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# Investigating the Impact of Work-Life Balance on Employee Well-being in Manufacturing Industries in Nigeria

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**Abstract:** This paper critically investigates the impact of WLB on four dimensions of employee well-being, namely psychological well-being, physical well-being, safety and security well-being, and work-life satisfaction, through a systematic literature review methodology. A total of 232 records were initially identified across four major academic databases, including Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science, and JSTOR, covering literature published between 1984 and 2025. Following rigorous screening against structured inclusion and exclusion criteria, forty-two peer-reviewed studies, institutional reports, and theoretical frameworks were retained for substantive analysis. Anchored in Clark's Work-Family Border Theory, the study argues that structurally rigid and impermeable work-family borders endemic to Nigerian manufacturing environments systematically produce compounding well-being deficits through chronic overdemand, inadequate organisational support, and persistent regulatory non-enforcement. Findings reveal that WLB deficits generate significant psychological strain, physical deterioration, elevated occupational safety risks, and profound work-life dissatisfaction, with consequences extending to organisational productivity and national economic sustainability. The study concludes that work-life balance is a foundational determinant of employee psychological health, physical well-being, safety and security, and work-life satisfaction within Nigerian manufacturing industries. The study recommends among others that, manufacturing employers in Nigeria should institutionalise flexible scheduling arrangements, including rotating shift equity, compressed workweeks, and where operationally feasible, remote administrative functions, to reduce temporal border rigidity and support meaningful employee work-life integration.

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## 1. Introduction

Work-life balance (WLB) has emerged as one of the most critically debated constructs in contemporary organisational and occupational health scholarship, reflecting a growing global recognition that the boundaries between professional obligations and personal life have profound consequences for employee well-being and organisational productivity. Greenhaus and Beutell [1] were among the earliest scholars to formalise this discourse, identifying conflict between work and family roles as a significant source of employee strain, a position that has since been reinforced and expanded by decades of subsequent research. The relevance of WLB has only intensified in the twenty-first century, as globalisation, technological advancement, and increasingly demanding work environments have blurred the traditional separation between work and non-work domains [2], [3]. Haar et al. [4] demonstrated across multiple national contexts that

employees who perceive greater balance between their work and personal lives report significantly higher levels of job satisfaction, life satisfaction, and lower levels of burnout, underscoring the universality of WLB as a determinant of human flourishing. Amstad et al. [5], in a comprehensive meta-analysis, further established that work-family conflict carries measurable negative consequences for both psychological and physical health outcomes across diverse workforce populations. International bodies have not been silent on this matter; the International Labour Organization [6] has consistently advocated for decent work conditions that support employee well-being, while the World Health Organization [7] has championed healthy workplace frameworks as essential to sustainable human development. Bakker and Demerouti [8] similarly argue through the Job Demands-Resources theory that when job demands consistently outweigh available resources, including time for personal and family life, employees inevitably suffer deteriorating well-being. Despite this robust global body of evidence, the translation of WLB principles into organisational practice remains uneven, with significant disparities existing between developed and developing economies, raising critical questions about whose well-being is truly being protected and under what structural conditions WLB can be meaningfully achieved [9], [10].

While the global scholarship on work-life balance has generated considerable insight, there is a compelling argument that much of this literature is anchored in the realities of Western, industrialised economies and therefore fails to adequately capture the distinct socio-cultural, economic, and structural conditions that shape WLB experiences across the African continent. Africa presents a fundamentally different context, characterised by extended family obligations, communal social structures, high rates of informal employment, weak institutional frameworks, and persistent economic pressures that collectively complicate any straightforward application of WLB models developed elsewhere [11], [12]. In many African societies, the cultural expectation that employees, particularly women, maintain significant domestic and caregiving responsibilities alongside formal employment creates a unique form of role conflict that Western-centric WLB frameworks have been slow to theorise adequately [13]. The manufacturing sector in sub-Saharan Africa, which forms the productive backbone of many economies in the region, is particularly characterised by demanding shift work, inadequate occupational health protections, and limited access to family-supportive workplace policies, all of which have been identified as major antecedents of employee well-being deficits [14]. Ogunyomi and Bruning [15] observed that human resource management practices in African organisations, including those designed to support WLB, are frequently underdeveloped and poorly implemented, leaving employees exposed to the compounding stresses of work-family conflict without adequate organisational support. Furthermore, Danna and Griffin [16] argued that well-being in the workplace cannot be divorced from the broader socio-economic environment in which employees are embedded, a point that carries particular weight in African contexts where poverty, infrastructural deficits, and political instability serve as additional stressors that compound work-related demands. The emerging body of research from African scholars is beginning to document these realities with greater precision, yet significant gaps remain, particularly with respect to the manufacturing sector where the physical and psychological toll of poor WLB is arguably most acute.

Nigeria, as Africa's most populous nation and largest economy, presents a particularly urgent and under-examined case for the study of work-life balance and employee well-being, especially within its manufacturing sector. The Nigerian manufacturing industry, which spans food processing, textiles, cement production, pharmaceuticals, and other subsectors, employs millions of workers who are routinely subjected to long working hours, shift-based scheduling, physically demanding tasks, and inadequate occupational health provisions, all of which are well-documented antecedents of poor employee well-being [13], [12]. Despite Nigeria's ratification of several

International Labour Organization conventions and the existence of domestic labour legislation, the practical enforcement of worker welfare standards remains deeply inconsistent, creating a significant and troubling gap between policy articulation and organisational reality [11], [15]. Mohanty et al. [17] observed that in manufacturing environments, employee well-being is directly tied to job satisfaction and organisational commitment, yet the structural conditions of Nigerian manufacturing workplaces frequently undermine both. The persistent neglect of WLB as a strategic human resource management priority in Nigerian organisations is not merely an academic concern; it carries real consequences for worker health, productivity, and retention, with Maertz and Boyar [18] confirming that work-family conflict is a robust predictor of turnover intentions, a finding with significant implications for Nigeria's already strained manufacturing labour market. Furthermore, Idris [19] argued that prolonged role stress, which is endemic to poorly managed work environments, produces lasting psychological strain that erodes both individual well-being and organisational performance over time. Alarming, empirical research specifically examining the nexus between WLB and employee well-being within Nigerian manufacturing industries remains sparse, and the few existing studies tend to be limited in scope, methodological rigour, or sectoral specificity, leaving a critical knowledge gap that this paper directly seeks to address.

Given the foregoing critical analysis of the global, African, and Nigerian contexts surrounding work-life balance and employee well-being, it is evident that a focused, rigorous, and contextually grounded inquiry into this relationship within Nigerian manufacturing industries is not only timely but academically and practically imperative. The existing literature, while rich at the global level, has insufficiently interrogated the specific dimensions of employee well-being, namely psychological, physical, safety and security, and work-life satisfaction, as distinct outcomes shaped by WLB practices in the Nigerian manufacturing context [20], [21], [22]. Adnan et al. [23] and Widawska-Stanisiz [24] have both highlighted that employee well-being is a multidimensional construct that demands disaggregated analysis if policy and managerial interventions are to be meaningful and targeted, a position this paper firmly adopts. Accordingly, this paper is guided by four specific objectives: to ascertain if work-life balance has impact on employee psychological well-being in manufacturing industries in Nigeria; to determine if work-life balance has impact on employee physical well-being in manufacturing industries in Nigeria; to examine if work-life balance has an impact on employee safety and security well-being in manufacturing industries in Nigeria; and to determine if work-life balance has an impact on employee work-life satisfaction in manufacturing industries in Nigeria.

### **Conceptual Clarifications**

#### **a. Work-Life Balance**

Work-life balance (WLB) as a concept has undergone considerable evolution since its early conceptualisation, transitioning from a narrow focus on work-family conflict to a broader, more nuanced understanding of the dynamic interplay between professional demands and personal life domains. Greenhaus and Beutell [1] provided one of the earliest and most cited definitions, describing WLB in terms of role conflict arising when the pressures of work and family roles are mutually incompatible, a framing that positioned WLB primarily as an absence of conflict rather than a positive state of equilibrium. Subsequent scholars challenged this deficit-oriented perspective, with Kalliath and Brough [25] arguing that WLB is better understood as an individual's perceived satisfaction with their simultaneous management of multiple roles across life domains, thereby introducing a subjective and evaluative dimension to the construct. Frone [26] further distinguished between work-to-family and family-to-work conflict as directionally distinct phenomena with different antecedents and outcomes, while Carlson et al. [27] questioned whether balance could be fully captured by conflict and enrichment alone, suggesting the concept demands even broader theorisation. The dimensions of

WLB have since expanded to include time balance, involvement balance, and satisfaction balance, reflecting the multifaceted nature of how individuals negotiate competing demands [28]. Brough et al. [29] observe that definitional inconsistency remains one of the central methodological challenges in WLB research, with scholars variously treating it as an outcome, a process, or a perception, a debate that continues to shape how the construct is operationalised and measured across different organisational and cultural settings [9], [30].

#### b. **Employee Well-Being**

Employee well-being is a broad, multidimensional construct that encompasses the totality of an individual's physical, psychological, social, and economic experience within the workplace and beyond, and its significance to both individual flourishing and organisational effectiveness has been extensively documented in the occupational health and management literature. Danna and Griffin [16] were instrumental in establishing a comprehensive framework of workplace well-being, distinguishing between health-related outcomes such as physical symptoms and psychological states, and broader life satisfaction indicators, thereby laying the groundwork for subsequent multidimensional conceptualisations. Sirgy et al. [31] extended this understanding through their quality-of-work-life theory, identifying safety and security, psychological health, and work satisfaction as core dimensions of employee well-being that are directly shaped by the conditions of employment. The relevance of employee well-being to organisational outcomes is equally well established; Mohanty et al. [17] demonstrated empirically that well-being exerts a significant positive effect on job satisfaction in manufacturing environments, while Bakker and Demerouti [8] argued through the Job Demands-Resources framework that well-being is fundamentally determined by the balance between workplace demands and the resources available to employees. Adnan et al. [23] further showed that employee well-being and WLB jointly function as determinants of job satisfaction, with organisational citizenship behaviour serving as an important moderating mechanism. Widawska-Stanisiz [24] adds that corporate social responsibility practices, when aligned with WLB initiatives, produce measurable enhancements in employee well-being, underscoring the point that well-being is not merely a personal attribute but an organisational responsibility with strategic implications [7], [22].

#### c. **Manufacturing Industries in Nigeria**

The Nigerian manufacturing sector occupies a strategically significant position within the national economy, contributing to employment generation, industrial output, and economic diversification, yet it remains characterised by structural vulnerabilities, infrastructural deficits, and human resource management challenges that collectively undermine the well-being of its workforce. Nigeria's manufacturing landscape encompasses a wide range of subsectors including food and beverages, textiles, cement, chemicals, and pharmaceuticals, employing a substantial proportion of the formal workforce, many of whom are subjected to physically demanding tasks, irregular shift patterns, and limited access to occupational health and safety provisions [13], [15]. Ojo et al. [11] documented that work-life balance practices in Nigerian organisations are poorly institutionalised, with many employers in the manufacturing sector placing productivity demands above employee welfare, resulting in chronic work-family conflict among workers. The gap between legislative intent and practical enforcement in Nigeria's labour framework further compounds these challenges, as workers lack effective mechanisms to assert their rights to reasonable working hours and family-supportive workplace policies [12]. Ganiyu et al. [14], examining the manufacturing sector in a comparable African context, found that the effectiveness of WLB strategies is significantly mediated by organisational culture and managerial commitment, both of which are frequently cited as weak in Nigerian manufacturing environments. These structural realities make the Nigerian manufacturing sector a critical and compelling site for examining how WLB deficits translate into measurable well-being outcomes, and why targeted policy and

managerial interventions are urgently required to reverse the current trajectory of employee health and satisfaction within the sector [6], [17]

#### **Linkage Between the Variables**

##### **a. Work-Life Balance and Employee Psychological Well-being**

The relationship between work-life balance and employee psychological well-being is among the most robustly evidenced connections in the occupational health literature, with consistent findings across diverse settings confirming that WLB deficits produce significant psychological strain, emotional exhaustion, and diminished mental health outcomes. Lazarus and Folkman's [32] stress and coping framework established the foundational argument that when environmental demands exceed an individual's coping resources, psychological distress inevitably follows, a dynamic that is acutely evident in manufacturing environments where high job demands frequently overwhelm available personal and organisational resources. Amstad et al. [5] demonstrated through meta-analytic evidence that work-family conflict is a robust and consistent predictor of psychological strain, including anxiety, depression, and burnout, while Allen et al. [33] identified emotional exhaustion and job dissatisfaction as among the most prevalent psychological consequences of work-to-family conflict. Bakker and Demerouti [8] further argued that chronic imbalance between job demands and resources progressively depletes employees' psychological reserves, producing a deterioration in mental well-being that compounds over time if not structurally addressed. In the Nigerian manufacturing context, these dynamics are intensified by the absence of formalised employee assistance programmes, limited access to mental health support, and a workplace culture that frequently stigmatises psychological vulnerability, leaving manufacturing workers particularly exposed to the psychological costs of poor WLB [19], [12]. Kamboj et al. [20] found in their study of manufacturing workers that psychological well-being is among the most significantly affected dimensions of employee health when WLB is poorly managed, reinforcing the critical need for targeted organisational and policy interventions within Nigerian manufacturing industries [23], [24].

##### **b. Work-Life Balance and Employee Physical Well-being**

The impact of work-life balance on employee physical well-being represents a dimension of the WLB discourse that demands critical attention, particularly in manufacturing environments where the physical nature of work amplifies the bodily consequences of imbalance between professional demands and personal recovery time. Danna and Griffin [16] argued persuasively that physical health outcomes, including fatigue, musculoskeletal disorders, cardiovascular complaints, and immune system suppression, are directly linked to the conditions of employment, with excessive work demands and insufficient rest emerging as primary physiological stressors. Byron [34], in a comprehensive meta-analytic review, confirmed that work-family conflict is associated with a range of physical health complaints, demonstrating that the inability to achieve balance between work and personal life translates into measurable bodily harm over time. Demerouti et al. [35] further established that work-home interference, which is particularly prevalent among shift workers and those in physically demanding occupations, contributes significantly to physical exhaustion and long-term health deterioration. The manufacturing sector in Nigeria is especially concerning in this regard, as workers frequently endure extended shifts, inadequate rest periods, exposure to hazardous working conditions, and insufficient access to occupational health services, all of which compound the physical toll of WLB deficits [14], [13]. Mohanty et al. [17] observed that physical well-being is a critical mediator of the relationship between working conditions and employee satisfaction in manufacturing settings, while Alzadjali and Ahmad [22] demonstrated that organisational support for WLB significantly reduces physical strain among workers, pointing to the urgent need for manufacturing employers in Nigeria to adopt proactive health-supportive workplace practices [6], [7].

##### **c. Work-Life Balance and Employee Safety and Security Well-being**

The intersection of work-life balance and employee safety and security well-being represents a critically underexplored dimension of the broader WLB discourse, yet one with particularly grave implications in the manufacturing sector where occupational hazards are an inherent feature of the work environment. Sirgy et al. [31] identified safety and security as a foundational dimension of employee well-being, arguing that workers who feel physically and psychologically unsafe in their workplaces experience profound reductions in overall quality of work life, with cascading effects on performance, motivation, and retention. The theoretical link between WLB deficits and safety outcomes is well grounded; when employees are overworked, fatigued, and denied adequate recovery time, their capacity for concentration, vigilance, and safe task execution is demonstrably diminished, increasing the likelihood of workplace accidents, errors, and injuries [32], [8]. Michel et al. [36] demonstrated that the antecedents of work-family conflict, including long working hours, high workload, and schedule inflexibility, are precisely the same conditions that safety research has consistently identified as precursors to occupational accidents and health deterioration. In Nigerian manufacturing industries, these risks are further compounded by inadequate enforcement of occupational health and safety regulations, limited provision of personal protective equipment, and a prevailing organisational culture that prioritises output over worker welfare [11], [15]. Ganiyu et al. [14] specifically highlighted that the absence of effective WLB strategies in manufacturing environments is associated with elevated safety risks, while the ILO [6] has repeatedly emphasised that decent work frameworks must integrate safety and health protections as non-negotiable components of any credible approach to employee well-being in the manufacturing sector [12], [13].

#### d. **Work-Life Balance and Employee Work-Life Satisfaction**

Work-life satisfaction, understood as an employee's subjective evaluation of the degree to which their work and personal life roles are fulfilling, harmonious, and mutually reinforcing, constitutes one of the most direct and meaningful outcomes of effective work-life balance, and its absence in manufacturing environments carries significant implications for organisational commitment, productivity, and retention. Haar et al. [4] provided compelling cross-national evidence that WLB is a robust positive predictor of both job satisfaction and life satisfaction, establishing that employees who perceive greater equilibrium between their professional and personal lives report significantly higher levels of overall work-life satisfaction across diverse occupational contexts. Aryee et al. [37] further demonstrated that work-family balance generates positive rhythms in employees' lives that enhance satisfaction with both work and family roles, while Grzywacz and Carlson [38] argued that satisfaction-based conceptualisations of WLB capture the construct more fully than conflict-based frameworks alone. Nadeem and Abbas [39] found that work-life conflict significantly and negatively impacts job satisfaction, a finding echoed by Mendis and Weerakkody [40] who demonstrated that WLB practices are strong predictors of employee performance and satisfaction, particularly in structured organisational settings. In Nigerian manufacturing industries, where demanding production schedules, inadequate compensation, poor working conditions, and limited family support policies converge to erode employees' sense of personal fulfilment, work-life satisfaction deficits are both widespread and consequential [17], [12]. Adnan et al. [23] and Widawska-Stanisiz [24] collectively affirm that strategic organisational investment in WLB initiatives produces measurable improvements in employee satisfaction, reinforcing the argument that Nigerian manufacturing employers who neglect work-life satisfaction do so at significant cost to their human capital and long-term organisational viability [22], [21].

#### **Theoretical Framework: Work-Family Border Theory**

The theoretical foundation of this paper is grounded in Clark's [2] Work-Family Border Theory, which offers a compelling and contextually applicable framework for understanding how individuals navigate and manage the boundaries between their work

and family domains. Clark [2] posits that people are daily border-crossers who move between the distinct worlds of work and family, each governed by its own culture, norms, and expectations, and that the nature, permeability, and flexibility of the borders between these domains fundamentally determine the degree of balance or conflict an individual experiences. The theory identifies three types of borders: physical borders that define where work and family domains occur; temporal borders that determine when each domain is active; and psychological borders that govern the mental and emotional boundaries individuals maintain between work and family life. Central to the theory is the argument that when borders are flexible and permeable, individuals are better able to integrate their work and family roles in ways that reduce conflict and enhance satisfaction, whereas rigid or impermeable borders can produce role strain and well-being deficits [2], [25]. In the context of Nigerian manufacturing industries, where shift work, long hours, and physically demanding conditions routinely erode the boundaries between work and personal life, Border Theory provides a powerful lens through which to examine how structural work conditions undermine employee psychological health, physical well-being, safety, and satisfaction. The theory directly underpins each of the four objectives of this paper by providing a conceptual basis for understanding how the permeability or rigidity of work-family borders in Nigerian manufacturing industries shapes psychological well-being through role spillover, physical well-being through fatigue and health neglect, safety and security through inattention and overwork, and work-life satisfaction through the perceived harmony or discord between professional and personal life domains.

## **2. Materials and Methods**

### **a. This Research Design**

This study adopts a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) design, which is considered the most rigorous and transparent approach to synthesising existing evidence on a defined research problem. The SLR methodology is particularly appropriate for this study given the conceptual and exploratory nature of the inquiry, which seeks to interrogate the relationship between work-life balance and employee well-being in Nigerian manufacturing industries through the lens of existing scholarship rather than primary data collection. A qualitative, desk-based approach was adopted in recognition that the research objectives demand interpretive synthesis of theoretical and empirical contributions rather than statistical measurement. This approach allows for the critical appraisal and integration of diverse scholarly perspectives, thereby generating conceptually grounded insights that are both academically credible and practically relevant to the Nigerian manufacturing context [29], [9].

### **b. Search Strategy**

The literature search was conducted across four major academic databases: Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science, and JSTOR, selected for their comprehensive coverage of management, occupational health, and human resource literature. Search terms were constructed using Boolean logic and included combinations such as "work-life balance AND employee well-being," "WLB AND manufacturing," "work-family conflict AND Nigeria," "psychological well-being AND manufacturing," "occupational health AND Africa," and "employee satisfaction AND Nigerian organisations." Additional targeted searches incorporated terms such as "safety and security well-being," "physical well-being AND work-life balance," and "work-life satisfaction AND developing economies." The literature coverage spans from 1984 to 2025, ensuring both foundational theoretical works and contemporary empirical contributions are represented, with particular emphasis on studies published from 2000 onwards to reflect evolving scholarly understanding of WLB in organisational contexts [25], [4].

### c. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

A structured set of inclusion and exclusion criteria was applied to ensure the relevance, quality, and contextual appropriateness of the literature retained for review. Studies were included if they were published in peer-reviewed academic journals, scholarly books, or credible institutional reports such as those from the ILO and WHO; addressed work-life balance, employee well-being, or work-family conflict as central constructs; and focused on manufacturing environments, African or Nigerian organisational contexts, or produced findings generalisable to these settings. Theoretical and conceptual papers that provided foundational frameworks were also included where directly applicable. Studies were excluded if they were non-peer-reviewed, lacked empirical or theoretical grounding, focused exclusively on sectors with no relevance to manufacturing, or addressed well-being outcomes outside the scope of the four study objectives. Grey literature and unpublished dissertations were similarly excluded to maintain scholarly rigour [5], [11].

### d. Quality Assessment

All studies identified through the database search were subjected to a two-stage quality assessment process to evaluate their relevance, credibility, and methodological rigour. In the first stage, titles and abstracts were screened against the study's inclusion and exclusion criteria, eliminating sources that were evidently outside the thematic and contextual scope of the review. In the second stage, full-text articles were reviewed for depth of theoretical engagement, quality of empirical evidence where applicable, and direct relevance to at least one of the four study objectives. Studies were further evaluated based on the credibility of their publication outlets, with preference given to indexed journals and widely cited works. Following this process, a total of forty-two sources were retained for substantive inclusion in the review, collectively spanning theoretical frameworks, meta-analytic evidence, context-specific empirical studies, and policy-oriented reports. The PRISMA flow of the screening and selection process is presented in Table 1 below.

**Table 1.** PRISMA Flow Diagram of Literature Search and Selection Process

Stage	Description	Number of Records
<b>Identification</b>	Records identified through database searches (Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science, JSTOR)	214
	Additional records identified through reference list scanning and citation tracking	18
<b>Total Identified</b>	Combined records before duplicate removal	232
<b>Screening</b>	Records removed as duplicates	31
	Records screened by title and abstract	201
	Records excluded at title/abstract stage (irrelevant topic or sector)	112
<b>Eligibility</b>	Full-text articles assessed for eligibility	89
	Full-text articles excluded (non-peer-reviewed, no well-being focus, no manufacturing/African relevance)	47
<b>Included</b>	Studies included in the final systematic review	<b>42</b>

**Source:** Authors' Compilation (2025), adapted from PRISMA guidelines (Moher et al., 2009)

As presented in Table 1, a total of 232 records were initially identified across all search sources. Following duplicate removal and sequential screening by title, abstract, and full text, 42 studies were ultimately retained for inclusion in the review. These sources collectively inform the thematic synthesis aligned with each of the four study objectives.

### e. **Data Extraction and Synthesis**

Data extraction was conducted thematically, with each retained study reviewed for its theoretical contributions, empirical findings, contextual focus, and direct relevance to the study's four objectives. A thematic synthesis approach was employed, whereby recurring patterns, conceptual arguments, and empirical outcomes across the selected literature were systematically organised into four overarching themes corresponding to the study objectives: WLB and psychological well-being; WLB and physical well-being; WLB and safety and security well-being; and WLB and work-life satisfaction. This approach facilitated interpretive integration of findings across diverse methodological traditions and geographic contexts, enabling the generation of coherent, evidence-based insights specific to the Nigerian manufacturing sector. The synthesis process drew on both convergent findings, where multiple studies confirmed consistent patterns, and divergent perspectives, where scholarly debate or contextual variation warranted critical interrogation, thereby ensuring analytical depth and scholarly balance throughout the review [5], [29], [20].

## 3. **Results and Discussion**

### a. **Work Life Balance and Employee Psychological Well-being in Manufacturing Industries in Nigeria**

The accumulated body of evidence linking work-life balance deficits to deteriorating psychological well-being is, by any scholarly measure, overwhelming and demands serious organisational attention. Amstad et al. [5], in a landmark meta-analysis, established unequivocally that work-family conflict constitutes a robust and consistent predictor of psychological strain, encompassing anxiety, burnout, and clinical depression, outcomes that are not incidental but structurally produced by environments where professional demands consistently overwhelm personal resources. Allen et al. [33] similarly documented that emotional exhaustion and pervasive job dissatisfaction are among the most prevalent psychological consequences of work-to-family conflict, a finding reinforced by Bakker and Demerouti [8], who argued through the Job Demands-Resources framework that chronic imbalance between demands and resources progressively depletes psychological reserves, producing compounding deterioration in mental health if structurally unaddressed. Critically, Lazarus and Folkman [32] provided the foundational stress-appraisal argument that when perceived environmental demands exceed available coping resources, psychological distress is an inevitable and predictable outcome, not a personal failing. Kim [41] extended this logic specifically to WLB, demonstrating that employees experiencing poor balance report significantly diminished psychological well-being regardless of occupational sector, while Kamboj et al. [20], studying manufacturing workers specifically, found psychological well-being to be the most acutely affected dimension of employee health when WLB is mismanaged. Mazzetti et al. [42] further observed that sustained role overload, characteristic of manufacturing environments, accelerates psychological burnout through mechanisms that progressively erode individual resilience and coping capacity. Idris [19] added the crucial temporal dimension, arguing that prolonged role stress produces lasting psychological strain that compounds over time, and that organisations which fail to intervene early bear disproportionate long-term costs in terms of absenteeism, presenteeism, and workforce attrition.

Transposing these global findings onto the Nigerian manufacturing context reveals a situation of considerable alarm that demands urgent critical interrogation. Nwagbara [13] documented that Nigerian manufacturing workers routinely endure excessive working hours, shift-based scheduling, and high physical demands without access to meaningful psychological support structures, conditions that Oludayo et al. [12] identified as endemic to the sector's broader organisational culture of productivity over welfare. The near-total absence of formalised employee assistance programmes in Nigerian manufacturing firms

constitutes a structural indictment of human resource management priorities within the sector, one that Ogunyomi and Bruning [15] directly linked to poorly institutionalised HRM practices that leave workers exposed to preventable psychological harm. Adnan et al. [23] demonstrated that employee well-being and WLB jointly function as determinants of job satisfaction, with organisational citizenship behaviour serving as a moderating mechanism, yet the conditions necessary to activate this mechanism remain largely absent in Nigerian manufacturing workplaces. Widawska-Stanisiz [24] further argued that corporate social responsibility initiatives aligned with WLB produce measurable psychological well-being gains, a model that Nigerian manufacturing employers have conspicuously failed to adopt. Kossek et al. [43] warned that without deliberate organisational investment in work-family integration, the psychological costs of imbalance fall disproportionately on already vulnerable workers, a dynamic that is especially troubling in Nigeria where cultural expectations around male stoicism and feminine domestic responsibility compound rather than mitigate psychological strain. The evidence collectively compels the conclusion that Nigerian manufacturing organisations are, through neglect and structural inaction, actively producing and sustaining the psychological distress of their workforce, a position that is both morally indefensible and organisationally counterproductive [8], [7].

#### **b. Work Life Balance and Employee Physical Well-being in Manufacturing Industries in Nigeria**

The relationship between work-life imbalance and deteriorating physical well-being is substantiated by a formidable and growing body of empirical evidence that challenges the persistent organisational tendency to treat worker health as a secondary concern subordinate to productivity. Danna and Griffin [16] articulated with considerable persuasive force that physical health outcomes including fatigue, musculoskeletal disorders, cardiovascular complaints, and immune system suppression are directly and causally linked to the conditions of employment, with excessive work demands and inadequate recovery time constituting primary physiological stressors. Byron [34], in a comprehensive meta-analytic synthesis of the WLB literature, confirmed that work-family conflict is robustly associated with a range of physical health complaints, demonstrating that the inability to achieve meaningful balance between work and personal life translates into measurable and progressive bodily harm. Demerouti et al. [35] provided a more granular theoretical account, establishing that work-home interference, particularly prevalent among shift workers and those in physically demanding occupations, contributes significantly to physical exhaustion and long-term health deterioration through mechanisms involving chronic physiological activation. Eby et al. [44] similarly documented that workers who experience sustained work-family conflict report significantly more physical health symptoms than their counterparts who maintain reasonable balance, with Hill et al. [45] demonstrating that schedule flexibility, by allowing workers greater control over temporal borders, produces measurable improvements in physical health outcomes. Alzadjali and Ahmad [22] more recently confirmed that high-commitment work systems offering organisational support for WLB significantly reduce physical strain among workers, while Mohanty et al. [17] specifically identified physical well-being as a critical mediator between working conditions and employee satisfaction in manufacturing settings, underscoring the sector-specific urgency of this dimension.

The physical well-being consequences of WLB deficits in Nigerian manufacturing are not merely an academic abstraction but a lived, embodied reality for millions of workers whose health is systematically eroded by structural conditions that their employers and the state have conspicuously failed to address. Nwagbara [13] identified that Nigerian manufacturing workers routinely face extended shifts, inadequate rest intervals, and exposure to hazardous working environments without proportionate occupational health provisions, a situation that Ganiyu et al. [14] confirmed represents a systemic failure of

WLB strategy rather than an inevitable feature of manufacturing work. The ILO [6] has repeatedly emphasised that decent work frameworks must incorporate health-protective provisions as non-negotiable components, yet the enforcement of such standards within Nigeria's manufacturing sector remains, as Ojo et al. [11] documented, embarrassingly inconsistent. Oludayo et al. [12] argued that the absence of family-supportive workplace policies in Nigerian manufacturing firms denies workers the recovery time necessary to maintain physical resilience, effectively creating a cycle of cumulative physical deterioration that reduces both individual well-being and organisational productivity. The WHO [7] healthy workplaces model advocates for proactive employer investment in physical health protection, a model whose adoption by Nigerian manufacturing employers remains alarmingly limited. Deery and Jago [46], examining WLB across demanding work environments, found that physical health deterioration is among the primary drivers of employee turnover intentions, a finding with direct and troubling implications for Nigeria's manufacturing labour market, which is already characterised by high attrition and skills shortages. The evidence is unambiguous: the physical well-being crisis in Nigerian manufacturing is a managerial and policy failure with compounding human and economic costs that can no longer be responsibly ignored [34], [35], [6].

### c. **Work Life Balance and Employee Safety and Security Well-being in Manufacturing Industries in Nigeria**

The nexus between work-life balance deficits and compromised safety and security well-being represents arguably the most acute and immediately consequential dimension of this discourse, yet it remains critically undertheorised relative to its practical significance in manufacturing environments where occupational hazards are ever-present and the margin for attentional error is dangerously narrow. Sirgy et al. [21], in their foundational quality-of-work-life framework, identified safety and security as a non-negotiable foundational dimension of employee well-being, arguing persuasively that workers who feel physically and psychologically unsafe experience cascading reductions in motivation, concentration, and organisational commitment. The theoretical linkage between WLB deficits and safety deterioration is grounded in the established psychophysiology of fatigue; Lazarus and Folkman [32] demonstrated that cognitive resources are finite, and when chronically depleted by unrelenting work demands, the vigilance and attentional capacity required for safe task execution are inevitably compromised. Michel et al. [36] made the critical empirical observation that the antecedents of work-family conflict, including long working hours, high workload, and scheduling inflexibility, are precisely the same structural conditions that occupational safety research has consistently identified as precursors to workplace accidents, injuries, and near-miss incidents. Bakker and Demerouti [8] reinforced this through the JD-R framework, arguing that resource depletion produced by demand overload progressively undermines the behavioural and cognitive capacities on which workplace safety depends. Wayne et al. [47] further demonstrated that work-family facilitation, the positive counterpart to conflict, enhances employee engagement and attentiveness, implying that organisations which invest in WLB indirectly invest in safety performance as well. The ILO [6] has made the political and normative case that decent work is inseparable from safe work, positioning safety and security as both a right and a prerequisite for sustainable organisational performance.

When these global findings are applied to the Nigerian manufacturing context, the safety and security implications of WLB deficits acquire a dimension of urgency that borders on crisis. Ojo et al. [11] documented that occupational health and safety regulations in Nigeria are routinely under-enforced, with manufacturing firms frequently prioritising production output over compliance with worker safety standards, creating environments where fatigued, overworked employees are expected to perform hazardous tasks without adequate protection. Ogunyomi and Bruning [15] directly linked this to the

broader failure of HRM practices in Nigerian organisations to institutionalise safety as a component of worker welfare strategy, a failure that Ganiyu et al. [14] confirmed significantly elevates safety risks in manufacturing settings where effective WLB strategies are absent. Nwagbara [13] observed that the physical and psychological exhaustion produced by sustained WLB deficits in Nigerian manufacturing substantially diminishes workers' capacity for sustained concentration and error-free task performance, a finding whose safety implications are self-evidently grave. Oludayo et al. [12] added that the absence of formal rest period policies and inadequate provision of personal protective equipment in many Nigerian manufacturing firms compounds the safety vulnerability of workers who are already physiologically and psychologically depleted. Idris [19] argued that prolonged role stress not only produces psychological strain but also induces a form of cognitive numbing that renders workers less responsive to workplace hazards, an effect that is particularly dangerous in manufacturing environments involving heavy machinery, chemical exposure, and high-risk physical tasks. The WHO [7] and ILO [6] frameworks are united in arguing that safety and health protections must be structurally embedded within organisational WLB strategies, a standard that Nigerian manufacturing remains, by critical assessment, profoundly and unacceptably distant from achieving [36], [31].

#### **d. Work Life Balance and Employee Work-Life Satisfaction in Manufacturing Industries in Nigeria**

Work-life satisfaction, understood as the subjective and evaluative dimension of WLB through which employees assess the harmony, fulfilment, and mutual reinforcement between their professional and personal life roles, represents the most integrative and arguably most meaningful outcome variable in this discourse, capturing the totality of an employee's lived experience of balance or imbalance across domains. Haar et al. [4], in a compelling cross-national study spanning multiple cultural contexts, provided robust evidence that WLB constitutes a positive and significant predictor of both job satisfaction and life satisfaction, establishing that perceived equilibrium between work and personal life is not merely instrumentally valuable but intrinsically linked to human flourishing. Aryee et al. [37] elaborated on this relationship, demonstrating that work-family balance generates positive emotional rhythms that enhance satisfaction across both domains simultaneously, while Grzywacz and Carlson [38] argued that satisfaction-based conceptualisations of WLB capture the construct more comprehensively than conflict-based frameworks alone, advocating for a fuller theorisation that acknowledges enrichment alongside strain. Nadeem and Abbas [39] found that work-life conflict significantly and negatively impacts job satisfaction, a finding with broad implications for talent retention, while Mendis and Weerakkody [40] demonstrated empirically that WLB practices are among the strongest predictors of employee performance and satisfaction in structured organisational settings. Adnan et al. [23] further showed that WLB and employee well-being jointly and interactively determine job satisfaction, with organisational citizenship behaviour functioning as a meaningful moderating variable. Widawska-Stanisz [24] extended this argument by demonstrating that CSR-aligned WLB initiatives produce measurable and sustained improvements in employee satisfaction, while Bakar [21] confirmed in an exploratory study that WLB is fundamentally indispensable to any credible organisational approach to employee well-being. Kossek et al. [43] underscored that work-life satisfaction is not purely a personal achievement but an organisationally produced outcome, shaped decisively by the policies, cultures, and management practices that employers choose to adopt or neglect.

The Nigerian manufacturing context presents a particularly compelling and troubling illustration of how structural WLB deficits systematically erode work-life satisfaction with measurable consequences for individual well-being and organisational viability. Mohanty et al. [17] confirmed that employee well-being exerts a significant positive effect on job satisfaction in manufacturing environments, yet the conditions necessary to produce this

effect, namely adequate WLB, remain structurally absent in most Nigerian manufacturing organisations. Oludayo et al. [12] documented that demanding production schedules, inadequate compensation structures, poor working conditions, and the near-total absence of family-supportive policies converge in Nigerian manufacturing to systematically erode workers' sense of personal fulfilment and professional satisfaction. Nwagbara [13] observed that Nigerian manufacturing workers are denied the discretionary time necessary to sustain satisfying family and social relationships, a deprivation that Aryee et al. [37] identified as fundamentally corrosive to the positive life rhythms that sustain work-life satisfaction. Maertz and Boyar [18] provided the critical organisational consequence of this deficit, confirming that work-family conflict is a robust predictor of turnover intentions, a finding whose implications for Nigeria's manufacturing sector, already contending with skills shortages and labour instability, are profoundly serious. Beauregard and Henry [10] argued persuasively that organisations which invest strategically in WLB practices generate measurable returns in employee commitment and retention, a logic that Nigerian manufacturing employers have been conspicuously and demonstrably slow to internalise. Alzadjali and Ahmad [22] reinforced this by demonstrating that high commitment work systems, which embed WLB support as a structural feature, significantly enhance employee well-being and satisfaction, while Widawska-Stanisz [24] and Adnan et al. [23] collectively affirm that the failure to prioritise work-life satisfaction constitutes a strategic human capital deficit with compounding long-term costs. The evidence is unequivocal and demands urgent managerial and policy response: Nigerian manufacturing employers who continue to neglect work-life satisfaction do so at profound cost to their workforce, their productivity, and ultimately their organisational sustainability [4], [21], [20].

#### 4. Conclusion

This systematic review has demonstrated, with consistent and converging scholarly support, that work-life balance is a foundational determinant of employee psychological health, physical well-being, safety and security, and work-life satisfaction within Nigerian manufacturing industries, four interdependent dimensions whose collective neglect produces compounding and measurable harm to workers and organisations alike. Anchored in Clark's [2] Work-Family Border Theory, the review established that the rigid, impermeable work-family borders characteristic of Nigerian manufacturing environments systematically erodes worker well-being through structural overdemand, managerial inaction, and chronic regulatory non-enforcement. The evidence collectively indicts Nigerian manufacturing employers and policymakers for perpetuating preventable well-being deficits whose consequences extend beyond individual suffering to encompass diminished productivity, elevated turnover, and compromised national economic development. This paper contributes a contextually grounded, multidimensional analytical framework that advances both scholarly understanding and the urgent practical case for transformative work life balance reform within manufacturing industries Nigeria.

##### Recommendations

The following policy recommendations are proffered based on the evidence synthesised in this work.

- i. Manufacturing industries in Nigeria should institutionalise flexible scheduling arrangements, including rotating shift equity, compressed work-weeks, and where operationally feasible, remote administrative functions, to reduce temporal border rigidity and support meaningful employee work-life integration.
- ii. Nigerian manufacturing organisations must establish formalised, accessible employee wellness programmes encompassing mental health support, counselling services, and stress management interventions, recognising

- psychological and physical well-being as strategic organisational priorities requiring dedicated resourcing and sustained managerial commitment.
- iii. Manufacturing industries and government agencies in Nigeria must enforce rigorous occupational health and safety standards, ensuring adequate rest periods, provision of protective equipment, hazard reduction protocols, and regular health screenings, thereby addressing the compounding safety risks produced by WLB deficits.
  - iv. Human resource practitioners and senior leadership in Nigerian manufacturing firms should receive structured, mandatory training on evidence-based WLB practices, equipping them to design and implement family-supportive organisational policies that meaningfully reduce work-family conflict and enhance employee satisfaction.
  - v. The Nigerian government must strengthen and actively enforce legislative frameworks governing working hours, occupational welfare, and family-supportive workplace provisions within the manufacturing sector as this would help to strengthen work-life balance on employee well-being in manufacturing industries in Nigeria

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