Individual, Organizational, and Environmental Factors Affecting Work-Life Balance among Malaysian Lecturers Amidst COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

Education plays a significant role in every country in this world. Nowadays, lecturers are burdened with many roles, such as researcher, administrator, counsellor, and others. The position of a lecturer is very important for the success of institutions. To provide a professional service, they should be mentally and physically fit. High levels of work stress were associated with lower work-life balance and increased conflicts in their jobs. The Covid-19 pandemic has made it tougher for lecturers to perform the duties of teaching online while working from home. So, it is essential to see what factors matter to the lecturers in Malaysia in balancing their work and life. Therefore, this study seeks to identify the factors affecting work-life balance among lecturers in Malaysia. The dependent variable in this study was work-life balance, while the independent variables were made up of three major factors, i.e., individual, organizational, and environmental, with six sub-factors, namely emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, work overload, organizational support, technological advancement, and telecommuting. For this research, 435 lecturers participated and were contacted by email to answer the online survey questionnaire. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences Software (SPSS) was used to conduct multiple regression analysis in evaluating the relationships between the variables. The findings of this study revealed that the individual factors, organizational factors, and environmental factors were partially supported because only one sub-factor was significant in each factor. Work overload is the most influencing factor affecting the lecturer's work-life balance in Malaysia, while emotional intelligence is the least influencing factor. In addition, the result depicts that only emotional intelligence, work overload, and technological advancement made a significant impact on work-life balance. Whereas spiritual intelligence, organizational support, and telecommuting do not explain the variance in work-life balance significantly. The findings of the study provide the Ministry of Higher Education and policymakers with key information to increase and maintain the lecturers' work-life balance. At the same time, this study helps the lecturers themselves to improve their skills in managing their emotions and their time in order to meet their deadlines which can help foster and reinforce a separation between work and home environment.

Keywords: *Emotional intelligence; Spiritual intelligence; Work overload; Organizational support; Technological advancement; Telecommuting; Work-Life balance*

1. Introduction

The demands of lecturers or academicians have increased because people view teaching as a flexible career. Students are their customers [1], and private higher education institutions operating as commercial entities are frequently forced to acquiesce to students' demands. Also, maintaining a work-life balance is a concern that is increasingly recognized as being of strategic importance to the significance of a company and its employee [2]. High levels of work stress were associated with lower work-life balance and increased conflicts between different occupations. In the UNI Equal Opportunities by UNI Global Union [3] survey, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the work-life balance around the world are highlighted. 5,000 respondents have answered the survey, showing how the pandemic has changed the workers' lives. It is reported that more than 50% of respondents said they used the digital platform of work to adapt their way of working to the new working conditions. 69% of respondents agree that the changes in their way of work have made their workload increase during this pandemic with the household chores and their task of working from home.

According to The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2020), seeking an acceptable balance between work and everyday life is a challenge faced by every worker. Work-life balance is an ideal balance of working and personal life for an individual. In other words, work-life balance refers to the actions, decisions, and responsibilities that determine how much time is spent on work and the rest of their life [4]. It is a philosophy in which a worker's happiness is a source of job satisfaction and a motivator for productivity. The concept of work-life balance is considered one of the fundamental components of a balanced work environment [5]. Work and life balance are two important factors in people's working lives. Balancing work and personal life are regarded as a traditional work-life balance problem [6].

FIG. 1. **The Top and bottom cities for work-life balance 2020 (Source: Kisi, [7]).**

As per FIG. 1, according to US-based security specialist Kisi's study [7], people in Norway lead the world in work-life balance, followed by Finland, Denmark, and Germany. South Korean are among those most struggling with their work-life balance. The Italian staying in Milan was listed 49th, and the Hungarian who stayed in Budapest was listed 48th and did not completely balance their work-life. Besides, Malaysia is ranked 47 out of 50 with a low work-life balance, and Argentina is in the ranking no 46th. As per FIG. 2, Hong Kong is one of the top overworked cities globally. Other Asian countries like Singapore and Seoul ranked 2nd and 3rd in the top overworked cities. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia is listed 4th and followed by Tokyo in 5th rank. According to Kisi [7], Kuala Lumpur is ranked number one globally as Malaysian take a total of 52 hrs to commute and work

per week. It led Singapore, whose staff averaged 51.1 hours a week, followed by Bangkok, with 50.7 hours per week. Despite the longest hours worked and commute per week, Kuala Lumpur was in the top 4 cities with the overworked population. Hong Kong is the highest overworked population, with 29.9%, which shows that most workers work more than 48 hours per working week. Singapore ranked second with 25.1% and followed by Seoul with 23.1%. Besides, Kuala Lumpur ranked number 4, with 21% of overworked workers. Additionally, Malaysia is number 3" fewest vacations day offered," with many taking only 12 days off per year [7].

FIG. 2. **Top Overworked cities in the world (Source: Kisi, [7]).**

According to Aman [8], due to the Covid-19 pandemic in Malaysia, starting from March 2020, all the education sector, especially universities, need to telecommute or work from home and conduct online teaching and learning. The lecturer will need to record the lab session and give their student to watch the video, but not all academicians are known to use the latest technology, and some of them fear using it [7]. Suganya [9] claims that individual, organizational, and environmental factors play a significant role in work-life balance. Individual factors come from the employee itself, which are emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence. Organizational factors such as work overload and organizational support also can be factors that can affect the employee's work-life balance. Furthermore, technological advancement and telecommuting, which is under environmental factors, can impact the employee in achieving a work-life balance. As for this study, lecturers play a crucial role in the success of academic institutions. They should be physically and mentally fit in order to provide a professional service. Besides lecturing, they are also active in research activities, supervise students on research projects, interact externally, serve as academic advisors, and manage administrative duties [10].

A study on work-life balance satisfaction among academics in the public higher education sector was conducted by Noor et al. [11]. Seventeen academics from Malaysia's three public universities participated in this research. The findings from the study showed that overtime/weekend work and family support were among the major issues discussed among academics when it came to work-life balance. The lecturers at public universities feel they are not happy with the direction given by the management to work overtime and to work on weekends. They also assume that if the lecturers cannot afford to attend any university programs and say they need to focus more on their family and personal business, it shows that they are unable to

harmonize and balance their life and their job. In order to deal with challenges, changes, uncertainty, and conflict, Slamet [12] claimed that emotional intelligence is important to the lecturer. First, the lecturer must know to manage their feelings and others' feelings and identify whether the issue is emotionally or rationally linked. Second, optimizing positive emotions such as optimism, fortitude and hope to achieve their goals. Third, the lecturer has to maintain self-motivation and self-discipline to maintain the quality and productivity of work. Next, emotional intelligence is important for them to feel empathy and attention to others and to demonstrate integrity and loyalty. It is challenging and complex to teach in a university, and it is not enough for lecturers to be good at handling their emotions, they should be spiritually balanced as well as keep up with the real-time changes in the global world.

On the other hand, a study conducted by Sunday and Rosemary [13] showed that a lot of workload leads to stress resulting in a lack of focus to perform, deviant conduct among lecturers in Nigerian Universities leading to poor student relationships, doing too many other works at the same time leading to occasional absence in the classroom, too much work leading to stress that decreases productivity, competence and efficiency. This leads to prolonged stress among lecturers that causes depression and other related illnesses. Next, the perception of the employee about the support provided by their company or organization is important because it can affect how they will perform. Based on Gunawan et al. [14], there is an influence of organizational support on lecturers' performance, which means the bigger the organizational support given to the lecturer, their performance and work-life balance will increase. In reality, the latest technology in teaching cannot be embraced by many lecturers. The learning process suddenly changes to online learning when all the lecturers usually do in a face-to-face class. Learning will become chaotic if the lecturers were unprepared and do not know how to use the medium of teaching online [15]. In order to make all the lecturers adapt to the technological change, Pionke [16] argues that lecturers must possess the necessary flexibility and skills to increase technical knowledge so that the diffusion of learning technology can be applied and sustained. Support from the campus can help lecturers learn how to use technology effectively.

In addition, telecommuting gives lecturers can work anywhere from home, such as from the living room, dining room, etc. Nowadays, online assignment submissions, as well as synchronous and asynchronous teaching, are common practices in university teaching. Synchronous learning via 'live sessions' is recorded so that students, who were unable to participate in real-time, can access the recordings. Afterwards, shorter engagement sessions are held like chat rooms and online meetings. In contrast, asynchronous learning allows students to view recorded sessions, lecture notes, or online discussions on their schedule. As well as using social media platforms, educators engage students affected by limited Internet connections using WhatsApp, Telegram, and WeChat. Thus, this study is conducted to examine the three main factors impacting Malaysian lecturers' work-life balance, i.e., individual, organizational, and environmental factors, with six subfactors. Individual factors consist of emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence. Organizational factors consist of two subfactors which are work overload and organizational support. Besides, environmental factors consist of technological advancement and telecommuting.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Work-Life balance

Hasan and Teng [17] define work-life balance as how employees balance work and personal interests, such as family and friends, with work responsibilities. An effective work-life balance ensures that people can manage their personal, work, and family lives effectively. Besides, work-life balance is often referred to as an acceptable tension facing workers between their

work life and social life [18]. As mentioned in the study conducted by Aman-Ullah et al. [8], for workers to learn to manage their work life, the worker must be alert to any personal needs and demands, such as time and energy. It's not a matter of organizing their work life, but it also involves their outside office life. In contrast to their work-life, Aman-Ullah et al. [8] contend that there are other parts of their lives that they may manage, such as studying, travelling, sports activities, charitable work, self-development, leisure, or eldercare. With all this awareness of the importance of work-life balance, the employee will be more attentive to their work-life balance by managing their lives to be healthier. The employee should also gain flexibility over their work adaptation to ensure that they can balance other prospects in their lives while also preserving their job assignment's success. Work-life balance and employee job satisfaction also have been found to be significantly linked [19]. Yadav and Dabhade [20] concluded their findings as work-life balance plays a vital role in intrinsic aspects of job satisfaction. There are several previous researchers found that work-life balance is positively correlated with employee performance [21-23].

2.2 Individual factors of emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence

A study by Suganya [9] indicates that emotional and spiritual intelligence plays an essential role in achieving work-life balance for employees. Researchers conducted a study in order to evaluate the work-life balance of 103 postgraduate students at the Eastern University of Sri Lanka and the South Eastern University of Sri Lanka. Emotional intelligence (EI) is a broad term that encompasses soft skills or interpersonal skills within a broad range of personal and professional skills and dispositions. It needs to be aware of emotions and how they can influence traditional intelligence and communicate with them [24]. According to Kumarasamy et al. [2], greater emotional intelligence is correlated with greater work-life balance. The study was conducted in 12 police headquarters in Peninsular Malaysia, with a population of 11,388 police officers. Employees who are able to make use of emotional intelligence will be able to learn how to influence others and also maintain a balance between their professional and personal lives, as stated by Easmin et al. [25]. Therefore, this study proposes that in order to maintain the working life; the lecturers must have emotional intelligence as it enables thought and behaviour to deal with something with a measure of balance and maturity and almost constantly with a positive viewpoint. Based on the above explanations, the following hypothesis is developed: H1a- There is a relationship between emotional intelligence and work-life balance.

On the other hand, spiritual intelligence is one of the new understanding concepts that help to solve a person's problems. The impact of spiritual intelligence on human life is numerous, especially at work and home. Emmons [26] claimed that spiritual intelligence is measured as a whole set of skills and abilities to solve problems and reach goals in their everyday lives. Five spiritual intelligence attributes have been described such as (a) being able to enter into heightened spiritual states of consciousness; (b) the ability to use spiritual power to solve problems in living; (c) the capacity to participate in virtuous behaviours; and (d) the ability to spend daily activities, events, and relationships with a sense of the sacred (to show forgiveness, to express gratitude, to be humble, to display compassion). Ling et al. [27] found the importance of spiritual intelligence, which can be applied effectively to improve the performance of employees. Spiritual intelligence also has not been proven to be significantly related to work-life balance [28]. The study was conducted to help develop the spiritual intelligence of Iranian female teenagers studying at the Kuala Lumpur Iranian School. The study included 32 female students, 16 of whom were assigned to the experimental group and 16 to the other control group. Therefore, based on this literature, the following hypothesis will be tested: H1b- There is a relationship between spiritual intelligence and work-life balance.

2.3 Organizational factors of work overload and organizational support

Work overload can be defined as a mental construct that shows brain damage as the effect of performing work tasks under different environmental and operational conditions, combined with the person's ability to respond to these demands [29]. Nekoranec and Kmosena [30] mention that the employee tends to feel sick and tired or under pressure, if he is at his place of work but the employer has no task to offer him. In this study, the lecturers are overloaded with their job, not only teaching but supervising students for projects and also administrative tasks. They also do not have enough rest, so they need to bring all the work and do it at home. Work overload also significantly correlates to employee performance [31]. Besides, Onsardi and Sulas [32] found the importance of the company minimizing work stress and workload faced by employees so that later employee performance will improve. Inegbedion [33] in their study found that employee workload can influence their perception of job satisfaction.

Based on previous studies by Suganya [9], findings show that work overload is significantly impacting on work-life balance. This is also supported by Kumarasamy et al. [2], who found that work overload significantly impacts work-life balance. The study conducted by Omar et al. [34] also found that work overload was the most dominant factor affecting work-life balance. The research was conducted using a cross-sectional survey which uses a questionnaire method to gather data. One hundred respondents from one government enforcement agency in Malaysia were selected as a sample of the study. The sampling method that has been used in the research is convenience sampling. Therefore, the proposed hypothesis is H2a- There is a relationship between handling work overload and work-life balance.

Work-life balance is something that the employer and employee can work on together. Organizational support is important to ensure a good balance between work and life. Organizations that have not realised the value of work-life balance may exploit the hard work and commitment of their employees. By contrast, companies that are interested in the welfare of their staff will show support through the implementation of work-life balance programs and policies [35]. Chen et al [36] found that organizational support has a positive effect on the performance of frontline workers, and a sense of belonging plays a strong mediating role between them. Maan et al [37] also found that perceived organizational support positively influenced psychological empowerment and job satisfaction.

Moreover, the study found that perceived organizational support and job satisfaction are weaker when an employee's proactive personality is higher rather than lower. There are previous studies that found a positive relationship between organizational support and work-life balance. It can be seen in the study by Suganya [9] and Kumarasamy, et al. [2]. McCarthy et al. [35] found that such measures positively affected the balance between employees' working and living conditions. The study was conducted on the employee in 15 large organizations in Ireland, which included 15 HR managers and 133 supervisors, and 729 employees. Amazue and Onyishi [38], in their study, found that organizational support has a positive relationship with work-life balance. The study involved 254 bank workers in Nigeria. Based on the above explanations about the relationship between organizational support and work-life balance, the following hypothesis is developed: H2b- There is a relationship between organizational support and work-life balance.

2.4 Environmental factors of technological advancement and telecommuting

Technological advancement has made it increasingly possible for staff to stay connected to the job while not in the workplace. Nevertheless, the effects on essential aspects of working and working life were hardly known. Waller and Ragsdell [39] found that the influence of technology has a negative effect on the work-life balance. The study found that technological advancement makes people feel more distant from their work and home lives, making it more challenging to sustain the work-life balance. Jaiswal et al [40] found that the introduction and adoption of new technology calls for employees to upskill themselves to survive in future work. Alaba [41] stated that advancements in technology could contribute to employee productivity and organizational effectiveness. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, most of the companies offer work-from-home and the company use online work-sharing systems as the new way of work. So, it will make the employees stressed about using the new technology. The research conducted by First Psychology Scotland [42] found that most of the respondents feel the use of mobile technology can increase their stress and lead to an imbalance in their work and life. The research was conducted using an online survey via Survey Monkey, and the participants were social media users, specifically Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook users aged 18 and above. Therefore, based on the literature explained above, the following hypothesis will be tested: H3a- There is a relationship between technological advancement and work-life balance.

Likewise, telecommuting is considered one of the prominent strategies resulting from advanced technology. Lakshmi et al. [43] stated that the traditional working arrangements turning into the virtual office and declining the importance of personal presence was a visible drastic change that occurred in the last decade. Onyemaechi et al. [44] state that telecommuting is permitting employees to substitute their regular office work to perform their job tasks away from the office using technological means. In this study, flexibility is an inevitable requirement of employees in the new millennium, where organizations have adopted telecommuting to enhance the flexibility of work tasks. Moreover, with the COVID-19 pandemic faced by people around the globe, attention toward telecommuting has abruptly risen. Telecommuting was one of the prime prerequisites when people tend to adopt a 'new normal' situation due to a pandemic. Telecommuters may foster work-life balance and job satisfaction as well as can affect the employees' career success [45]. Nayak and Pandit [46] stated that telecommuting could influence employee productivity levels. Uresha [47] found a significant positive relationship between the variable in the study conducted on 110 employees in Sri Lanka. The convenient sampling technique and the questionnaire were used to gather data. Thus, the following hypothesis is developed: H3b-There is a relationship between telecommuting and work-life balance.
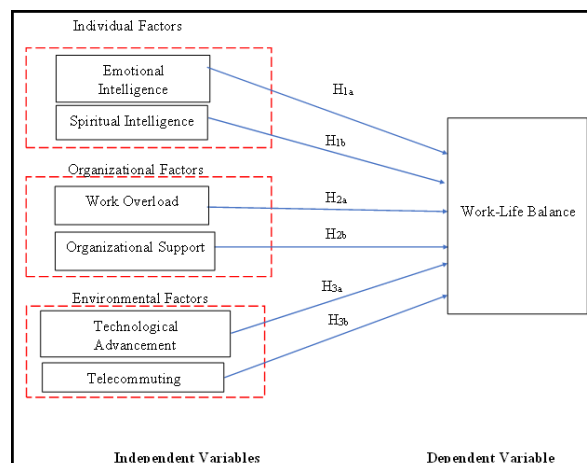

FIG. 3. **Research Framework.**

3. Methodology

The type of investigation is correlation research of cross-sectional study using the questionnaire. Salkind [48] shared that correlation research is able to identify the relationship between two or more variables which makes it suitable to be used in this research. The study setting is non-contrived because the research was conducted in the natural environment where the respondent usually works.

The individual lecturers in public and private universities are the unit of analysis for this study. In this study, the target population are Malaysian lecturers from private and public universities 68,827 lecturers. The sample size has been determined according to the Sample Size Determination Table by Krejcie and Morgan [49] as a guide; hence with a total population are 68,827 academicians, the researcher must distribute 382 sets of questionnaires. There were more participants which are lecturers in public universities compared to private universities.

For this study, the researcher has sent emails to 10,468 lecturers in public universities and 1,503 to lecturers in private universities. There was no sampling frame in this study because the list of lecturers in the population is confidential. In this research, researchers chose the convenience sampling method to select the elements of the population. According to Salkind [48], convenience sampling is a form of nonprobability sampling in which the respondents are convenient sources of data rather than randomly selected. This type of sampling is easy to access and inexpensive for the researcher to conduct the study compared to other sampling methods [48].

The primary data used for this research is a set of questionnaires, and the questionnaire was handed over directly to the respondents. The data of the respondent was obtained through the university directory provided by the university on the university website. The survey method that has been used for this research is the online questionnaire in Google Forms was delivered through e-mail to the respondents personally.

The respondent was provided enough time (i.e., 15-20 mins) to complete the questionnaire, and the researcher directly collects the data through Google Forms. The researcher starts to blast the questionnaire in February 2021 after the proposal submission. A total of three months was required for data collection in this study, starting in February and ending in May 2021.

As per TABLE 1, The dependent variable, work-life balance, was measured using 8-item scales adapted from Hayman [50]. The individual factors of emotional intelligence were measured using the Wong and Low Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLIES) by Wong and Law [51], while spiritual intelligence was measured using the Spiritual Intelligence Self-Report Inventory (SISRI) by King and DeCicco [52]. The organizational factor, work overload, was measured following Qureshi et al. [53], while organizational support was measured using four items from Eisenberger et al. [54].

The environmental factors of technological advancement were measured using a two-item scale by Waller and Ragsdell [39], and telecommuting was measured using five items scale by Uresha [47]. To analyse this data, the researcher used Statistical Packaging for Social Studies (SPSS) Version 25. The data needs to be analysed to obtain the accuracy and reliability of the questionnaire.

TABLE 1. **List of Measurement Items and Sources.**

Variables and Number of Items	Sources
Work-Life Balance 1. My personal life suffers because of work. 2. My work suffers because of my personal life. 3. I find it hard to work because of personal matters. 4. My jobs make my personal life difficult. 5. I neglect personal needs because of work. 6. I miss personal activities because of work 7. I struggle to juggle work and non-work 8. I am too tired to be effective at work	Hayman [50]
Individual Factors: Emotional intelligence 1. I will always encourage myself to try my best. 2. I am able to control my temper and handle difficulties rationally. 3. I am quite capable of controlling my own emotions. 4. I can always calm down quickly when I am very angry. 5. I have good control of my own emotions. 6. I have a good understanding of my own emotions. 7. I really understand what I felt. 8. I always know whether or not I am happy. 9. I always set goals for myself and try my best to achieve them. Spiritual intelligence 1. I am able to define a purpose or reason for my life. 2. I am able to move freely between levels of consciousness or awareness. 3. I define myself by my deeper, non-physical self. 4. When I experience a failure, I am still able to find meaning in it. 5. I often see issues and choices more clearly while in higher states of consciousness/awareness. 6. I am able to make decisions according to my purpose in life. 7. I am able to find meaning and purpose in my everyday experiences. 8. I have developed my own techniques for entering higher states of consciousness or awareness. 9. I can control when I enter higher states of consciousness or awareness	Wong and Low [51] King and DeCicco [52]

Organizational Factors: Work overload 1. I experience excessive work pressure. 2. I work for long hours, overtime and even on holiday. 3. I am unable to meet the demands of my job. 4. I spend so long at work that my outside relationship is suffering. 5. I'm so busy; that I find it increasingly difficult to concentrate on the job in front of me. 6. I feel tired during the day due to an excessive workload.	Qureshi et al. [53]
Organizational support 1. The organization fails to appreciate any extra effort from me. 2. The organization would ignore any complaints from me. 3. Even if I did the best job, the organization would fail to notice. 4. The organization show very little concern for me.	Eisenberger et al. [54]
Environmental Factors: Technological advancement 1. By spending time on communication devices outside of working hours, I feel I miss out on other things. 2. Information communication devices received outside of office hours result in me having to work outside of office hours.	Waller and Ragsdell [39]
Telecommuting 1. I engage in telecommuting/working from home. 2. My organization allows telecommuting. 3. Organizational management and my supervisor are always available to help me when a problem is incurred while I telecommute. 4. I could complete all my work duties while staying at home. 5. I have the required devices and adequate internet connections to telecommute effectively.	Uresha [47]

4. Findings and Discussion

The targeted respondent in this study is the lecturers from public and private universities in Malaysia. A total of 11,971 questionnaires were sent to respondents individually via email in order to achieve the minimum sample size of targeted respondents. But the researcher only obtained 435 questionnaires with completed data. Hence, the response rate accumulated

for this study is 3.63%. As the questionnaire was being collected, there were no questionnaires discarded or uncompleted by the respondents. This is because the researcher ticks the required button in every question in Google Forms, so the respondent needs to answer all questions in order to continue answering the questionnaire. Most of the respondents are from public universities, with 367 respondents and a percentage of 84.4%. While 68 respondents were private university lecturers, with a percentage of 15.6%. With regards to demographics, out of 435 respondents, there was 38.4% male, with a total of 167 respondents, while the rest is 61.6% showing respondents were female, with a total of 268. The highest frequency of respondents is between the age of 31-40 years old, with 171 respondents and 39.3%. The respondent's age of 41-50 was recorded as the second highest, with a total of 161 respondents and a percentage of 37.0%. This was followed by 79 respondents (18.2%) aged 51-60. Lastly, the lowest frequency with 24 respondents is from 21-30 with 5.5%. Two hundred twenty respondents are senior lecturers, with a percentage of 50.6%. This was followed by the lecturer with a total of 115 respondents and a percentage of 26.4%. While associate professors with a total of 73 respondents and 16.8%. The second-lowest frequency is the professor, with a total of 23 respondents and a percentage of 5.3%. The lowest frequency is instructor, tutor, and assistant lecturer, with 4 respondents and a percentage of 0.9%. The last demographic question in the questionnaire is about working experience. The highest frequency of the respondent was 11-20 years of working experience, with a total of 166 and a percentage of 38.2%. This was followed by the lecturer with more than 20 years of working experience with a total of 105 respondents and a percentage of 24.1%. While 92 respondents were lecturers with 5-10 years of working experience, with a percentage of 21.1%. The lowest frequency is from lecturers with less than 5 years of working experience, with a total of 72 respondents and a percentage of 16.6%.

TABLE 2. **Summary of Mean and Normality Analysis for Each Variable.**

Variables		Mean	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Dependent Variable	Work-life balance	3.50	0.93	-0.11	-0.70
Individual Factors	Emotional Intelligence	4.13	0.55	-0.36	-0.20
	Spiritual Intelligence	4.11	0.59	-0.62	1.87
Organizational Factors	Work Overload	3.05	0.97	-0.10	-0.54
	Organizational Support	2.90	1.12	1.50	-0.80
Environmental Factors	Technological Advancement	3.42	1.10	-0.39	-0.62
	Telecommuting	4.06	0.63	-0.63	0.61

TABLE 2 has shown a summary of the descriptive statistical analysis. The dependent variable of work-life balance with a mean of 3.50 and a standard deviation of 0.93. Based on the value, the mean score for work-life balance is moderately high, and it indicated that most of the respondents were neutral with items in work-life balance. This variable of individual factors includes two dimensions which are emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence. Among 435 lecturers, emotional intelligence was most significant, with a mean of 4.13 and a standard deviation of 0.56, rather than spiritual intelligence (mean=4.11, standard deviation=0.59). Based on the value, the mean score for emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence was high, and it

indicated that most of the respondents agreed with items in emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence. This variable of organizational factors includes two dimensions which are work overload and organizational support. Among 435 lecturers, work overload was most significant, with a mean of 3.05 and a standard deviation of 0.97, rather than organizational support (mean=2.90, standard deviation=1.12). Based on the value, the mean score for the work overload was moderately high, and it indicated that most of the respondents were neutral about the items in the work overload. Besides, the mean score for organizational support was moderately low, and it shows that most of the respondents disagree with items in organizational support. This variable of environmental factors includes two dimensions which are technological advancement and telecommuting. However, among 435 lecturers, telecommuting was most significant, with a mean of 4.06 and a standard deviation of 0.63, rather than technological advancement (mean=3.42, standard deviation=1.10). Based on the value, the mean score for technological advancement was high, and it indicated that most of the respondents agreed with the items in the technological advancement. Besides, the mean score for telecommuting was moderately high, and it shows that most of the respondents were neutral with items in telecommuting. Skewness values were accepted when the values range from - 3 to + 3 and a range of -10 to +10 for acceptable kurtosis for each variable. If the distribution is normal, the kurtosis value of 0. Therefore, based on table 4.12, all data of this study were normally distributed since Skewness and Kurtosis were found to be in the range of -3 to +3 for each variable.

TABLE 3. **Summary of Reliability Analysis for Each Variable.**

Variables		No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
Dependent Variable	Work-Life Balance	8	0.908	Excellent
Individual Factors	Emotional Intelligence	9	0.887	Very Good
	Spiritual Intelligence	9	0.925	Excellent
Organizational Factors	Work Overload	6	0.893	Very Good
	Organizational Support	4	0.947	Excellent
Environmental Factors	Technological Advancement	2	0.797	Good
	Telecommuting	5	0.696	Moderate

TABLE 3 above shows that the value of Cronbach's Alpha measures the dependent variable, which is work-life balance, and the independent variables are emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, work overload, organizational support, technological advancement, and telecommuting. Cronbach's Alpha was used to measure the reliability of the analysis for this study and examine each variable's reliability. Cronbach's Alpha is higher when it is close to 1, indicating greater internal consistency reliability. In this study, the purpose is to determine whether the questionnaire used is reliable or not. In this study, Cronbach's alpha for 8 items of the work-life balance (dependent variable) measure is 0.91. According to the rule of thumb of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient size, the range between 0.9 and above is considered excellent. The result indicates that Cronbach's Alpha for 9 items in the emotional intelligence (independent variables) measure is 0.89 can be considered very good. Spiritual intelligence with nine items has an excellent result which is 0.93. While for 6 items in work overload and four items of organizational support, the result indicates that Cronbach's Alpha measure is 0.893 and 0.95, which are very good and

excellent. The results for two items of technological advancement and five items of telecommuting are 0.80 and 0.70, considered good and moderate. Therefore, it shows that the questionnaire is reliable for all variables in this study.

A correlation test is used to compare the net strength of the relationships between two continuous variables. Correlation coefficients indicate the direction, strength, and significance of the bivariate relationship between all measured variables at a ratio or interval level. In this study, the researcher used Pearson Correlation as one of several methods to determine the direction of the relationship between variables and the correlation between them. An analysis is conducted in order to identify whether the independent variables, which are emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, work overload, organizational support, technological advancement, and telecommuting, are related to work-life balance. Correlations between independent variables and dependent variables must be analysed in order to determine the strength of the correlation (r). It is assumed that r=1 indicates a positive relationship between the two and that r=-1 indicates a negative relationship. TABLE 4 highlighted the correlation coefficient between work-life balance and all independent variables, while Table 4.15 summarises the result of Pearson's Correlation Coefficient. Work overload had the highest correlation coefficient among other variables. A strong negative correlation was found, r (433) =-0.68, p<.001, indicating a significant relationship between work overload and work-life balance. This shows that if the lecturers are given more workload, they tend to be an imbalance in work and life.

TABLE 4. **Correlation Coefficient between Work Life Balance and All Independent Variables.**

	WLB	EI	SI	WO	OS	TA	TC
Work-Life Balance (WLB)	1	.369**	.305**	-.680**	-.415**	-.503**	.194**
Emotional Intelligence (EI)		1	.695**	-.279**	-.221**	-.239**	.308**
Spiritual Intelligence (SI)			1	-.229**	-.107**	-.182**	.263**
Work Overload (WO)				1	.502**	.578**	-.168**
Organizational Support (OS)					1	.409**	-.240**
Technological Advancement (TA)						1	-.077
Telecommuting (TC)							1

Note. **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

On the other hand, technological advancement recorded the second-highest correlation. A moderate negative correlation was found, r (433) =-0.50, p<.001, indicating a significant relationship between work overload and work-life balance. This shows that if the lecturer gets to use more advanced technology, they will feel it will affect their work-life balance. Organizational support recorded the third-highest correlation at (r=-0.42, p<0.00). This implied a negative significant relationship between organizational support and work-life balance. The correlation was significant at p<0.00, while the strength of the relationship was moderate. It can be concluded that if the lecturers were supported by their organization, it would decrease their work-life

balance. Next, the emotional intelligence recorded the correlation at (r=0.37, p<0.00). This implied a positive significant relationship between emotional intelligence and work-life balance. The correlation was significant at p<0.00, while the strength of the relationship was weak. This show that if the lecturer has high emotional intelligence, they tend to have a work-life balance compared to the lecturer that has lower emotional intelligence. On the other hand, spiritual intelligence recorded the second-lowest correlation (r=0.31, p<0.00). This implied a positive significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and work-life balance. The correlation was significant at p<0.00, while the strength of the relationship was weak. This shows that if the lecturers have high spiritual intelligence, they will have a balance in their work and life as compared to the lecturer that has lower spiritual intelligence. Last but not least, telecommuting recorded the lowest correlation at (r=0.194, p<0.00). This indicated a negative relationship between telecommuting and work-life balance. The correlation was significant at p<0.00, while the strength of the relationship was very weak. It can be concluded that if the lecturer has to telecommute, they tend to be less balance in their work and life.

TABLE 5. **Multiple Regression Analysis.**

Dependent Variable: Work-Life Balance					
Independent Variables	**Unstandardized Coefficient**		**Standardized Coefficient**		**Sig. Value**
	B	**Std. Error**	**(Beta)**	**t**	
(Constant)	4.093	.350		11.689	.000
Emotional Intelligence	.222	.081	.132	2.726	.007
Spiritual Intelligence	.089	.075	.056	1.193	.233
Work Overload	-.496	.043	-.518	-11.604	.000
Organizational Support	-.048	.033	-.058	-1.427	.154
Technological Advancement	-.115	.035	-.136	-3.227	.001
Telecommuting	.040	.053	.028	.760	.448
R^2	.516				
F Value	76.195				
Significance	0.00				

TABLE 5 showed multiple regression analysis. Multiple linear regression was calculated to predict the lecturer's work-life balance in Malaysia based on all independent variables, namely, emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, work overload, organizational support, technological advancement, and telecommuting. A significant regression equation was found, F=76.20, p<.001 with an R^2 of 0.52. This implied that 52% of the variance in the dependent variable, work-life balance, was explained by the variation of all independent variables, namely, emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, work overload, organizational support, technological advancement, and telecommuting. The remaining variance of 48% that explains other factors outside the study can explain the dependent variable. The respondents predicted dependent variable is equal to: Work-

life balance =4.09 - 0.22 Emotional Intelligence +0.09 Spiritual Intelligence - 0.50 Work Overload -0.05 Organizational Support - 0.12 Technological Advancement +0.04 Telecommuting.

Besides, the regression intercept takes a value of 4.09. In contrast, the regression slope for emotional intelligence takes a value of 0.22; spiritual intelligence takes a value of 0.09; work overload takes values of -0.50, organizational support takes a value of - 0.05, technological advancement takes a value of -0.12 and telecommuting takes a value 0.40. This shows that the amount predicted that work-life balance changes for an increase of 1 in emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, work overload, organizational support, technological advancement, and telecommuting. For the intercept, the t-statistic is 11.69, and the p-value is .00, less than 0.05. Hence, the model is statistically fit, and three independent variables, which are emotional intelligence, work overload and technological advancement, were significant. Next, the significance between independent variables and dependent variables was examined. As mentioned, each variable must achieve a significance value of less than 0.05 to be considered significant. A variable with the most excellent beta value indicates the factor most influenced by the dependent variable.

Based on table 5, the largest beta is work overload (β -0.52, p=0.00, p<0.05). Therefore, this concludes that work overload makes the strongest unique contribution to explaining the dependent variable when the variance explained by all other variables in the model is controlled. This is followed by technological advancement (β -0.14, p=0.00, p<0.05). Next is emotional intelligence (β 0.13, p=0.01, p<0.05) and followed by spiritual intelligence (β 0.056, p=0.23, p>0.05). The lowest beta is telecommuting (β 0.028, p=0.45, p>0.05) and followed by organizational support (β -0.06, p=0.15, p>0.05). It shows that work overload is the most influencing factor affecting the lecturer's work-life balance in Malaysia, while telecommuting is the least influencing factor. In addition, the result depicts that only work overload, technological advancement and emotional intelligence made a unique and statistically significant contribution to the prediction of work-life balance. Whereas spiritual intelligence, telecommuting and organizational support do not explain the variance in work-life balance significantly.

TABLE 6. **Analysis of Hypotheses.**

Hypotheses	Decision (Supported/ Not Supported)
H1: There is a significant relationship between individual factors and work-life balance.	Partially Supported
H1a: There is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and work-life balance.	Supported
H1b: There is a significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and work-life balance.	Not Supported
H2: There is a significant relationship between organizational factors and work-life balance.	Partially Supported
H2a: There is a significant relationship between work overload and work-life balance.	Supported
H2b: There is a significant relationship between organizational support and work-	Not Supported

life balance.	
H3: There is a significant relationship between environmental factors and work-life balance.	Partially Supported
H3a: There is a significant relationship between technological advancement and work-life balance.	Supported
H3b: There is a significant relationship between telecommuting and work-life balance.	Not Supported

TABLE 6 represents the analysis of the hypothesis. Based on the result, the first independent variable, emotional intelligence, has a significant value of 0.007, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and work-life balance. As for the hypothesis, H1 is supported, and the researcher managed to achieve research objective 1a. Suganya [9] and Cho and Lee [55] also found that emotional intelligence is significantly associated with work-life balance. One reason for this might be that they are better able to recognise their own needs with emotional intelligence and to relate to people they work with. The outcome is that they are more effective in completing their work and maintaining an equilibrium between work and life. In the study by Shylaja and Prasad [56], employees with higher emotional intelligence were better able to handle stressful situations, as opposed to those with lower emotional intelligence. A person with a high degree of emotional intelligence will be able to influence other people's emotions in such a way that they can maintain a satisfying life in both the personal and professional spheres. Moreover, a study conducted by Naz et al. [57] found a high degree of emotional intelligence among working women and a high work-life balance at the same time. It has been found that emotional intelligence and work-life balance are significantly related. The study concluded that high emotional intelligence makes for a good work-life balance. The second independent variable, spiritual intelligence, has a significant value of 0.233, which is more than 0.05. Therefore, there is no significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and work-life balance. As for the hypothesis, H 1a is not supported, and the researcher managed to achieve research objective 1b. This result was supported by a study from Kumarasamy et al. [2] found that work-life balance is not influenced by spiritual intelligence. With their current sample, namely police officers, spiritual intelligence is not required to achieve work- life balance. The age of the respondents in this study can explain this issue. The survey says the bulk of responders are young police officers who still have relatively low levels of spiritual intelligence. They are thus not in a position to gain the deepest significance, purpose and motivation. Young police officers also continue to improve their spiritual understanding and so require more time to find calm areas for meditation, prayer or meditation. As police officers grow older, their spiritual intelligence may gradually increase, leading to a better work-life balance. The study concluded that young police officers have low spiritual intelligence, which negatively impacts their work-life balance. Moreover, Easmin et al. [25] also reported the same findings in their study, in which the authors did not find any relationship between work-life balance and spiritual intelligence.

The third independent variable, work overload, has a significant value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between work overload and work-life balance. As for the hypothesis, H2a is supported, and the researcher managed to achieve research objective 2a. According to a study published by Easmin et al. [25], work overload is positively related to work-life balance because many staff believe that working long or extra hours does not impact them since employees consider it to be part of the organizational culture at present. Omar et al. [34] further supported this finding through his study which between workload and work life balance, there is a considerable negative connection. The bigger the burden

the less the balance of working life they enjoy. Thus, the work life balance of the employee can be improved by considering the amount of workload given to them. In this study, the researcher found that most of the respondents felt that excessive work pressure, working for long hours are alleviated tensions between work and life. It means that if there is excessive workload then their work life balance will also be affected. Therefore, the conclusion may be drawn that the overloading of work and work life balance have a substantial link. Next, organizational support has a significant value of 0.154, which is more than 0.05. Therefore, there is no significant relationship between organizational support and work-life balance. As for the hypothesis, H2b is not supported, and the researcher managed to achieve research objective 2b. Based on the previous study, there are no researchers that found the insignificant relationship between organizational support and work-life balance. In this study, the researcher found that most of the respondents felt that even with organizational support it does not help them to achieve work life balance. It shows that they can manage their work life balance on their own without any support from their supervisor and organization. Therefore, it can be inferred that organisational support and the balance of work life have no substantial connection.

The technological advancement has a significant value of 0.001, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between technological advancement and work-life balance. As for the hypothesis, H3a is supported, and the researcher managed to achieve research objective 3a. A study by Easmin et al. [25] found the advancing technology associated with certain jobs negatively affected work-life balance. As a result of technological advancements, workers are often forced to bring their incomplete work outside the office, which has an adverse impact on their daily lives. The advancement of technology and communications has enabled employees to work 24 hours a day, 7 days a week [58]. Employees are constantly on the go because of these actions and decisions. The work-life balance of employees is being hampered by organizations creating e-mail traditions & using various channels such as phone calls, videoconferencing, networking sites etc. [39,59]. More work pressures caused from advancement in technology has affected the employees' stress level to a much larger extent [60]. In this study, the researcher found that most of the respondents felt that the use of technology disrupts their life, and they tend to miss out on the other things which resulting them to do work outside the working hours. Therefore, the conclusion can be drawn that the relationship between technical progress and working life equilibrium is substantial. The last independent variable, telecommuting, has a significant value of 0.448, which is more than 0.05. Therefore, there is no significant relationship between telecommuting and work-life balance. As for the hypothesis, H3b is not supported, and the researcher managed to achieve research objective 3b. Similarly, Hill et al. [61] concluded that telecommuting has a neutral effect on the balance between work and life. In conclusion, out of six variables, three independent variables, namely, emotional intelligence, work overload, and technological advancement, significantly affect the dependent variable, namely, work-life balance. The remaining variable, which is spiritual intelligence, organizational support and telecommuting does not have a significant relationship with work-life balance.

5. Recommendation

The study is based on a considerable favourable connection between emotional intelligence and work-life balance. HR practitioners should take the effort to increase and improve their employee's emotional intelligence abilities to provide a work-life balance. The HR practitioner can enhance the emotional intelligence level of employees by conducting workshop training and coaching the employee. Previous studies have recommended complementary approaches of training and coaching to enhance emotional intelligence levels [62]. Training is a group-based systematic learning method of transferring skills [63]

while coaching is a way of individual transmission of abilities [64]. The researcher, therefore, believes that emotional intelligence is a talent that can be developed and strengthened through individual interventions. Training and coaching can therefore produce optimal outcomes by improving deficiencies if the training procedure is left behind. Improved emotional intelligence skills assist people to understand and control their emotions better, leading to high- quality services. HR professionals should also focus on the design, development and implementation of optimal working-life balance policies in the building of an organisation. HR directors must integrate emotional intelligence and principles to make their staff feel. Organizations should develop effective and successful policies and programmes on work-life balance and maintain an organisational culture that encourages the use of the existing policies. This helps to reduce employment - the employee's life conflict.

Based on the study, workload has a significant negative relationship with work- life balance. It shows that the workload among employee need to be reduce in order to achieve work-life balance. The HR practitioner and employer should divide the work fairly so that the employees will have the same amount of work so that they will have less work overload. This is also supported by Omar et. al [34], who recommend that employers must be aware of workload segregation and take measures to prevent the employees from increasing their workload. It is also possible that introducing a flexible working schedule could help employees with kids or employees who care for siblings to balance work and other commitments [65]. Based on the study, technological advancement has significant negative relationship. Work-life balance can be achieved through establishing guidelines for appropriate and inappropriate use of organizational technology. This is an option that the employee can be referred to when needed. Furthermore, the managers should communicate with the employee and set parameters for work schedules when using the technology. Even in a remote world, technological advances do not automatically mean the end of work-life balance. Employees are not required to be on the internet all of the time, even after working hours. In a flexible work environment, managers need to educate their employees about the importance of well-being and maintaining a work-life balance. Additionally, encouraging staff to take time off is an excellent way to avoid burnout.

In order to enhance work performance as well as maintain work-life balance, the employee should improve their emotional intelligence skills. According to Goleman [62], in the book Working with Emotional Intelligence, the employee should take steps to improve their skills in the five areas of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self-regulation, social skills, empathy, and motivation. The employee must first be aware of their emotions in order to recognize and understand the cause of the feelings. First, they should be aware of their emotions, but then they should be able to manage their emotions as well. As these individuals are able to recognise the emotions of others, in any situation they may react correctly. In addition, social skills are highly appreciated at work as they help to better communication and pleasant enterprise culture. Next, empathy is more than just knowing how others feel. It also includes how staff react to these feelings. If people are emotionally intelligent, they are more motivated to achieve personal objectives. A person would rather do things because it is fulfilling to them, and they are passionate about them instead of seeking external rewards. A person with work overload must master the skill of managing their time. Meeting deadlines is easier if you know when tasks need to be completed and when they need to be completed. Speak to the supervisor or someone at a higher level about the issue and explain it if more time is needed frequently. In addition, every employee should set a goal and strive to achieve success in both his or her career and family life to achieve work-life balance. The skills and strategies at work, such as planning, organizing, and setting limits, can be applied both professionally and personally in order to achieve a satisfying and fulfilling well-balanced life. Employees who are overworked and stressed

may not be able to perform at their best, which will affect their work-life balance. The employee can help establish a work/life balance if they dismiss the use of organisational apps outside of the work area from his own personal devices outside working hours. These guidelines can help foster and reinforce a separation between the work and home environments.

It is essential that the Ministry of Higher Education come up with more ideas and proposals in order to improve the current working environment in both the private and public universities in the higher education sector. Consequently, the following recommendation should be taken seriously by the relevant authority in order to make the work-life balance concept a reality, namely the full implementation of flexible working arrangements (FWA) such as roistered days off and family-friendly starting and finishing times. The Ministry of Higher Education may also consider holding workshops and seminars on site to discuss issues such as reducing occupational stress and providing more internal and/or external educational or training opportunities for the university managers or employers and employee itself, in order to improve employee health. In addition, providing adequate resources such as portable Wi-Fi and laptops for the lecturer so that they can undertake their jobs properly especially when they are telecommuted. At the same time, the policy maker should also be proactive by refraining from introducing any policies which go against the concept of work-life balance, such as introducing any unrealistic programs or activities for employees. Therefore, it is needed to implement work-life policies in companies in an effective way. In this sense, there are a number of different policies and practices such as flexible work hours, and supervisor support on work-life balance. These policies will increase employee work-life balance. However, different policies and strategies are needed for employees of different ages, job type or seniority.

This study has limitations in terms of their findings, the barrier to research, generalizability, and the methodology used by the researcher to conduct the research and create validity. Research time is very limited for the researcher. As a result of time constraints, the researcher was unable to collect valid data and information for the study. If the time is taken to carry out the research and the questionnaire survey longer, more accurate data will probably be obtained, and thorough research will be possible. It is also likely that respondents had a busy schedule, which affected the validity of the data. Research papers are difficult to access as a result of limited financial resources such as ResearchGate, Scribd, which need the researcher to subscribe to their plan first. Although researchers can obtain this data through secondary sources, the authors might not be able to include all information relevant to this study. A large population sample should be used to conduct this research in order to see whether the results can be generalized. In addition, the researcher could have conducted this study at other organizations such as finance, health, or construction to see whether the results can be generalized. In order for future researchers to have sufficient time to complete the research and to find more findings, time restrictions should also be extended. Furthermore, future researchers can explain more about the research study to each respondent and follow up after the questionnaires have been distributed. Additionally, the researchers must examine the relevant area and culture while selecting the proper organisation to perform the research study. The researcher must ensure the organization has enough employees who can participate in the study as well as the organizational culture can withstand the research topic. Researchers can also conduct the study using other methods like interview methods and others aside from distributing a questionnaire.

6. Conclusion

The main objective of this study is to identify the factors affecting work-life balance among lecturers in Malaysia. The result of this research led the researcher to answer nine (9) research objectives that the researcher intended to achieve. There are three

hypotheses partially supported, three hypotheses are supported, and three hypotheses are rejected. Pearson's Correlation analysis was used to identify the significant relationship between emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, work overload, organizational support, technological advancement and telecommuting with work-life balance. While for regression analysis was used to examine amongst these factors, which one is the most influential factor. TABLE 5 indicated that the highest beta was 0.222 for emotional intelligence, which is higher than the other variables. Therefore, this study concluded that emotional intelligence is more robust than other variables in predicting work-life balance among lecturers. Based on the regression results, it indicates that this research only covered 51.6% of factors that affect work-life balance, while the remaining 48.4% suggest being conducted in future research. Due to insufficient results, it is essential to expand into future research by taking into consideration other factors that will affect work-life balance. From the information gathered through this research, the policymakers will have critical insights into enhancing and maintaining work-life balance. Additionally, this implies that policymakers need to work diligently to avoid any policies that violate the concept of work-life balance. This study also could help the HR practitioner in enhancing emotional intelligence in employees by conducting training and coaching to the employee. The company should be aware of workload segregation and take measures in order to prevent work overload. At the same time, this study helps the lecturer itself to improve their skills in managing their emotions and their time in order to meet their deadlines which can help foster and reinforce a separation between work and home environment.

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