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Research paper

The relationship between work-life balance and women leadership performance: The mediation effect of organizational culture

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Abstract

The objective of this study is examining the relationship among work-life balance, organizational culture and women leadership performance in China, and testing the conceptual research model connecting those three variables. The model was designed and tested by Partial Least Square (PLS) based on data collected from a survey of 290 available questionnaires. The results confirmed that organizational culture has significant and positive mediating effect on the relationship between work-life balance and women leadership performance in China. The findings indicated that the good relationship between work-life balance and organizational culture would lead to a high women leadership. Therefore, organizational culture and work-life balance play crucial function within women leaders in China

Keywords: *Organization Culture, Work-life Balance, Women Leadership Performance*

1. Introduction

Since the Washington post appointed Katherine Graham as a chief executive officer (CEO) in 1972, the challenges women have faced in career development in leadership positions have become attention [1]. Within the past few years, the number of women in the paid labor market has a big change in the demographic, social and economic area around the world [2]. Women obtained more opportunities to rising up to the leading positions in work environment or even became heads of states and government in the world [3, 4]. Centre [5] commented on its website front page: great leaders know that being committed to the success of an organization means being committed to their own personal development.

There were several scholars pay attention on the study of women leaders and try to find out what are the main factors influencing the women leadership performance [6, 7, 8, 9, 10]. Cashman [11] pointed out that leaders with a good way of work-life balance can achieve more effective performance. The promptest way in which leaders and organizations can support work-life balance is by promoting and implementing work-life programs and family-friendly policies [12, 13]. In addition, a strong organization culture emphasizes healthy working conditions, effective communication, modern ideas and technology, rational rewards and incentives, quick complaints, effective leadership, and so on [14], and organizational culture played a very important role for both work-life balance and leadership performance [15, 16].

Thus, the aims of this study are to examine the mediation effect of organization culture on the relationship between work-life balance and women leadership performance and to test the conceptual research model connecting those three variables.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Work life balance

Gurvis and Patterson [17] defined work-life balance was the equally weighed time for an individual to experience his or her expectations of commitment to career, family, friends, community, and leisure pursuits. Work-life balance continues to grow as a priority of prospective employees and an expectation of those who comprise an organization's workforce. Then, Winkler [18] defined that work-life balance based on 8 elements including 'being on purpose,' 'health, hobbies and habits,' and 'relationships,' 'lightening up,' 'spirituality,' 'prioritizing,' 'good thinking' and 'values and commitments.' In the context of this study, work-life balance was measured based on Winkler's 8 traits of work-life balance [18].

2.2. Organizational culture

Trice and Beyer [19] contended that 'organizational culture, like other cultures, develop as groups of people struggle to make sense of and cope with their worlds (p.4)' . Schein [20] argued that organizational culture as 'the accumulated shared learning of a given group, covering behavioral, emotional, and cognitive elements of the group members' total psychological functioning (p.17)'. Simply presented, organizational culture is "the way things are done around here, as well the way things are understood, judged, and valued. (p 112)" [21]. Flamholtz and Randle [22] believed that organizational culture could be regarded as "corporate personality" and can be defined as a combination of

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values, beliefs, and norms that affect the behavior of people who are members of an organization. In the context of this study, the organizational culture was measured based on Denison and Mishra 's four traits of organizational cultures, including involvement, consistency, adaptability, and mission [23].

2.3. Women leadership performance

Dulewicz and Higgs [24] believed that leadership performance is the basis for people to work together in a team and was considered as the most important aspect of human behavior research. The performance of leadership is a way to manage and adjust leadership behaviors, strategies and outcomes, including the three important elements, which are the realization of organizational, team and individual performance [25]. Some of the characteristics of leadership are measuring the success or failure of a project, such as "motivating others, managing resources, delegating and developing". In the context of this study, leadership performance is measured based on five factors, namely, building relationship, engaging talent, delivering results, creating the future, and personal leadership [26].

2.4. Relationship between work-life balance and women leadership performance

Many researchers are studying the relationship between work-life balance and women leadership performance. Courtney [27] used a qualitative narrative survey method to interview six mothers with higher education leadership status, finding that the work-life balance may be complex, and it will make women face the dilemma of management leadership role and birth of children, which will affect the performance of female leadership. Mangels [28] gathered data from a survey of 247 female and male college presidents and interviewed 12 female presidents who graduated from U.S. colleges and universities. The results showed that work-life balance and leadership success are linked, harmony/accord work-life balance was found to be significantly positively correlated with the President's success. The President's life is considered to be the most important predictor of his/her success. Heath [29] collected data from interviewing 22 women leaders to determine strategies for integrating balance into personal and professional life. The findings suggested that women are more likely to succeed in multiple roles if their careers are meaningful and fulfilling by keeping a work-life balance.

In view of that, we hypothesize: H1: There is a positive relationship between work-life balance and women leadership performance

2.5. Relationship between work-life balance and organizational culture

The study of the relationship between work-life balance and organizational culture has attracted several scholars. Kottabi [30] found in the federal government to support work/life balance, there were six topics related to the role of leadership, which were (a) leadership to support work/life balance, (b) flexibility, (c) a formal training, (d) mission to fulfill, (e)trust, (f) leadership style. In addition, these themes support and enable employees to achieve organizational goals and work-life balance simultaneously in the federal government, which can help employees achieve a better life balance. Jones, Burke [31] conducted a secondary analysis of attitude survey data from a large professional services company. During the survey, the company had about 2,150 employees and received 1,608 samples. It is believed that 'organizational culture is the key to success of work and life integration (p.235). If the organizational culture supports the integration of work and life, the increase in personal control will be effective. Bond [32] believed that organizational culture was significantly associated with work-life balance, which suggests that without a supportive organizational culture, the arrangement provided in themselves may not necessarily lead to a better work-life balance.

In view of that, we hypothesize H2: There is a positive relationship between work-life balance and organizational culture.

2.6. Relationship between organizational culture and women leadership performance

Some scholars are focusing on studying the relationship between organizational culture and women leadership performance. Meng [33] believed that the test of non-recursive structure model confirmed that organizational culture had a direct and positive impact on the achievements of excellent leaders in public relations. More notably, excellent leadership in public relations can also influence the organizational culture, by reshaping it to support public relations efforts in the organization. Lucas [34] conducted a study to determine whether transformational leadership behavior predicted constructive organizational culture in manufacturing enterprises. The results showed that transformational leadership style/performance is predictive and positively correlated with constructive organizational culture. Mishra [35] argued that organizational culture helps to build a strong value system and work ethic among employees, which is directly related to productivity. A strong culture emphasizes healthy working conditions, effective communication, modern concepts and techniques, rational rewards and incentives, quick complaints, effective leadership, and so on.

In view of that, we hypothesize: H3: There is a positive relationship between organizational culture and women leadership performance

2.7. The mediation role of organizational culture in the relationship between work-life balance and women leadership performance

Many studies have found that organizational culture plays a mediating role in work-life balance and leadership performance. Berson, Oreg [15] found that entrepreneurial cultures mediated the relationship between work-life balance and company sales growth of CEOs. Cegarra-Leiva, Sánchez-Vidal [36], in their study on 229 SMEs representing the metal industry sector of Southeast Spain have found an organizational culture (WLB supportive culture) mediates the effect of the availability of WLB practices on organizational and leadership performance. Munn (16) in his study of data from the 2008 National Study of the Changing Workforce (NSCW study) demonstrated that mediating role of organizational culture on the work-life benefits with financial and leadership performance.

In view of that, we hypothesize: H4: Organizational culture mediates the relationship between work-life balance and women leadership performance.

3. Research method

3.1. Research instrument

This study adopted and adapted instruments to measure work-life balance, organizational culture and women leadership performance based on "Work-life Balance Instrument" designed by Winkler [18]; 'Organizational Culture Instrument' designed by Denison (37) and 'Leadership Performance Instrument' based on PerformNuace [26], Key Associates [38] and Nixon, Harrington

[39]. A five-point Likert scale was utilized from strongly disagree\ not at all successful to strongly agree\ very successful.

3.2. Population and sample method

In this study, the unit of analysis was the individual of the women leaders from the private and public sector in Ning Xia Autonomous Region of China.

3.3. Data collection

Firstly, a pilot survey of 30 women leaders from Ningxia was conducted. The pilot study's data was used to assess the reliability of the multiple-item measurement scales used in the questionnaire by employing Cronbach's alpha [40]. The range of Cronbach's Alpha from 0.816-0.855, which indicated the satisfactory reliability of the measures and implied that all the measurement scales were good enough to be used for the actual data collection phase [41].

Secondly, a questionnaire was distributed among the target group. Because we cannot get the total number of female leaders in Ning Xia, an un-probabilistic approach was employed [41]. 290 valid questionnaires were received from 320distributed questionnaires, with a response rate of 90.6%. Thirdly, the outlier was tested by Mahalanobis distance (MD) in reference of Chi-square, the critical value at the level of significance of 0.001 and 4 degrees of freedom was at 18.467 [42]. In this study, there was only one case (at 18.798) was identified as outlier which MD was higher than 18.467. It seemed that the outlier was not a big threat to this study and can be ruled out.

3.4. Reliability and validation: elaborate on the content of instrument

The partial least squares (PLS) technique was adopted to do the empirical test of the research model. The measurement model and structure model were evaluated by using Smart PLS 3.0 software [43], because it can evaluate all the paths at the same time [44, 45] without requiring large sample size [45]. Figure 1 described the model with all the potential constructs (shaded areas) and measurement items (rectangles).

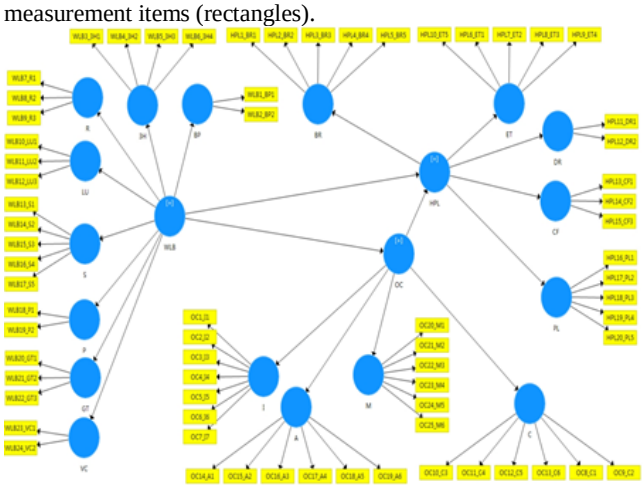


Fig. 1: Measurement Model Used for Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Note1: WLB=Work-life Balance, BP=Being on Purpose, 3H=Health, Hobbies, and Habits R=Relationship, LU=Lightening Up, S=Spirituality,

P=Prioritizing, GT=Good Thinking, VC= Values and Commitments.
OC=Organizational Culture, I=Involvement, C=Consistency,
A=Adaptability, M=Mission.
BR=Building Relationship, ET=Engaging Talent, DR=Delivering Results, CF=Creating the Future, PL=Personal Leadership.

Note 2: Hereinafter Inclusive.

Table 1: Assessment of Items Reliability (Number=69: WLB=24, OC=25, WLP=20)

Items of WLB	Load-ing	Items of OC	Load-ing	Items of WLP	Load-ing
WLB1_BP1	0.959	OC1_I1	0.860	WLP1_BR 1	0.868
WLB2_BP2	0.953	OC2_I2	**0.579**	WLP2_BR 2	0.922
WLB3_3H1	**0.677**	OC3_I3	0.861	WLP3_BR 3	**0.638**
WLB4_3H2	0.888	OC4_I4	**0.635**	WLP4_BR 4	0.886
WLB5_3H3	0.896	OC5_I5	0.712	WLP5_BR 5	0.788
WLB6_3H4	**0.593**	OC6_I6	**0.638**	WLP6_ET1	0.857
WLB7_R1	0.895	OC7_I7	0.888	WLP7_ET2	0.905
WLB8_R2	0.917	OC8_C1	0.831	WLP8_ET3	0.796
WLB9_R3	**0.662**	OC9_C2	0.806	WLP9_ET4	0.827
WLB10_L U1	0.771	OC10_C 3	0.884	WLP10_ET 5	0.846
WLB11_L U2	0.947	OC11_C 4	**0.542**	WLP11_D R1	0.734
WLB12_L U3	0.929	OC12_C 5	0.818	WLP12_D R2	0.874
WLB13_S1	0.909	OC13_C 6	0.728	WLP13_CF 1	0.736
WLB14_S2	0.897	OC14_A 1	0.703	WLP14_CF 2	0.891
WLB15_S3	**0.593**	OC15_A 2	0.875	WLP15_CF 3	0.919
WLB16_S4	0.908	OC16_A 3	**0.668**	WLP16_PL 1	**0.601**
WLB17_S5	0.886	OC17_A 4	0.867	WLP17_PL 2	0.824
WLB18_P1	0.945	OC18_A 5	0.867	WLP18_PL 3	**0.581**
WLB19_P2	**0.626**	OC19_A 6	0.705	WLP19_PL 4	**0.694**
WLB20_G T1	0.950	OC20_M 1	0.879	WLP20_PL 5	**0.675**
WLB21_G T2	**0.539**	OC21_M 2	0.881		
WLB22_G T3	0.957	OC22_M 3	0.886		
WLB23_V C1	0.756	OC23_M 4	0.848		
WLB24_V C2	0.929	OC24_M 5	0.708		
		OC25_M 6	0.723		

4. Results

4.1. Measurement model

Reliability and validity are two core criteria of evaluation measurement [46]. In this study, the reliability and validity of this study were evaluated by using indicator reliability, convergent and discriminant validity. First is to test the indicator reliability. After the model was successfully constructed in smart PLS 3.0 (see Figure 1), the basic statistics information was estimated by running a PLS-SEM algorithm, with the threshold of loading speed at 0.70 [47, 48]. Then, 16 items (Red figures) from total 69 loadings are lower than 0.70 and should be removed. Therefore, the 53 left items demonstrated satisfactory indicator reliability in this study (See Table 1).

Secondly, to evaluate the convergent validity, average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR) were recommended by researchers [49, 50] . According to Chin and Newsted [51], the AVE should above 0.50, which means that over 50 percent of the variation in a particular construct is explained by the specified index. In addition, the CR should be greater than 0.70 to show a good indicator of internal consistency [52] . The average vari-

ance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR) shown in Table 2 were considered to meet these requirements mentioned above.

Table 2: Convergent Validity of Constructs on AVE and CR

Constructs	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Composite Reliability (CR)
Work-life Balance	0.679	0.974
Organizational Culture	0.562	0.962
High-Performance Leadership	0.568	0.951
Note: AVE>0.50 (51); CR>0.70 (52)		

Thirdly, The discriminant validity was used to distinguish the measurement between a construct [53] , and was determined via correlation matrix construction (see Table 3) and cross-loading (see Table 4) [47, 49] . In Table 3, it was clear that the square root of the AVE (the bold number on the diagonal) is higher than the off-diagonal element in the columns and rows. Table 4 demonstrated the cross-loadings output of each block has a higher loading than other blocks in the same rows, which means that the discriminant validity was satisfied in this study.

Table 3: Inter-correlation Matrix Constructs

Constructs	WLP	OC	WLB
High-Performance Leadership	**0.953**		
Organizational Culture	0.856	**0.950**	
Work-life Balance	0.768	0.828	**0.924**

4.2. Structural model

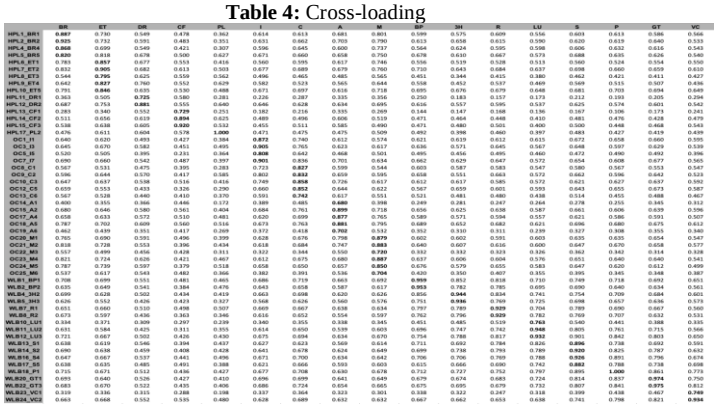
The structural model of this study was assessed by the bootstrapping with 5,000 bootstrap samples in PLS [45]. And the relationship between the hypotheses of the study evaluated by the path coefficient (β) [54] . In addition, there have two different models based on the Four-Step Technique mentioned by Baron and Kenny [55] to evaluate the mediation effect in this study, as shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Two Different Models Based on the Four-Step Technique

Model Type	Content
The First Model	1) A direct path from work-life balance to organizational culture.
	2) A direct path from work-life balance to women leadership performance.
	3) A direct path from organizational culture to women leadership performance.
The Second Model	4) A direct path from work-life balance to women leadership performance, and an indirect path from work-life balance to organizational culture and then an organizational culture to women leadership performance.

First of all, the first model was demonstrated with a direct path from work-life balance to organizational culture, work-life balance to women leadership performance and organizational culture to women leadership performance. With using PLS-SEM bootstrapping for 5,000 resamples with 5 percent significance, Table 6 demonstrated that each link was significant with t-value above 1.96 and p-value at 0.000 level, and the path coefficient (β) of 0.782,0.795, and 0.837 respectively without any indirect effect in it. Therefore, Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 were confirmed.

Table 4: Cross-loading



Note: The figures in boldface are the cross-loading of each construct.

Table 6: Direct Path Coefficient (**β**)

Direct	β	t-value	p-value
WLB→WLP	0.782	21.276	0.000
WLB→OC	0.795	22.269	0.000
OC→WLP	0.837	25.976	0.000
Notes: β>0.1 & t-values>1.65(p<0.10); t-values>1.96**(p<0.05); t-values>2.58***(p<0.01) (52)*			

On the other hand, the second model was presented with organizational culture plays a mediation role in work-life balance and women leadership performance. According to Osman and Sentosa [56] , when the indirect path through the mediation variance is established lead to the decrease of direct path coefficient (β) between the independent variable and the dependent variable, indicating that the mediation effect is significant. In this study, SPSS PROCESS 3.0 by Hayes [57] was adopted to measure the mediation effect. Table 7 demonstrated after the organizational culture as a mediator, the direct coefficient (β) had changed from 0.782 to 0.260, indicating that the mediation effect is significant.

Meanwhile, according to Hair Jr, Hult [58], for the mediation assumption, the t-value should have significantly (t>1.96, two-tailed, p<0.05), and the confidence interval (CI) should exclude zero (0) between the lower limit and upper limit values. In this study, PLS-SEM bootstrapping with resamples at 5% significance level and 95% confidence interval was adopted. Table 7 demonstrated that organizational culture mediates the relationship between work-life balance to women leadership performance, since t-value was higher than 1.96, and 95% CI excluded zero (0). Therefore, hypothesis 4 was confirmed.

Table 7: The Result of SPSS PROCESS 3.0 (**β**) and PLS-SEM for Mediation Analysis

Path	β	p-value	t-value	95% Bootstrapping Confidence Interval
WLB→OC→ WLP	0.260	0.000	10.893	(0.401,0.579)

5. Discussion

This study aims to a deep understanding of the mediation effect of organizational culture on the relationship between work-life balance and women leadership performance in China, and to build probable causal relationship among those three variables. In theory, the advantages of any model are hard to prove, so the empirical test is carried out [56]. In view of this, SPSS PROCESS 2.0 and PLS-SEM were adopted to analyze the gathered data, which indicates that all the 4 hypotheses were confirmed. Therefore, this study confirmed previous studies on the relationship study between work-life balance to women leadership performance, work-life balance to organizational culture, and organizational culture to women leadership performance [14, 27, 28, 30, 33, 59]. In addition, the results revealed that the organizational culture mediates the relationship between work-life balance and women leadership performance, which confirming the importance that scholars have

always called to attach importance to the construction of organizational culture [16].

6. Conclusion

The study findings suggested that organizational culture among Chinese women leader can be enhanced by work-life balance improvement. On the other hand, women leadership performance can be strengthened and enhanced by raising the level of organizational culture among women leaders. Thirdly, the findings implied that the good relationship between work-life balance and organizational culture would lead to a high women leadership. Therefore, organizational culture and work-life balance play a crucial function within women leaders in China. Finally, it is worth noting that this study only obtained survey data from a province in northwest China and its universality and representativeness remains to be discussed.

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