

Systematic Literature Analysis (SLR) of the Factors Affecting the Work Life Balance of Teachers in Malaysia

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p>Article history: Received: 20 June 2023 Revised: 15 July 2023 Accepted: 10 August 2023 Published: 1 Sept 2023</p>	<p>Teachers are important assets of the country in ensuring competitive education to achieve the country's vision and mission. The quality of work and good life among teachers will directly benefit the school and the teacher themselves. School leaders play a very important role in ensuring that work demands and personal needs can be met by teachers with minimal conflict management between work and personal life. The purpose of this study is to analyse the factors that affect the work-life balance of teachers by highlighting the literature. The selection is carried out by the process of identifying factors such as keyword setting and database selection. Out of the 47 articles listed, there are 38 studies in the study of teachers' work-life balance using a comprehensive quantitative method. This study has identified the factors of organisational support, job satisfaction, family support, workload and flexible work as factors that affect the work life balance of teachers in Malaysia. However, only the factors of job satisfaction, flexible work, organisational support, family support and spiritual intelligence are the main factors affecting the work-life balance of teachers in the Malaysian context. This study suggests that further research should be done related to the analysis of factors measuring the work life balance of school leaders. This is based on the limitations of the study, as there is no study has been done in the work-life balance of school leaders.</p>
<p>Keywords: Work life balance, teachers, systematic literature reviews</p> <p></p>	

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INTRODUCTION

The existence of teachers is important in a school. The goals of the school will not be achieved without the presence and roles played by the teachers. In accomplishing the national education vision and mission, teachers played their distinct own roles in the school organisation. Without the role of the teachers, the education sector will not be completed in educating the nation's children. The role of teachers as the main pillar in empowering and advancing the field of education in this country is undeniable. It is not an exaggeration to state that teachers are worthy school assets equipped with intellectual capital, leadership skills, high personality and are committed to making the process of student excellence a success (Mustafa et al., 2021).

In reality, the teachers need to accept that in current national education, they have to bear a great responsibility in teaching and learning including extracurricular activities as well as tasks that are equivalent to clerical duties (Mehat et al., 2021). The changes in work demands, work environments and international work standards make teachers' work-life balance becomes a critical global issue today. This has been illustrated through the increasing workload of the teachers. Many teachers are given additional tasks that are not related to the main tasks of teachers (Ali et al., 2017). The reformation and renewal of the school's curriculum and co-curriculum from time to time has dragged teachers to face various tasks that are strenuous challenging, difficult and test their patience until they feel burdened by these tasks (Arzizul & Dayang, 2018). The intense challenging and increasing workload of teachers affects teachers' motivation which in turn will affect teachers' work efficiency (Arzizul & Dayang, 2018). An example of the transformation process is in Malaysian Education Development Plan (PPPM) 2015-2025, which includes aspects of teaching quality, service quality, curriculum quality, assessment and certification quality, student development and welfare quality, student and organisational cultural environment quality, supervision quality, mentoring quality and the quality of teachers' development. Considering that the course of action in improving the quality and excellence of education is highly dependent on the commitment of teachers, schools and the Malaysian Ministry of Education need to be more sensitive to the pressures faced by teachers (Wong Yi Sze et al., 2022). Teachers who are burdened with various liabilities, whether work or personal demands, will definitely face problems in managing work and personal matters, thus contributing to the failure in managing work requirements and also personal demands. Therefore, gaining insights into factors affecting the work life balance of teachers is inevitable for any researcher involved in this research domain. Specifically, it is vital to understand the differences between factors affecting the work life balance among teachers in Malaysia and abroad. However, to the best of the authors' knowledge, it is impossible to search for any published systematic review on factors affecting the work life balance among teachers in Malaysia. This suggests that there is a gap in the related literature. Therefore, this systematic review article aims to synthesize the academic research on work life balance which were published in the past five years, from 2018 to 2022. This is to identify the factors affecting the work life balance among teachers in Malaysia. The methods used in this study are presented in the next section. Furthermore, the literature search procedure, article selection criteria, PRISMA 2020, data extraction and synthesis, research findings and discussions, conclusion and recommendation are presented in the following sections.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review includes the definition of work-life balance and teachers.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Work and life balance or work-life balance is defined as the employee's perception of personal time, family care and work integrated with minimal conflict (Clark-Campbell, 2000; Ungerson, 2005). Work-life balance also defined as an understanding of one's career and life (Yordy, 2018). This situation occurs when the work-family conflict has been resolved while meeting the demands of family life (Pratiwi, 2021; Pratiwi, Haryani & Putri, 2021).

There are three elements in work life balance that can be achieved, i.e when a person achieves time balance, engagement balance and satisfaction balance in their family and work roles. The balance of teacher's time is

closely related to teacher's working and life time management. Therefore, time management is a skill related to the technique and way on how an individual manages, divides and organizes his time effectively. Good time management will reduce work stress. Study found that there is a significant relationship between work pressure and time management (Branch, 2015). Besides that, engagement balance refers to the balance between psychological effort and presence invested in individual's work and life. Lack of engagement balance will cause depression, anxiety, emotional exhaustion, low focus and inability to control anger during tense situations, which leads to serious physical and mental illness as well as negative behavioral changes (Habib Yaribeygi et al., 2017). The balance of work-family satisfaction in addition, is the extent to which individuals are involved and equally satisfied in terms of work and family. Employees therefore, require a balance of family work satisfaction because they are responsible for the job through quality productivity within a commensurate salary payment. The responsibility to the family is carried out through taking care of the family's well-being to ensure the progress of the next generation. Vice versa, conflict will occur if individuals are unable to balance between work life and family life or the environment (Johari, 2018). Typically, this situation is often faced by employees and will lead to having stress in their life. Therefore, it is necessary to administer effective human resource management practices to guarantee the employee's well-being and work performance (Bakker, 2018). Effective human resource management assists employees to balance their work and family life. Furthermore work life balance will also produce a good physical health for employees and indirectly improve their morale.

Work life balance is a must for teachers in achieving their work and life performance. Good work performance qualifies teachers to be nominated for incentives by the school administration. Instructional Leadership Model (Halinger, 2011) outlines five elements of creating a learning climate which protects the teaching and learning time, maintains high visibility, provides incentives for teachers, encourages career development and provides incentives for learning. Encouragement, support and incentives for teachers will securely boost the teacher's work performance. Good work performance among teachers has a significant relationship with their work life balance (Izzati, 2021).

Organisations are fully responsible to fulfill work life balance by balancing the work and life demands of its employees. Typically, organisations would offer one of the following options; flexibility, organisational support for dependent and self care or family leave management (Feeney, 2019). This practice has become more critical as technological advances have blurred the boundaries set between work and non-work domains. The rise of two-income households, single parents and longer working hours are disrupting the work-life balance. The concept of work-life balance is often used by organisations as a basic framework in guiding the excellence of individuals through the organisation with respect to their career prospects. Therefore, various policies are formulated to create a work-life balance among employees (Kamaruddin, 2018). The examples of the policies in creating a work-life balance among employees are holiday policies, flexible working hours, child care centers and nursery room facilities at work (Kamaruddin, 2018).

TEACHERS

The UNESCO Institute of Statistics defines a trained teacher as someone who has met at least the minimum structured teacher training requirements (pre-service or in-service) to teach a specific level of education according to the relevant national policy or law. According to the Malaysia Education Act 1996 (Act 550), a teacher is defined as a person who — (a) teaches students in an educational institution; or (b) prepare or issue study materials or check answers returned at, for or through a distance education centre, and include head teachers or principals (Education Act 1996 (Act 550) & Selected Regulations). Contemporary Islamic Scholar, Muhammad Uthman El-Muhammady describes a teacher as a scholar who conveys and expands and makes knowledge successful in society. It includes knowledge about Islam or general knowledge with characteristics and tasks that need to be properly defended in society. In conclusion, they can carry out their duties effectively to create a shape, knowledgeable and charitable people (Hilmi, 2020).

METHODOLOGY

LITERATURE SEARCH PROCEDURE

The researcher focused on the literature search by focusing on the factors that influenced the teacher's work-life balance. Therefore, the determined keywords for the literature search are based on the title of the study. In addition, by using the medium of literature in Malay, the researcher also changed the keywords in English to broaden the scope of the literature search. This literature search used major databases such as Springer, Researchgate, Emerald, Academia.edu and Elsevier. The researcher also used the Google Scholar search engine to diversify the literature search. The importance of accessing this database is to facilitate literature search because the database gathers all literature data in a systematic and comprehensive manner. The summary of the literature search through the literature search database is explained through Figure 1 below:

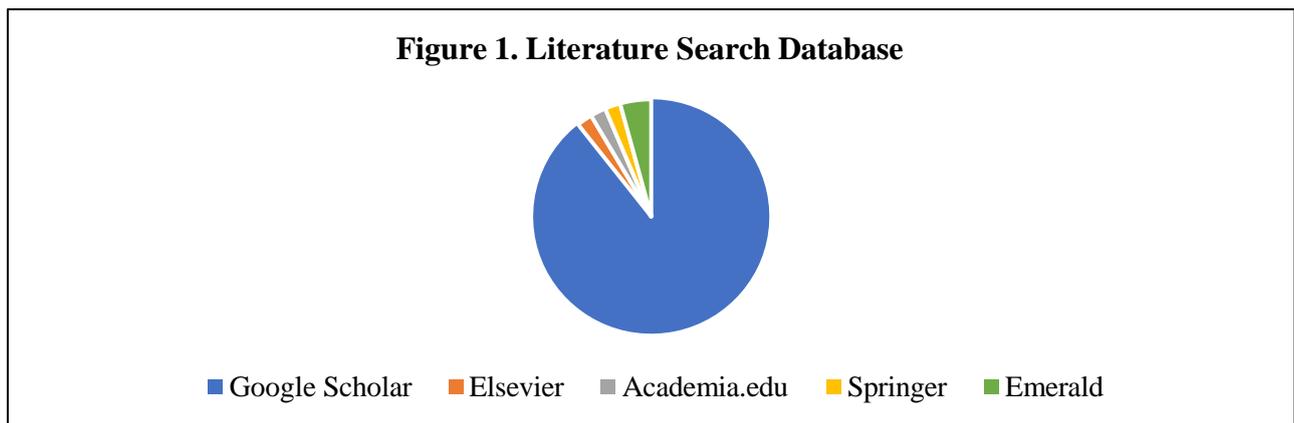


Figure 1 shows that the Google Scholar database (89%) is the largest contributor to literature searches. The Emerald database is the second largest contributor (4.4%). Elsevier, Academia.edu and Springer contributed a total of 6.6 percent to the literature search of this study. In conclusion, most of the literature on teachers' work-life balance factors is retrieved from the search engine in Google Scholar.

ARTICLE SELECTION CRITERIA

Survey research, whether it is a critical survey study or a critical survey study that involves the comparison of a group of literature, requires the appropriate establishment of a robust set of criteria (Xiao & Watson, 2019). Therefore, the researcher has set certain criteria in focusing the literature search. Thus, the researcher has set acceptance and rejection elements as criteria that must be met. The acceptance criteria set the limit for literature searches starting from 2018 until 2022. Setting this five-year timeline helps researchers obtain the latest literature while avoiding the use of outdated data.

The focus of this research is on the factors used, so the types of literature documents need to be diversified from different sources. Besides, the use of a suitable introductory language is required to facilitate the acquisition of various literary materials. Therefore, the researcher selected literature from theses, proceedings and journal articles. This study also determines the language of introduction for the search of various literature articles in Malay and English. The researcher adds that the use of English as the language of article search coincides with its function as a lingua franca (Iriance, 2018) meaning the language of communication between individuals even if they are of different races.

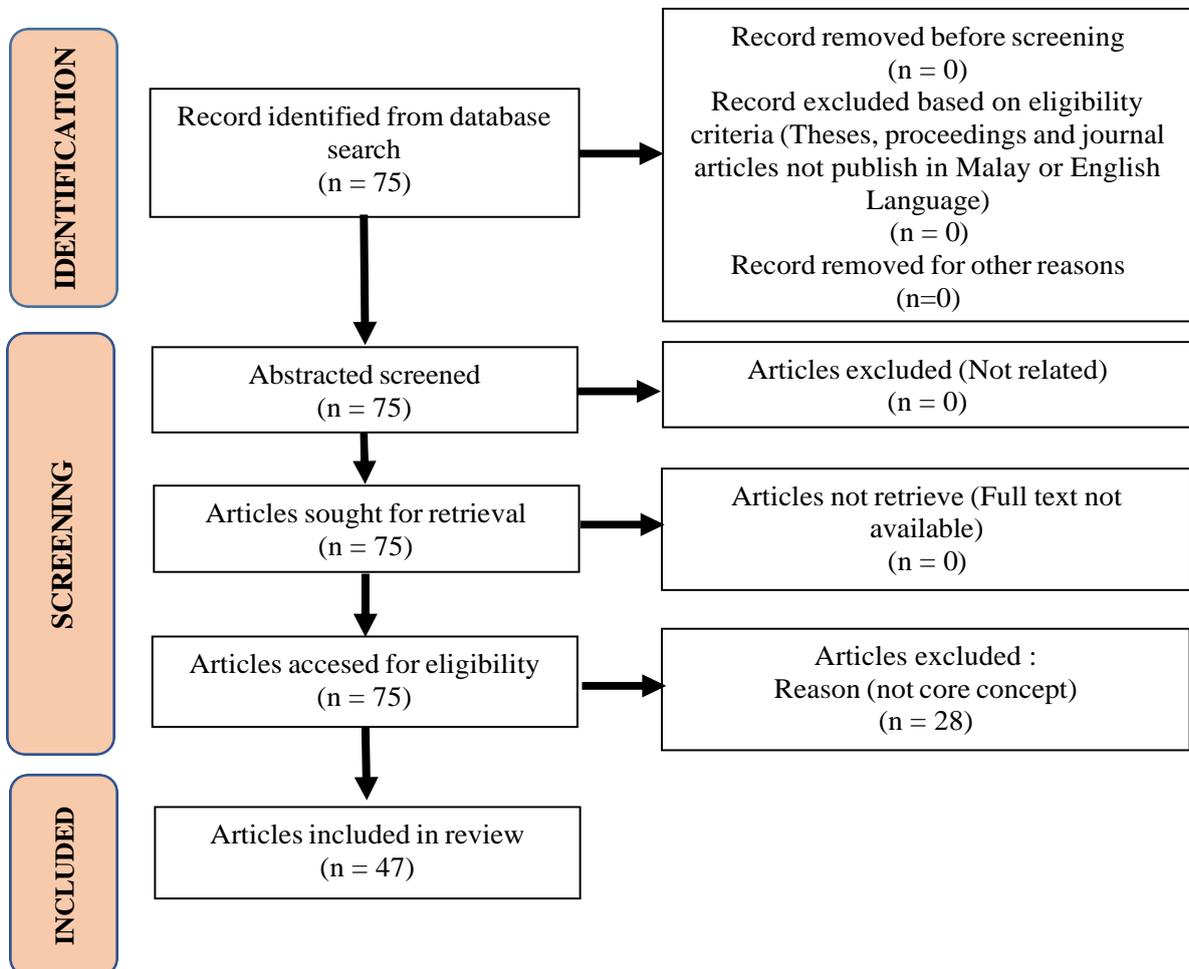
Needless to say, the researcher has set rejection criteria other than the accepted criteria. The criteria are briefly displayed based on Table 1 below. The determination of rejection criteria is limited so that the scope of the literature search on the teacher's work-life balance factors becomes larger. The determination of rejection criteria will make it easier for the researcher to find similarities or differences between each factor used in the study of the work-life balance of teachers.

Table 1: Determination of Acceptance and Rejection Criteria

General Criteria	Acceptance Criteria	Rejection Criteria
Year of Publication	2018 – 2022	Besides 2018 – 2022
Document type	Theses, proceedings and journal articles	Besides theses, proceedings and journal articles
Language	Malay and English	Besides Malay and English

After the first screening, the researcher continues with the second stage screening. The duplicated past research articles will be filtered and discarded through this process. The final screening is conducted by reading all the articles and filtering the articles that are not related. Through the final screening by the researcher, there are 47 research articles that can be analysed to answer the research objectives. The PRISMA flow diagram of article selection is depicted in Figure 1 :

Factors Affecting the Work Life Balance of Teachers : PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram for Article Selection



DATA EXTRACTION AND SYNTHESIS

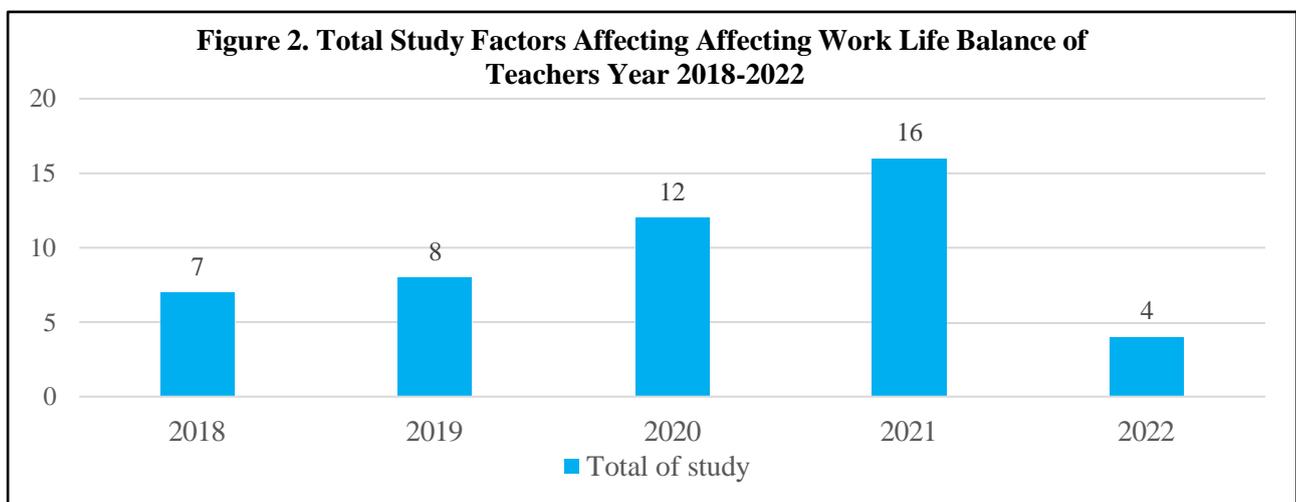
The data extraction process is carried out to facilitate and summarize the comparison of literature materials that meet the set criteria (Bevan et al., 2020). Through the data extraction process, all the literature data on the factors were screened according to the categories that had been set. The researcher has established the necessary categories such as usefulness, strengths and weaknesses of factors. The synthesis process of all

categories is also carried out by the researcher to give a clearer picture in producing a meaningful comparison (Bevan et al., 2020). Therefore, the results of the data extraction and synthesis process will be explained more details in the study findings section.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

OVERVIEW OF SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE ANALYSIS (SLR) AGAINST FACTORS AFFECTING WORK LIFE BALANCE OF TEACHERS

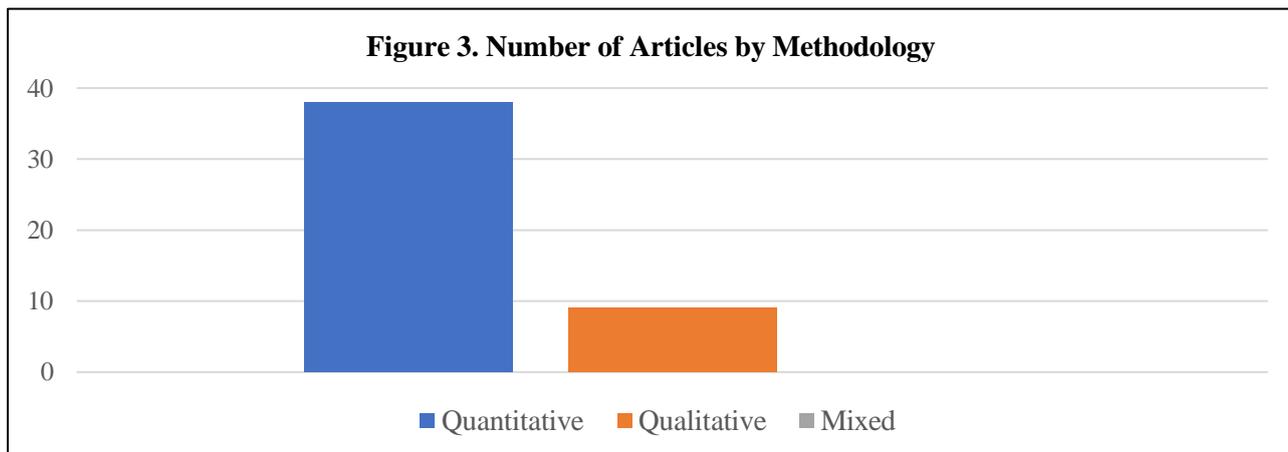
This literature review includes 47 sources and has a mean rate of 9.6 publications in the 5-year period from 2018 to 2022 (Figure 2). The publication of studies on factors affecting the work life balance of teachers increased significantly from 2018 to 2021. Starting with 2018 with only seven publications, the study of factors influencing the work life balance of teachers obtained the highest number of publications of 16 studies in 2021. The interest in the study of work-life balance among researchers began to surge in 2020 as a result of the movement control order that affected the work-life balance of teachers globally (Ali et al., 2022; Lizana & Vega-Fernandez, 2021). In general, the study of teachers' work-life balance factors is related through various aspects such as job satisfaction, phenomenological studies, work quality, practice and support needs.



WORK LIFE BALANCE OF TEACHERS' RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to systematically analyse this study, 47 articles have been identified as crucial instruments that fit the theme of the study of teachers' work-life balance factors. Of the total, there are 38 research articles that use quantitative methodology. Only nine studies used qualitative methodology (Dellia Mila Vernia et al., 2021; Daouia Laaboudi, 2021; Batsheva Guy & Brittany Arthur, 2020; Narayan Chakraborty, 2019; Julian et al.,

2020; Michael et al., 2021; Geetha et al., 2020; Kutsyuruba et al., 2019; Ismail et al., 2022). The analysis also shows that there are no studies using a mixed methodology as shown in Figure 3:



Based on Figure 3 above, the majority of studies use quantitative methods. Indirectly, there are various questionnaire instruments used in these studies. Therefore, based on the analysis of 47 selected research articles, the researcher listed six main factors that contribute to the work-life balance of teachers, which are organisational support factors (11 articles), job satisfaction (10 articles), family support (7 articles), workload (7 articles) and flexible work (6 articles).

THE MAIN FACTORS AFFECTING WORK LIFE BALANCE OF TEACHERS

a. ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT

The first factor is that organisational support acts as a shared and fair social exchange for workers. The study shows that the teacher's work-life balance is positively related to the school's commitment. Organisations must be concerned of their employees by helping them in maintaining a healthy balance between their personal and professional lives. In other words, school leaders must provide necessary support to teachers to maintain work-life balance (Hossain et al., 2019). Organizations need to maintain the performance of male and female teachers at their best to ensure lower levels of work-life conflict. Although the level of work-life conflict is likely to be the same, it is undeniable that male and female teachers may have different needs. Thus, the approach of school leaders needs to adapt to their needs (Hossain et al., 2019). The work life policy offered by a school leads to increased teacher loyalty and commitment. School leaders should create an orientation program to minimize work pressure while improving work-life balance skills among teachers (Maheswari & Shankar, 2020).

b. JOB SATISFACTION

The job satisfaction factor is the second factor that disrupts the teacher's work-life balance. Job satisfaction is one of the benchmarks to evaluate the extent to which the organization provides the best rewards for employees who have worked in accordance with the organization's goals (Ramadhan & Marinda, 2019). Job satisfaction is the 'key' that leads to income, promotion and achievement through satisfaction. As such, several studies show that teachers' work-life balance is closely related to the teacher's job satisfaction (Azam Malik & Zafrul Allam, 2021; Krishnan et al., 2018; Heffernan et al., 2019; Sarah et al., 2019; Jillard O. Mercado, 2019). There

are also studies that link job satisfaction with work-life balance policies (Johari et al., 2018), work-family conflict (Zahra et al., 2021) and organisational commitment (Ramadan & Marinda, 2019)

c. FAMILY SUPPORT

The family support factor allows work life balance to be well managed. For example, the family, especially the wife, helps take care of the children when the husband is at school or vice versa. Husbands also help teachers by managing household affairs and giving permission to female teachers to work (Julian, 2018). Teachers describe family as an asset and give self-motivation that can give enthusiasm when working (Julian, 2018). Therefore, family support has a positive effect on work-life balance, especially teacher couples who work by shouldering and sharing responsibilities together (Ravi Kumar. M, 2020).

d. WORKLOAD

Work-life balance is greatly influenced by workload. This fourth factor is taken into account based on the tasks or responsibilities entrusted to employees to be implemented either as a group or individually. In the organisational context, the teacher's workload refers to all the tasks that need to be done, whether related to teaching and learning or additional tasks outside the scope (Arzizul & Dayang, 2018). Increased work demands and non-work demands contribute to increased teacher workload (Amin, 2019). The study shown that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic started prior to the circumstances where the pre-pandemic teachers have shown a high rate of workload, fatigue and a high rate of professional illness (Lizana & Gustavo Vega-Fernandez, 2021). Therefore, school leaders should place a workload that suits the teacher's ability along with the optimal time. As a result, the teacher will be satisfied and able to carry out the task given. Teachers who have a good work-life balance have positive characteristics such as increased work productivity (Ali, 2022). When the teacher's task is felt to be easy according to his competence, of course all tasks will be carried out wholeheartedly. In conclusion, when the work-life balance goes well, teachers increase work productivity from a mental or physical point of view (Rohmawati & Izzati, 2021).

e. FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS

A good work-life balance is defined as a situation where employees are able to balance work and personal life with other commitments (Ganapathi, 2016). Thus, work life balance means that employees can use flexible working hours to balance work or other commitments such as family, hobbies and not just focusing on their works (Kusumah et al., 2021). Studies show that flexible working hours for teachers can improve the work

life balance of teachers (Laaboudi, 2021; Julian et al., 2020). There are also researchers who put flexible working hours among ten things to improve the work-life balance of teachers (Bartlett et al., 2021).

COMPARISON OF THE FINDINGS OF TEACHERS' WORK-LIFE BALANCE FACTORS BETWEEN MALAYSIA AND FOREIGN COUNTRIES

In order to systematically analyse the comparison of the above factors in the context of Malaysia, out of 47 articles that have been identified as matching the research theme, there are 14 research articles taken from local studies as represented through Figure 4 below :

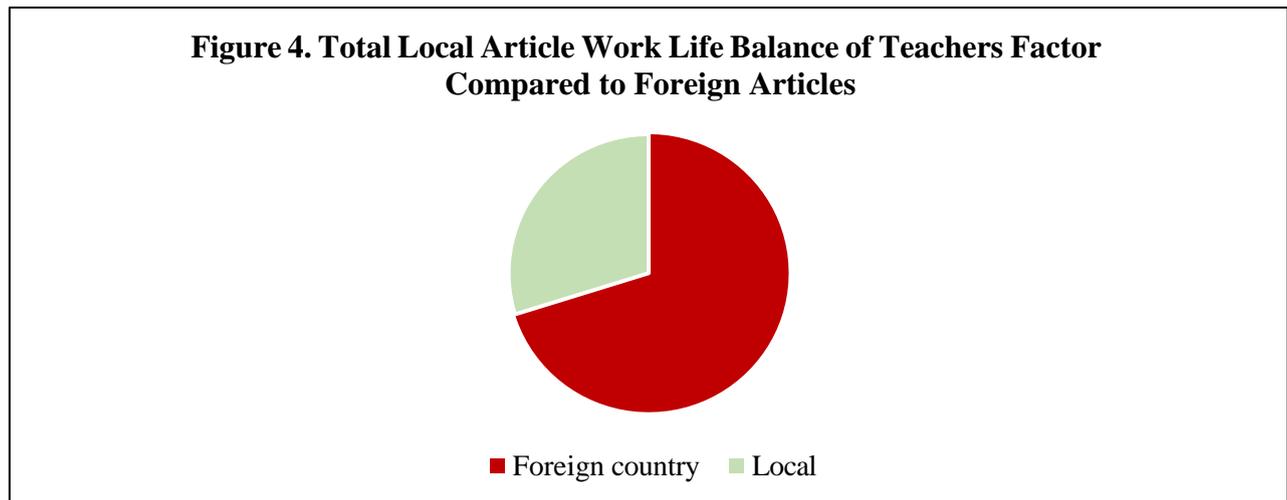


Figure 4 shows the number of local studies that meet the research theme with 15 studies (32%) compared to foreign studies with 33 studies (68%). In conclusion, foreign studies dominate local studies in fulfilling the theme of this study.

Based on the Malaysian context, the study found that the main factors of work life balance of teachers in Malaysia in order of priority are job satisfaction, flexible work, organisational support, family support and spiritual intelligence. The first factor is job satisfaction which is positively related to work life balance (Johari et al., 2018; Krishnan et al., 2018; Saraih et al., 2019; Ruslani et al., 2018). This is due to a teacher's work-life balance that provides benefits from the point of view of increased job satisfaction, high job security, increased control over the work-life environment, reduced levels of work stress while also improving the level of physical and mental health (Riffay, 2019). Work-life balance gives advantages to both the employee and the employer. Employees will be more committed, motivated and productive in carrying out tasks while providing a positive impact to their organization (Thevanes & Mangaleswaran, 2018). Family support is also significantly related to teachers' work-life balance (Husin et al., 2018; Kong et al., 2020). The researcher explained that Malaysian society is a collectivistic society which means that the family is the most important part of a person's life. Therefore, family support is important in meeting the work-life balance of teachers. Spiritual intelligence is one of the factors in the work-life balance of teachers that is emphasized in Malaysia. Teachers who have a high awareness of spiritual intelligence have less conflict and more enrichment in work and family life, thus achieving work and life balance (Zakaria et al., 2018; Zakaria, 2020).

The difference in factors affecting work life balance among teachers in foreign country and in Malaysia is spiritual intelligence factor. Spiritual intelligence is defined as “the adaptive use of information to facilitate everyday problem solving and goal attainment” (Emmoms, 2000). According to Emmoms (2000), by having appropriate spiritual intelligence, individuals have the ability to solve a problem beyond physical and materials, experience an increased state of consciousness, dedicate everyday life to God and utilize spiritual resources successfully. Studies suggest that spiritual intelligence is positively and significantly related to work-life balance. (Yazdani & Ashrafi (2015); Jena & Pradhan (2014); Singh & Sinha (2013); Sav (2009); Zakariaa

& Abdullah (2018). Zaiton et al., (2017) discovered that people with high consciousness of spiritual intelligence face less conflict and are more work enthusiast to family, hence will achieve a work and life balance. In addition, the majority of teachers in Malaysia are Muslims. Therefore religious practices among Muslims are high which positively affected their lifestyle at home and/or at work. In the context of a teacher, anything related to spiritual intelligence will be more emphasized by the school administration, for example the celebration of religious holy days, religious talk, etc. This helps to further enhance the quality and appreciation of spiritual intelligence (Zakariaa & Abdullah, 2018).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In creating a teacher's work-life balance that emphasizes aspects of work competence and personality excellence, teachers need to focus on work-life balance. Although there are factors for teachers' work-life balance in general, factors such as job satisfaction, flexible work, organisational support, family support and spiritual intelligence are important elements in producing a balanced and holistic teacher's work-life balance in Malaysia. Work-life balance is important to produce excellent people in the sense of creating quality teachers. If all the factors that have been mentioned can be balanced, teachers can create a prosperous educational climate in schools. As a result, the process of teaching, learning and school management reaches the target group which is the students and simultaneously achieves the wishes that have been set by the Malaysian Ministry of Education.

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