

Influence of Family Support on Work-Life Balance: Female Entrepreneurs vs. Female Leaders

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ABSTRACT

The increasing participation of women in leadership roles across sectors has intensified challenges related to balancing professional and personal responsibilities. This study investigates differences in the effects of family support on work-life balance between women entrepreneurs and women leaders in institutional settings. Data were collected from 476 respondents representing both groups and analyzed comparatively. The findings demonstrate a contextual divergence in the effectiveness of support types. Emotional support exerted a stronger influence on the work-life balance of women leaders in organizational contexts, whereas instrumental support was more critical for women entrepreneurs. Although women entrepreneurs reported higher levels of emotional support, instrumental support proved more effective in facilitating balance between work and personal life. Conversely, women leaders experienced greater access to instrumental support, yet emotional support played a more decisive role in managing work-life demands. These results highlight the heterogeneous nature of support needs across professional contexts and emphasize the importance of a contextualized approach to understanding women's work-life balance. This study contributes to the literature on gender, leadership, and work-life balance by clarifying context-specific support mechanisms.

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Introduction

The increasing integration of women into the labor market has been closely associated with policy initiatives aimed at improving work-life balance and sustaining women's long-term career participation. As a result, women have progressively assumed strategic roles across both organizational and entrepreneurial contexts, making substantial contributions to institutional effectiveness and economic development ([Hua et al., 2018](#); [Fauziah et al., 2022](#)). However, this expanded participation has simultaneously intensified challenges related to balancing professional responsibilities and personal life, particularly for women occupying leadership positions.

These challenges largely stem from heightened role conflict arising from competing expectations across work and family domains. While women demonstrate strong commitment to their professional roles, they frequently remain responsible for significant domestic and caregiving duties, resulting in increased strain in managing multiple roles ([Duxbury et al., 2022](#)). This tension is especially pronounced among female leaders in

institutional settings and women entrepreneurs, whose professional roles are characterized by high responsibility, performance pressure, and time intensity.

Significantly, the nature of work–life balance challenges differs across leadership contexts. Female entrepreneurs often benefit from greater temporal flexibility; however, they simultaneously face broader responsibilities and blurred boundaries between work and personal life ([Rembulan et al., 2016](#); [Lim, 2019](#)). In contrast, female leaders in institutional settings operate within more rigid organizational structures that limit flexibility and intensify accountability, thereby constraining their capacity to reconcile professional and personal demands ([Begum et al., 2024](#)). These contextual differences suggest that women’s work–life balance experiences are shaped not only by gendered expectations but also by structural characteristics of their work environments.

The role of leaders within institutions is critical, as they are responsible for managing employee performance, meeting organizational demands, and ensuring overall organizational effectiveness ([Wang et al., 2011](#)). Similarly, women entrepreneurs confront analogous hurdles, including domestic responsibilities intertwined with their entrepreneurial activities.

The challenges associated with work-life balance (WLB) have emerged as a significant global concern due to intensifying work demands, extended working hours, and the increasing blurring of boundaries between professional and personal life. Prior research highlights that structural changes in contemporary work environments have made it increasingly difficult for individuals to maintain a healthy balance between work and non-work roles ([Kossek et al., 2012](#); [Allen et al., 2015](#)). This challenge is also evident in the Indonesian context, where long working hours further exacerbate work–life imbalance. Data from the International Labour Organization indicate that 22% of workers in Indonesia work more than 49 hours per week, exceeding the threshold for excessive working hours ([International Labour Organization, 2023](#)). Such conditions substantially undermine efforts to promote sustainable work–life balance.

Recent research underscores the challenges faced by female leaders in attaining an equitable alignment between professional obligations and personal life. Studies indicate that female leaders often perceive that their professional commitments encroach upon their personal lives ([Brue, 2018](#)). This obligatory dedication to work, juxtaposed with the demands of personal life, generates a complex role conflict that hinders individuals’ capacity to achieve work–life balance ([Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985](#); [Allen et al., 2000](#)). The repercussions of this imbalance can manifest as absenteeism, diminished focus, heightened stress levels, and a deterioration in the interaction between professional obligations and personal commitments ([Craig & Churchill, 2021](#)).

Furthermore, at the individual level, work-life imbalance adversely affects overall well-being, leading to detrimental outcomes such as life dissatisfaction and prolonged feelings of sadness. Shaffer et al. ([2016](#)) and Kumara and Fasana ([2018](#)) have documented that the ramifications of WLB may include fatigue and increased stress. The insufficient integration of work-related and personal responsibilities not only jeopardizes the health and well-being of women but also hinders organizational performance. Achieving equilibrium between professional and personal domains is essential for preserving employees’ mental, emotional, and cognitive health, thereby fostering improved organizational performance ([Jaharuddin & Zainol, 2019](#)).

Moreover, Prithi and Vasumathi ([2020](#)) contend that a perceived inadequacy in work-life balance correlates with behavioral and emotional challenges, including anxiety, remorse, sadness, and decreased productivity. Conversely, effective work-life balance facilitates women's achievement of aspirations within both personal and professional realms. Prior

research suggests that organizations supporting work–life balance can enhance employee satisfaction and strengthen organizational commitment, particularly among female employees (Allen et al., 2013). Veluthan and Valarmathi (2020) elucidate that work-life balance is influenced by two primary categories: work-related factors, such as working hours, incentive structures, peer support, available organizational resources, internal policies, and leave entitlements; and personal life factors, encompassing home responsibilities, child-rearing duties, parental involvement, and spousal support.

Kumar and Krupanandhan (2019) argue that elements influencing work-life balance include personal support, organizational backing, clarity in job descriptions, and effective coping strategies. Among these factors, a significant catalyst for work-life imbalance is the lack of adequate support. Notably, the support system for female leaders is critical, particularly the backing they receive from their families. Familial support serves as an essential determinant in assisting women who serve as entrepreneurs or leaders within institutions in managing their multifaceted responsibilities. Familial support is vital for individuals striving to achieve work-life balance (WLB), as it provides essential emotional backing. Uddin et al. (2020) further emphasize that women lacking familial support often experience resource depletion in fulfilling their obligations, which adversely impacts their capacity to maintain a satisfactory equilibrium between professional duties and personal life. Shouman et al., (2022) reinforce this notion by asserting that women can excel as leaders and achieve WLB when they receive adequate support from their families.

Women occupying strategic leadership positions or operating their own businesses frequently encounter the dual pressures of demanding professional responsibilities and societal expectations concerning their domestic roles (Del Boca et al., 2020). This inherent imbalance imposes additional challenges on women. However, the predominant support systems currently available are not tailored to address the unique needs faced by women in these contexts. Consequently, women entrepreneurs need to be equipped to renegotiate the types of support they require in order to realize their identities both as entrepreneurs. Likewise, women leaders must be provided with the most effective and relevant forms of support to enhance their work-life balance.

King et al. (1995) distinguish between emotional support and instrumental support as dimensions of family support because they serve different functions, employ distinct mechanisms, and have varying impacts. In this case, the researchers refer to the two dimensions used by King et al (1995). Emotional support encompasses empathy, attention, affection, and understanding provided by those closest to the individual, which serves to strengthen the individual's psychological well-being, reduce stress, and enhance emotional well-being. Meanwhile, instrumental support refers to tangible and practical assistance, such as financial assistance, division of household tasks, or childcare, which helps reduce time and energy burdens.

Enhancing the support for women in leadership roles goes beyond mere gender equality; it also fosters productivity, innovation, and inclusive economic development. When provided with appropriate support, women not only fulfill their roles but also make more substantial contributions to organizations and economies at local and global levels. Given the complexity of the dual roles that women navigate as institutional leaders and entrepreneurs, it is crucial to explore how family support facilitates the achievement of WLB. This scholarly inquiry aims to explore the dynamics of role conflict and determine the most effective types of familial assistance, encompassing both emotional and instrumental dimensions, needed to promote a balanced engagement in women's professional and personal domains.

Most research on women's work-life balance still focuses on female leaders in organizations or female entrepreneurs separately, while studies that directly compare the two groups within the same analytical framework are still minimal (Brieger et al., 2024). In addition, many studies discuss family support in general, but do not specifically differentiate between emotional support and instrumental support, nor do they explain how each form of support functions differently in the context of different work roles. Based on the theoretical review above, the researchers formulated the following hypotheses:

H1 There is a difference in the family support received by female entrepreneurs and female leaders in institutions.

H2 There is a difference in the effect of family support on work-life balance among female entrepreneurs and female leaders in institutions

Method

Participants

The study involved 476 respondents, divided into two groups. A total of 240 female leaders in an agency with the following criteria: (1) female, (2) holding a leadership position in an agency. It also involved 236 female entrepreneurs who met the following criteria: 1) had been running a business for at least 1 year, 2) owned and managed their business daily.

Table 1 presents the demographic information of 476 participants. Most respondents were aged 41-50 years (40.5%). Furthermore, respondents completed their education at the Bachelor's Degree level (56.5%). In addition, 47.90% of respondents had more than 10 years of experience. Finally, 89.9% of respondents were married.

Table 1

Demographic Data of Participants

Demographic data	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	20-30 years	40	8.4
	31-40 years	150	31.5
	41-50 years	193	40.5
	>60 years	93	19.5
Education	High School	80	16.8
	Diploma	38	8.0
	Bachelor's Degree	269	56.5
	Master's Degree	86	18.1
length of service	Doctorate Degree	3	.6
	1-6 months	11	2.3
	1-3 years	32	6.7
	3-5 years	56	11.8
	5-10 years	149	31.3
Marriage status	> 10 years	228	47.9
	Not yet married	48	10.1
	Already married	428	89.9

Instruments

The sample size was calculated using the Lemeshow formula with a margin of error of 0.05. Data collection was conducted through Google Forms and distributed via social media platforms, including Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, and private messages, as well as through direct visits to relevant institutions with permission from their leaders. Direct visits to various institutions were also conducted to expedite data collection and minimize the risk of incomplete or non-return forms.

Measurement was facilitated through a four-point Likert scale of Family Support (King et al., 1995) and Work Life Balance (Taşdelen-Karçkay & Bakalım, 2017), which range from "very dissatisfied" (1) to "very satisfied" (4). We employed a rigorous translation process employing back-forward translation techniques endorsed by an accredited institution. Following the translation of the items, we refined them to suit the research context. Furthermore, an expert judgment process was undertaken, incorporating insights from four specialists with established expertise in industrial and organizational psychology. Azwar (2012) explains that content validity is a type of validity estimated through testing the appropriateness or relevance of test content via rational analysis by a competent/expert panel, or through expert judgment. Subsequently, we conducted tests to assess the reliability and discriminative power of each item.

Family Support. Family Support (FS) was assessed using the Family Support instrument, developed by King et al. (1995), that comprises two key dimensions: emotional support and instrumental support. The emotional support dimension consists of 29 items, exemplified by inquiries such as, "When I achieve success at work, my family demonstrates pride in my accomplishments." Determination test analysis provides evidence of scale validity with corrected item-total correlation values ranging from $r_{ix} = 0.32$ to $r_{ix} = 0.77$. Furthermore, the internal reliability of the instrument was assessed through the application of Cronbach's alpha coefficients, which yielded $\alpha = 0.93$ for the emotional support dimension. The instrumental support dimension includes 15 items, with examples such as "My family assists me with household chores when I am faced with numerous tasks." Collectively, the Family Support Scale (King et al., 1995). Validity assessments of the Family Support Scale reveal a coefficient of $r < 0.30$, confirming the validity of all items contained within the scale. Determination test analysis provides evidence of scale validity with corrected item-total correlation values ranging from $r_{ix} = 0.32$ to $r_{ix} = 0.62$. Furthermore, the internal reliability of the instrument was assessed through the application of Cronbach's alpha coefficients, which yielded $\alpha = 0.86$ for the instrumental support dimension.

Work Life Balance (WLB). Work-life balance variables were assessed utilising a measurement instrument developed by Taşdelen-Karçkay & Bakalım (2017), which is firmly grounded in the theoretical framework proposed by (Greenhaus et al., 2003). In their research, Greenhaus et al. (2003) identified three principal aspects of WLB: time balance, commitment balance, and satisfaction balance. The aspect of time balance is represented by three specific items, one of which states, "I am able to balance my roles in my personal and professional life." Commitment balance is evaluated through two statements, including, "I feel a strong sense of loyalty to both my professional and personal roles." Additionally, the satisfaction balance aspect comprises three items, such as, "I am satisfied with my roles in my personal and professional life." The analytical results yielded a coefficient value of $r_{ix} \geq 0.30$, substantiating the validity of the data: Determination test analysis provides evidence of scale validity with corrected item-total correlation values ranging from $r_{ix} = 0.60$ to $r_{ix} = 0.77$. Furthermore, the WLB variable demonstrated a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of $\alpha = 0.90$, indicating high internal consistency.

Data Analysis

Data normality was assessed using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test in SPSS 26.0 for Windows. The results showed that the data were normally distributed with a significance value > 0.05 . Next, hypothesis testing was performed using statistical analysis in SPSS 26.0 for Windows with regression techniques. Data analysis was carried out in two stages. The

first stage used the One-Way ANOVA test to examine differences in family support based on employment status and differences in work–life balance based on demographic factors. The second stage used moderation regression analysis with a subgroup approach to measure the difference in the influence of family support on work–life balance among female entrepreneurs and female leaders in institutions.

Results

Descriptive analysis of the research variables was conducted using the KATEG program (Categorization Program) (see [Table 2](#)), which classifies data into categorical levels based on statistical parameters to support clearer interpretation.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Variable	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Work Life Balance	8	32	20	4
Emotional Support	29	116	72.5	14.5
Instrumental Support	15	60	37.5	7.5

Based on [Table 2](#), the mean value for the work–life balance variable was 20 with a standard deviation of 4. The emotional support variable had a mean value of 72.5 with a standard deviation of 14.5, while instrumental support showed a mean value of 37.5 with a standard deviation of 7.5.

The first hypothesis in this study employs regression moderation analysis with subgroups to investigate the difference in the effect of family support on work-life balance among female entrepreneurs and female leaders within an institution (see [Table 3](#)).

Table 3
*Results of the Test of Differences in Family Support Based on Status * ($p < 0.05$)*

Dimensions	Mean		sig
	Female leader	Female Entrepreneur	
Emotional Support	87.10	88.82	0.002*
Instrumental Support	43.85	42.73	0.001*

[Table 3](#) shows the significance value of emotional support with $p = 0.002$ ($p < 0.050$). This indicates a notable distinction in the dimension of emotional support between female leaders in an institution and female entrepreneurs. The dimension of instrumental support also shows a p -value of $p = 0.001$ ($p < 0.050$), which signifies a notable difference in instrumental support for female leaders in an organization and female entrepreneurs. The average value of emotional support received by female leaders in institutions is $\bar{x} = 87.10$, which is lower than the average value for female entrepreneurs, which reaches $\bar{x} = 88.82$. Thus, this shows that female entrepreneurs receive more emotional support than female leaders in institutions. On the other hand, the average instrumental support for female leaders in institutions is $\bar{x} = 43.85$, while for female entrepreneurs it is $\bar{x} = 42.73$. Therefore, it can be concluded that female leaders in institutions receive greater instrumental support than female entrepreneurs.

Based on [Table 4](#), the results of the analysis indicate differences in the effects of emotional support and instrumental support on work–life balance between women entrepreneurs and women leaders in institutions, as indicated by a significance value of ($p < 0.05$). In terms of emotional support, the regression analysis yielded a beta coefficient of β

= 0.44 for female leaders, compared to $\beta = 0.25$ for female entrepreneurs. This differential indicates that emotional support possesses a more significant impact on the WLB of female leaders than on that of female entrepreneurs. Conversely, in relation to instrumental support, the beta value for female leaders was found to be $\beta = 0.18$, while female entrepreneurs exhibited a beta value of $\beta = 0.18$. This suggests that instrumental support has a more substantial effect on the WLB of female entrepreneurs than that of female leaders.

Table 4

Results of Testing the Difference in The Influence of Family Support Dimensions on WLB Among Female Entrepreneurs and Female Leaders in An Institution.

Variable	Job status	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
Emotional Support-WLB	Female Leader	0.21	0.03	0.44	3.73	0.000*
	Female Entrepreneur	0.12	0.03	0.25	4.00	0.000*
Instrumental Support-WLB	Female Leader	0.16	0.06	0.18	2.76	0.006*
	Female Entrepreneur	0.13	0.05	0.18	2.92	0.004*

* ($p < 0.05$)

A one-way ANOVA test was conducted for additional analysis, yielding significant results regarding work-life balance based on age, level of education, length of service, and marriage status (refer to [Table 4](#)). Specifically, the study found significant differences in work-life balance based on age group ($p = 0.001$; $p < 0.05$). However, no significant differences were found based on education level, length of service, or marriage status ($p > 0.05$).

Table 5

Result Differences in Work-Life Balance Reviewed from Demographic Data N = 476; ($p < .05$)*

Variabel	Demographic data	Mean	p
Work Life Balance	Age	20-30 years	27.15
		31-40 years	27.17
		41-50 years	28.88
		>60 years	28.42
	Education	High School	28.00
		Diploma	26.76
		Bachelor's Degree	27.16
		Master's Degree	27.20
	Length of service	Doctorate Degree	29.33
		1-6 months	27.73
		1-3 years	28.50
		3-5 years	27.25
	Marriage status	5-10 years	27.46
> 10 years		27.01	
Not yet married		27.50	
Already married		27.27	

Discussion

This study advances the understanding of work–life balance among women in leadership by demonstrating that both the availability and effectiveness of family support differ between female entrepreneurs and female leaders in institutional settings. The findings suggest that variations in professional context shape not only the type of support women receive but also how such support functions in helping them manage competing work and family demands. These results highlight the importance of moving beyond a uniform conceptualization of family support and adopting a context-sensitive perspective.

For female leaders in institutional environments, emotional support emerged as the most influential factor in enhancing work–life balance, despite their relatively greater access to instrumental support. This pattern can be explained by the structural characteristics of organizational settings, which often involve high levels of formal accountability, role complexity, and sustained performance pressure. In such contexts, emotional support from family members may serve as a critical psychological resource, enabling female leaders to cope with stress, maintain emotional resilience, and navigate persistent role strain. This interpretation aligns with prior research emphasizing the role of emotional support in mitigating work-related stress and facilitating balance among women in organizational roles (Ngangi et al., 2023). Furthermore, Tetrick et al. (2000) contend that entrepreneurs typically encounter higher stress levels and receive less support compared to their counterparts in managerial or leadership positions.

In contrast, instrumental support was found to play a more decisive role in improving the work–life balance of female entrepreneurs. Blurred boundaries between professional and personal domains, limited institutional resources, and heightened time demands frequently characterize entrepreneurial work. Under these conditions, tangible assistance—such as childcare, household responsibilities, and logistical support related to business activities—becomes particularly salient. Instrumental support enables female entrepreneurs to allocate their time and energy more effectively across various domains, thereby reducing role overload and facilitating a better balance. This finding is consistent with earlier studies highlighting the central role of family-provided instrumental support in sustaining women’s entrepreneurial engagement and well-being (Edralin, 2013; Cogan et al., 2022).

Taken together, these findings underscore the heterogeneous nature of family support needs among women across different leadership contexts. While female leaders in institutions rely more heavily on emotional support to manage psychological demands, female entrepreneurs benefit more from instrumental support that alleviates practical constraints. By elucidating these context-specific mechanisms, this study contributes to the literature on gender, leadership, and work–life balance and underscores the necessity of tailoring support frameworks to the distinctive challenges faced by women in different professional environments.

Beyond its empirical contributions, this study offers several theoretical implications for the literature on gender, leadership, and work–life balance. First, it extends work–life balance theory by demonstrating that family support is not a universally effective resource but operates through context-specific mechanisms. By differentiating between emotional and instrumental support across entrepreneurial and institutional leadership contexts, this study challenges one-dimensional conceptualizations of family support commonly adopted in prior research. Second, the findings contribute to role theory by illustrating how variations in role structure, boundary permeability, and institutional embeddedness shape women’s reliance on distinct forms of support. Finally, this study bridges entrepreneurship and organizational leadership literatures by showing that women’s support needs cannot be understood solely through gendered expectations but must also be situated within the

structural and contextual demands of their professional roles. These theoretical insights provide a more nuanced framework for understanding how women navigate work–life balance across diverse leadership settings.

The present study examines variations in work-life balance (WLB) in relation to demographic factors, including age, marital status, employment tenure, and educational attainment. The results indicate that age is the primary demographic variable that significantly impacts WLB, while other demographic factors do not demonstrate notable differences. These findings corroborate the assertions made by Padmasiri & Gamage (2016), suggesting that specific demographic characteristics can influence the patterns of WLB practices, which may vary according to the context and the stages of an individual's life.

The analysis reveals a pronounced role of age in shaping WLB, particularly highlighting that female leaders aged 40 to 50 exhibit superior work-life balance compared to other age cohorts. This observation aligns with the conclusions of Padmasiri & Gamage (2016), and Shakya (2023), who contend that as individuals mature, they typically enhance their managerial competencies, particularly in time management, prioritization, and striking a balance between professional obligations and personal life. This age group is generally considered to have navigated the initial career transition phase and possesses more developed adaptive skills. Further supporting this notion, Richert-Kaźmierska and Stankiewicz (2016) assert that older individuals are often more adept at maintaining a work-life balance than their younger counterparts and exhibit a greater capacity to exercise control over their lives.

Moreover, the empirical evidence obtained suggests that marital status does not significantly influence the ability to balance professional and personal responsibilities. This observation is consistent with prior research conducted by Panisoara & Serban (2013), which concluded that matrimonial status does not serve as the principal determinant of WLB. It should be emphasized that not all married women assume more substantial domestic responsibilities compared to their unmarried peers. In fact, unmarried women may also face substantial emotional obligations and personal responsibilities, such as caregiving for family members, participating in social activities, or pursuing personal growth. Consequently, the burden of personal life responsibilities is not exclusively borne by those who are married. This perspective is further substantiated by Yan et al. (2022), which demonstrated the absence of significant differences in WLB attributable to marital status.

In the analysis of work-life balance (WLB) concerning the length of service, the study reveals that there is no statistically significant difference in WLB between female leaders and female entrepreneurs with varying lengths of service. This observation is consistent with prior research suggesting that work–life balance is not significantly determined by tenure, but is more strongly shaped by contextual and structural factors such as job demands and support systems (Allen et al., 2013; Shockley & Allen, 2007). A plausible explanation for this trend may be rooted in the persistent structural responsibilities inherent in leadership roles, which remain pronounced irrespective of an individual's tenure. Early-career professionals often struggle with time management and role-related pressures as they adapt to job demands, while individuals in more advanced career stages face increasingly complex responsibilities and heightened professional expectations (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011; Irawanto et al., 2021; Michel et al., 2011). Consequently, it appears that women in both leadership and entrepreneurial positions are capable of sustaining a satisfactory WLB, regardless of their years of experience. Furthermore, Shintri and Narasalagi (2021) support this perspective, noting that the number of hours worked does not significantly affect the maintenance of a balance between professional and personal life.

Regarding educational attainment, the analysis indicates a similar lack of correlation with WLB levels. These results affirm the conclusions drawn, which posit that formal education does not function as a critical determinant in the attainment of WLB. Although advanced education may enhance problem-solving abilities and cognitive capacity, it does not necessarily translate into improved time management or a reduction in the burden of various roles. Female leaders and entrepreneurs, regardless of their educational backgrounds, often face intense work demands, particularly in managerial roles that involve complex strategic objectives. Collectively, the outcomes of this demographic analysis illustrate that age emerges as the sole variable with a significant impact on WLB. This finding underscores the notion that work-life balance is not exclusively dictated by static personal attributes such as marital status, length of employment, or educational attainment; rather, it is more profoundly influenced by life experiences, adaptive capacities, and the managerial competencies that evolve. Therefore, strategies aimed at enhancing WLB should take into account the various stages of the working life cycle and integrate cross-career development methodologies.

This study extends work-life balance theories by demonstrating that family support operates through context-specific mechanisms, rather than as a uniform resource. The findings highlight that emotional and instrumental support interact differently with leadership roles, boundary permeability, and institutional embeddedness. By distinguishing between entrepreneurial and institutional leadership contexts, this study advances role theory by clarifying how structural and psychological demands shape women's reliance on specific forms of support. Moreover, by integrating perspectives from entrepreneurship and organizational leadership, the study provides a more comprehensive theoretical framework for understanding women's work-life balance beyond gender-based explanations alone.

The findings suggest that work-life balance interventions should be tailored to the leadership context and career stage. Organizations employing female leaders should prioritize emotionally supportive practices, such as mentoring, leadership coaching, and psychologically safe environments, to help women manage sustained role pressure. For female entrepreneurs, policies and family-based initiatives that enhance instrumental support—such as access to childcare services and flexible business support—are particularly critical. Additionally, age-sensitive approaches are recommended, as work-life balance capacities evolve across the career life cycle. Overall, practical support strategies should move beyond one-size-fits-all models and adopt context- and life-stage-specific approaches.

Despite its contribution, this study acknowledges certain limitations, notably its exclusive focus on female subjects. Future research endeavors are encouraged to expand the scope to include male leaders, thereby facilitating a comprehensive understanding of WLB challenges across genders within both governmental and private sectors. Additionally, while this study concentrates on family support as a primary determinant of WLB, future inquiries should consider a broader spectrum of support mechanisms, including those from supervisors, workplace environments, and other societal contexts. Lastly, the present study utilizes a singular independent variable; thus, it is anticipated that future researchers will incorporate moderating or mediating variables, such as workload and work environment, to deliver a more comprehensive analysis of the multifaceted nature of WLB.

Conclusion

This study provides a nuanced understanding of work-life balance among women in leadership by demonstrating that the availability and effectiveness of family support are contingent upon professional context. The findings indicate that female leaders in institutional settings benefit primarily from emotional support to manage psychological

demands associated with formal accountability, role complexity, and sustained performance pressure, whereas female entrepreneurs rely more on instrumental support to address practical constraints arising from blurred work–life boundaries and limited institutional resources. These results highlight that family support operates through context-specific mechanisms rather than as a uniform resource. Additionally, this study underscores the role of demographic factors, with age emerging as the only significant determinant, as women aged 40–50 years exhibit better work–life balance, suggesting that life experience, adaptive capacity, and managerial competence are more influential than marital status, tenure, or educational background. Overall, these findings contribute to the literature by emphasizing a context-sensitive and life-cycle-oriented perspective, suggesting that strategies to enhance women’s work–life balance should be tailored to both professional roles and evolving capacities across different stages of working life.

Declarations

Author’s Contributions. All authors contributed to the research drafting and design process. The first author wrote the manuscript draft, collected the data, and analyzed it. The Second Author contributed to guiding research direction, as well as conducting revisions and refinements of the manuscript.

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