

The Role of Work-Life Balance on Gratitude of Female Teachers in High Schools

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this research is to empirically examine the role of work-life balance on gratitude among female teachers in high schools. *Methodology:* The research subjects were 509 female teachers from all state high schools in Palembang, South Sumatra. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling. Data was collected using gratitude and work-life balance scales. The data analysis technique used to test the hypothesis was regression analysis. *Results:* The results of the study showed that work-life balance plays a positive role in gratitude. The higher the work-life balance, the higher the gratitude among female teachers. The Sig value < 0.05 or t count > t table, with a t value of work-life balance = 8.061 and Sig 0.000, which means that work-life balance has a positive effect on gratitude with a regression coefficient value of 0.335. This means that the higher the work-life balance, the higher the gratitude of female teachers in high schools. *Applications/Originality/Value:* The findings of this study are in line with the hypothesis set by the researcher, and it is hoped that schools will jointly develop work-life balance in order to increase the gratitude of female teachers in high schools.

Introduction

Efforts to improve the intelligence of the nation will be realized if the duties or roles of teachers are fulfilled. Warso (2014) explains that the implementation of the learning process by teachers has a very important role which includes being a learning source, facilitator, learning manager, demonstrator, mentor, motivator, and assessor. The duty of a teacher is to guide students in shaping a complete Indonesian person who has the spirit of Pancasila, possesses and implements professional honesty, strives to obtain information about students as material for guidance and counseling, creates the best possible school atmosphere that supports the success of the teaching and learning process, maintains good relationships with parents and the surrounding community to foster participation and joint responsibility for education, personally and together develops and improves the quality and dignity of their profession, maintains professional relationships, the spirit of brotherhood, and social solidarity, and implements all government policies in the field of education. Teachers also play a crucial role in determining the quality of education because they directly interact with students, as students will observe and imitate what the teacher does, both in and out of the classroom.

Shabiir (2015) also explains that the ultimate goal of the teacher's role is to shape the students' personality into an independent and mature person. Furthermore, Ormrod (2008) explains that one of the behaviors that teachers must exhibit in shaping students' personality and character is that they must be able to provide equal treatment professionally to all students, even though they may have different religions, economic statuses, and places of residence. Then, Chan (2010) points out that teachers have to deal with various stressors in the school environment.

Cui et al. (2018) explained that one of the challenges faced by teachers is dealing with students who misbehave or exhibit indiscipline, as well as those who lack motivation to learn. Teachers themselves also face high workloads and pressure in completing their tasks. Role conflict may arise for teachers, as well as conflicts with colleagues, administrative staff, or school management. Kokkinos (2007) summarized several factors that contribute to teacher stress, such as interpersonal demands, lack of appreciation, the variety of tasks to be completed, classroom discipline issues, bureaucracy, time constraints, a large number of student assignments to be graded with limited resources, excessive workload, and lack of support.

Fahmi et al. (2019) also supported the results that gratitude and burnout in teachers have a negative relationship where the higher the sense of gratitude, the lower the burnout, and the intensity of gratitude has the strongest relationship. In addition, looking at the reality that occurs in the field, teachers still experience problems in feeling well-being. The role and responsibilities undertaken by teachers are not balanced with

appropriate recognition for their performance at work. Diener, Lucas & Oishi (2018) stated that subjective well-being is influenced by several factors such as social relationships, income and wealth, religion, age, education level, gender, and health.

The research by Manita et al. (2019) shows that gratitude in teachers is associated with lower levels of stress and increased teacher well-being. Furthermore, regarding subjective well-being, research by Trzcinski and Holst shows that there are differences in subjective well-being based on gender. Women who work have higher levels of subjective well-being than women who do not work. Similarly, research by Bericat shows that working women tend to have better social and emotional conditions than non-working women, which leads to higher levels of well-being.

Peterson & Seligman (in Deng, et al. 2018) stated that the feeling of gratitude arises as an emotion of appreciation and satisfaction for positive events experienced by an individual. This is supported by an experimental study conducted by Armenta, et al (2017), which showed that gratitude leads individuals to greater life satisfaction and well-being over time. McCullough, et al (2021) also explained that factors that influence an individual's gratitude include emotionality/well-being, a tendency or level at which someone reacts emotionally and experiences satisfaction in their life; prosociality, an individual's tendency to be accepted by their social environment; and spirituality/religiousness, related to religion and faith, which concerns transcendent values related to a vertical relationship with God.

The reality is that the application of gratitude in daily life is not yet well implemented. The meaning of accepting what has been given to humans as sufficient gratitude for the blessings received has not been realized properly. People who receive little blessings sometimes forget to be grateful and always feel lacking (<http://www.kompasiana.com/berita/6> July 2020). The contributions of teachers are still fresh in our memories, but many teachers still feel neglected in the process of appointment, whether as contract teachers or permanent civil servants. The level of well-being between permanent civil servant teachers and contract teachers is very different, as contract teachers who have served for 10-20 years are still not appointed as permanent civil servants.

Every human is always given by Allah SWT an opportunity to experience blessings. One of them is to get education and a job, and humans should be able to show their gratitude for what has been given to them. There are many factors that influence human gratitude, such as love, affection, feeling valued, living sufficiently, satisfaction, desire to help others, His blessings and gifts, worship and obedience to Him. Looking at the meaning of gratitude understood by each teacher, gratitude has a broad meaning, based on each individual's experiences in living their life. It is clear how a teacher or anyone else interprets every gift that Allah gives to humans, both the pleasure and difficulty, so that there is a balance in life that must be implemented.

The first thing that should be considered is to derive benefits from the material world. However, one should not be attached or dependent on it. The spiritual journey towards Allah is not compatible with dependence on the material world. The Quran states that there are people who embark on a sacred journey towards Allah. One of them is the balance between the spiritual and physical aspects of human life, the balance between personal life and work. Work-life balance is a state in which an individual finds satisfaction in roles within the family and roles within the work realm, with minimal conflict.

Djajendra (2013) emphasizes that work-life balance is not something that can satisfy everyone. However, it requires the self-awareness of each individual to be more grateful and responsible for their life and work, and to equip themselves with consistent personal integrity because work-life balance cannot be achieved unilaterally. Life that is not lived in simplicity and gratitude will become a complicated and difficult life to find happiness in what is done. Work-life balance requires a highly trained and habituated personality to live in gratitude, thankfulness, learning, humility, tolerance, empathy, and self-awareness.

Most women try to focus and concentrate even when they are physically unwell and face many problems. In addition to working to increase their income and family's welfare, they seek inner satisfaction and reduce their dependence on their husbands. They also communicate with neighbors and social environment while facing many challenges and problems, feeling guilty for being too busy to pay attention to their children and fulfill their needs, facing role conflicts as a wife or mother and a career woman, getting tired of routine, feeling lonely even though they have many friends, working hard only for future ambitions, and experiencing an increasingly difficult life so that their needs are difficult to fulfill. The results of Handayani's (2013) research found

that work-life balance is a condition that can balance roles in their lives and feel satisfaction and well-being when performing every role in their life.

Based on the phenomenon of the issues described, it is interesting to examine and investigate further the role of work-life balance on gratitude among female high school teachers.

Gratitude

Emmons et al. (2003) defines gratitude as a feeling of wonder, gratitude, and appreciation for the benefits that one has received. This feeling can be directed towards others or towards oneself. Park & Seligman (2004) view gratitude as one of the positive psychology studies, which means expressing thanks for the blessings given. Gratitude is described as a condition where individuals are aware and grateful for all the good things that happen. Individuals are also expected to express and show gratitude. According to Husna (2013), if gratitude is interpreted in the Qur'anic psychology study, it is understood as a condition where a Muslim must be able to open up and show all the blessings without any effort to hide them for personal gain. The essence of gratitude is to show the blessings that Allah has given by using them in the way that Allah desires.

McCullough et al. (2002) also explain the aspects of gratitude which consist of three interdependent aspects: 1) Individuals with a high level of gratitude tend to experience gratitude more frequently (frequency). 2) The intensity of the experience of gratitude significantly influences behavior, as individuals become more sensitive to life experiences that evoke gratitude (span). 3) The more sincere acknowledgments an individual receives for their personal achievements, the higher the density of gratitude in their life (density).

Work-Life Balance

Clark (2000) defined work-life balance as the interaction between work and other activities, including family, community, recreation, and personal development, in order to reduce potential tension between work and personal life. Work-life balance is a state in which individuals find satisfaction in their roles within both family and work domains, with minimal conflict.

McDonald and Bradley (2005) described three aspects of work-life balance, namely: 1) Time balance which concerns the amount of time allocated for work and activities outside of work. Time balance is a way to balance time for learning or working, having fun or relaxing, and resting effectively. 2) Involvement balance which is the level of psychological involvement and commitment in work or outside of work, an alternative where individuals prioritize roles hierarchically to organize and manage various responsibilities, while achieving these roles is related to expectations of negotiation and sharing of roles in the work-family domain. 3) Satisfaction balance which is related to job satisfaction levels while working and outside of work. It is a personal satisfaction that arises when employees consider what they have done so far is sufficient and can accommodate work and family needs.

Figures and tables

In this research, the subject was female teachers who teach in 22 senior high schools in the city of Palembang. They have certain characteristics, including being married, having a status as a civil servant (PNS) or a non-permanent employee (Non PNS), being married with children, having an age range from <30 to >60 years, having a minimum education of S1, and having taught for a long time. The measuring instrument used was a 24-item gratitude scale with a range of item validity coefficients ranging from 0.631-0.310. The reliability coefficient of the gratitude scale obtained a result of $r_{xx} = 0.907$. The 21-item work-life balance scale had item difficulty indices with scores ranging from 0.501 to 0.314 ($r_{iX} \geq 0.30$), which means that the work-life balance items were able to achieve a minimum coefficient of 0.30, interpreted as having satisfactory item difficulty. The reliability score of the work-life balance scale obtained a result of $r_{xx'} = 0.835$, indicating that the estimated reliability of the measurement obtained on the work-life balance scale was satisfactory. The data analysis used was linear regression analysis.

Generally, the data on respondent characteristics show that female teachers are in the age range of 41-50 years (37.9%), which includes the productive age group between 40-50 years, considered as the productive age during mid-adulthood development. The educational background of female teachers is dominated by graduates of bachelor's and master's degree programs, with 281 (55.2%) and 215 (42.2%) individuals respectively. The

employment status of female teachers in this high school is mostly civil servants, with 416 individuals, and on average they have been teaching for more than 15 years.

The research results indicate that the basis for decision-making when the probability is <0.025 , a two-tailed test is performed, so that the probability value is $= 0.05/2 = 0.025$. The decision in the SPSS output table shows a Sig value of 0.000, which means H_0 is rejected or the regression coefficient is significant. The research results show that $Sig < 0.05$ or t calculated $> t$ table, with a t value of work-life balance = 8.061 and Sig 0.000, indicating that work-life balance has a positive effect on gratitude with a regression coefficient of 0.335, which means that the higher the work-life balance, the higher the gratitude of female teachers. The value of $R = 0.540$ and R Square = 0.292.

Table 1. Analysis of Gratitude Variables

Coefficients ^a											
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	29.336	5.430		5.403	.000					
	WLB	.416	.052	.335	8.061	.000	.532	.338	.283	.713	1.403

a. Dependent Variable: Gratitude

Table 2. Analysis Regression

Model Summary ^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.540 ^a	.292	.288	6.069	1.863

a. Predictors: (Constant), Satisfaction Balance, Time Balance, Engagement Balance
b. Dependent Variable: Gratitude

The results of this study found that work-life balance contributes to gratitude by 0.178 (0.335×0.532) or 17.8% and has a significant level of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). The better the work-life balance, the higher the gratitude. Public high school teachers are workers who generally have responsibilities as teachers, mothers, and wives. Thus, the balance between life and work can certainly be applied, supported by schools that schedule the teaching hours of their teachers. This is in line with the results of the study by Aisyah & Chisol (2018), which explained that there is a significant relationship between gratitude and the psychological well-being of honorary teachers. The higher the gratitude, the higher the psychological well-being of the honorary teacher and vice versa. Gratitude is an experience gained by every individual when receiving something valuable in the form of material and social appreciation, and is expressed in the feelings of someone who receives and is treated kindly by others. Demographic data analysis was conducted using cross-tab data analysis. If seen from the age, length of teaching experience, and education factors, generally female teachers in Palembang are aged 41-60 years, have taught for more than 15 years with bachelor's and postgraduate degrees, and are experienced in the teaching and learning process, time management, and obtaining satisfaction and happiness of their own.

Discussion

The demands and responsibilities of fulfilling certain roles can become stressors due to their complexity. If not addressed, they can lead to the emergence of psychological, physical, and social disorders in individuals.

Therefore, efforts are needed to balance work and non-work life (work-life balance). Chen's research from the University of California summarized that many women are still hesitant to climb the career ladder or develop a business because they fear becoming too successful. According to the study, the main concerns and doubts of most women are the fear of sacrificing their family for career and business achievements.

The study suggests that this doubt is not seen in men. On the contrary, men tend to be much more optimistic and confident in achieving the highest level of success without burden. It was found that many women who are decision-makers at home become unambitious in pursuing success. The responsibility of making decisions in the domestic realm is the same as deciding at the office. Eventually, women feel less inclined to seek power when outside the home. In addition, the urge to care for children, complete household tasks, and manage family budgets have an impact on women's style of career in the workplace (Rakhma, 2017). The study also found reinforcing and supporting factors for the work-life balance strategy, namely gratitude, trust, organizational and social support, as well as hardiness personality type. Values play a role as driving factors, namely comfort, religious, and achievement values. Similarly, the meaning of work plays a role in strengthening the work-life balance strategy, namely increasing knowledge, preaching, and improvising oneself.

Women are able to feel grateful if all their roles can be carried out well, the needs of the family, especially the husband and children, can be fulfilled, the responsibilities as a wife and mother of children are fulfilled, able to complete tasks and work at home or in other work smoothly, able to be grateful for the sustenance provided by the husband and gratitude will certainly make all activities valuable worship. Whether it's when doing household chores, serving food, or even sleeping, doing tasks is always accompanied by remembrance and other sunnah worship as exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad SAW.

Ryff (1989) defines psychological well-being as an individual's ability to accept oneself as is, form warm relationships with others, have independence in facing social environment, control external environment, establish life goals, and continuously realize one's potential. These abilities can be enhanced by focusing on self-realization, self-expression, and self-actualization in order to function positively and achieve happiness. Work-life balance will result in an individual feeling satisfied and happy in their life because no aspect of their life feels neglected or receives inadequate attention. Work-life balance can be achieved through various strategies, such as managing time to be more flexible, arranging flexible work, being able to care for and guide children, having time for vacation or leave, and having good communication access with colleagues and family.

The presence of work-life balance is crucial for female teachers in various conditions and situations. It is known that the role and responsibility of a female teacher, besides being a teacher who has a crucial role in the process of teaching and learning in schools, is also that of a professional who must educate, teach, guide, direct, and evaluate students until they succeed.

In human life, a balance between economic activities such as work and social activities such as family and interpersonal relationships is important. However, both activities are not free from problems, role conflicts, and negative emotions. However, individuals can overcome these challenges by practicing gratitude towards what happens. Sheldon and Sonja have shown that gratitude can reduce negative emotions in individuals. Furthermore, Hamdan et al. (2020) explained previous research findings regarding the positive impact of happiness on an individual. A happy individual has good social relationships, is more enjoyable, and more

romantic. Murisal & Hasanah (2017) emphasize the importance of increasing happiness in life, especially for teachers, and one factor that influences happiness is gratitude. Gratitude is a form of emotion or feeling that then develops into an attitude, feeling, and ultimately affects the individual.

Gratitude as a virtue in enhancing and protecting happiness and well-being. A study on emotions to improve human quality of life, especially related to the important part of grateful behavior. Ultimately, happiness will come if humans consistently balance their life and work. Although there are many factors that influence happiness within humans, whether it be material wealth, marital relationships, social life, work, or human health. Emmons (Takdir, 2018) explains that a person's happiness is greatly determined by expressing gratitude and thankfulness consistently through daily life practices. His research proves that the quality of happiness or satisfaction with life can increase by 25% if a person expresses gratitude.

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that there is a significant positive role of work-life balance on gratitude among female teachers. This indicates that the higher the work-life balance, the higher the gratitude of female high school teachers. The findings of this study are in line with the hypothesis set by the researchers. High school teachers are workers who typically have responsibilities as teachers, mothers, and wives. Therefore, balancing between life and work is certainly possible, supported by schools that allocate teaching schedules for teachers. The school organization provides support for female teachers to balance their lives and duties, allowing for religious beliefs, providing opportunities for further education or improving teacher competence, which ultimately leads to a feeling of happiness and contentment if fulfilled properly.

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