

## Work-life balance and self-reported health of employees during the COVID-19 pandemic: A case of a state university in the Philippines



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### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history:

Received 17 March 2023

Received in revised form

19 July 2023

Accepted 31 July 2023

#### Keywords:

Work-life balance

Self-reported health

COVID-19 pandemic

Northern Iloilo State University

Employee well-being

### ABSTRACT

This research attempts to investigate the work-life balance and self-reported health of Northern Iloilo State University (NISU) employees in Iloilo, Philippines, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Employing a descriptive survey with a correlational design, an adapted survey questionnaire was administered across the seven campuses of NISU. Statistical analyses encompassed mean and standard deviation calculations, t-tests, One-Way ANOVA, and Pearson's *r* correlations. The study revealed that work-life balance, particularly in categories such as social wellness and emotional wellness, was consistently rated as "Very Good" across different variables (Age, Sex, and Administrative Function). Self-reported health, with categories encompassing excessive work demand, professional growth, role clarity, age, sex, and administrative functions, was generally perceived as "Good." Intriguingly, the findings demonstrated insignificance in social wellness and emotional wellness categories when considering various factors. However, there was significance noted in terms of emotional wellness concerning sex, while administrative function appeared not to be a significant factor for either social wellness or emotional wellness. The study underscores the significance of key officials' support during the pandemic and advocates for the establishment of mechanisms to assist faculty and staff in adapting to the evolving challenges of these times. Work-life balance and self-reported health emerged as significant factors, with a notable correlation between self-reported health and work-life balance ( $r = 0.581$ ,  $\text{Sig} = 0.000$ ).

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### 1. Introduction

The years of lockdown due to the pandemic caused 'challenges to all employees worldwide. They are forced to work remotely; gadgets and connectivity become the trends. People are not allowed to go out of their residences to avoid the rapid spread of the virus. Hence, many employees become stressed, and their health suffered significantly. Both organizations and individuals were not ready for the quick change (Lonska et al., 2021). Thus, one factor affected during the crisis is work-life balance (WLB).

There were studies pre-pandemic that working long hours not only affect employees but employers

as well. An in-depth interview with 78 professionals working in global law and accounting firms in London ages between 30 and 50 years old with 1 dependent. The findings show that the majority described their jobs as highly challenging, exhausting, and chaotic (Lupu and Castro, 2021). In the UK, 65% of job seekers highlighted work-life balance than pay and benefits (Sánchez-Hernández et al., 2019). The study of Ogunola (2022) on work-life and work-life balance influences bank employees' job satisfaction. Thus, the results recommend improving the working environment and conditions. Specifically, during the lockdown workplace shifted to limited face-to-face and online. The schools face a lot of pressure (Chavez, 2022).

WLB emerged in the 20th-century when the eight-hour workload was widespread. When workers demand and win, WLB is defined as the ability to classify work and life. But when technologies developed in recent years, workers have access to files anytime and anywhere (Sánchez-Hernández et al., 2019). Many have concluded that

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<https://doi.org/10.21833/ijaas.2023.09.005>

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it's difficult to achieve a healthy balance between work and personal life. Thus, WLB is always about coordination between different aspects of life. Many may blend work and personal lives, but there are others who struggle to make both work together. WLB gained recognition from the public but earned long debates among experts because the terms are not solid. The WLB basically refers to working mothers (Gragnano et al., 2020).

Younger generations are more likely to enjoy work if flexibility is implemented. WLB is one factor that can impact the attitudes of millennials. Job satisfaction always depends on the company but always thinks of employee expectations. They work well inside the office and are not burdened by problems outside of work (Silaban and Margaretha, 2021). Employers should always think of win-win solutions to have a better relationship between workers and the company.

Further, WLB is an individual's accomplishment of synchronization and balance between working and non-working times but in academe, it's only curiosity over time. The working environment is an essential factor for WLB. University employees are more challenged by intense work stress (Helvaci et al., 2017). There were limited studies on WLB in academia. In addition, this study is also anchored on self-reported health among employees in the academic institution. Self-reported health (SRH) refers to indicators of a person's well-being in terms of social, organic, and psychological health. The high prevalence of self-reported health complaints across Europe suggests that people feel unhealthy. Ignoring this may lead to high costs of sick leave and sickness compensation (Williams et al., 2017). SRH is a comprehensive instrument for mental health and social context, and it reflects coping resources and influences behavior and outcomes (Lorem et al., 2020). Thus, this study was formulated.

The lack of references related to WLB and SRH within the Province of Iloilo specifically on the academic researchers motivated to engage in this research. Hence, this study aims to find the work-life balance and self-reported health of the employees of Northern Iloilo State University, Iloilo, Philippines during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## 2. Methods

This study used the descriptive type of research and added correlational design involving the systematic investigation of the nature of relationships, or associations between and among variables, rather than direct cause-effect relationships. The instrument employed in this study was a research-made questionnaire. The tool was validated by 5 experts in the field. The respondents of the study were the 211 administrative staff and faculty members with administrative functions comprising the seven campuses of NISU System: NISU Estancia Main Campus, NISU Ajuy Campus, NISU Barotac Viejo Campus, NISU Batad Campus, NISU Concepcion Campus, NISU Lemery Campus,

and NISU Victorino Salcedo Sara Campus for the year 2021-2022. This study used a stratified random sampling method to utilize the entire population of the administrative staff and faculty members with administrative functions of the Northern Iloilo State University system as of the school year 2021-2022.

The data were gathered using the researchers-made questionnaire on work-life balance and adopted a questionnaire from Galanti et al. (2021) with some modifications on self-reported health. The data were gathered using the research-made and adopted questionnaire checklist. The independent variables are age, sex, and administrative function, while the dependent variables are work-life balance and self-reported health. The statistical tools used were mean and standard deviation, t-test and One-Way ANOVA, and person's r. The results on work-life balance were interpreted as follows: 5.81-7.00 (Very Good); 4.61-5.80 (Good); 3.41-4.60 (Fair); 2.21-3.40 (Poor); and 1.00-2.20 (Very Poor). On the other hand, the results on self-reported health of employees were interpreted as follows: 3.67-5.00 (Good); 2.34-3.66 (Average); and 1.00-2.23 (Poor).

## 3. Results and discussions

Table 1 shows the work-life balance of NISU employees in terms of their social, and emotional wellness classified according to age.

The findings of the investigation indicate that the majority of the selected categories were ascribed the descriptor "Very Good," exhibiting a mean score ranging from 5.92 to 6.61, irrespective of the age cohort under consideration. However, the category denoted as "I contribute time and/or money to social and community projects or causes" within both age groups yielded mean scores of 5.65 and 5.37, denoted as "Good." A prior study, conducted by Lonska et al. (2021), unveiled the presence of challenges pertaining to work-life balance among individuals aged 18 to 44 years. Table 2 portrays the work-life equilibrium among employees of the NISU (National Institute of Social Understanding), delineating their social and emotional well-being as stratified by gender.

Similar to age, gender exhibited mean scores falling between 5.87 and 6.62, categorizing both males and females as having a "Very Good" status. Additionally, concerning the statement "I contribute time and/or money to social and community projects or causes," both genders received a classification of "Good." Specifically, the mean scores were 5.31 for males and 5.67 for females.

Women are more affected by the pandemic compared to men (Lonska et al., 2021). Women with dependents were more affected during the pandemic compared to women without dependents and men (Myers et al., 2020). According to Lupu and Castro (2021), the findings of the study exposed that about 30% of men and 50% of women acted to consciously resist working long hours. They explain a variety of strategies they developed for preserving a healthier work-life balance.

**Table 1: Work-life balance of NISU employees in terms of their social, and emotional wellness classified according to age**

Age	21-40 (young)		41-up (old)	
	Mean	Description	Mean	Description
<b>Social wellness</b>				
I treasure a network of friends and/or family	6.61	Very Good	6.36	Very Good
I contribute time and/or money to social and community projects or causes	5.65	Good	5.37	Good
I spend time with people I like	6.35	Very Good	6.00	Very Good
I balance my own needs with the needs of others	5.92	Very Good	5.98	Very Good
I keep a compassionate heart and try to help others when I can	6.31	Very Good	6.21	Very Good
I have a sense of belonging within my community	6.10	Very Good	6.05	Very Good
I feel comfortable meeting new people	6.01	Very Good	5.87	Very Good
I give and receive compliments graciously	6.01	Very Good	6.14	Very Good
I communicate with and get along with a wide variety of people	6.12	Very Good	5.93	Very Good
Area mean	6.11	Very Good	5.97	Very Good
<b>Emotional wellness</b>				
I accept responsibility for my actions	6.55	Very Good	6.48	Very Good
I see challenges and change as opportunities for growth	6.45	Very Good	6.47	Very Good
I believe that I have considerable control over my life	6.25	Very Good	6.23	Very Good
I can laugh at life and myself	6.30	Very Good	6.41	Very Good
I feel good about myself	6.32	Very Good	6.41	Very Good
I can appropriately cope with stress and tension	6.08	Very Good	6.26	Very Good
I make time for leisure pursuits	6.05	Very Good	6.07	Very Good
I enjoy each day	6.47	Very Good	6.42	Very Good
Area mean	6.30	Very Good	6.34	Very Good
Overall	6.21	Very Good	6.29	Very Good

5.81–7.00 (Very Good); 4.61–5.80 (Good); 3.41–4.60 (Fair); 2.21–3.40 (Poor); 1.00–2.20 (Very Poor)

**Table 2: Work-life balance of NISU employees in terms of their social, and emotional wellness classified according to sex**

Sex	Male		Female	
	Mean	Description	Mean	Description
<b>Social wellness</b>				
I treasure a network of friends and/or family	6.28	Very Good	6.65	Very Good
I contribute time and/or money to social and community projects or causes	5.31	Good	5.67	Good
I spend time with people I like	5.97	Very Good	6.34	Very Good
I balance my own needs with the needs of others	5.87	Very Good	6.00	Very Good
I keep a compassionate heart and try to help others when I can	6.07	Very Good	6.40	Very Good
I have a sense of belonging within my community	5.93	Very Good	6.17	Very Good
I feel comfortable meeting new people	5.89	Very Good	6.00	Very Good
I give and receive compliments graciously	5.95	Very Good	6.14	Very Good
I communicate with and get along with a wide variety of people	5.91	Very Good	6.12	Very Good
Area mean	5.90	Very Good	6.15	Very Good
<b>Emotional wellness</b>				
I accept responsibility for my actions	6.36	Very Good	6.62	Very Good
I see challenges and change as opportunities for growth	6.28	Very Good	6.58	Very Good
I believe that I have considerable control over my life	6.04	Very Good	6.37	Very Good
I can laugh at life and myself	6.10	Very Good	6.51	Very Good
I feel good about myself	6.24	Very Good	6.44	Very Good
I can appropriately cope with stress and tension	6.02	Very Good	6.24	Very Good
I make time for leisure pursuits	5.89	Very Good	6.17	Very Good
I enjoy each day	6.52	Very Good	6.41	Very Good
Area mean	6.17	Very Good	6.17	Very Good
Overall	6.41	Very Good	6.02	Very Good

5.81–7.00 (Very Good); 4.61–5.80 (Good); 3.41–4.60 (Fair); 2.21–3.40 (Poor); 1.00–2.20 (Very Poor)

Table 3 displays the work-life balance of NISU employees in terms of their social, and emotional wellness classified according to Administrative Function. Furthermore, regarding administrative functions, the faculty members exhibited a range of mean scores, with the highest mean score recorded at 6.59 and the lowest at 5. These scores were consistently categorized as "Very Good," even for the lowest mean score of 5.95. Similarly, for the staff, the highest mean score observed was 6.50, while the lowest was 5.91, both remaining classified as "Very Good." Notably, the item that received a "Good" rating, with a mean score of 5.59 for faculty members and 5.52 for staff, pertained to the statement "I contribute time and/or money to social and community projects or causes."

It is noteworthy that work-life balance (WLB) did not exhibit significant variations concerning academic positions, fields of expertise, or tenure within the academic context (Helvaci et al., 2017).

A study about WLB in one university in the Province of Iloilo exposed unit heads were described as "Highly Balanced," while the talent management

skills were interpreted as "Highly Managed," and for the institutional performance, they were coined as "Outstanding (Chavez, 2022).

Table 4 shows the self-reported health of NISU employees in terms of their excessive work demands, professional growth, and role clarity classified according to age.

The findings pertaining to the three categories within the self-reported health item reveal noteworthy insights. For individuals facing excessive work demands between the ages of 21 and 40, the assessment yielded an "Average" classification, with a mean score of 3.59. Conversely, those aged 41 and above reported a "Good" status, with an average score of 3.75. In the context of professional growth, younger individuals exhibited a mean score of 4.20, while their older counterparts achieved a slightly higher mean of 4.27. Both age groups were characterized as "Good" in this aspect. Concerning role clarity, it was observed that variable A achieved a mean score of 4.45, while variable B attained a mean score of 4.37, both of which were explained as "Good."

**Table 3:** Work-life balance of NISU employees in terms of their social, and emotional wellness classified according to administrative function

Administrative function	Faculty	Staff
<b>Social wellness</b>		
I treasure a network of friends and/or family	Mean: 6.52 Description: Very Good	Mean: 6.50 Description: Very Good
I contribute time and/or money to social and community projects or causes	Mean: 5.59 Description: Good	Mean: 5.52 Description: Good
I spend time with people I like	Mean: 6.38 Description: Very Good	Mean: 6.15 Description: Very Good
I balance my own needs with the needs of others	Mean: 6.11 Description: Very Good	Mean: 5.91 Description: Very Good
I keep a compassionate heart and try to help others when I can	Mean: 6.28 Description: Very Good	Mean: 6.27 Description: Very Good
I have a sense of belonging within my community	Mean: 6.16 Description: Very Good	Mean: 6.05 Description: Very Good
I feel comfortable meeting new people	Mean: 5.95 Description: Very Good	Mean: 5.95 Description: Very Good
I give and receive compliments graciously	Mean: 6.09 Description: Very Good	Mean: 6.06 Description: Very Good
I communicate with and get along with a wide variety of people	Mean: 6.07 Description: Very Good	Mean: 6.04 Description: Very Good
Area mean	6.10	6.04
<b>Emotional wellness</b>		
I accept responsibility for my actions	Mean: 6.59 Description: Very Good	Mean: 6.50 Description: Very Good
I see challenges and change as opportunities for growth	Mean: 6.42 Description: Very Good	Mean: 6.47 Description: Very Good
I believe that I have considerable control over my life	Mean: 6.26 Description: Very Good	Mean: 6.24 Description: Very Good
I can laugh at life and myself	Mean: 6.38 Description: Very Good	Mean: 6.34 Description: Very Good
I feel good about myself	Mean: 6.33 Description: Very Good	Mean: 6.37 Description: Very Good
I can appropriately cope with stress and tension	Mean: 6.07 Description: Very Good	Mean: 6.18 Description: Very Good
I make time for leisure pursuits	Mean: 6.14 Description: Very Good	Mean: 6.04 Description: Very Good
I enjoy each day	Mean: 6.26 Description: Very Good	Mean: 6.50 Description: Very Good
Area mean	6.31	6.32
Overall	6.26	6.24

5.81–7.00 (Very Good); 4.61–5.80 (Good); 3.41–4.60 (Fair); 2.21–3.40 (Poor); 1.00–2.20 (Very Poor)

**Table 4:** Self-reported health of NISU employees in terms of their excessive work demands, professional growth, and role clarity classified according to age

Age	21-40	41-up
<b>Excessive work demands</b>		
Employees are overloaded with work in this school	Mean: 3.84 Description: Good	Mean: 3.90 Description: Good
There is too much expected of employees in this school	Mean: 3.84 Description: Good	Mean: 3.95 Description: Good
There is constant pressure on employees to keep working	Mean: 3.53 Description: Average	Mean: 3.79 Description: Good
There is no time for employees to relax in this school	Mean: 3.15 Description: Average	Mean: 3.42 Description: Average
Area mean	3.59	3.75
<b>Professional growth</b>		
Others in the school take an active interest in my career development and professional growth	Mean: 4.29 Description: Good	Mean: 4.24 Description: Good
I am encouraged to pursue further professional development	Mean: 4.18 Description: Good	Mean: 3.96 Description: Good
The professional development planning in the school considers my individual needs and interests	Mean: 4.17 Description: Good	Mean: 4.18 Description: Good
There are opportunities in this school for developing new skills	Mean: 4.02 Description: Good	Mean: 3.81 Description: Good
It is not difficult to gain access to in-service courses	Mean: 4.09 Description: Good	Mean: 3.93 Description: Good
Area mean	4.20	4.27
<b>Role clarity</b>		
I am always clear about what others at school expect of me	Mean: 4.33 Description: Good	Mean: 4.24 Description: Good
My work objectives are always well-defined	Mean: 4.31 Description: Good	Mean: 4.25 Description: Good
I always know how much authority I have in this school	Mean: 4.59 Description: Good	Mean: 4.54 Description: Good
I am clear about my professional responsibilities	Mean: 5.80 Description: Good	Mean: 5.73 Description: Good
Area mean	4.45	4.37

3.67–5.00 (Good); 2.34–3.66 (Average); 1.00–2.23 (Poor)

A prior study conducted by Gragnano et al. (2020) underscored the significance of health in the context of work-life balance, with workers regarding it as being as vital as family considerations. Table 5 delineates the self-reported health of Northern Iloilo State University employees across the three identified categories, with corresponding categorizations based on gender.

When examining self-reported health and categorizing it based on excessive work demands, male participants displayed a general mean score of 3.49, while their female counterparts achieved a mean score of 3.77. Both genders were characterized as having a "Good" self-reported health status in this regard. In terms of professional growth, the total mean score for males was 4.20, and for females, it was 4.15, both indicating a "Good" self-reported health status. Regarding role clarity, both male and female participants received a "Good" self-reported health classification, with mean scores of 4.57 and 4.32, respectively.

Table 6 provides an overview of the self-reported health of Northern Iloilo State University employees, categorized according to administrative functions across different segments.

Within the realm of administrative functions, faculty members exhibited a mean score of 3.87, which corresponds to a "Good" rating, while staff members achieved a mean score of 3.62, indicating an "Average" rating in terms of excessive work demands. In the context of professional growth, both faculty and staff members received an interpretation of "Good," with mean scores of 4.26 and 4.23, respectively. Furthermore, in the dimension of role clarity, both groups attained a "Good" rating, with mean scores of 4.52 for faculty and 4.39 for staff members. Table 7 provides an in-depth exploration of the notable disparities in the work-life balance of Northern Iloilo State University employees concerning social and emotional wellness, categorized based on age, gender, and administrative functions.



**Table 5:** Self-reported health of NISU employees in terms of their excessive work demands, professional growth, and role clarity classified according to sex

Sex	Male		Female	
	Mean	Description	Mean	Description
<b>Excessive work demands</b>				
Teachers are overloaded with work in this school	3.67	Good	3.99	Good
There is too much expected of teachers in this school	3.75	Good	3.97	Good
There is constant pressure on teachers to keep working	3.41	Average	3.79	Good
There is no time for teachers to relax in this school	3.13	Average	3.35	Average
Area mean	3.49	Good	3.77	Good
<b>Professional growth</b>				
Others in the school take an active interest in my career development and professional growth	4.24	Good	4.28	Good
I am encouraged to pursue further professional development	4.10	Good	4.07	Good
The professional development planning in the school takes into account my individual needs and interests	4.21	Good	4.15	Good
There are opportunities in this school for developing new skills	4.01	Good	3.88	Good
It is not difficult to gain access to in-service courses	4.02	Good	4.02	Good
Area mean	4.20	Good	4.25	Good
<b>Role clarity</b>				
I am always clear about what others at school expect of me	4.21	Good	4.34	Good
My work objectives are always well-defined	4.21	Good	4.33	Good
I always know how much authority I have in this school	4.52	Good	4.60	Good
I am clear about my professional responsibilities	5.63	Good	5.86	Good
Area mean	4.57	Good	4.32	Good

3.67–5.00 (Good); 2.34–3.66 (Average); 1.00–2.23 (Poor)

**Table 6:** Self-reported health of NISU employees in terms of their excessive work demands, professional growth, and role clarity classified according to administrative function

Administrative function	Faculty		Staff	
	Mean	Description	Mean	Description
<b>Excessive work demands</b>				
Teachers are overloaded with work in this school	4.04	Good	3.82	Good
There is too much expected of teachers in this school	4.07	Good	3.84	Good
There is constant pressure on teachers to keep working	3.80	Good	3.60	Good
There is no time for teachers to relax in this school	3.57	Average	3.19	Average
Area mean	3.87	Good	3.61	Average
<b>Professional growth</b>				
Others in the school take an active interest in my career development and professional growth	4.21	Good	4.28	Good
I am encouraged to pursue further professional development	4.02	Good	4.10	Good
The professional development planning in the school considers my individual needs and interests	4.14	Good	4.18	Good
There are opportunities in this school for developing new skills	4.00	Good	3.91	Good
It is not difficult to gain access to in-service courses	3.97	Good	4.03	Good
Area mean	4.26	Good	4.23	Good
<b>Role clarity</b>				
I am always clear about what others at school expect of me	4.16	Good	4.32	Good
My work objectives are always well-defined	4.19	Good	4.31	Good
I always know how much authority I have in this school	4.59	Good	4.56	Good
I am clear about my professional responsibilities	5.68	Good	5.79	Good
Area mean	4.52	Good	4.39	Good

3.67–5.00 (Good); 2.34–3.66 (Average); 1.00–2.23 (Poor)

**Table 7:** Significant differences in the work-life balance of NISU employees in terms of social, and emotional wellness when classified according to different variables

Category	Age			Sex			Administrative function		
	F	Sig.	Remarks	F	Sig.	Remarks	F	Sig.	Remarks
Social wellness	.178	.673	Not significant	3.322	.070	Not significant	.219	.641	Not significant
Emotional wellness	2.457	.119	Not significant	5.512	.020	Significant	.001	.982	Not significant

alpha=.05 level of significance

The findings were elucidated concerning categories such as social wellness and emotional wellness, with a focus on variables including age, sex, and administrative function. When scrutinizing age as a variable, the statistical analysis indicated an F-value of 0.178 with a corresponding significance (Sig.) value of 0.673, signifying nonsignificance. Conversely, when examining sex in relation to social wellness, the analysis revealed an F-value of 2.457 and a Sig. value of 0.070, also indicating nonsignificance. However, concerning emotional wellness, the F-value was 5.512, and the Sig. value was 0.020, which falls below the significance threshold of 0.05, signifying significance. The variable of administrative function yielded a nonsignificant result, with an F-value of 0.219 and a

Sig. value of 0.641 for social wellness. Similarly, for emotional wellness, the F-value was 0.001, with a Sig. value of 0.982, both indicating nonsignificance. Table 8 presents a comprehensive overview of the significant disparities in self-reported health among Northern Iloilo State University employees concerning excessive work demands, professional growth, and role clarity, classified according to age, sex, and administrative function.

In the context of the three categories, namely excessive work demand, professional growth, and role clarity, concerning age as a factor, the statistical analyses yielded non-significant results with F-values of 2.058, 0.014, and 0.623, accompanied by respective Significance (Sig.) values of 0.153, 0.906, and 0.431. Regarding gender (sex) as a variable,

excessive work demand demonstrated a non-significant relationship, with an F-value of 0.017 and a Sig. value of 0.895. Conversely, professional growth exhibited a significant relationship (F = 8.269, Sig. = 0.004) indicating significance. Conversely, for the administrative functions variable, no significance was observed across all three categories, resulting in F-values of 0.820, 1.107, and 2.157, with corresponding Sig. values of 0.366, 0.314, and 0.143, respectively. Table 9 presents the outcome regarding the significant relationship between work-life balance and the self-reported health of Northern

Iloilo State University employees. The results unequivocally indicate the existence of a significant relationship between work-life balance and employees' self-reported health, as evidenced by a computed result of 0.000, which is lower than the alpha level of significance (0.001). Consequently, the null hypothesis postulated in the study is rejected. This outcome underscores the direct influence of employees' work-life balance on their self-reported health. Work-life balance and self-reported health were described as significant since the value for self-reported health was  $r=.581$ , Sig=.000.

**Table 8:** A significant difference in the self-reported health of NISU employees in terms of excessive work demands, professional growth, and role clarity when classified according to different variables

Category	Age			Sex			Administrative function		
	F	Sig.	Remarks	F	Sig.	Remarks	F	Sig.	Remarks
Excessive work demands	2.058	.153	Not significant	.017	.895	Not significant	.820	.366	Not significant
Professional growth	.014	.906	Not significant	8.269	.004	Significant	1.017	.314	Not significant
Role clarity	.623	.431	Not significant	1.345	.247	Not significant	2.157	.143	Not significant

alpha=.05 level of significance

**Table 9:** The significant relationship between work-life balance and self-reported health of NISU employees

Category	Work-life balance		Self-reported health		Remarks
	R	sig.	r	sig.	
Work-life balance	-	-	.581**	.000	Significant
Self-reported health					

\*\* : Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

#### 4. Conclusion

The discourse on health has emerged as a pivotal subject in organizational literature. The employees of Northern Iloilo State University display unwavering dedication and commitment to enhancing the quality of service provided to their clientele. They are cognizant of the significance of the health domain in achieving a harmonious work-life balance. Remarkably, their social and emotional well-being has not been profoundly affected by the disruptive force of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the face of substantial alterations in the work environment, such as transitioning to remote work or dealing with restricted transactions, employees have demonstrated resolute determination to maintain equilibrium between their professional, personal, and familial commitments, irrespective of age, gender, or administrative roles. The imperatives of sustaining operational continuity have prompted employees to adapt swiftly to the changes precipitated by the pandemic. The adoption of sound work-life balance practices has yielded notable benefits, encompassing enhanced service delivery, increased quality time spent at home, and augmented financial support through gainful employment, all of which significantly impact the lives of each employee. Moreover, employees exhibit a commendable ability to harmonize work with other dimensions of their existence. A supportive work environment plays an integral role in enabling employees to provide exemplary service to their clientele. Notably, the self-reported health of employees remains robust, even in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, irrespective of their demographic profiles. The institution, in its wisdom,

extends opportunities for each employee's personal and professional growth, with a particular emphasis on accommodating individual interests and competencies when defining role clarity within the overarching goals and objectives of the institution. This concerted effort equips employees with the tools to navigate the complexities of life, particularly during the ongoing pandemic. Furthermore, the administration's support during times of crisis is of paramount importance in facilitating this delicate balance.

#### 5. Recommendations

The institution should consider implementing additional training programs or projects aimed at maintaining and potentially enhancing the work-life balance of its employees, particularly during times of crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic. These programs or projects could afford employees the opportunity to dedicate a portion of their time to cultivating a positive work attitude, thereby facilitating the delivery of superior-quality services to the institution's clientele. To incentivize and recognize exceptional employee performance and achievements, the institution might consider providing cash incentives, contingent upon budget availability. This would reinforce the notion that employees are significant contributors to the institution's success. In circumstances where budget permits, it would be advantageous to furnish additional facilities catering to the needs of employees, particularly those working remotely. This would enable the continued provision of exemplary services, even in situations necessitating a skeletal workforce due to the ongoing COVID-19

pandemic. Employees should contemplate the establishment of their own association, where none currently exists, to advocate for the welfare of the entire workforce within the institutional framework. Such an association plays a pivotal role in safeguarding the welfare and interests of both faculty and staff, ensuring their voices are heard within the administration. It is imperative for employees to persist in their efforts to balance their professional responsibilities with their personal lives, thereby facilitating outstanding performance for the benefit of both clients and the institution. Engaging in diversions and maintaining a positive outlook on life are essential, regardless of the crises that may emerge. Harmonious collaboration between the administration and employees, encompassing a holistic consideration of all facets of life, serves the common good. Furthermore, future studies should be undertaken to corroborate and validate the findings of the present investigation.

### Compliance with ethical standards

### Conflict of interest

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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