PRIMARY RESEARCH

Work-life balance and employee productivity: Intervention in service organizations

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Abstract

This research explores the intricate relationships among work-life balance, employee productivity, employee engagement, and family-supportive supervisor behavior within the context of service organizations in South Africa. The study seeks to inform organizational practices, policies, and leadership strategies tailored to the unique challenges and opportunities in the South African service sector by investigating how these components interconnect. The research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining a comprehensive literature review with qualitative data collection through semi-structured interviews. Thematic analysis is applied to the literature review, identifying key themes and concepts across existing research. Twelve in-depth interviews with experts in the field provide qualitative data, utilizing a semi-structured interview guide to explore real-world experiences and perspectives. This dual-method approach enables a holistic understanding of the variables under investigation, allowing for both a synthesis of existing knowledge and fresh insights from industry experts. Organizational policies and continual connectedness affect work-life balance impressions, which are subjective. Transformational leadership boosts staff productivity, demonstrating the link between leadership, well-being, and teamwork. The study acknowledges generational disparities in employee engagement preferences and how technology shapes virtual engagement techniques. In remote work, family-supportive supervisors demonstrate the necessity for adaptability. These findings provide practical and theoretical guidance to help firms design strategies that match the complexity of the South African service industry. Organizational policies, leadership development, and family-friendly workplaces promote a balanced, engaged, and productive workforce.

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary organizational dynamics make family-supportive supervisor behavior, work-life balance, productivity, and engagement hard to explain. This research targets South African service firms. Technology and remote work are changing global professionalization; thus, understanding their complicated connection is crucial. Understanding is vital to a healthy, sustainable workplace that meets employees' changing needs. We study work-life balance, engagement, productivity, and family-friendly bosses. It fits South Africa's service sector. South Africa's diversified culture and economy make organizational interaction research distinctive. Saks (2022) and Moreo, Cain, and Chang (2020) have extensively studied organizational work-life balance. Researchers explored work-life balance's subjectivity and the complex personal-professional link. Corporate policies impact workers' work-life balance, study suggests. Cultural and societal issues hinder the South African service industry's work-life balance. Staff productivity analysis increases inquiry with revolutionary leadership. Jackson (2020) found that transformational leadership enhances productivity by fostering personal growth. Leadership predicts staff productivity, suggesting leadership practices alter corporate work dynamics. South African service industry leadership may provide productivity-boosting challenges and opportunities. LaVigne et al. (2022) highlight teamwork and workplace well-being. The study found that comprehensive well-being efforts and teamwork im-

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prove employee engagement. Knowing how South African service organizations' workforces and structures affect employee engagement is crucial. This knowledge aids local treatments.

Organizational research has focused on employee engagement since successful organizations need it. P. Li, Sun, Taris, Xing, and Peeters (2021) and Murphy and Reeves (2019) researched employee engagement, organizational culture, and leadership practices comprehensively. Their findings suggest inspiring leadership and a supportive corporate culture significantly boost employee engagement. These studies show how leaders' actions affect staff engagement. Weziak-Bialowolska et al. (2023) find generational involvement preferences complicating labor dynamics. Multigenerational workplaces must understand and accommodate varied age groups' objectives. This study enhances employee engagement talks by addressing generational workplace expectations and viewpoints. This research can help HR strategies increase generational engagement. Susanto et al. (2022) state supervisors are crucial to a family-friendly workplace. Family-supportive solutions are essential as remote work grows.

They analyze how administrators may assist employees in managing work and family, a crucial part of the changing workplace. The findings emphasize the importance of companies supporting employees' family needs to improve well-being and job happiness. The literature uncovers several insights by studying these components' interactions. According to Yang and Jo (2022), organizational policy affects employee well-being and work-life balance. According to the poll, firms should understand employees' requirements and implement policies that suit growing worker expectations to achieve optimal work-life balance. According to Peng, Nie, and Chen (2023), leadership affects worker productivity. Research shows that transformational leadership motivates and develops people, increasing productivity. Understanding the complex interactions between these factors helps organizations create ways to boost employee engagement, well-being, and productivity for long-term success.

Employee engagement is complex and tied to organizational culture and leadership, according to (Meuser & Smallfield, 2023). The research shows that employee engagement requires good leadership. To encourage, respect, and align people with company goals, leadership tactics stress communication, support, and a solid corporate culture. According to Osborne et al. (2023), generational variations impede employee engagement. This strategy focuses on tailoring workplace engagement methods to age groups' preferences. Generational gaps can boost employee engagement. Age-specific values and rewards must be considered. Family-supportive supervisors' flexible hours and honest communication are emphasized in remote work literature (S. Wang et al., 2023). Remote managers handle family. Clear goals, flexible scheduling, and remote work programs make organizations family-friendly. These complex connections have been studied to help companies boost employee engagement. Saks (2022) offers something more sophisticated that considers the subjectivity and employee work-life balance requirements and proposes leadership training. This leadership boosts staff engagement. J. Wang, van Woerkom, Breevaart, Bakker, and Xu (2023) recommend integrating engagement with company culture to increase employee appreciation, support, and mission commitment. Mazaheri, Hawk, Ledermann, Lozano, and Porter (2023) suggest remote work-family support changes. This work change acknowledgment allows family-oriented professionals flexibility and understanding. These insights assist organizations in managing the complexity of employee engagement and workforce performance by incorporating them into operational standards.

According to Rehder et al. (2020), culture strongly impacts ideas of work-life balance. These findings indicate South Africa must address this issue. Understanding how culture influences work-life balance requires understanding South Africa's different cultures. Schaefer, Terlutter, and Diehl (2019) contextualize employee engagement and business culture. These findings suggest adapting organizational strategies to South African service organizations' ethnic diversity-focused culture. Cultural diversity must be respected in a friendly workplace. This will aid indigenous worker-friendly efforts. Frameworks facilitate complicated variable connection analysis theoretically. According to Schiuma, Schettini, and Santarsiero (2021), transformative leadership affects worker efficiency. This concept pairs leadership with employee cultural expectations in South Africa, where culture may affect leadership.

The work-life balance affects policy and personal views. This theory stresses context-related work-life balance. These frameworks must be used to build worker-friendly rules in South Africa's diversified and culturally rich environment, where different groups have different work and lifestyle ideals—engagement theories that measure employee devotion. Understanding job engagement is critical to loyalty-promoting methods. South African engagement theories can account for cultural and contextual factors to motivate employees. Family Systems Theory states that work and family are interrelated; therefore, a good supervisor improves the family (Sneed, May, & Stencel, 2004).

This theory examines all elements of life and how family impacts work. In family-heavy South Africa, managers may help or impede workers' family commitments.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Modern organizational management is embracing work-life balance. This paradigm shift illustrates how work settings develop by breaking from professional and personal contexts. Due to its impact on productivity and employee well-being, work-life balance is more often discussed in corporate settings. This research examines the complicated relationships between work-life balance, family-supportive supervisors, and employee engagement in South African service organizations. Work-life balance is a complex concept reconciling personal and professional duties (Raffi, Trivedi, White, & Murase, 2020). Reaching this equilibrium impacts both personal and corporate aspirations. Positive work-life balance has repeatedly been linked to employee productivity. Workers with a good work-life balance are more engaged and committed. The link between work-life balance and employee productivity is complex and synergistic. Flexible and independent workers are more likely to handle their professional and personal obligations successfully. The difference between "work" and "life" is being replaced by a belief that the two are connected and compete for time and attention (C. Lee & Park, 2021). Employee engagement matters in this dynamic. Engaged employees are motivated to go above and beyond, genuinely devoted to the company's goals, and dedicated to their employment. Work-life balance affects employee engagement. Balanced personal and professional lives lead to more enthusiastic and dedicated work. Increased engagement boosts workplace satisfaction and corporate health, encouraging innovation, cooperation, and production.

Supervisors affect workplace culture and life balance. A corporation that promotes work-life balance may boost employee satisfaction. Supervisors must support their families. This strategy respects workers' lifestyles by incorporating home responsibilities into work. Managers who help workers at home understand work-family balancing concerns (Newton et al., 2023). This includes worker-friendly rules, family-friendly jobs, and flexible scheduling. Research shows that family-supportive managers minimize turnover, increase work happiness, and boost employee loyalty (Litano, Major, Landers, Streets, & Bass, 2016). Economically critical service sectors in South Africa make work-life balance increasingly important. The nation's demographics and history have shaped its sociocultural fabric, making organizational management challenging. Work-life

balance is challenging yet vital in the service industry owing to variable hours, deadlines, and customer engagement (Abebe & Assemie, 2023). Due to apartheid and socioeconomic imbalance, South African firms must encourage employee well-being. Work-life balance becomes a social justice and equality concern when it affects productivity beyond job satisfaction (N. Lee, Appelbaum, Amendola, Dodson, & Kaplan, 2017). Understanding and resolving these concerns helps organizations recruit and retain diverse workforce and promote social responsibility. The impact of work-life balance on productivity should go beyond convenience. Clearly, achieving this strategic goal will impact corporate results. Companies that promote work-life balance, employee engagement, and family-friendly supervisor conduct are more likely to produce supportive environments. This improves corporate performance, employee satisfaction, and loyalty. As workplaces evolve, work-life balance, employee engagement, and supervisor conduct must be managed. Studying these traits in South Africa's service industry contributes to the global discourse about healthier, more productive workplaces. It emphasizes the need for a holistic approach to corporate management that recognizes people's specific requirements and seeks to build a win-win work-life balance to boost organizational effectiveness.

Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance occurs when personal and professional obligations are balanced. It involves setting limits to prevent work from consuming personal time and vice versa. Work-life balance is unique to each person's responsibilities, tasks, and interests (Aracil-Jordá, Clemente-Almendros, Jiménez-Zarco, & González-González, 2023). A supportive environment for emotional and professional growth is the goal. The work-life imbalance has always been shown to be harmful. The work-life conflict has regularly been linked to excessive stress, weariness, and job dissatisfaction. They can cause mental and bodily harm outside of work. Studies show that people who prioritize work-life balance have better job satisfaction, wellness, and organizational commitment (Irfan, Khalid, Kaka Khel, Maqsoom, & Sherani, 2023). Researchers found several factors that affect work-life balance. Employment flexibility, corporate policy, and supervisor support matter. Cultural and societal norms also shape people's work-life balance ideals. The literature emphasizes the need for personal and professional self-care for holistic wellness. Current debates focus on work-life balance and labor's changing nature. Some believe that perfect balance is unattainable in today's fast-paced, globalized society. The focus has shifted to creat-

ing work environments that promote employee well-being, flexibility, and adaption (Rincón & Martínez, 2020). This has sparked questions about company culture and whether current rules promote work-life balance. Organizations must balance output and labor needs. Flexible work schedules, remote jobs, and family-friendly practices are becoming more popular. The efficacy of these measurements is still debated. How much corporate adoption of a work-life balance-promoting culture exists is unknown. A recent academic study examined how work-life balance influences job performance, organizational dedication, and life satisfaction (T. Lee et al., 2023). Better work-life balance boosts productivity and job happiness. Successful flexible work arrangements enable work-life balance. A growing body of research examines how work-life balance affects employee recruitment and retention. Future generations of professionals choose employers who successfully promote work-life balance. Enterprise performance and work-life balance are positively associated, prompting organizations to consider the strategic benefits of employee well-being (Sasmaz & Fogarty, 2023). However, work-life balance is still tricky, and corporate cultures and industries have variable success rates. Technology makes life more flexible and makes work more likely to eat over personal time. Concerns concerning the unintended consequences of constant interaction arise from blurring personal and professional boundaries. Modern corporations require work-life balance. The continuous debate regarding its viability and usefulness shows shifting workplace and employee expectations (Unni, Haines, Stein, Tucker, & Van Amburgh, 2023). According to this study, cultural congruence, corporate support, and flexible policies promote work-life balance. In the evolving modern workplace, organizations must acknowledge the significance of work-life balance and aggressively promote it as a strategic aim for worker benefit and long-term success.

Employee Productivity

Employee productivity measures how successfully a person does their job and meets their goals in a given period. The notion encompasses both quantity and quality of effort. Productive workers complete projects on schedule and boost company performance. The variable affects motivation, organizational structure, managerial strategies, and individual aptitudes. Previous studies have examined staff productivity and its impact on a company's profitability. Productivity is tied to economic ideals and promotes competitiveness and progress (Hammouri, Altaher, Rabaa'i, Khataybeh, & Al-Gasawneh, 2022). Classical research finds that training, work design, and motivation determine pro-

duction. Qalati, Zafar, Fan, Limón, and Khaskheli (2022) highlighted how social and psychological factors impact employee performance, emphasizing the importance of the workplace. Research has also examined how leadership boosts productivity. Studies show that good leadership boosts output.

The scholarly literature stresses how individual, organizational, and leadership traits affect worker productivity. Current worker productivity issues focus on labor, technology, and workers' expectations. The productivity implications of digital technologies and remote work have been debated recently. Technology can boost productivity but also cause distractions, weariness, and work-life imbalance (Kong, Yin, Baruch, & Yuan, 2023). Another topic is how to assess knowledge-driven corporate productivity. Knowledge work requires creative and intellectual contributions, making defining and assessing output harder than standard manufacturing situations (Y. L. A. Lee, Malik, Rosenberger III, & Sharma, 2020). Questions still need to be answered regarding whether traditional performance measurements convey the complexity of modern work.

Many current factors have been studied on employee productivity. According to studies, flexible work options, including remote work, can boost productivity when paired with effective collaboration and communication technologies. Remote work results vary depending on corporate culture, job kind, and individual autonomy. Employee well-being is vital to productivity. Studies show that companies with employee wellness programs, mental health services, and a good work environment are more productive (Ababneh & Alnawas, 2022). Well-being is both a moral imperative and a strategic investment in the organization that boosts employee productivity, innovation, and resilience. This research examines leadership styles. Transformational leadership inspires and gives people a sense of purpose, according to (Jena, Pradhan, & Panigrahy, 2018). According to the research, empowerment strategies like allocating responsibility and allowing autonomy boost employee productivity. Organizational studies place a high priority on employee productivity. Continuous conversation and growing research emphasize the necessity for a thorough productivity perspective that accounts for workplace changes (Annamalai, Kumar, & Bagathsingh, 2020). This study shows that technical advances, leadership techniques, and staff well-being affect productivity in various ways. As organizations adapt to the changing environment, a comprehensive productivity strategy that recognizes human, organizational, and environmental factors becomes more crucial.

Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is a complicated concept encompassing emotional investment, dedication to business objectives, and individual drive to perform at their best. It is part of job happiness, alignment with the company's aims and values, and work fulfillment. Actively seeking opportunities to contribute to corporate success, an engaged worker is enthusiastic and devoted (Zhu, Lin, Thawornlamlert, Subedi, & Kim, 2023). Business performance and employee engagement have been extensively studied. The idea was born from the failures of standard employee satisfaction measurements, which acknowledged that comfort does not necessarily lead to productivity. Scholars say development opportunities, corporate culture, job design, and leadership encourage participation (Niemann, Mai, & Dickel, 2022). The Gallup Q12 poll often measures employee engagement, which emphasizes clear expectations, recognition, and professional advancement. Employee involvement consistently leads to higher profitability, customer satisfaction, and productivity, according to (Weziak-Bialowolska et al., 2023). Current discussions about employee engagement focus on its adaptability to changing work environments. Due to contract economics, remote labor, and other worker demands, debates center on changing contact patterns. Engagement in a digital workplace and how organizations might foster purpose and community in virtual environments are continuing discussions. Leadership's role in fostering participation has been included. Traditional hierarchical leadership may need to engage modern workforces, prompting talks about empowerment and teamwork-focused leadership approaches (Ababneh & Alnawas, 2022). There is disagreement about whether engagement efforts should be industry-standard or personalized to unique corporate cultures.

A recent study shows that employee involvement improves organizational success. Employee participation is linked to decreased staff turnover, improved productivity, and a better business culture. The findings emphasize the need for organizations to regard engagement as a strategic aim rather than an HR function (X. Li, Sanders, & Frenkel, 2012). Technology advances affect employee engagement in this study. Virtual communication, cooperation, and flexible work arrangements can boost participation. However, digital weariness and diminished social relationships in remote employment must be considered. Current employee engagement research focuses on leadership. Studies demonstrate that real, servant, and transformative leadership boosts employee engagement (Rubim, Rubim, & Thornton, 2020). Staff engagement increases in organizations that in-

vest in leadership development and encourage open communication. Employee engagement is crucial to organizational research. Discussions and studies underscore the necessity to adapt engagement approaches to workplace changes. The present study emphasizes the long-term value of employee involvement in organizational performance, focusing on altering work arrangements and leadership. In today's complex workplace, organizations must understand employee engagement to succeed.

Family-Supportive Supervisor Behavior

Family-Supportive Supervisor Behavior (FSSB) is a complex term that affects workers' workplace impressions and the organization's support for family duties. This variable includes managerial actions and attitudes that help workers balance work and life. Family-supportive managers deliberately create a professional environment that accommodates families. This involves providing actual help and acknowledging employee family commitments. Consider acknowledging and meeting family needs, adopting flexible work hours, and providing psychological support during difficult times (Sargent, Shanock, Banks, & Yavorsky, 2022). The FSSB recognizes supervisors' vital role in creating a professional environment that supports work-life balance. Prior work-life balance and organizational support studies laid the groundwork for flexible work schedule literature. The late 20th and early 21st century inquiry revealed how supervisor behavior affects workers' work-life balance. FSSB requires empathy, flexibility, and a healthy workplace, according to (Ellis, Bauer, & Crain, 2023). The study highlights the benefits of supportive supervisory methods. Increased FSSB reduces work-family conflict, job satisfaction, and tension. Research also shows that FSSB improves employee performance, emphasizing the benefits of engaged, contented employees who can better balance work and family. The feasibility, durability, and adaptation of FSSB to diverse organizational contexts are often discussed in modern debate (Susanto et al., 2022). The widespread use of FSSB procedures in many organizations, sectors, and cultures has raised issues. The discussion also tackles managers' challenges in balancing personnel concerns with company needs. The impact of remote work on FSSB protocols was also discussed. The rise of flexible work arrangements has raised questions about how administrators might help distant workers with family commitments (Litano et al., 2016). Tasks include balancing work and family, regulating distant work expectations, and addressing FSSB in digital workplaces. A recent poll found FSSB beneficial to firms and employees. Research shows that FSSB reduces stress, boosts

job happiness, and strengthens employer loyalty (Kangas, Pensar, & Rousi, 2023).

Companies publicly supporting family-friendly policies are more likely to recruit and retain top talent. The study also examines how work-life balance policies benefit FSSB. Organizations that follow policies give the framework for administrators to implement supportive actions. The results underline the need for a holistic approach that combines official regulations with supervisor actions to create a family-friendly workplace (Hunsaker, 2021). Studies continue to emphasize FSSB's impact on organizational results. Training and development are prioritized by organizations that realize the link between supervisor behavior and organizational success. These initiatives help managers create a family-friendly workplace to reduce attrition and boost morale. Family-supportive supervisor conduct is crucial to organizational studies and changes in our understanding of work-life connections. The present debate and growing research emphasize the need to place FSSB processes in varied organizational settings (J. Wang et al., 2023). The study found that supervisors' behavior creates a work atmosphere that balances professional and personal commitments, improving employee well-being and company success. Organizations must focus on and understand family-supportive supervisor behavior to succeed in the modern workplace.

METHODOLOGY

The research began with a thorough thematic search of existing information. This technique was used to review the enormous amount of relevant scholarly literature for the criterion. A detailed examination of current content was conducted using academic research, fiction, and peer-reviewed periodicals. The topic inquiry covered employee participation, supervisor conduct that promotes families, work-life balance, and efficiency. The goal was to find subtle remarks and crucial subjects in intellectual conversations. The literature analysis sought to identify recurring themes and patterns that may explain the complicated dynamics of the selected variables (Table 1). The review went beyond collecting research data to analyze the theoretical and empirical underpinnings of work-life balance, employee engagement, productivity, and family-friendly supervisor conduct. The literature review supported the research and helped understand the data, identify gaps, and anticipate future advances. The literature review led to subject analysis with little difficulty. This study used a systematic qualitative approach to identify, classify, and explain literary trends. This analytical technique required a careful analysis of repeated themes, ideas, and patterns across investigations. The objective was better to comprehend these components' interplay and reciprocal influence. By identifying and classifying reoccurring themes, the study team gained deeper insights beyond particular studies, improving their comprehension of the topic. The topic analysis linked the actual inquiry to the literature study's theoretical framework. It was used as a prism to extract the fundamental principles of current knowledge and apply them to the study issues. A purposeful and systematic approach to understanding how work-life balance, employee productivity, employee engagement, and family-supportive supervisor conduct are related strengthened the study's conceptual framework. This enhancement also affected further data collecting and analysis.

TABLE 1. Literature review of thematic analysis for study variables

Variables	Author	Key Themes/Concepts Explored	Methodology	Major Findings/Contributions
Work-life Balance	Ninaus, Diehl, and Terlutter (2021)	Work-life balance perceptions	Qualitative interviews and surveys	It identified diverse perceptions of work-life balance, highlighting its subjective nature and its impact on employee well-being.
	Medina-Garrido, Biedma-Ferrer, and Bogren (2023)	Organizational policies and work-life balance	Document analysis and employee surveys	It explored the effectiveness of organizational policies in promoting work-life balance and its correlation with job satisfaction.

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Variables	Author	Key Themes/Concepts Explored	Methodology	Major Findings/Contributions
	Ashiq and Warraich (2023)	Gender and work-life balance	Longitudinal study and focus group discussions	We investigated gender differences in work-life balance experiences, uncovering disparities and proposing strategies for inclusivity.
	Bourlakis, Nisar, and Prabhakar (2023)	Technology and work-life Balance	A mixed-methods approach combining surveys and interviews	Examined the impact of technology on work-life integration, highlighting challenges and opportunities for employees and organizations.
Employee Productivity	Meuser and Smallfield (2023)	Leadership styles and employee productivity	Meta-analysis and case studies	We investigated the correlation between leadership styles (transformational, transactional) and their impact on employee productivity.
	Kong et al. (2023)	Employee well-being and productivity	Longitudinal surveys and performance metrics	We explored the relationship between employee well-being, job satisfaction, and subsequent effects on overall individual productivity.
	Iqbal, Ahmad, and Ahmad (2021)	Job design and task variety	Experimental study and in-depth interviews	Analyzed the impact of job design and task variety on employee engagement and productivity, emphasizing the role of intrinsic motivation.
	Nunes, Abreu, Bagnjuk, and Tiedtke (2021)	Team dynamics and collaborative productivity	Observational studies and surveys	It explored the influence of team dynamics on collaborative productivity, identifying key factors that contribute to or hinder effective teamwork.
Employee Engagement	AlNuaimi, Singh, Ren, Budhwar, and Vorobyev (2022)	Leadership impact on employee engagement	Qualitative interviews and content analysis	It explored the role of leadership in shaping employee engagement, identifying specific behaviors that positively impact organizational commitment.

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Variables	Author	Key Themes/Concepts Explored	Methodology	Major Findings/Contributions
	P. Li et al. (2021)	Organizational culture and engagement	Case study analysis and employee surveys	We investigated the influence of organizational culture on employee engagement, emphasizing the role of values alignment and shared purpose.
	Yim, Byon, Baker, and Zhang (2021)	Generational differences in engagement	Cross-sectional surveys and focus groups	We examined generational variations in factors contributing to engagement, providing insights into tailoring engagement strategies for different age groups.
	Catalá Bolos, Gijlers, and Visser (2022)	Technology's impact on virtual engagement	A mixed-methods approach combining surveys and virtual observations	Explored the effect of technology on virtual engagement, emphasizing the need for effective communication and virtual team-building activities.
Family-Supportive Supervisor Behavior	Sargent et al. (2022)	Supervisor behaviors and family support	Qualitative interviews and thematic analysis	It explored the role of supervisors in providing family support and identifying specific behaviors that contribute to a family-friendly work environment.
	Lambert, Pasupuleti, Cluse-Tolar, Jennings, and Baker (2006)	Impact of family-friendly policies	Longitudinal surveys and case studies	They investigated the effectiveness of family-friendly policies in organizations, analyzing their impact on employee satisfaction and retention.
	O'Rourke, Main, Gray, and Lovering (2021)	Gender-inclusive family support strategies	Mixed-methods research combining surveys and focus groups	Explored gender-inclusive strategies in family support, emphasizing the importance of tailored approaches to accommodate diverse employee needs.
	Kangas et al. (2023)	Remote work and family-supportive practices	Virtual ethnography and employee interviews	Examined the challenges and benefits of remote work on family-supportive practices, providing insights into fostering a supportive virtual work environment.

The research included subject analysis, a literature review, and semi-structured interviews with twelve carefully selected specialists. The specialists were picked for their expertise in work-life balance, employee engagement, productivity, and family-friendly supervision. The extensive participant selection technique yielded many data and various opinions, deepening and broadening the study. Semi-structured interviews were chosen to balance structure and flexibility suitably. This technique allowed the researchers to freely examine the participants' perspectives and experiences, capturing the richness of their reality and feelings. The interviews followed a prepared set of questions to ensure relevant subjects were covered while retaining structure for comparison analysis. Because participants could voice complex opinions, the semi-structured technique boosted knowledge of the examined factors. Semi-structured interviews were more about expert-researcher collaboration than data collection. Real-world examples of work-life balance, employee engagement, productivity, and supervisor support for families were discussed. Due to the participants' extensive expertise, the interviews added real-world insights to the theoretical framework that may aid the study's practical implementation. The profile of selected participants is shown in Table 2 below:

TABLE 2. Profile of selected participants

Participant ID	Gender	Age	Occupation	Years of Experience	Industry Sector
P001	Male	38	Human Resources Manager	12	Technology
P002	Female	45	Organizational Psychologist	18	Healthcare
P003	Male	50	Executive Director	25	Finance
P004	Female	35	Employee Relations Specialist	8	Manufacturing
P005	Male	42	Leadership Coach	15	Consulting
P006	Female	48	Workforce Development Manager	20	Education
P007	Male	36	Talent Acquisition Specialist	10	Retail
P008	Female	52	Chief People Officer	28	Pharmaceuticals
P009	Male	40	Occupational Health Specialist	14	Energy
P010	Female	47	Diversity and Inclusion Manager	22	Nonprofit
P011	Male	39	Training and Development Coordinator	11	Aerospace
P012	Female	43	Employee Engagement Consultant	17	Hospitality

An excellent interview guide was needed before semi-structured interviews. Professionals provided detailed responses to well-crafted open-ended inquiries. Questions were carefully designed to examine the perceived impact of work-life balance on employee productivity, supervisor conduct that supports families, and employee engagement challenges and benefits. This detailed interview approach enabled data consistency and planned and flexible in-depth subject matter expert conversations. Flexibility in the interview guidelines led to unexpected topics and insights. Researchers may organically study complicated factors by adapting to each specialist's perspective and experience. Flexibility permitted unscripted, insightful interviews. These findings showed comprehension levels that a rigorous methodology would have overlooked. The semi-structured interviews were conducted online for participant and researcher convenience. Technology made interviews easier and allowed international experts to participate.

TABLE 3. Interview guideline for study variables

Variable	Interview Questions
Work-Life Balance	1. How do you define work-life balance in the context of your organization?
	2. What policies or practices does your organization have to support work-life balance?
	3. How do employees perceive the effectiveness of these policies in achieving work-life balance?
	4. In your opinion, what challenges or barriers do employees face in maintaining work-life balance?
	5. How can organizations enhance and promote work-life balance among their employees?
	6. Can you share any success stories or best practices related to work-life balance in your organization?
Employee Productivity	1. How would you define employee productivity in your organization?
	2. What leadership styles or practices contribute to enhanced employee productivity?
	3. In your experience, how does employee well-being impact overall productivity levels?
	4. Are there specific job design elements or strategies that have proven effective in increasing productivity?
	5. How do teamwork and collaboration contribute to employee and organizational productivity?
	6. What challenges do employees commonly face that may hinder their productivity, and how can these be addressed?
Employee Engagement	1. How does your organization define and measure employee engagement?
	2. What role do leadership and organizational culture play in fostering employee engagement?
	3. Are there generational differences in what employees seek from their work regarding engagement?
	4. How has technology influenced employee engagement, particularly in virtual or remote work settings?
	5. Can you share examples of successful strategies your organization has implemented to enhance employee engagement?
	6. What challenges do organizations face in maintaining high employee engagement, and how can these be overcome?
Family-Supportive Supervisor Behavior	1. How does your organization define and promote family-supportive supervisor behavior?
	2. In your experience, what specific behaviors or actions characterize a supervisor as family-supportive?
	3. How are family-friendly policies communicated and implemented within the organizational hierarchy?
	4. Can you provide examples of initiatives or practices that have proven effective in supporting employees' family needs?
	5. How has the shift to remote work influenced supervisors' implementation of family-supportive practices?
	6. What role do organizational policies play in supporting supervisors exhibiting family-friendly behaviors?

Accepting numerous viewpoints influenced by professional and cultural conditions made the study more inclusive. The virtual nature of the interviews requires careful technological and logistical considerations to ensure a smooth procedure for all participants. With participant consent, we filmed each interview to verify expert opinions. The previously mentioned recording was used for exact transcription and detailed response analysis. The researchers could extensively evaluate the interview guidelines (See Table 3) since the transcription and recording process preserved the conversations' nuances.

The vast amount of qualitative material from semi-structured interviews was transcribed thoroughly. Theme analysis was more straightforward after switching from spoken to written language. As with the literature review, this technique involves carefully examining the transcribed data to reveal repeating themes, patterns, and insights in participant replies. This analytical endeavor produced diverse outcomes, reflecting the complexity of the expert viewpoints. The systematic and consistent narrative technique to explain these findings increased the study's knowledge of the variables. Semi-structured expert interviews, a topic literature scan, and a thematic analysis thoroughly assessed the elements under discussion. Combining these methods strengthened the study's validity and reliability, laying the groundwork for analysis, interpretation, and consequences. Many data sources, including current research and expert opinions, have helped us understand the complicated relationship between work-life balance, employee productivity, employee engagement, and family-supportive supervisor conduct.

FINDINGS
Work-Life Balance

A thorough examination of professional responses illuminates the complicated work-life balance dynamics and workplace obstacles and potential (Figure 1). Respondent 3, a 25-year-old Executive Director, is vital to our inquiry. This expert examined altering work-life balance and location/hour flexibility. Work-life balance requires occupational flexibility. Respondent 6's concern about 24/7 connectivity weakening work-life boundaries stood out in discussions. These findings related to technology-related work-life balance are supported by (Wong, Bandar, & Saili, 2017). Companies and workers must grasp how technology influences work-life balance. Employee relations specialist Respondent 4 stresses firm work-life balance policy and leadership. This situation requires leadership, but studying organizational norms and work-life balance is proper. Strategically integrated leadership and policies increase company work-life balance. Most respondents think technology impacts work-life balance internationally. Respondent 8, a 28-year CPO, believes technology blurs work-life boundaries. To reduce technological integration risks, firms must specify criteria. Technology and work-life balance should be further investigated due to gaps. Worker safety needs aggressive workplace technology integration.
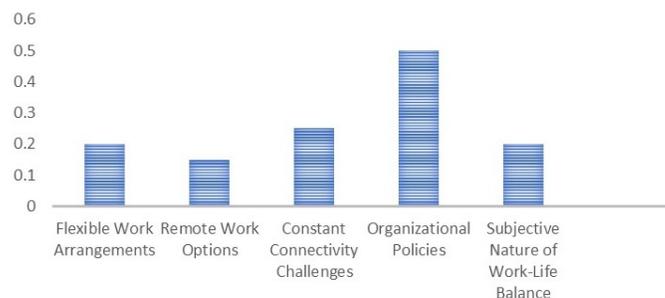

FIGURE 1. Themes identified related to work-life balance

Employee Productivity

A comprehensive assessment of professional ideas on worker productivity reveals a complex network of conflicting opinions that emphasize the relevance of this critical component of organizational effectiveness. Respondent 2 (a corporate psychologist) and Respondent 9 (an occupational health specialist) stressed the importance of business culture and leadership styles on productivity. Peng et al. (2023) agree that organizational culture affects worker productivity and that different leadership philosophies lead to higher output. Response 5 offers a distinct leadership coaching perspective. It stresses how skill development improves teamwork and production (Figure 2). This complicated conclusion shows that purposeful investments in employee training and collaborative work conditions are needed to sustain and enhance productivity, complicating

prior research. Companies must identify and handle the interconnectedness of production, cooperation, and skills to fulfill the dynamic requirements of the modern workforce to succeed long-term. Respondent 7, a talent acquisition specialist, discusses the pros and cons of remote employment. This is similar to the literature gaps observed by (Abadie, Roux, Chowdhury, & Dey, 2023), who encourage firms to adapt and establish effective plans to sustain and boost remote work productivity. Employers must be

proactive and nuanced about distant work concerns, including worker privacy and advanced digital communication requirements. Businesses must prioritize remote-friendly culture and technology to solve these challenges. Respondent Seven stressed the need to adapt talent acquisition strategies to changing jobs. This entails providing remote workers with the proper resources and fostering a sense of connection and engagement in the company's goals.
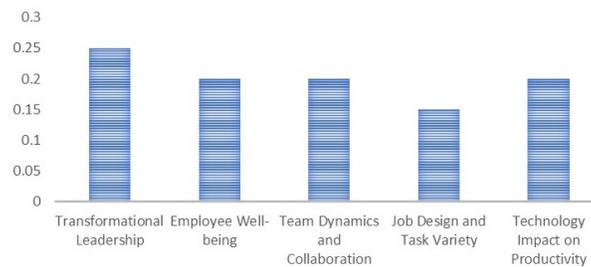

FIGURE 2. Themes identified related to employee productivity

Employee Engagement

Many research participants recognized the importance of leadership in establishing worker engagement levels in an organization. Respondents 1 (competent human resources manager) and 11 (committed training and development coordinator) agree that leadership matters. This matches the consensus of (Rubim et al., 2020). Numerous studies have shown that leadership affects workplace satisfaction and engagement, especially supervisory leadership. Respondent 10, a progressive diversity and inclusion manager, brought a new perspective by linking employee engagement to diversity and inclusion efforts. This intelligent study provides concrete evidence that inclusive work cultures actively drive employee participation and interest in the corporate purpose rather than simply awareness raising for diversity. Respondent 10 notes that while corporations develop diverse and inclusive cultures, these efforts are crucial to equity and boost employee engagement. Respondent 12 also noted the difficulties of maintaining respondents' attention during the survey. A broader corpus of

data shows that employee engagement is evolving. As employee engagement fluctuates, regular changes and efforts are needed to keep personnel enthusiastic and dedicated (Figure 3). Presslee, Richins, Saiy, and Webb (2023) found that involvement involves proactive activities and organizational adaptation. Organizations must encourage a culture of continual development and realize the transient nature of employee engagement to address retention issues. Respondent 12 stresses organizational flexibility, responsive leadership, and engagement program review to guarantee applicability and efficacy. A detailed review of professional viewpoints shows that employee engagement is multifaceted, with leadership being crucial. We better understand participation by adding different perspectives, such as diversity and inclusion program impacts. The awareness of the challenges of long-term commitment emphasizes the need for proactive and adaptive businesses. By incorporating these insights into organizational design, businesses may foster worker success. This will help the company grow.
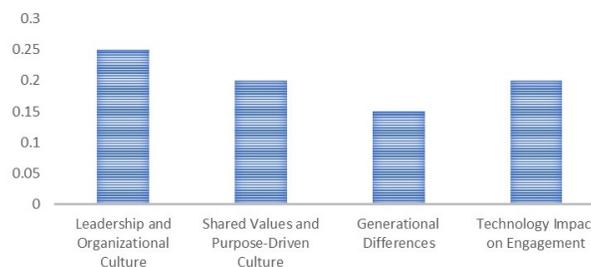

FIGURE 3. Themes identified related to employee engagement

Family-Supportive Supervisor Behavior

The research on supervisor behavior that promotes family support within the work-life balance framework showed significant results, emphasizing the importance of supervisors in helping employees manage personal-professional conflicts and skilled employee relations. Respondent 4 agrees with Presslee et al. (2023), highlighting the importance of supervisors in providing practical and psychological support for work-life balance. These results prove that good interpersonal relationships and supportive leadership help employees manage personal and professional demands (Figure 4). Respondent 8, an experienced chief people officer, said corporate culture nurtures supervisor behavior that benefits families. Current academic research shows that corporate culture fundamentally affects work-family relationships, supporting this complex position. Employees' views of company culture affect their support of family-friendly initiatives. Respondent 8 stresses the importance of culture and encourages firms to purposefully foster work-life balance via deeply rooted cultural norms and practices. Respondent 2, an organizational psychology specialist, and Respondent 12, an employee engagement ex-

pert, stressed the necessity of tailored policies and supervisor training. The changing workplace and virtual employment make this vital. According to Khaw et al. (2023), complete training and technological assistance are needed for family-supportive remote work practices. Remote work situations make juggling professional and personal duties exceedingly more complex. Thus, businesses must provide administrators with the skills, expertise, and resources to manage staff. Due to the complexities of remote work, supervision approaches must be rethought. This reevaluation should highlight flexible work schedules, communication technology, and trust-building. Respondents 2 and 12 stressed the need to invest heavily in comprehensive policies and training programs to address these issues. Manager investments help remote workers balance work with pleasure. A thorough study of supervisors' family behavior revealed work-life balance issues. Supervisors' practical and emotional support and organizational culture show that organizations must create work-life balance conditions. Managers may need extra policies and training to help remote workers adjust. These techniques help companies improve work-life balance and productivity.
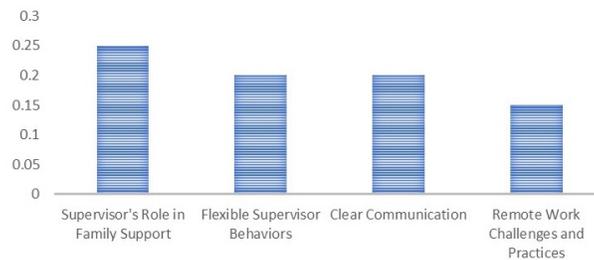

FIGURE 4. Themes identified related to family-supportive supervisor behavior

DISCUSSION

Workplace dynamics are shown by work-life balance, productivity, employee engagement, and supervisor family-friendly activity research. This discussion chapter reviews prior research to understand these essential organizational traits. This extensive study acknowledges the arbitrariness of work-life balance but underlines its numerous elements. We continue to address continual connection difficulties (Ip et al., 2023). The poll found that remote work and flexibility help workers balance work and life. The survey also illustrates people's continued efforts to disengage from work, a work-life balance issue experts ignore. This study validates transformative leadership productivity finding. We expand productivity information beyond prior papers. The study illustrates the complex link between team dynamics and employee well-being. Medina-Garrido et al.

(2023) value these traits. This holistic approach to worker well-being and cooperation supports leadership and productivity. This study reveals the complex relationships between work-life balance, productivity, and leadership styles in modern firms. The results also suggest that firms employ technology to boost online participation since it can help. The findings indicate that enterprises must invest in cross-border cooperation, communication tools, and platforms. Businesses can develop virtual collaboration and information spaces (Vellanki, Mond, Khan, & Nair, 2022). This suits a linked, digital workforce where distant cooperation is expected. Tech is fantastic for virtual engagement, but the study reveals that worker requirements and preferences must be understood. According to Al-Omar et al. (2019), firms should personalize IT solutions to employees' interests and work schedules to prevent a homogenous ap-

proach. The human-centered approach to technology guarantees that digital technologies improve work.

The study shows that supervisors are crucial to building a family-friendly and supportive workplace (Zhang, Jin, & Jiang, 2020). Key supervisor traits include effective communication, adaptability, and understanding of family needs. This supports a wider body of studies emphasizing supervisors' specific activities in building a work environment that fits the needs of family-caregiving workers. The study examines managers' behaviors and traits to foster a family-friendly workplace. Instead, then merely respecting work-life balance legislation, managers may actively support and encourage their employees' different family obligations to show flexibility (Arlinghaus et al., 2019). Effective communication goes beyond stating expectations and obligations to build trust and understanding. Through these details, the study illuminates' managers' complicated conduct that goes beyond rhetoric and creates a workplace where employees are assisted in managing their family obligations. The study also examines how remote employment impacts family-supportive behaviors, adding a novel perspective. Since virtual workplaces are becoming more common, this study explores the challenges of managing remote workers and the innovative methods created to promote family-friendly work settings. Due to their constant change, this scholarly contribution enhances our understanding of family-supportive practices in current workplaces (Lei, Zhang, & Cheah, 2023). The report highlights managers' challenges while managing remote teams, such as promoting effective communication, distributing responsibilities equally, and fostering team togetherness. The study also examines managers' innovative remedies to remote work difficulties, emphasizing the need for adaptation and innovation in family-friendly virtual settings. Technology, virtual support systems, and flexible scheduling are needed to increase teamwork and communication among geographically dispersed team members (Zhao & Alfandari, 2020). The study improves previous research by offering firms insights that may be used in remote work strategies to develop a flexible, family-friendly culture.

Based on this study's integrated findings, a complete theoretical framework explains the complex linkages between work-life balance, employee productivity, engagement, and Family-Supportive Supervisor Behavior. The study found that work-life balance, achieved through flexible work arrangements and remote work, boosts employee productivity. According to Jena et al. (2018), transformational leadership positively influences organizational productivity, and employee well-being and collaboration are crucial. Employee involvement is included in the theoretical framework of this study. A good work-life balance boosts employee engagement and productivity. Other studies stress the importance of leadership paradigms, organizational cultural dynamics, and technology initiatives in fostering engagement. The research gives a complete insight into what makes a successful and dedicated staff. This study is critical because it examines generational engagement decisions. Theoretical frameworks analyze these disparities to help organizations tailor strategies to different age groups. The study reveals that to engage employees, knowing and considering generational motivational elements and habits is vital. Thus, a generational-specific employee engagement approach is advised (Farmaki, Pappas, Kvasova, & Stergiou, 2022). The moderating influence of family-supportive supervisor behavior is examined beyond theoretical fundamentals. This section claims managers' conduct strongly affects work-life balance, employee engagement, and productivity. Complex professional relationships require a compassionate supervisor. Remote supervision raises distinct difficulties, driving study (Susanto et al., 2022). Change the moderating function to match remote work supervisory dynamics as the paradigm spreads. A virtual Family-Supportive Supervisor Behavior study can help organizational stakeholders change supportive behaviors to transcend geography.
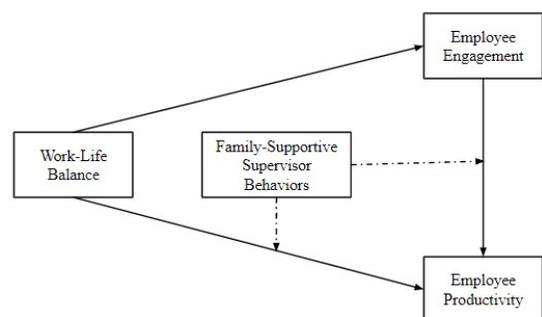

FIGURE 5. Purposed framework

Work-life balance, employee engagement, productivity, and supervisor support for families are complicated interactions that moderate each other. The proposed framework considers these linkages and provides complete knowledge to assist organizations in creating a healthy work environment that improves employee well-being and business results. More empirical validation and enhancement will increase the framework's generalizability and suitability for various organizational circumstances.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study examines the complicated links between work-life balance, employee engagement, productivity, and family-friendly supervisor conduct. A thematic analysis of expert interviews showed that work-life balance is difficult, especially with continual connectivity and personal perspective. The study confirmed that transformational leadership boosted workforce productivity and showed how cooperative team dynamics, leadership ideologies, and worker well-being affect organizational performance. By using employee engagement as a mediator, work-life balance's productivity benefits are better appreciated. The complicated findings support earlier research on leadership and organizational culture's involvement in engagement. Purpose-driven cultures and shared values are essential. The study also illuminates generational engagement choices and how technology affects virtual participation, mirroring current workplaces. This study also illuminates supervisors' genuine efforts to create family-friendly workplaces, revealing the moderating influence of family-supportive supervisor behavior. Companies adopting flexible work hours may learn a lot from remote work practices and issues. The proposed paradigm unites these complex linkages by showing how engagement and supportive supervision lead to work-life balance and improved productivity. The findings help CEOs construct workplaces that promote employee well-being and productivity. Supportive leadership, flexible work schedules, and family-friendly policies are highlighted. This study may help organizations navigate the shifting world of employment, technology, and employee requirements. These findings may affect strategic actions to build a cohesive, engaged, and productive workforce. More research and empirical validation are needed to develop the framework and make it suitable for other organizational settings. Overall, this study improves our understanding of the sector and helps us design calm and successful working techniques.

Implications

This study has significant implications for companies seeking to improve working conditions. Work-life balance is subjective; thus, understanding this is crucial. Employers should consider tailoring policies and programs to meet employees' different needs. Regular employee surveys help organizations create more effective work-life balance initiatives. The research also examines how transformational leadership influences productivity and offers ways for organizations to enhance their leadership skills. Leadership development initiatives that expressly promote transforma-

tional leadership in managers are beneficial. The organization's success depends on increased productivity and a positive work environment. Developing personalized solutions is vital since various generations have varied employee engagement levels. Practical, adaptable engagement initiatives may meet the interests of diverse age groups. This strategy encourages diversity and makes engagement activities accessible to all employees, making them happier and more engaged. The study's findings on family-supportive supervisor conduct, particularly in remote work, are relevant to enterprises adapting to changing work dynamics. Managers may maintain family-friendly practices by instituting remote work rules, improving communication, and giving flexible schedules. These findings can help companies enhance their remote work policies and procedures to balance work and life.

Organizational behavior and HR paradigms are affected by this study. Including persistent connection difficulties enhances work-life balance research. This contribution enhances theoretical frameworks by identifying how digital work-life balance dynamics develop. This knowledge might improve theoretical models incorporating continuous connection limitations in future studies. Coordination, leadership, and well-being enhance workforce productivity research. The study stresses these components' interrelatedness, suggesting that future theoretical frameworks should include how many factors impact worker productivity. This integration allows researchers to study the relationships between elements, going beyond specific difficulties to understand worker productivity characteristics better. Understanding technology and generational differences increases employee engagement thinking. The study suggests that future theoretical frameworks should account for these challenges to simplify engagement techniques. The workplace is dynamic. Thus, adaptable engagement strategies that are technologically savvy and appealing to different age groups are needed. The study's identification of distant job issues strengthens its family-supportive supervisor behavior theory knowledge. Given its theoretical implications, additional study is required in order to determine how remote employment affects family-supporting behaviors. This more excellent theoretical knowledge can help firms construct comprehensive models that account for remote work's unique challenges.

Limitations and Future Directions

This study provided valuable information, yet its limits allow for more investigation. First, the study solely examined South African service firms, which may restrict its ap-

plicability. Due to organizational and cultural differences, south African service settings may minimize identified relationships. Other industries or areas may not see these effects. Although useful for qualitative insights, the study's exploratory method hinders causality. Cross-sectional design limits temporal evolution and effect direction tracking. Future research may employ longitudinal methods to understand work-life balance and leadership development better. Another concern is response bias from self-reported data. Social desirability and subjective experiences may impact respondents. If performance measurements or organizational records are added to self-report measures, the findings will be more robust and biases reduced.

Addressing the constraints allows future research to enhance and refine this study. The extent to which discoveries may be applied in economic and international situations is significant. Cross-national and industry comparative studies can illuminate cultural and industry-specific elements that affect work-life balance, productivity, engagement, and family-supportive supervisor conduct. Future research may involve experimental or quasi-experimental methodologies due to its exploratory nature. This would allow scientists to modify parameters, implement initiatives, and track their impacts. Well-planned experiments may reveal the causes of these traits. Combine self-reported data with objective indicators to undertake additional study. Objective metrics like absence rates or organizational performance indicators can provide a more reliable assessment of work-life balance programs and leadership styles on organizational results. Mixed-methods research gives us a triangulated understanding of complicated organizational processes. More study is needed to understand how leadership styles and organizational policies affect employee outcomes. Investigating company culture's moderating role or psychological well-being's mediating role may complicate these correlations. Thus, a more complicated and comprehensive theoretical framework may result. Remote work's revolutionary influence on organizational dynamics would be intriguing to study. Research on how long-term remote work impacts work-life balance, employee outcomes, and supportive supervisor behavior for families may help organizations transition to remote and hybrid work models. To build solutions that support corporate goals and employee wellness, remote work limits and possibilities must be understood.

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