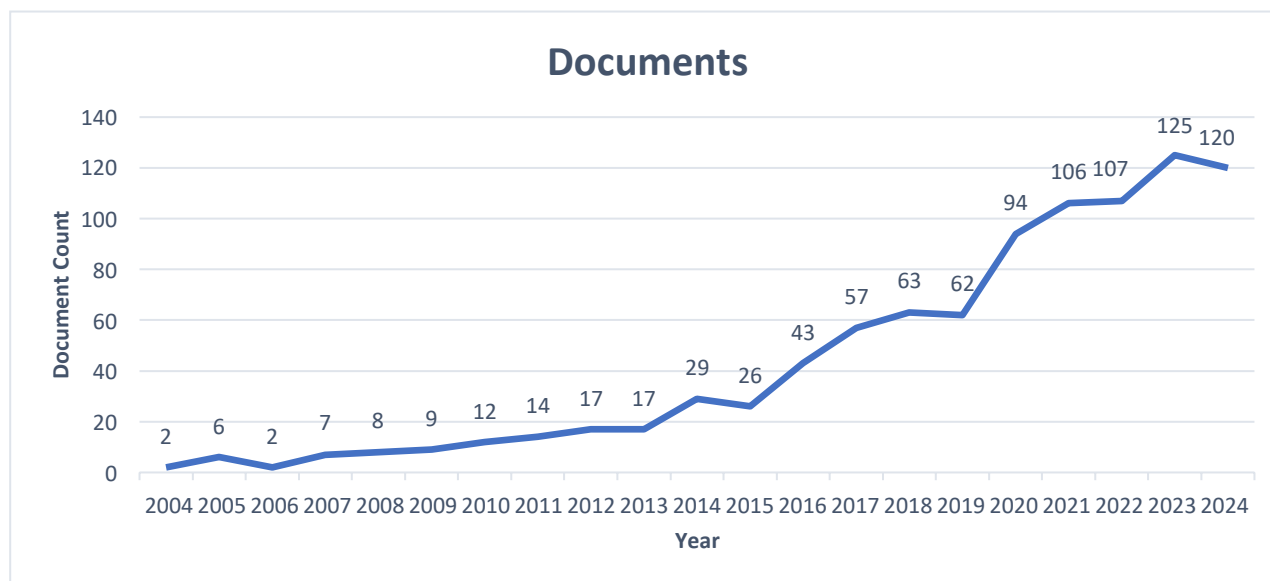


Figure 2: Document Publication Trend
Source: Author's Compilation

Figure 2 shows the publication trend of the documents. Initially, a very low number of publications were accounted for from 2004 to 2010. This period can be termed as the early growth period. From 2011 to 2019, the researchers took more interest in the education sector than from 2004 to 2010. While after 2019, there is a huge jump in publication, there may be a reason that the change in work culture was introduced due to the pandemic. Year 2023 was recorded as the highest publication year. In this year, 125 documents were published.

Table 1: Top 10 Highly Cited Documents

Document Title	Document Type	Publication Year	Number of Citation
"Women in academic science: A changing landscape"	Article	2014	731
"The new lives of teachers"	Book	2010	364

"Women physicians and promotion in academic medicine"	Article	2020	324
"Academic staff workloads and job satisfaction: Expectations and values in academe"	Review	2006	271
"Where Are the Women in Orthopaedic Surgery?"	Article	2016	245
"Why do women choose or reject careers in academic medicine? A narrative review of empirical evidence"	Review	2016	245
"Inadequate Progress for Women in Academic Medicine: Findings from the National Faculty Study"	Article	2015	244
"Academic productivity differences by gender and child age in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medicine faculty during the COVID-19 pandemic"	Article	2021	214
"Mentoring and the career satisfaction of male and female academic medical faculty"	Article	2014	190
"Consequences of Flexibility Stigma Among Academic Scientists and Engineers"	Article	2014	157

Source: Author's Compilation

Table 1 shows the top ten cited document in which Seven are articles, two are review and one is book. Among these top ten document, seven are focusing on the issues the women in the academia and related to healthcare sector.

As per these highly cited documents, the representation of women in academic science has evolved over time, but challenges persist (Ceci et al., 2014). Key factors include historically male-oriented departmental culture, budget cuts, and increased reliance on technology (Day & Gu, 2010). Discriminatory attitudes, discouraging behavior, and limited mentorship and networking opportunities hinder women's advancement in their career growth(Houston et al., 2006). The percentage of female scientists and engineers in academia has increased, but gender disparities persist, especially in low- and middle-income countries. The neoliberal transformation of the academic labor market and current family policy leave women less able to fit their life biography into their preferred career model, impacting their careers in academia. The wider range of roles for women in academia, including traditionally male, higher-level occupations, has impacted the representation of women in their career (Carr et al., 2015). The changing landscape for women in academic science reflects progress but persistent challenges. Addressing these challenges and promoting equity and intersectionality is crucial for achieving long-lasting changes that make science gender-blind(Richter et al., 2020).

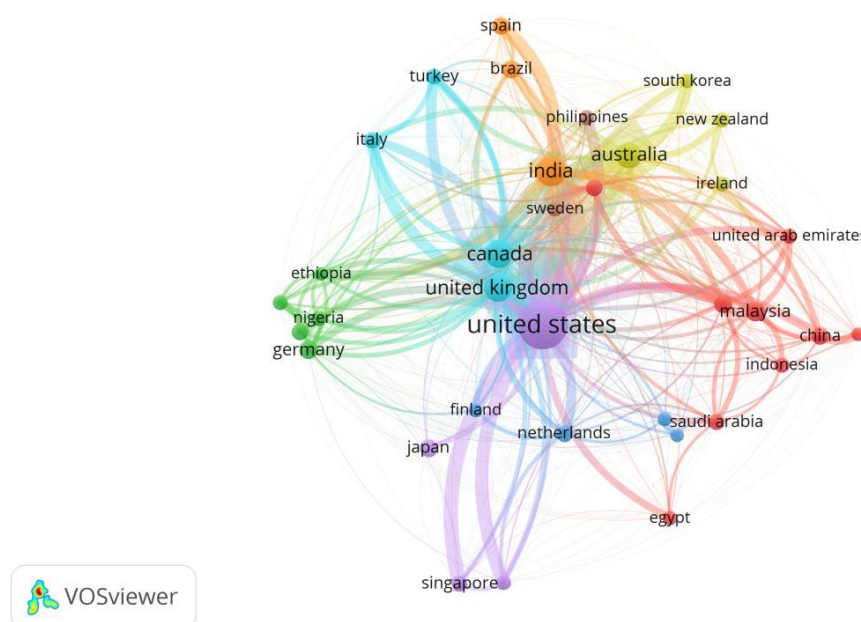


Figure 3: Bibliographic Coupling of Country

Source: Author's Creation

Figure 3 Shows that United states, United Kingdom, Canada, India and Australia are the top document published country on work-life balance in Academia. Thus, these countries are paying more attention towards the issues related to work-life balance of academicians to tackle the present and upcoming challenges in educational institution. While other countries like Egypt, Singapore, Japan, Nigeria, Spain and Ethiopia have paid less attention on it.

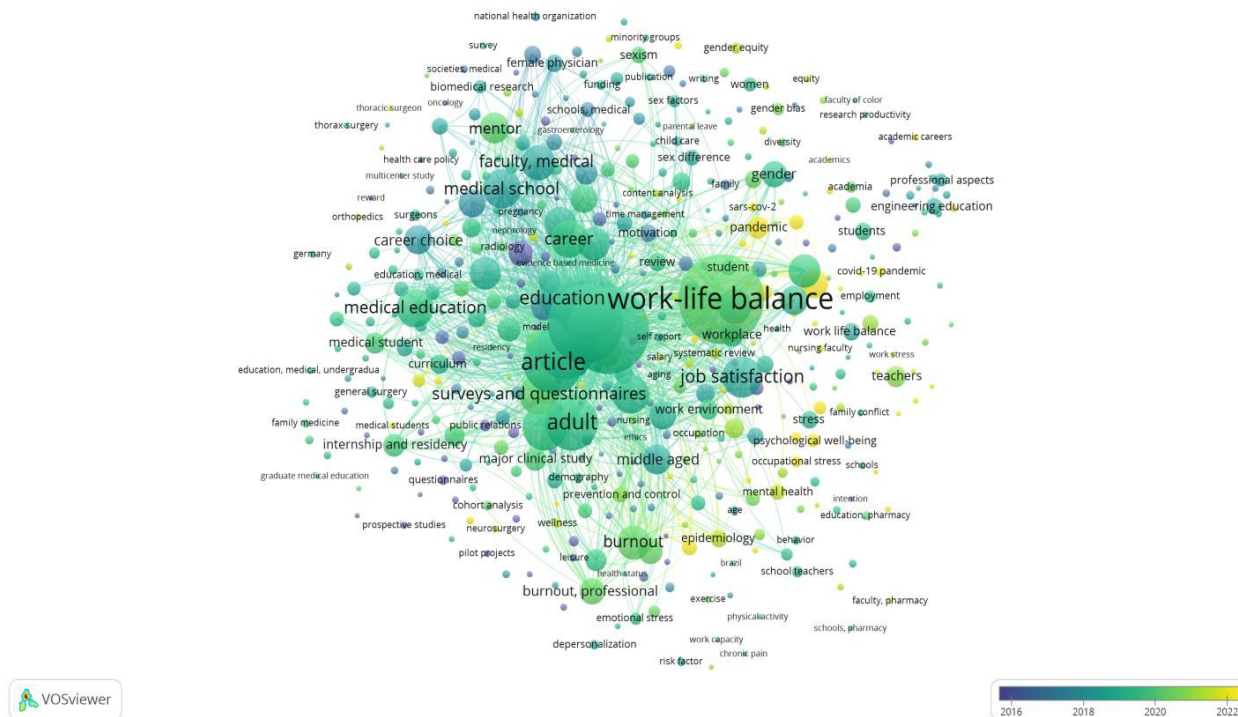


Figure 4 : Keywords Co-occurrence
Source: Author's Creation

The documents extracted from Vos-Viewer revealed that there is a total 387 keywords co-occurrence and these are grouped into 7 group of clusters on the threshold of 5. Figure 4 explains the network visualisation map of keyword co-occurrence.

Cluster 1 contains a total of 75 keywords which is related to mental health, physical health, occupational health and age. The major keywords are mental stress, burnout, emotional stress, wellbeing, workload, work environment and so on.

Cluster 2 contains 74 keywords in total and related to gender, institution, nature of employment, and type of research. The major keywords are child care relation, content analysis, university, time management etc.

Cluster 3 having 74 keywords and it focus on achievements, policies and practices, career mobility, efficiency and lifestyle. It includes major keywords like academic achievement, award and prizes, life event, organizational culture, professional practices and so on.

Cluster 4 contains a total of 74 keywords that focus on education program, learning environment, skills, and career choice. It includes perception, attitude, decision making, curriculum, program development others as major keywords.

Cluster 5 contains 35 keywords in total and related to employment conditions. It includes major keywords like education sector, working conditions, training and so on.

Cluster 6 having 32 keywords and focus on behaviour, demography and ethnicity. It includes keywords such as self-evaluation, german, personality etc.

Cluster 7 having 23 keywords and focus on employee expectations. The major keywords are salary, achievement, attention, awareness and so on.

Conclusion

The outcome of work-life balance on the wholesomeness of education sector employees has prodded research interest in work-life balance among researchers in education sector. To gather omnibus insight on this subject matter, this study carried on a bibliometric analysis on work-life balance in the education sector published between 2004 to 2024. A grand total of 926 publications had extracted for trend analysis, keyword analysis, highest contributor countries, and highest cited documents on work-life balance studies in education sector. The limitation of this study, this study can be used only for getting an overview on work-life balance among academicians.

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