DETERMINANTS OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE AMONG POLICE OFFICERS: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aims to identify the main factors affecting work-life balance among police officers.

Method: This systematic literature review uses Bibliometrix software to identify relevant articles in the Web of Science and Scopus databases. After applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, 19 articles were selected and analyzed.

Results and Discussion: The main factors identified include competitive organizational culture, lack of family-friendly policies, shift rotations, unpredictable schedules, occupational stress, and the absence of supportive measures for work-life balance. These factors significantly impact the physical and psychological well-being of police officers, contributing to issues such as PTSD, chronic fatigue, and job dissatisfaction.

Research Implications: Implementing family-friendly policies, ensuring flexible and predictable work schedules, and providing adequate organizational support can significantly improve work-life balance among police officers, leading to greater job satisfaction and the effectiveness of police forces.

Originality/Value: This study contributes to the literature by systematically identifying and analyzing the main factors affecting work-life balance among police officers, providing insights into policies and practices to improve their well-being.

Keywords: Work-Life Balance, Police, Quality of Work Life, Occupational Stress.

DETERMINANTES DO EQUILÍBRIO ENTRE TRABALHO E VIDA PESSOAL ENTRE POLICIAIS: UM ESTUDO DE REVISÃO SISTEMÁTICA

RESUMO

Objetivo: Este estudo visa identificar os principais fatores que afetam o equilíbrio entre trabalho e vida pessoal entre os policiais.

Método: Esta revisão sistemática da literatura utiliza o software Bibliometrix para identificar artigos relevantes nas bases de dados Web of Science e Scopus. Após a aplicação dos critérios de inclusão e exclusão, 19 artigos foram selecionados e analisados.

Resultados e Discussão: Os principais fatores identificados incluem cultura organizacional competitiva, falta de políticas favoráveis à família, rotativas de turno, horários imprevistos, estresse ocupacional e ausência de medidas

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Determinants of Work-Life Balance Among Police Officers: a Systematic Review Study

de apoio ao equilíbrio entre trabalho e vida pessoal. Esses fatores impactam significativamente o bem-estar físico e psicológico dos policiais, contribuindo para problemas como TEPT, fadiga crônica e insatisfação no trabalho.

Implicações da Pesquisa: A implementação de políticas favoráveis à família, garantindo horários de trabalho flexíveis e previsíveis, e fornecendo suporte organizacional adequado pode melhorar significativamente o equilíbrio entre trabalho e vida pessoal entre os policiais, levando a uma maior satisfação no trabalho e eficácia das forças policiais.

Originalidade/Valor: Este estudo contribui para a literatura ao identificar e analisar sistematicamente os principais fatores que afetam o equilíbrio entre trabalho e vida pessoal entre os policiais, fornecendo insights sobre políticas e práticas para melhorar seu bem-estar.

Palavras-chave: Equilíbrio entre Trabalho e Vida Pessoal, Polícia, Qualidade de Vida no Trabalho, Estresse Ocupacional.

DETERMINANTES DEL EQUILIBRIO ENTRE TRABAJO Y VIDA PERSONAL ENTRE POLICÍAS: UN ESTUDIO DE REVISIÓN SISTEMÁTICA

RESUMEN

Objetivo: Este estudio tiene como objetivo identificar los principales factores que afectan el equilibrio entre trabajo y vida personal entre los policías.

Método: Esta revisión sistemática de la literatura utiliza el software Bibliometrix para identificar artículos relevantes en las bases de datos Web of Science y Scopus. Después de aplicar los criterios de inclusión y exclusión, se seleccionaron y analizaron 19 artículos.

Resultados y Discusión: Los principales factores identificados incluyen la cultura organizacional competitiva, la falta de políticas favorables a la familia, las rotaciones de turno, los horarios imprevisibles, el estrés ocupacional y la ausencia de medidas de apoyo para el equilibrio entre trabajo y vida personal. Estos factores impactan significativamente el bienestar físico y psicológico de los policías, contribuyendo a problemas como TEPT, fatiga crónica e insatisfacción laboral.

Implicaciones de la investigación: La implementación de políticas favorables a la familia, garantizando horarios de trabajo flexibles y previsibles, y proporcionando apoyo organizacional adecuado puede mejorar significativamente el equilibrio entre trabajo y vida personal entre los policías, llevando a una mayor satisfacción laboral y efectividad de las fuerzas policiales.

Originalidad/Valor: Este estudio contribuye a la literatura al identificar y analizar sistematicamente los principales factores que afectan el equilibrio entre trabajo y vida personal entre los policías, proporcionando ideas sobre políticas y prácticas para mejorar su bienestar.

Palabras clave: Equilibrio entre Trabajo y Vida Personal, Policía, Calidad de Vida en el Trabajo, Estrés Ocupacional.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Work-life balance (WLB) is an increasingly important topic, especially in professions that require high dedication and face challenging working conditions. Among these professions,
police officers stand out due to their responsibilities' intense and unpredictable nature. The police profession involves long working hours, exposure to high-stress situations, and the constant need to be alert, which can negatively impact officers' physical and psychological well-being (Sousa et al., 2022).

Studies have shown that occupational stress and the lack of WLB can lead to a range of health problems, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), chronic fatigue, sleep problems, and other psychological disorders (Buhrig, 2023; Burchell et al., 2023). Additionally, the organizational culture and internal policies of police forces can exacerbate these issues, especially in environments where competition and self-sufficiency are valued over emotional and social support. These conditions are often worsened by the lack of recognition and unfair promotion practices, which contribute to job dissatisfaction and high turnover rates (Mukwevho & Bussin, 2021; Ohlsson & Nilsson, 2023; Oskarsson et al., 2020).

The literature indicates that the lack of flexibility in work schedules and the absence of family-friendly policies significantly contribute to stress among police officers (Cheung & Li, 2023; Egreja & Melo, 2023). Shift rotations, unpredictable schedules, and the difficulty in mentally disconnecting from work make managing personal and family responsibilities challenging, increasing emotional and physical strain (Sakuma et al., 2024). These challenges are even more pronounced for female officers, who often face gender discrimination and unequal expectations regarding their domestic and professional responsibilities. The presence of masculinity contest cultures (MCCs) within police forces further increases stress, reduces psychological well-being, and exacerbates PTSD symptoms, particularly affecting female officers (Schafer et al., 2024; Yu, 2020).

Given these challenges, it becomes essential to investigate the main factors influencing WLB among police officers. This study aims to identify the key factors affecting WLB among police officers. Gaining a better understanding of these factors is hoped to contribute to creating a healthier and more balanced work environment, thereby promoting job satisfaction and the effectiveness of police forces.

2 METHOD

This study is characterized as a systematic literature review. The Bibliometrix software (Aria; Cuccurullo, 2017) was used to construct the research corpus. Initially, the most appropriate descriptors and combinations were identified to answer the research question: "What are the main factors affecting WLB among police officers?" After the initial exploration,
the descriptors "work-life balance" and "police" were chosen, which were directly related to the topic.

The descriptors and combinations identified were tested in the Web of Science and Scopus databases. The tested databases were considered adequate due to the many articles with the search terms and the ease of access to the available materials. For the research, the following combination was defined: ("work-life balance" OR "work life balance" OR "work-family balance" OR "work family balance") AND (police OR "law enforcement" OR officers OR policemen OR policewomen). The search interval covered the period between 01/01/2020 and 12/06/2024.

The search was conducted considering exclusively articles published in journals and taking into account only the titles of the articles. The search yielded 80 articles (Scopus – n = 36; Web of Science – n = 44). This result was considered satisfactory, with no need to expand the databases. RStudio software was used as a reference manager for data collection and storage.

Procedures were carried out to prepare the Bibliometrix tool for data analysis. The R and RStudio software was installed sequentially to configure the environment and build the portfolio. After the preparation methods had been applied, the Bibliometrix package was configured.

The databases were combined, and duplicate works were removed using RStudio software to create the portfolio and eliminate duplicate articles. After applying these filtering procedures, a total of 67 articles was obtained.

The studies were ranked using Bradford's Law, where if the journals are organized in descending order of the number of articles published on the subject, successive zones of journals containing the same number of articles form a simple geometric series (1: n: n²: n³). Articles from various zones were used for broader coverage of the topic (Figure 1).
The articles were located directly on the journal's website through the CAPES Journals Portal, with CAFe access provided by the institution to which the authors are affiliated. Then, a full reading of the selected articles was carried out, excluding those that did not provide robust elements to answer the research question. The research corpus was composed of 19 articles.

The steps are summarized in Figure 2.

**Figure 2**

*Flowchart of the Use of Bibliometrix and Dependent Software*

Source: Own authorship.
3 RESULTS

An analysis of the number of citations each article received was conducted better to understand the relevance and impact of the selected articles. This indicator allows for evaluating the influence and dissemination of the research within the academic and practical communities. Figure 3 presents the distribution of the number of citations received by the selected articles, highlighting those with the most significant impact and visibility in the field of study.

Table 1 organizes the articles in the research corpus according to the total number of citations, citations per year, and normalized citations. This table provides a detailed view of the recognition and influence of each study over time, allowing for comparative analysis among the different works and identifying those that contributed the most to the field of research.
Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Ranking</th>
<th>Total Citations</th>
<th>Total Citations per Year</th>
<th>Normalization of Total Citations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Poulose &amp; Dahal (2020)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5.40</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Zheng et al. (2019)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5.40</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Viegas &amp; Henriques (2020)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>2.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Oskarsson et al. (2021)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Granholm Valmari et al. (2023)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Makwevho &amp; Bussin (2021)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Rohwer et al. (2022)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Terschüren et al. (2020)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Yu (2021)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Ohlsson &amp; Nilsson (2023)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Sousa et al. (2023)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Sakuma et al. (2024)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Cheung &amp; Li (2022)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Schafer et al. (2024)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Egreira &amp; Melo (2023)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Singh et al. (2023)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Buhrig (2023)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Sondhi et al. (2023)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Burchell et al. (2023)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own authorship.

Table 2 presents a summary of the objectives, populations or samples, and conclusions of the included studies. This table allows for understanding the diversity of the included studies, the different contexts and methodologies used, and the main findings that each research brought to the discussion on WLB among police officers.

Table 2

Objective, Population or Sample, and Conclusion of the research corpus documents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Population or Sample</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buhrig (2023)</td>
<td>To explore the relationship between MCCs and well-being outcomes among police officers.</td>
<td>Two hundred thirty-eight patrol officers from five Canadian police agencies.</td>
<td>MCCs are linked to adverse well-being outcomes, particularly for female officers, including diminished psychological well-being, increased stress, and higher rates of PTSD symptoms. The study emphasizes the need for reforming police organizational culture to improve overall officer wellness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burchell et al. (2023)</td>
<td>To examine the association between job quality and the incidence of PTSD amongst police personnel.</td>
<td>Twelve thousand four hundred serving police officers in the United Kingdom.</td>
<td>The study found that poor job quality, including lack of support, high demands, and exposure to traumatic events, is associated with higher rates of PTSD and complex PTSD among police officers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Research Question</td>
<td>Sample Size</td>
<td>Outcomes or Findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
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<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheung &amp; Li (2022)</td>
<td>To clarify how night shift work impedes work-family balance and whether shift autonomy moderates this relationship.</td>
<td>Seven hundred ninety-three police officers in Hong Kong, China.</td>
<td>Nightshift work negatively affects work-family balance, mediated by work hazards. Higher shift autonomy mitigates this effect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egreja &amp; Melo (2023)</td>
<td>To investigate the impact of professional demands on WLB among high-pressure professions in Portugal.</td>
<td>Five hundred thirty-nine participants: 36.9% nurses, 36.2% police officers, and 26.9% journalists.</td>
<td>High professional demands negatively impact WLB, significantly affecting sleep and personal/family life. The study highlights the need for policies that address the unique challenges of these professions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Granholm Valmari et al. (2023)</td>
<td>To explore and describe the challenges between police officers’ professional roles and their private life roles as parents and life partners and how they balance these roles.</td>
<td>Thirteen uniformed police officers in Sweden.</td>
<td>Police officers face significant challenges in balancing professional and private life roles, experiencing role conflict and enrichment, with support from their partners crucial for managing these challenges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mukwevho &amp; Bussin (2021)</td>
<td>To explore the role of a total rewards strategy in retaining South African police officers in Limpopo province.</td>
<td>Fourteen police officers in Limpopo province, South Africa.</td>
<td>Performance management, career development, and compensation could have been more effective, leading to high turnover intentions despite satisfaction with work benefits and WLB.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohlsson &amp; Nilsson (2023)</td>
<td>To investigate military officers’ perception of the implicit expectations the organization has for the officer’s private life and its implications for gender norms.</td>
<td>Twenty interviews with military officers in Sweden (18 men and two women).</td>
<td>Military officers perceive implicit expectations for their private lives, including acceptance of travel demands, adapting private life to organizational demands, and choosing a supportive partner. These expectations affect gender norms and family dynamics within the military context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oskarsson et al. (2021)</td>
<td>To investigate the perception of WLB among newly employed officers in the Swedish Armed Forces (SAF) and its implications for future military careers.</td>
<td>Twenty-six men and eight women officers and non-commissioned officers in Sweden.</td>
<td>Perceived WLB among newly employed SAF officers is crucial for job satisfaction and retention. Organizational support can mitigate WLB challenges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poulose &amp; Dhal (2020)</td>
<td>To examine the mediating effect of perceived WLB between work overload and career commitment among law enforcement officers in India.</td>
<td>Eight hundred nineteen public security police officers in India.</td>
<td>Perceived WLB mediates the relationship between work overload and career commitment, while satisfaction with organizational WLB strategies reduces the impact of work overload on perceived WLB.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rohwer et al. (2022)</td>
<td>To evaluate mental health-related outcomes of police officers 5.5 years after implementing a new alternating shift schedule.</td>
<td>Eighty-two men and 34 women police officers in Germany.</td>
<td>The new shift schedule improved WLB and job satisfaction, but the increase in quality of life was insignificant. Further studies are recommended to monitor the long-term effects on police officers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sakuma et al. (2024)</td>
<td>To investigate the relationship between stress responses and lifestyle factors of police officers in Japan.</td>
<td>Nine thousand six hundred thirty-three men and 1086 women</td>
<td>Short sleep duration consistently increases the risk of high stress and stress responses. Other factors like age, rank, marital status, overtime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authors and Year</td>
<td>Study Objective</td>
<td>Sample Characteristics</td>
<td>Findings and Implications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schafer et al. (2024)</td>
<td>To assess the gender discrimination and family stressors experienced by women police officers and their impact on career opportunities.</td>
<td>Fourteen women police officers in the St. Louis, MO, metropolitan region, USA.</td>
<td>Women officers experience significant discrimination and family stressors, which impede career advancement. The study highlights the need for policy changes to support gender equity in policing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singh et al. (2023)</td>
<td>To investigate the relationship between WLB and occupational stress among non-gazetted officers of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) Jawans.</td>
<td>Three hundred fifty-four non-gazetted CRPF officers in Chandauli, India.</td>
<td>Moderate occupational stress and high WLB were observed. A moderate negative correlation between occupational stress and WLB was found. The study emphasizes the need for targeted interventions to improve the well-being of CRPF officers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sondhi et al. (2023)</td>
<td>To examine factors associated with burnout symptoms among investigators working on rape and serious sexual offense (RASSO) investigations.</td>
<td>538 RASSO investigators in five police force areas in England and Wales.</td>
<td>Excessive job demands and lack of team support are strongly related to emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. Creating an effective learning environment and supportive organizational health policies can reduce burnout.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sousa et al. (2023)</td>
<td>To explore the impact of professional challenges on work-family balance among Portuguese police officers.</td>
<td>Eleven men and eight women police officers in Portugal.</td>
<td>Police officers face significant work-family balance challenges, with military officers particularly highlighting career advancement as a major issue. Both groups identified their profession's negative and positive impacts on family life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terschüren et al. (2020)</td>
<td>To develop a new working time regulation (DZR) for the Hamburg Police to reduce health burdens for officers working alternating shifts (WSD) and improve WLB.</td>
<td>Eight hundred thirteen men and 338 women police officers in Germany.</td>
<td>The new DZR, with 14 shifts of 12 hours in 8 weeks and 14 days off, was well received by WSD employees, with perceived improvements in recovery and overall health. The results highlight the importance of working time policies that promote a healthy WLB and contribute to the health and well-being of police officers in shift work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viegas &amp; Henriques (2020)</td>
<td>To examine the relationship between job stress, work-family conflict, and job satisfaction among police officials.</td>
<td>One hundred police officials in Goa, India.</td>
<td>Job stress is positively correlated with work-family conflict and negatively correlated with job satisfaction, while job satisfaction is negatively correlated with work-family conflict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You (2021)</td>
<td>To examine the impact of gender diversity initiatives in the workplace on the retention of female federal agents in the United States.</td>
<td>Two hundred forty-nine female federal agents in the United States.</td>
<td>Female federal agents in Offices of Inspectors General (OIG) face fewer relocations, less sexual harassment, and greater access to WLB policies compared to other law enforcement agencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zheng et al. (2019)</td>
<td>To investigate the impact of public service motivation (PSM) and meaningfulness of work on job satisfaction,</td>
<td>Two hundred fifty-three police employees and their spouses in</td>
<td>PSM positively relates to job satisfaction and individual initiative and negatively to psychological detachment from</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4 DISCUSSION

The research addresses the main factors affecting WLB among police officers, a topic of growing interest due to the unique demands of the profession. This study's research question is: "What are the main factors influencing WLB among police officers?" A systematic literature review was conducted using the Bibliometrix software to answer this question. The research involved identifying appropriate descriptors and combining these terms in the Web of Science and Scopus databases, resulting in a final corpus of 19 selected articles. The classification of the articles followed Bradford's law to ensure comprehensive coverage of the topic, with relevant references identifying current challenges and solutions for WLB among police officers.

The main factors affecting WLB among police officers were identified by analyzing several studies in this systematic review. According to Buhrig (2023), the competitive organizational culture and the lack of family-friendly policies play a fundamental role. MCCs within police forces increase stress, reduce psychological well-being, and exacerbate symptoms of PTSD, mainly affecting female officers more severely. These cultures promote an environment where self-sufficiency is valued over emotional and social support, discouraging help-seeking behaviors and exacerbating occupational stress. Additionally, Burchell et al. (2023) point out that the lack of flexibility in work schedules and the difficulty in taking personal breaks are significant factors contributing to Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (C-PTSD) among police officers. The long and often unpredictable working hours make it challenging for officers to manage personal responsibilities, leading to increased stress and reduced mental health. Furthermore, the constant exposure to traumatic events and the high job demands contribute to the deteriorating WLB, highlighting the urgent need for reforms to create a more supportive and balanced work environment for police officers.

Cheung and Li (2023) highlight that shift autonomy can moderate the adverse effects of night work on work-family balance, showing that greater autonomy is associated with better balance. Police officers with greater control over their work schedules experience less stress and can better reconcile professional and personal demands. On the other hand, Egreja and Melo (2023) emphasize that sleep quality and appropriate work schedules are critical for the well-being of police officers. Shift rotations and irregular schedules significantly contribute to
insufficient sleep and excessive fatigue, negatively impacting officers' physical and mental health. Granholm Valmari et al. (2023) stress the emotional burden and hypervigilance inherent in police work, which limits participation in family and social activities, creating conflicts between work and private life roles. The constant need to be alert and the emotional pressure of dealing with high-tension and risky situations make it difficult to disconnect from work, leading to significant emotional exhaustion and impairing the quality of family and social interactions.

Mukwevho and Bussin (2021) and Ohlsson and Nilsson (2023) also address the importance of organizational support and career development opportunities, suggesting that the lack of recognition and unfair promotion practices are factors that contribute to dissatisfaction and the decision to leave the organization. The absence of transparent promotion mechanisms and the lack of recognition for police performance create a demotivating work environment where officers feel they need to be more valued for their contributions. These findings are corroborated by Oskarsson et al. (2020), who identify irregular working hours and lack of organizational support as significant challenges for newly hired officers. The irregular shifts and the unpredictability of work schedules make it difficult to establish stable personal routines, increasing stress and dissatisfaction. Additionally, the lack of orientation programs and constructive feedback leaves new officers without the necessary guidance to adapt to the work environment, increasing feelings of isolation and frustration. Poulose and Dhal (2020) reinforce the importance of organizational support strategies, highlighting that the perception of WLB mediates the relationship between work overload and career commitment. Officers who perceive a high WLB are more committed to their careers and show less intention to leave the organization. Effective organizational support strategies, such as flexible scheduling policies and wellness programs, are essential to promoting a work environment that balances professional and personal demands, improving satisfaction and retention among officers.

Rohwer et al. (2023) show that changes in shift schedules can significantly improve WLB, highlighting the need for more flexible and predictable schedules. Police officers who work regular and predictable shifts can better plan personal and family activities, which reduces stress and increases job satisfaction. Sakuma et al. (2024) identify that short sleep duration and irregular daily life rhythms increase stress levels and responses, negatively affecting officers’ mental and physical health. The lack of adequate sleep is associated with a range of health problems, including chronic fatigue, irritability, and increased vulnerability to illnesses. Irregular work schedules exacerbate these problems, making maintaining a healthy and balanced lifestyle difficult.
Schafer et al. (2024) address gender discrimination and family stressors as factors that negatively influence the WLB of female officers, suggesting the need for organizational culture changes to promote gender equity. Female officers often face additional barriers, such as the expectation to balance domestic responsibilities with work demands, and discrimination can manifest both directly, through limited career opportunities, and indirectly, through a hostile work environment. Implementing policies that promote gender equity and provide adequate support for family responsibilities can help mitigate these challenges and improve WLB for all officers.

Singh et al. (2023) and Sondhi et al. (2023) discuss the impact of intense workload and lack of psychological support on WLB, with a particular focus on specific groups such as the non-gazetted officers of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) in India and investigators of serious sexual offenses. Singh et al. (2023) highlight that the high work demand, combined with the lack of psychological support, results in elevated levels of stress and exhaustion, negatively affecting the well-being of police officers. This situation is exacerbated by the lack of structured mental support programs, leaving many officers vulnerable to chronic stress and its negative impacts. Sondhi et al. (2023) reveal that investigators of serious sexual offenses face additional pressures due to the emotionally draining nature of their cases, which increases the risk of burnout and diminishes the ability to maintain a healthy WLB.

Sousa et al. (2023) highlight shift rotations, the unpredictability of schedules, and the difficulty of mentally disconnecting from work as factors that hinder the management of family routines. Police officers often face the need to be constantly available and alert, which interferes with their ability to participate in family and social activities. The difficulty in mentally disconnecting from work, especially after dealing with traumatic situations, can lead to sleep problems and increase emotional fatigue, further impairing quality of life.

Terschüren et al. (2020) emphasize the importance of regular and extended rest periods to improve the compatibility between work and personal life. Police officers with access to adequate and scheduled rest periods can better recover from work-related stress, resulting in better mental and physical health. Implementing policies that ensure sufficient rest intervals and promoting an organizational culture that values WLB is essential to mitigate the adverse effects of long working hours and high occupational demand. These measures benefit the individual officers and improve the performance and effectiveness of the police force.

Viegas and Henriques (2021) identify occupational stress and family conflicts as essential correlates of job satisfaction, suggesting interventions focused on stress reduction and improving organizational support. These authors highlight that high levels of work-related
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stress and frequent conflicts between professional and family responsibilities negatively affect police officers' job satisfaction. Interventions such as mental well-being programs, psychological support, and policies that promote a more flexible work environment are essential to mitigate these issues and enhance job satisfaction and productivity.

Yu (2020) points out that fewer relocations, a lower incidence of sexual harassment, and family-friendly policies positively affect WLB among female police officers. The research shows that workplace stability, with fewer transfers and relocations, contributes to a more predictable and less stressful environment. Additionally, reducing cases of sexual harassment and implementing family support policies, such as flexible working hours and childcare options, are crucial for improving the well-being of female officers. These policies provide a safer and more supportive work environment and promote a healthy balance between professional and personal responsibilities.

Zheng et al. (2019) discuss public service motivation (PSM) and job autonomy as critical factors that affect job satisfaction and the ability to detach from work psychologically. Police officers with high public service motivation tend to find more meaning in their work, which increases their job satisfaction. However, this dedication can make it difficult to detach from work, leading to psychological stress and exhaustion. Job autonomy can moderate these effects, allowing officers to better manage their tasks and schedules and promoting a healthier WLB.

The results of this systematic review highlight several critical factors that influence WLB among police officers, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions and policy reforms. The competitive organizational culture and lack of family-friendly policies (Buhrig, 2023) underscore the importance of creating a supportive work environment that prioritizes emotional and social support alongside professional demands. Implementing family-friendly policies and reducing the prevalence of MCCs within police forces can significantly reduce stress and improve psychological well-being, particularly for female officers who are more adversely affected by these conditions.

The review also highlights the need for flexible and predictable work schedules. Cheung and Li (2023) demonstrate that greater shift autonomy can alleviate the negative impacts of night work on work-family balance. This finding is very relevant, as it suggests that increasing officers' control over their work schedules can lead to better management of professional and personal responsibilities, thereby reducing stress and fatigue. Similarly, Egreja and Melo (2023) and Sakuma et al. (2024) highlight the detrimental effects of irregular schedules and inadequate sleep on the mental and physical health of police officers. Addressing these issues through more
regular and extended rest periods, as suggested by Terschüren et al. (2020), can lead to significant improvements in the overall well-being of police officers.

The importance of organizational support is another recurring theme in the literature. Studies by Mukwevho and Bussin (2021), Ohlsson and Nilsson (2023), and Oskarsson et al. (2020) reveal that the lack of recognition and unfair promotion practices contribute to dissatisfaction and turnover intentions among police officers. Implementing transparent promotion mechanisms and recognizing the contributions of police officers can create a more motivating work environment. Additionally, providing comprehensive orientation programs and constructive feedback for new officers can help mitigate feelings of isolation and frustration, improving job satisfaction and retention.

Addressing gender-specific challenges is necessary to promote equity and improve WLB among female police officers. Schafer et al. (2024) highlight the impact of gender discrimination and family stressors on female officers, suggesting that policies promoting gender equity and support for family responsibilities are vital. Yu (2020) corroborates this by showing that fewer relocations, reduced sexual harassment, and family-friendly policies positively affect the WLB of female officers. By implementing these targeted interventions and reforms, police organizations can improve the overall well-being of their officers, leading to a more effective and satisfied workforce.

5 CONCLUSION

This systematic review has identified several critical factors that influence work-life balance (WLB) among police officers. The findings highlight the significant impact of organizational culture, work schedules, and support systems on the well-being of officers. Specifically, competitive organizational cultures and the lack of family-friendly policies contribute to increased stress and reduced psychological well-being, particularly among female officers. Implementing family-friendly policies and reducing MCCs within police forces can significantly improve officers' psychological well-being.

Flexible and predictable work schedules are essential for improving WLB. Cheung and Li (2023) show that greater shift autonomy allows officers to manage their professional and personal responsibilities better, reducing stress and fatigue. Addressing the detrimental effects of irregular schedules and inadequate sleep, as emphasized by Egreja and Melo (2023) and Sakuma et al. (2024), can significantly improve officers' overall well-being through regular and extended rest periods.
The importance of organizational support cannot be overstated. Studies by Mukwevho and Bussin (2021), Ohlsson and Nilsson (2023), and Oskarsson et al. (2020) demonstrate that lack of recognition and unfair promotion practices contribute to dissatisfaction and turnover intentions. Implementing transparent promotion mechanisms and providing comprehensive orientation programs and constructive feedback can create a more motivating work environment, improving job satisfaction and retention.

Addressing gender-specific challenges is necessary to promote equity and improve WLB among female officers. Policies that promote gender equity and provide support for family responsibilities are vital, as highlighted by Schafer et al. (2024) and Yu (2020). By implementing these targeted interventions and reforms, police organizations can enhance the overall well-being of their officers, leading to a more effective and satisfied workforce.

These findings underscore the need for targeted interventions and policy reforms to improve work-life balance among police officers. Future research should continue to explore these factors and evaluate the effectiveness of implemented policies to ensure the well-being and productivity of police forces.

REFERENCES


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