

Negotiating Work–Life Balance among Higher-Education Lecturers: An Integrative Review with Indonesian Islamic Higher Education as a Focal Case

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Abstract

Work–life balance (WLB) among higher-education lecturers has shifted from a welfare concern to a question of university governance, as rising demands and constant digital connectivity erode the boundary between academic work and personal life. This integrative review synthesizes international and Indonesian evidence on how lecturers negotiate WLB, how job demands and resources shape that negotiation, and what follows for academic practice and lecturer wellbeing. Indonesian Islamic higher education serves as a focal case in which religiously grounded expectations of dedication further intensify boundary work. A structured search of Scopus and Indonesian national indexes (SINTA, Garuda) identified 17 direct WLB studies of academics (8 international, 9 Indonesian Islamic higher education), alongside supporting literature on demands, resources, leadership, and the Islamic Work Ethic (IWE). The synthesis combined work/family border theory, the job demands–resources model, IWE, and Islamic and spiritual leadership research. Four patterns emerged. First, the direct evidence challenged common assumptions: in the only focal study that tested it, technology-enabled flexibility lowered balance, and among Muslim employees, IWE amplified rather than buffered harm under despotic leadership. Second, studies measured productivity far more consistently than well-being; third, Indonesian evidence concentrated on female lecturers and on cross-sectional designs. Fourth, no study stratified its findings by generational cohort. The review reframes WLB as negotiated academic practice, extends the conditional reading of IWE into the work–life domain, and sets out a research agenda. Because it is integrative rather than systematic, its conclusions are agenda-setting rather than definitive.

Keywords: work–life balance; job demands–resources; Islamic work ethic; academic leadership; lecturer wellbeing

Introduction

The contemporary university has become a site of chronic time pressure. Across national systems, academic work folds teaching, research, administration, and community engagement into a single, expanding workload, while digital infrastructure keeps that workload accessible at all hours. Work–life balance (WLB), the extent to which academics can meet occupational demands without eroding their health, family life, and personal time, has correspondingly shifted from a matter of individual welfare to a question about how universities are governed and how academic knowledge can be produced sustainably. The stakes are not marginal. Where boundary erosion becomes chronic, it surfaces as burnout, attrition, and a decline in the quality of academic engagement.

Two mechanisms drive this intensification. First, academic work has become structurally unbounded. Flexibility, once a resource, now operates as an obligation to remain available, so that the same connectivity that lets work move into personal time also lets institutional demands follow a lecturer home.¹ Second, performance governance rewards measurable output while leaving its human cost uncounted, and overload becomes normalized because it stays invisible to the metrics that steer the institution.² Read through the job demands–resources model,³ The balance a lecturer can sustain depends less on individual time management than on the architecture of demands and resources that the institution builds around them.

These pressures take on a distinctive form in Islamic higher education. Indonesia hosts one of the world's largest systems of Islamic universities, the *Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam*, in which lecturers carry the threefold *Tri Dharma* obligations of teaching, research, and community engagement and are expected, beyond these, to embody the ethical and spiritual commitments the institution teaches. The Islamic Work

¹ L Eastgate, A Bialocerkowski, M Hood, et al., “Applying Boundary Management Theory to University Students: A Scoping Review,” *International Journal of Educational Research* 108 (2021): 101793, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2021.101793>; K Johnston, J Tanwar, S Pasamar, et al., “Blurring Boundaries: Work-Life Balance and Unbounded Work in Academia. The Role of Flexibility, Organisational Support and Gender,” *Labour and Industry* 32, no. 2 (2022): 139–55, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10301763.2022.2081902>.

² O.-H. Ylijoki and H Mäntylä, “Conflicting Time Perspectives in Academic Work,” *Time & Society* 12, no. 1 (2003): 55–78, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0961463X03012001364>.

³ A B Bakker and E Demerouti, “Job Demands-Resources Theory: Taking Stock and Looking Forward,” *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology* 22, no. 3 (2017): 273–85, <https://doi.org/10.1037/ocp0000056>.

Ethic (IWE), which frames effort and dedication as religiously grounded obligations,⁴ together with the Islamic and spiritual leadership traditions that govern these institutions,⁵ shapes what counts as legitimate work, legitimate rest, and the legitimate refusal of additional demands. Indonesian Islamic higher education is therefore more than a regional variant of the academic workplace. It is a revealing case in which the ordinary pressures of academic boundary work are intensified by a normative mandate, and in which the grounds a lecturer might invoke to protect personal time are themselves inflected by an ethic of dedication.

Despite this analytical interest, the WLB literature has not been brought to bear on the case. The evidence is dispersed across international and national outlets and fragmented across theoretical traditions that rarely speak to one another. Boundary theory characterizes the work–home interface; the demands–resources literature specifies its mechanisms; and Islamic organizational behavior research examines IWE and leadership largely in isolation from WLB outcomes. Within the focal case evidence specifically, the direct base is small, concentrated on female lecturers, and dominated by cross-sectional designs. At the same time, the prevailing reading of IWE as a uniformly protective resource has largely gone untested by the possibility that its consequences are conditional. No synthesis has integrated these strands, and none has examined whether the generational account often asserted of millennial academics holds in this setting.

This review addresses that gap. It synthesizes the international and Indonesian evidence on how higher-education lecturers negotiate WLB, organizes that evidence through an integrated lens combining work/family border theory,⁶ the job demands–resources model,⁷ the Islamic Work Ethic, and Islamic and spiritual leadership research,

⁴ G Rice, “Islamic Ethics and the Implications for Business,” *Journal of Business Ethics* 18, no. 4 (1999): 345–58, <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1005711414306>; A J Ali and A Al-Owaidan, “Islamic Work Ethic: A Critical Review,” *Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal* 15, no. 1 (2008): 5–19, <https://doi.org/10.1108/13527600810848791>.

⁵ A K Djaelani, A Sanusi, and B Trianmanto, “Spiritual Leadership, Job Satisfaction, and Its Effect on Organizational Commitment and Organizational Citizenship Behavior,” *Management Science Letters* 10, no. 16 (2020): 3907–14, <https://doi.org/10.5267/j.msl.2020.7.020>; L W Fry, “Toward a Theory of Spiritual Leadership,” *The Leadership Quarterly* 14, no. 6 (2003): 693–727, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2003.09.001>; Ali Abdul Wakhid, Idrus Ruslan, and Arifeen Yama, “Transformational–Spiritual Leadership in HRM and Lecturer Competence at Indonesian Islamic Universities,” *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun* 14, no. 1 (2026): 597–618, <https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v14i1.2015>.

⁶ S C Clark, “Work/Family Border Theory: A New Theory of Work/Family Balance,” *Human Relations* 53, no. 6 (2000): 747–70, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726700536001>.

⁷ Bakker and Demerouti, “Job Demands-Resources Theory: Taking Stock and Looking Forward.”

and develops Indonesian Islamic higher education as a focal case that sharpens the general argument. It offers three contributions.

First, it repositions WLB as a negotiated academic practice, something lecturers actively do at the boundary, rather than a static outcome to be scored. Second, it carries the conditional reading of the Islamic Work Ethic, established in the leadership–ethics literature, into the work–life domain and reads it through the lens of border theory. Third, it integrates four separate literatures into a single analytical chain linking academic demands, boundary negotiation, institutional and ethical resources, lecturer wellbeing, and academic practice. Four questions guide the review: RQ-1 How do higher-education lecturers negotiate work–life balance, and what does the direct evidence show? RQ-2 How do job demands and resources, including leadership and, in the focal case, the Islamic Work Ethic, enable or constrain that negotiation? RQ-3 What are the consequences for academic practice and lecturer wellbeing? RQ-4 What should future research prioritize?

Research Methods

This study is an integrative review.⁸ The design was chosen over a systematic review with meta-analysis for three reasons grounded in the state of the literature. The direct evidence on WLB among higher-education lecturers is methodologically heterogeneous, spanning survey, structural-equation, and phenomenological studies that cannot be pooled statistically. The evidence is theoretically fragmented, since boundary dynamics, job demands–resources, the Islamic Work Ethic, and Islamic and spiritual leadership have developed in isolation, and the task is to integrate them rather than to estimate a single effect. And the body of work that speaks directly to WLB in Islamic higher education is small and dispersed across national and international outlets, so the priority is interpretive synthesis and agenda-setting rather than exhaustive enumeration. An integrative review suits these conditions because it accommodates diverse designs and combines direct and contextual evidence through an explicit theoretical lens.

The authors searched the literature during Januari–April 2026. Because the relevant scholarship appears in both English and Indonesian, and because much of the Indonesian evidence is published in nationally indexed rather than Scopus-indexed journals, the

⁸ R Whittemore and K Knafl, “The Integrative Review: Updated Methodology,” *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 52, no. 5 (2005): 546–53, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2648.2005.03621.x>.

search used two complementary channels. International peer-reviewed literature was retrieved from Scopus. Indonesian national literature was retrieved through the SINTA and Garuda indexes and Google Scholar, using Publish or Perish to capture work Scopus does not cover. The review states this dual-channel strategy openly: it does not claim the comprehensiveness of a single-database Scopus-only systematic review. Instead, it prioritizes coverage of national-language literature that a Scopus-only search would miss.

Search strings combined three concept blocks with Boolean operators. The WLB block comprised "*work-life balance*", "*work-family balance*", "*work-family conflict*", "*quality of work life*", and the Indonesian "*keseimbangan kehidupan-kerja*". The population block comprised *lecturers*, *faculty*, "*academic staff*", *academic*, "*higher education*", *university*, and the Indonesian *dosen*. The focal-case block comprised "*Islamic higher education*", "*Islamic university*", "*Islamic work ethic*", "*Islamic leadership*", "*spiritual leadership*", and the Indonesian institutional abbreviations *PTKIN*, *PTKIS*, *UIN*, *IAIN*, and *STAIN*. Searches were conducted on the title, abstract, and keyword fields, and backward citation tracing of the retained studies supplemented these searches.

A study was retained as direct evidence when work–life balance, work–family balance, work–family conflict, or quality of work life was a primary or mediating variable, and the population comprised lecturers or academics in higher education. Studies measuring these constructs in Islamic higher-education settings formed the focal-case subset. Studies that examined job demands and resources, organizational support, leadership, or the Islamic Work Ethic among academics without directly measuring WLB were retained as contextual evidence to scaffold interpretation. Foundational theoretical works on boundary dynamics, the job demands–resources model, the Islamic Work Ethic, and spiritual leadership were included to build the analytical lens. Studies were excluded if they addressed higher-education institutions without reference to lecturers' work experience, such as governance, accreditation, internationalization, or curriculum, since these fall outside the construct of interest. Both empirical and conceptual works were eligible, both English- and Indonesian-language works were eligible, and no date restriction was imposed, although the direct evidence concentrates on the past decade.

The authors screened records in two passes, working independently and resolving disagreements by discussion to a consensus. In the first pass, they assessed titles,

abstracts, and keywords against the eligibility criteria and sorted records into the direct, contextual, and excluded categories. In the second pass, they examined the full texts of records surviving the first pass to confirm that the construct and population criteria were met and to classify each retained study by its role in the synthesis. Selection prioritized relevance to the review questions and analytical contribution over venue prestige, so that nationally indexed Indonesian studies that met the criteria were retained alongside internationally indexed ones.

The search yielded seventeen direct WLB studies of higher-education academics, listed in Table 1. Eight sit in general higher education internationally, drawn from Malaysia, Ethiopia, Ghana, South Africa, and Anglophone settings, and published mainly in Scopus- or Web of Science–indexed journals. Nine form the focal-case tier, examining WLB among lecturers in Indonesian Islamic higher education and published mainly in nationally indexed journals. Around this direct base, the synthesis draws on six mechanism studies of job demands, resources, organizational support, and leadership among academics, and on nine studies of the Islamic Work Ethic and Islamic or spiritual leadership, together with foundational theoretical works that build the analytical lens.

Three features of the focal-case tier bear on interpretation and are stated at the outset. It is small. It is dominated by cross-sectional survey designs, with one qualitative study. And it concentrates on female lecturers, with five of the nine studies sampling women specifically. The mechanism and Islamic-context studies are used to interpret the direct findings rather than to extend them.

Table 1.
Characteristics of the seventeen direct work–life balance studies

Study	Country/setting	Design (n)	WLB focus and direction of key findings
Panel A: General higher education (international)			
Badri & Panatik (2020)	Malaysia	Survey	Job autonomy and self-efficacy improve academics' WLB
Ahmad Saufi et al. (2023)	Malaysia	Survey	Person–environment fit supports sustainable WLB and lowers turnover intention.
Abebe & Assemie (2023)	Ethiopia	Survey	Quality of work life relates to organizational commitment

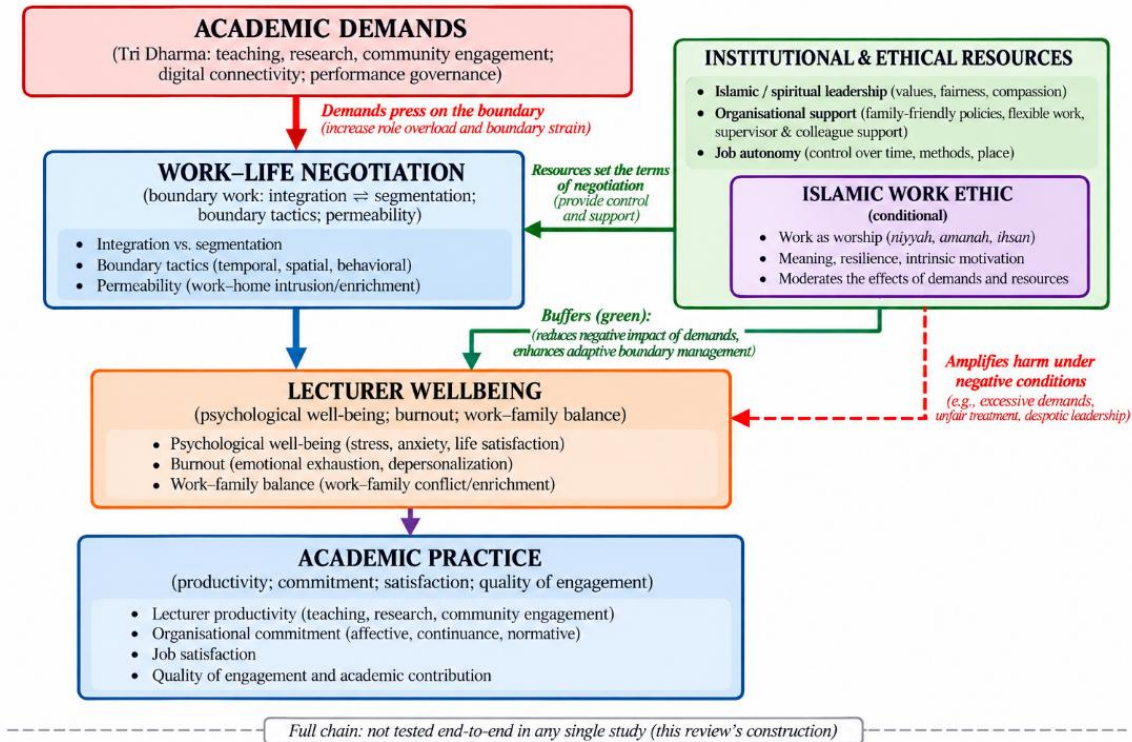
Kibi et al. (2024)	Ghana	Survey	WLB mediates emotional intelligence to lecturer satisfaction
Makhoba (2026)	South Africa	Qualitative	Describes the WLB strain among female lecturers
Katsiirah & Sujoso (2024)	Indonesia (secular)	Survey	Demographic characteristics weakly differentiate WLB
Sabri & Mahmood (2025)	Malaysia	Phenomenology	Intense work–family conflict among working mothers in higher education
Johnston et al. (2022)	Anglophone	Survey	Flexibility, support, and gender shape who bears the cost of unbounded work
Panel B: Indonesian Islamic higher education (focal case)			
Ridwansyah et al. (2025)	Indonesia, PTKI	Survey/SEM (440)	Tech-flexible work raised productivity but lowered WLB; IWE buffered without reversing the effect.
Muafiah et al. (2023)	Indonesia, Islamic	Survey (200, female)	WFB and burnout shape female lecturers' domestic character-building
Yani et al. (2026)	Indonesia, 6 IHEIs	Survey (237)	WLB positive but weak on productivity; organizational commitment significant
Yudiani & Istiningtyas (2022)	Indonesia, UIN	Survey (54, female)	Psychological well-being associated with WLB
Nova et al. (2022)	Indonesia, UIN	Survey (121, female)	Workplace well-being predicts work–family balance
Karima (2023)	Indonesia, UIN	Survey (56, female)	Burnout is negatively associated with WLB
Choeriyah & Utami (2023)	Indonesia, PTKIS	Survey (84)	WLB predicts affective, continuance, and normative commitment
Fidrayani et al. (2024)	Indonesia, PTKIN	Qualitative (5, female professors)	Time- and work-management are central to balance during the pandemic
Saputri et al. (2025)	Indonesia, PTKIS	Survey	WLB positive but weak on job satisfaction; work environment stronger

The authors synthesized the evidence narratively and thematically. Following an integrative logic, they read the findings of each study against the review's analytical chain, from academic demands through work–life negotiation and institutional and ethical

resources to lecturer wellbeing and academic practice, and grouped them into themes that cut across studies. Because the corpus combines designs that cannot be pooled, study characteristics that bear on the weight an inference can carry, including sample size, cross-sectional versus longitudinal design, single- versus multi-institution scope, and directness of relevance to the focal population, were weighed interpretively throughout. Where the direct evidence was thin, contextual and mechanism studies scaffolded the interpretation, and the review marks this reliance at each point so that readers can separate what the direct evidence establishes from what the surrounding literature makes plausible. Figure 1 summarises this analytical chain and, with dashed links, marks the connections that no single study has yet tested.

Figure 1. Analytical chain integrating boundary dynamics, the job demands–resources model, the Islamic Work Ethic, and Islamic and spiritual leadership. Solid arrows denote links evidenced in the reviewed corpus. The dashed outer path denotes the full chain, which no single study has tested end-to-end. The Islamic Work Ethic is modeled as a conditional resource: buffering under ethical leadership and amplifying harm under despotic leadership.

Figure 1.
Integrative Framework of Lecturer Wellbeing in Islamic Higher Education



Results

Work–Life Balance as a Boundary-Configuration Problem

Across settings, the direct evidence supports treating work–life balance not as a matter of individual time-management but as a problem of how the boundary between work and non-work is configured. The academic workplace tends toward integration, high permeability between the two domains, and offers weak institutional protection for segmentation. Johnston et al. document how academic work becomes unbounded, with flexibility and organizational support determining who absorbs the cost of that erosion,⁹ Eastgate et al. show how digital connectivity converts flexibility into a standing obligation to remain reachable.¹⁰

The most pointed evidence comes from the focal case. Ridwansyah et al. modeled WLB as a mediator between technology-based flexible work and productivity among 440 staff in Indonesian Islamic higher education. They found that flexible work arrangements raised productivity but lowered work–life balance, with the Islamic Work Ethic buffering the effect without reversing it. Read through border theory,¹¹ This is not an anomaly but a prediction: flexibility without boundary protection produces permeability rather than segmentation, and lecturers absorb the cost in balance rather than in output. The qualitative counterpart, Fidrayani et al., traces how female professors managed work-life and life-work spillover during the pandemic, identifying time and work management as the practical levers through which balance is negotiated.¹² Together, these studies establish WLB in the academic setting as something lecturers actively engage in at the boundary, and show that, specifically in Indonesian Islamic higher education, the prevailing institutional tendency pushes that boundary toward permeability.

⁹ Johnston, Tanwar, Pasamar, et al., “Blurring Boundaries: Work-Life Balance and Unbounded Work in Academia. The Role of Flexibility, Organisational Support and Gender.”

¹⁰ Eastgate, Bialocerkowski, Hood, et al., “Applying Boundary Management Theory to University Students: A Scoping Review.”

¹¹ Ridwansyah, Sumin, Suhrawardi, et al., “Tech-Enabled Flexible Work and Employee Productivity: The Role of Work-Life Balance and Islamic Work Ethic,” *Ascarya: Journal of Islamic Science, Culture and Social Studies* 5, no. 2 (2025): 211–24, <https://doi.org/10.53754/1wp7zs95>.

¹² Fidrayani, S Aripin, T N Puspita, et al., “Keseimbangan Antara Kehidupan Dan Pekerjaan Masa Pandemi Dosen Perempuan Di Indonesia,” *Anterior Jurnal* 23, no. 2 (2024): 134–39, <https://doi.org/10.33084/anterior.v23i2.6961>.

The Demand–Resource Architecture of Academic Balance

A second body of evidence specifies the mechanism through which balance is won or lost. Academics operate under high and rising demands met by uneven resources,¹³ And faculty well-being in an accelerating academic environment is well described by a job demands–resources account.¹⁴ Within that account, organizational and autonomy support emerge as the central resources. Perceived organizational support predicts engagement and buffers burnout risk, and autonomy support is linked to lecturer adaptability, organizational commitment, and psychological well-being.¹⁵ Leadership operates through the same pathway, with transformational leadership and organizational support predicting engagement, resilience, and innovative work behavior among university teachers.¹⁶ The cumulative implication is consistent: the balance a lecturer can sustain is a function of the demand–resource architecture the institution builds, not primarily of individual coping.

Antecedents and Correlates of (im)Balance

The direct studies converge on wellbeing and burnout as the correlates of balance that the field has actually measured. In the general higher-education evidence, job autonomy and self-efficacy improve academics' WLB,¹⁷ person–environment fit predicts sustainable WLB and reduced turnover intention,¹⁸ and working mothers in higher education report intense work–family conflict with distinct psychological and role-

¹³ M Naidoo-Chetty and M du Plessis, “Job Demands and Job Resources of Academics in Higher Education,” *Frontiers in Psychology* 12 (2021): 631171, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.631171>.

¹⁴ Y Huang and C Wang, “Surviving and Thriving in ‘Accelerating’ Academia: Toward a Job Demands–Resources Model of Faculty Well-Being,” *Asia Pacific Education Review* 23 (2022): 683–99, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12564-022-09769-2>.

¹⁵ A J Holliman, A Reville-Keen, and D Waldeck, “University Lecturers’ Adaptability: Examining Links with Perceived Autonomy Support, Organisational Commitment, and Psychological Wellbeing,” *Teaching Education* 33, no. 1 (2022): 42–56, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10476210.2020.1803822>.

¹⁶ Z Li, L Liu, and Y Lin, “Transformational Leadership and Teacher Resilience in Chinese Universities: The Chain Mediating Role of Perceived Organisational Support and Work Engagement,” *PLOS ONE*, 2026, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0350574>; F R Hassanein, S Mohammadi, and P Zargar, “Toxic Leadership and Job Satisfaction in the Middle Eastern Education Sector: The Influence of Organizational Culture and Trust,” *Administrative Sciences* 15, no. 5 (2025): 171, <https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci15050171>.

¹⁷ S K Z Badri and S A Panatik, “The Roles of Job Autonomy and Self-Efficacy to Improve Academics’ Work-Life Balance,” *Asian Academy of Management Journal* 25, no. 2 (2020): 85–105, <https://doi.org/10.21315/aamj2020.25.2.4>.

¹⁸ R Ahmad Saufi, N B Che Nawi, P Y Permarupan, et al., “Academic Person-Environment Fit towards Sustainable Work-Life Balance and Reduced Turnover Intention Moderated by Job Opportunities,” *Sustainability* 15, no. 4 (2023): 3397, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15043397>.

overload dimensions.¹⁹ Katsiirah and Sujoso found that demographic characteristics do not strongly differentiate lecturers' WLB, a result consistent with the view that structural rather than individual factors dominate.²⁰

In the focal case, these correlates have been examined almost entirely among women. Workplace wellbeing positively predicts work–family balance; psychological wellbeing is associated with WLB; and burnout is negatively associated with WLB, such that higher burnout is associated with lower balance.²¹ Muafiah et al. extend the outcome frame beyond the workplace, linking work–family balance and burnout to the character-formation work female lecturers undertake with their own children.²² This concentration is itself a finding, and it is not incidental: five of the nine focal studies sample women because the questions posed, about balance, burnout, and family, have been posed mainly of women. The evidence on which the field's understanding of Islamic higher-education lecturers rests is, at present, substantially based on evidence about female lecturers.

Outcomes: Commitment, Satisfaction, and Productivity

A further cluster treats balance and work quality as predictors of workplace outcomes. Quality of work life relates to organizational commitment among academic staff,²³ and emotional intelligence predicts lecturer satisfaction, with workplace environment and work–life balance as mediators.²⁴ In the focal case, WLB predicts organizational commitment among hybrid-working lecturers,²⁵ while its associations with job satisfaction and productivity are positive but not statistically significant, with organizational commitment carrying the significant effect in the latter. The pattern of

¹⁹ S K Sabri and S R S Mahmood, “When Work and Family Collide: A Phenomenological Inquiry Exploring Work-Family Conflicts among Professional Working Mothers at Institutions of Higher Education,” *Business and Accounting Review* 9, no. 1 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.24191/ba/v9i1/118973>.

²⁰ A Q Katsiirah and A D P Sujoso, “Work-Life Balance Pada Dosen Universitas Jember,” *Jurnal Vokasi Kesehatan* 8, no. 2 (2024): 123–30, <https://doi.org/10.20473/jvhs.v8.i2.2024.123-130>.

²¹ U Karima, “Burnout Dan Work-Life Balance Pada Dosen Wanita Di Universitas Islam Negeri Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember,” *Psychospiritual: Journal of Trends in Islamic Psychological Research* 2, no. 1 (2023): 45–56, <https://doi.org/10.35719/psychospiritual.v2i1.23>.

²² E Muafiah, N E Sofiana, and M Nurhidayati, “Exploring the Influence of Work-Family Balance and Burnout on Working Mothers' Character-Building Efforts in a Post-Pandemic World,” *Islamic Guidance and Counseling Journal* 6, no. 1 (2023): 196–208, <https://doi.org/10.25217/igcj.v6i1.3623>.

²³ A Abebe and A Assemie, “Quality of Work Life and Organizational Commitment of the Academic Staff in Ethiopian Universities,” *Heliyon* 9, no. 4 (2023): e15139, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e15139>.

²⁴ A B S Kibi, F N Kibi, S Afrifa Jnr, et al., “Emotional Intelligence and Lecturer Satisfaction: Mediating Effects of Workplace Environment and Work-Life Balance in Ghanaian Higher Learning Institutions,” *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science* 13, no. 9 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.20525/ijrbs.v13i9.3872>.

²⁵ A N Choeriyah and A T Utami, “Pengaruh Work Life Balance Terhadap Komitmen Organisasi Pada Dosen Hybrid Working,” *Jurnal Riset Psikologi* 3, no. 1 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.29313/jrp.v3i1.1800>.

positive but weak WLB-to-performance effects,²⁶ set against the stronger WLB-to-wellbeing associations, is instructive. The more consequential effects of imbalance appear to lie in well-being, which the productivity-oriented models do not measure.

Institutional Conditions and the Conditional Role of the Islamic Work Ethic

No study in the corpus directly links leadership behavior to WLB outcomes in Islamic higher education, which is itself a notable gap; thus, the evidence on leadership and ethics is contextual. Within that evidence, Islamic and spiritual leadership are consistently associated with positive lecturer outcomes, including engagement, satisfaction, commitment, and citizenship,²⁷ and the Islamic Work Ethic is generally read as protective of performance and citizenship.²⁸

The decisive counterevidence comes from research on Muslim organizational behavior. Raja et al. show that despotic leadership, combined with a high Islamic Work Ethic, produces a misfit and reduces job performance, satisfaction, and psychological well-being.²⁹ Javid et al. find that aversive leadership erodes employees' emotional and psychological health, with the Islamic Work Ethic moderating but not eliminating the damage,³⁰ interpreted through conservation-of-resources logic.³¹ These studies examine employees rather than lecturers, so they are contextual rather than direct, but they

²⁶ A Yani, S Pawirosumarto, and M Ridwan, “Digital Readiness and Work Engagement as Drivers of Academic Productivity in Islamic Higher Education,” *Discover Education* 5 (2026), <https://doi.org/10.1007/s44217-026-01385-1>.

²⁷ K Ahmad and O K Ogunsola, “An Empirical Assessment of Islamic Leadership Principles,” *International Journal of Commerce and Management* 21, no. 3 (2011): 291–318, <https://doi.org/10.1108/10569211111165325>; Djaelani, Sanusi, and Trianmanto, “Spiritual Leadership, Job Satisfaction, and Its Effect on Organizational Commitment and Organizational Citizenship Behavior”; Wakhid, Ruslan, and Yama, “Transformational–Spiritual Leadership in HRM and Lecturer Competence at Indonesian Islamic Universities.”

²⁸ M V Romi, E Ahman, Disman, et al., “Islamic Work Ethics-Based Organizational Citizenship Behavior to Improve the Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment of Higher Education Lecturers in Indonesia,” *International Journal of Higher Education* 9, no. 2 (2020): 78–84, <https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v9n2p78>; F Wulandari and S Mubarak, “Islamic Work Ethics and Lecturer Performance: Mediating Roles of Person-Organization Fit and Innovation in Learning Activities,” *Problems and Perspectives in Management* 19, no. 3 (2021): 22–32, [https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.19\(3\).2021.03](https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.19(3).2021.03); D A Yousef, “Organizational Commitment as a Mediator of the Relationship between Islamic Work Ethic and Attitudes toward Organizational Change,” *Human Relations* 53, no. 4 (2000): 513–37, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726700534003>.

²⁹ U Raja, I U Haq, D De Clercq, et al., “When Ethics Create Misfit: Combined Effects of Despotic Leadership and Islamic Work Ethic on Job Performance, Job Satisfaction, and Psychological Well-Being,” *International Journal of Psychology* 55, no. 3 (2020): 332–41, <https://doi.org/10.1002/ijop.12606>.

³⁰ F Javid, A Gul, I Naz, et al., “Do Islamic Work Ethics Matter? Impact of Aversive Leadership on Employees’ Emotional and Psychological Health through the Lens of Conservation of Resource Theory,” *Sustainable Futures* 8 (2024): 100309, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sfr.2024.100309>.

³¹ Stevan E Hobfoll, “Conservation of Resources: A New Attempt at Conceptualizing Stress,” *American Psychologist* 44, no. 3 (1989): 513–24, <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.44.3.513>.

establish a boundary condition central to this review. Leadership functions as a protective resource only under ethical conditions, and despotic or aversive leadership, interacting with a high ethic of dedication, amplifies rather than merely fails to prevent harm. On this evidence, the Islamic Work Ethic cannot be read as a uniformly protective resource. Its consequences depend on the leadership environment in which it is enacted.

Cross-Cutting Patterns

One structural fact organizes the corpus: the analytical chain is empirically discontinuous. No single study tests the full sequence from demands through negotiation and resources to well-being and practice, so the integrated chain is a construction of this review rather than a documented empirical structure. Within that discontinuity, four patterns recur. First, the field measures productivity-side outcomes far more consistently than the well-being cost at which they are obtained. Second, the focal-case evidence concentrates on female lecturers and on cross-sectional designs, so claims about lecturers in general remain provisional. Third, the single focal study testing the flexibility–balance link finds that flexibility reduces rather than improves balance, and the two contextual studies of the Islamic Work Ethic under adverse leadership find it to be amplifying rather than buffering harm; both run counter to conventional intuition. Fourth, the generational cohort is absent as an analytical category, so the proposition that millennial lecturers negotiate balance in distinctive ways remains untested.

Discussion

Work–Life Balance as Negotiated Practice Under Institutional Pressure Toward Integration

The first contribution of this review is to reframe what work–life balance is in the academic setting. The dominant operationalization treats WLB as a scalar outcome, a satisfaction score to be raised or lowered, and locates the remedy in individual time management. The evidence synthesized here does not support that framing. Read together, the boundary literature³² and the direct studies characterize WLB as a negotiated

³² T D Allen, E Cho, and L L Meier, “Work-Family Boundary Dynamics,” *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior* 1 (2014): 99–121, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-031413-091330>; B E Ashforth, G E Kreiner, and M Fugate, “All in a Day’s Work: Boundaries and Micro Role Transitions,” *Academy of Management Review* 25, no. 3 (2000): 472–91, <https://doi.org/10.2307/259305>; Clark, “Work/Family Border Theory: A New Theory of Work/Family Balance”; G E Kreiner, E C Hollensbe, and M L Sheep, “Balancing Borders and Bridges: Negotiating the Work-Home Interface via Boundary Work Tactics,” *Academy of Management Journal* 52, no. 4 (2009): 704–30, <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2009.43669916>.

practice:³³ a configuration of the work–home boundary that lecturers enact under institutional conditions, biasing it toward integration and withholding protection for segmentation.

Ridwansyah et al.'s finding that flexibility reduced, rather than improved, balance anchors this reframing, with the caveat that it is based on a single study. As an anomaly, it is puzzling, since flexibility is conventionally theorized as a work–family resource.³⁴ Through border theory, it is what high permeability and low segmentation predict: the technology that moves work into personal time also moves demands there, and without boundary protection, the lecturer pays in balance what the institution gains in output, the flexibility paradox documented across knowledge work.³⁵ The focal case intensifies this dynamic. Where the ethical substance of work carries religious weight, the grounds on which a lecturer might legitimately refuse an incursion into personal time are themselves undermined by the ethic of dedication that the Islamic Work Ethic emphasizes.³⁶ The lecturer is positioned as ethically committed to permeability while bearing its practical cost in terms of well-being. Muafiah et al.'s extension of that cost into domestic character formation shows that the consequences do not remain within the workplace and that this downstream effect is gendered, falling on women academics who shoulder both the domestic labor and its religious salience.³⁷ Measuring WLB in this setting, therefore, requires instruments that capture boundary-configuration behavior, including integration–segmentation practices, boundary tactics, and permeability tolerances, rather than balance-satisfaction scores alone.

The Islamic Work Ethic as a Conditional Resource

The review's second contribution extends an argument already made in the leadership–ethics literature. Raja et al. directly showed that a high Islamic Work Ethic, combined with despotic leadership, reduces rather than protects performance,

³³ Fidrayani, Aripin, Puspita, et al., “Keseimbangan Antara Kehidupan Dan Pekerjaan Masa Pandemi Dosen Perempuan Di Indonesia”; Johnston, Tanwar, Pasamar, et al., “Blurring Boundaries: Work-Life Balance and Unbounded Work in Academia. The Role of Flexibility, Organisational Support and Gender”; Ridwansyah, Sumin, Suhrawardi, et al., “Tech-Enabled Flexible Work and Employee Productivity: The Role of Work-Life Balance and Islamic Work Ethic.”

³⁴ Ridwansyah, Sumin, Suhrawardi, et al., “Tech-Enabled Flexible Work and Employee Productivity: The Role of Work-Life Balance and Islamic Work Ethic.”

³⁵ Allen, Cho, and Meier, “Work-Family Boundary Dynamics.”

³⁶ Ali and Al-Owaidan, “Islamic Work Ethic: A Critical Review.”

³⁷ Muafiah, Sofiana, and Nurhidayati, “Exploring the Influence of Work-Family Balance and Burnout on Working Mothers’ Character-Building Efforts in a Post-Pandemic World.”

satisfaction, and well-being, and Javid et al. reported a parallel effect for aversive leadership.³⁸ The conditional character of the ethic is therefore not a discovery of this review. What the review adds is to carry that conditional reading into the work–life domain, where no study has yet examined it, and to explain it through border theory.

The leadership evidence establishes only half of the conditional claim. Transformational-spiritual and Islamic ethical leadership are reliably associated with engagement, satisfaction, and commitment,³⁹ which is unsurprising given ethical leadership theory.⁴⁰ Leadership that models and rewards ethical conduct produces workforce alignment. What the corpus does not establish is that such leadership protects balance, since no study links leadership style to WLB outcomes in Islamic higher education. That absence is a specific and addressable gap rather than a null result.

The adverse half is better evidenced and more consequential for theory. The amplification reported by Raja et al. and Javid et al. resists a simple demand–resources reading, in which the ethic would function as a personal resource that buffers job demands.⁴¹ Conservation-of-resources logic explains it better:⁴² A strong ethic of dedication binds the individual more tightly to the work environment, so that when that environment fails to reciprocate ethically, the commitment itself becomes the channel through which harm reaches the person. In resource terms, a high Islamic Work Ethic under despotic leadership behaves as a sunk investment that cannot be withdrawn, turning a presumed protective asset into a conduit of depletion. Carried into the work–life domain, this logic predicts that the ethic will not uniformly protect balance, and the one focal study that measured both is consistent with that prediction: IWE buffered but did not reverse the loss of balance under flexible work.⁴³

³⁸ Javid, Gul, Naz, et al., “Do Islamic Work Ethics Matter? Impact of Aversive Leadership on Employees’ Emotional and Psychological Health through the Lens of Conservation of Resource Theory.”

³⁹ Ahmad and Ogunsola, “An Empirical Assessment of Islamic Leadership Principles”; Djaelani, Sanusi, and Trianmanto, “Spiritual Leadership, Job Satisfaction, and Its Effect on Organizational Commitment and Organizational Citizenship Behavior”; Wakhid, Ruslan, and Yama, “Transformational–Spiritual Leadership in HRM and Lecturer Competence at Indonesian Islamic Universities.”

⁴⁰ M E Brown, L K Treviño, and D A Harrison, “Ethical Leadership: A Social Learning Perspective for Construct Development and Testing,” *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 97, no. 2 (2005): 117–34, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2005.03.002>.

⁴¹ Bakker and Demerouti, “Job Demands-Resources Theory: Taking Stock and Looking Forward.”

⁴² Hobfoll, “Conservation of Resources: A New Attempt at Conceptualizing Stress.”

⁴³ Ridwansyah, Sumin, Suhrawardi, et al., “Tech-Enabled Flexible Work and Employee Productivity: The Role of Work-Life Balance and Islamic Work Ethic.”

This conditional reading corrects the prevailing treatment of the Islamic Work Ethic in the higher-education literature, which is treated as monotonically protective.⁴⁴ Its reach extends beyond the Islamic case. In its original form, Clark treats work-domain and non-work-domain cultures as symmetric categories but says little about their substantive content.⁴⁵ The focal case shows why that content matters: a culture that sacralizes effort and dedication is not neutral toward boundary configuration, since it biases the border toward permeability. The general lesson for boundary-dynamics research is that domain-neutral treatments of work culture will under-predict permeability wherever work carries strong ethical or religious weight, of which Muslim academic work is one instance among others, including vocational, medical, and mission-driven work.

Demands, Resources, And the Missing Vocabulary of Wellbeing

The third question concerns consequences, and here the synthesis reveals an asymmetry in what the field chooses to measure. The demands–resources evidence explains why balance is institutionally rather than individually governed: academics face high demands met by uneven resources.⁴⁶ Organizational support and autonomy support are the levers that determine whether those demands are depleted or absorbed.⁴⁷ Yet across both the general and focal literatures, productivity-side outcomes such as commitment, satisfaction, performance, and innovation are modeled far more consistently

⁴⁴ Romi, Ahman, Disman, et al., “Islamic Work Ethics-Based Organizational Citizenship Behavior to Improve the Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment of Higher Education Lecturers in Indonesia”; U Tufail, M S Ahmad, T Ramayah, et al., “Impact of Islamic Work Ethics on Organisational Citizenship Behaviours among Female Academic Staff: The Mediating Role of Employee Engagement,” *Applied Research in Quality of Life* 12, no. 3 (2017): 693–717, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11482-016-9484-5>; Wulandari and Mubarak, “Islamic Work Ethics and Lecturer Performance: Mediating Roles of Person-Organization Fit and Innovation in Learning Activities.”

⁴⁵ Clark, “Work/Family Border Theory: A New Theory of Work/Family Balance.”

⁴⁶ Huang and Wang, “Surviving and Thriving in ‘Accelerating’ Academia: Toward a Job Demands-Resources Model of Faculty Well-Being”; Naidoo-Chetty and du Plessis, “Job Demands and Job Resources of Academics in Higher Education.”

⁴⁷ Holliman, Revill-Keen, and Waldeck, “University Lecturers’ Adaptability: Examining Links with Perceived Autonomy Support, Organisational Commitment, and Psychological Wellbeing”; M R van der Ross, C Olckers, and P Schaap, “Engagement of Academic Staff amidst COVID-19: The Role of Perceived Organisational Support, Burnout Risk, and Lack of Reciprocity as Psychological Conditions,” *Frontiers in Psychology* 13 (2022): 874599, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.874599>.

than the well-being cost at which they are achieved.⁴⁸ The evidence for burnout that would quantify that cost sits apart from the performance models rather than within them.⁴⁹

This asymmetry is not a neutral methodological preference. It reproduces, at the level of research design, the governance logic that academic-capitalism scholarship identifies in the institution itself: systems that count outputs but not costs render those costs invisible and therefore unaddressed.⁵⁰ In Islamic higher education, the problem is compounded by the *Tri Dharma* structure, which distributes lecturer effort across teaching, research, and community engagement without providing corresponding protection against overload in any of the three. The result is an underspecified causal pathway, measured intermittently at its endpoints and rarely in its middle. This is not a defect of the review but a finding about the state of the field: the outcome vocabulary appropriate to WLB negotiation, centered on wellbeing and on the quality of academic engagement, remains comparatively undeveloped.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Taken together, the three contributions integrate four separate literatures, boundary dynamics, job demands–resources, the Islamic Work Ethic, and Islamic and spiritual leadership, into a single analytical chain that holds both agency and structure in one frame. The chain makes visible what lecturers do at the boundary and the institutional and ethical conditions that set the terms of that boundary work, without collapsing either into the other. Its principal value is generative: it marks where the field's evidence is discontinuous, thereby defining the primary research that the next section sets out to address.

The practical implications follow from the central claim that balance is institutionally, rather than individually, governed, and are directed to institutional leaders rather than individual lecturers. Four points of intervention emerge. Digital work norms that protect segmentation, including bounded communication windows, protected family

⁴⁸ Choeriyah and Utami, “Pengaruh Work Life Balance Terhadap Komitmen Organisasi Pada Dosen Hybrid Working”; Saputri, Azis, and Tenrisau, “Pengaruh Work-Life Balance Dan Lingkungan Kerja Terhadap Kepuasan Kerja Dosen FEB-UMI”; Yani, Pawirosumarto, and Ridwan, “Digital Readiness and Work Engagement as Drivers of Academic Productivity in Islamic Higher Education.”

⁴⁹ Karima, “Burnout Dan Work-Life Balance Pada Dosen Wanita Di Universitas Islam Negeri Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember”; C Maslach and M P Leiter, “Understanding the Burnout Experience: Recent Research and Its Implications for Psychiatry,” *World Psychiatry* 15, no. 2 (2016): 103–11, <https://doi.org/10.1002/wps.20311>; Muafiah, Sofiana, and Nurhidayati, “Exploring the Influence of Work-Family Balance and Burnout on Working Mothers’ Character-Building Efforts in a Post-Pandemic World.”

⁵⁰ Ylijoki and Mäntylä, “Conflicting Time Perspectives in Academic Work.”

and prayer time, and leadership modeling of disconnection, are institutional resources rather than matters of personal discipline. Workload architectures that treat the three *Tri Dharma* pillars as elements of a bounded total load, rather than as three additive commitments, would change the boundary configuration lecturers face. Leadership development that is explicitly ethical, given evidence that despotic leadership channels the Islamic Work Ethic into harm, is a wellbeing intervention, not merely a management one. And a family-supportive organizational culture, salient given the concentration of the direct evidence on women, conditions whether the ethic of dedication supports or erodes balance. In each case, the unit of intervention is the institution, because the underlying configuration is institutional.

Research Agenda

The discontinuities identified above define a research agenda whose priorities are actionable: each specifies a design and a testable proposition rather than naming a desirable topic.

The priority is an end-to-end test of the analytical chain. No study in the corpus tests the full sequence from academic demands through boundary negotiation and institutional resources to well-being and academic practice; studies test discrete links in isolation. A mixed-methods design combining boundary-configuration measurement, an integration–segmentation continuum, and an inventory of boundary tactics, with longitudinal well-being tracking and academic-practice outcomes across at least two contrasting institutions, would provide the first integrated test. The proposition to examine is that institutional resources moderate the effect of academic-work intensification on well-being by shaping boundary configuration, and that this moderation is stronger under transformational-spiritual leadership than under transactional or despotic leadership.

The second priority is to move beyond productivity as the measured outcome. The under-measurement of well-being means the human cost of academic performance remains largely unquantified. Studies that model wellbeing and burnout as outcomes in their own right, integrated with the demands–resources resource pathway rather than appended to it, would supply the outcome vocabulary the field lacks.

The third priority is to correct the female-concentrated, cross-sectional character of the focal-case evidence. Because the direct evidence on Islamic higher-education

lecturers draws substantially on female samples and almost entirely on cross-sectional surveys, claims about lecturers in general remain provisional. Comparative designs that include men, and qualitative studies of how boundary work is enacted, the emails not sent, the meetings declined, the times protected, would generate both the generality and the practice-level detail that the current variable-oriented literature cannot provide.

The fourth priority is a direct test of the conditional-IWE argument in the work–life domain. The proposition that the Islamic Work Ethic is conditional rather than uniformly protective is established with respect to performance and well-being.⁵¹ Designs that measure both the Islamic Work Ethic and boundary-configuration outcomes, and that model the interaction between the ethic and leadership climate on balance, would directly test the claim rather than infer it.

The fifth priority is generation-specific and cross-national research. No included study stratifies its findings by cohort, leaving untested the proposition that millennial lecturers, digital natives, frequently dual-career, and operating under reconfigured religious authority, negotiate boundaries in distinctive ways.⁵² Cohort-stratified designs and comparison across national higher-education systems and across Muslim-majority and Muslim-minority contexts would separate the effects of Islamic institutional character from those of specific national systems and test whether the conditional-IWE argument holds across settings with different labor-market structures and gender-role norms. These priorities are not mutually exclusive; one well-designed program could address several at once.

Limitations

The inferences drawn here are bounded by the evidence synthesized and by the review's design. As an integrative rather than systematic review, the synthesis does not claim exhaustive retrieval, and its conclusions are interpretive rather than statistical; it is positioned as agenda-setting rather than definitive. The direct evidence on work–life

⁵¹ Javid, Gul, Naz, et al., “Do Islamic Work Ethics Matter? Impact of Aversive Leadership on Employees’ Emotional and Psychological Health through the Lens of Conservation of Resource Theory”; Raja, Haq, De Clercq, et al., “When Ethics Create Misfit: Combined Effects of Despotic Leadership and Islamic Work Ethic on Job Performance, Job Satisfaction, and Psychological Well-Being.”

⁵² E S Ng, L Schweitzer, and S T Lyons, “New Generation, Great Expectations: A Field Study of the Millennial Generation,” *Journal of Business and Psychology* 25, no. 2 (2010): 281–92, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-010-9159-4>; J M Twenge, “A Review of the Empirical Evidence on Generational Differences in Work Attitudes,” *Journal of Business and Psychology* 25, no. 2 (2010): 201–10, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-010-9165-6>.

balance in Islamic higher education is small, predominantly cross-sectional, and concentrated on female lecturers, so claims about lecturers in general are provisional and await confirmation from more varied samples and designs. That focal-case evidence is also published largely in nationally indexed journals. Although its inclusion is a deliberate strength, capturing a national-language literature that an international-database search would miss, it means part of the evidence base has not passed through the review processes of internationally indexed outlets. The central theoretical claim, that the Islamic Work Ethic is conditional in the work–life domain, is an extension from two studies of employees rather than lecturers and from a single focal study that measured both the ethic and balance; an alternative reading, in which the ethic is protective on average but insufficient to withstand despotic leadership rather than harmful in interaction, cannot be excluded with the present evidence. Finally, the focal case is Indonesian, and the transfer to Islamic higher-education systems elsewhere, which operate under distinct institutional and cultural conditions, is not established.

Conclusion

Work–life balance among higher-education lecturers is neither a purely individual struggle nor a straightforward matter of institutional support. On the evidence synthesized here, it is a negotiated practice governed by the demand–resource architecture institutions construct, in which flexibility without boundary protection can erode rather than improve balance. Indonesian Islamic higher education sharpens this general picture into a revealing case. Where academic work carries religious weight, the Islamic Work Ethic operates not as a uniformly protective resource but as a conditional one, supporting constructive engagement under ethical leadership yet amplifying harm under despotic leadership, binding lecturers more tightly to environments that may deplete them. The review contributes a repositioning of balance as negotiated academic practice, the extension of a conditional reading of the Islamic Work Ethic into the work–life domain, and the integration of four separate literatures into a single analytical chain. Its central practical message is that, because the boundary configuration lecturers face is institutionally produced, it must be addressed at the level of institutional norms, workload architecture, ethical leadership, and supportive culture. The field's next task is to test the chain that this review can only assemble, and to treat lecturers' well-being with the seriousness it has so far reserved for their productivity.

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This study is a literature review. It did not involve human participants, animal subjects, or primary data collection. The analysis drew only on published, publicly available scholarly sources. Ethical approval and informed consent were therefore not required.

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The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Author Contributions

Bhaswarendra Guntur Hendratri: conceptualization, literature search, screening, analysis, and writing of the original draft. Adi Marsono: literature search, screening, interpretation of findings, and critical revision of the manuscript. Mas'ut: interpretation of findings, critical revision, and supervision. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Declaration of Generative AI in Scientific Writing

During the preparation of this manuscript, the authors used Claude (Anthropic) for language editing and paragraph-level sequencing, and ChatGPT (OpenAI) to generate Figure 1. The authors reviewed and edited all AI-assisted output and take full responsibility for the integrity and content of the published work.

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