

The Relationship Between Work-Life Balance and Female Teachers' Performance in Government Aided Secondary Schools in Bushenyi District

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between work-life balance and female teachers' performance in government-aided secondary schools in Bushenyi District, Uganda. A descriptive research design was adopted, combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Data were collected using structured questionnaires administered to 191 randomly selected female teachers and interviews conducted with 14 purposively selected headteachers and one District Education Officer. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically. The findings revealed a statistically significant and positive relationship ($r = 0.665$, $p < .01$) between work-life balance and job performance, indicating that improved personal well-being is associated with enhanced professional outcomes. The study recommends that education stakeholders develop clear policies on flexible scheduling, invest in childcare and mental health services, and institutionalize performance appraisal systems. Promoting work-life balance as a leadership priority can create an enabling environment that supports female teachers in achieving optimal performance.

Keywords: work-life balance, job performance, female teachers, government-aided secondary schools, Bushenyi District.

Introduction

Work-life balance is defined as the degree to which individuals can simultaneously manage work responsibilities and personal obligations with minimal stress or conflict (Greenhaus & Allen, 2019). Female teachers' performance refers to the extent to which teachers discharge their duties of teaching and learning, as well as their general attitude towards the profession and related activities (Owan, 2012). This study was carried out in Bushenyi District, where work-life balance among female teachers has been identified as a challenge to school stakeholders by earlier researchers (Babiita, 2007; Nyirabimana, 2004). Female teachers have, on several occasions, exhibited signs of ineffective work performance, such as deliberately refusing to perform assigned tasks like preparing lesson plans and schemes of work, ignoring participation in school games and athletics, and at times disregarding instructions from authorities such as the board of governors (Nakiganda, 2006).

It is against this background that the current study was undertaken to examine the relationship between work-life balance and female teachers' performance in government aided secondary schools in Bushenyi District. Notably, none of the previous researchers, including Ssekomi (2014), Tumwesigye (2015), and Byangire (2016), focused on this specific issue in Bushenyi, making the study both relevant and timely. Female teachers in government-aided secondary schools face unique challenges in balancing professional and family responsibilities, particularly in rural districts like Bushenyi. These challenges arise from work-related demands such as teaching large classes and administrative duties, alongside family obligations like childcare and household management. Studies show that female teachers in rural areas often experience significant work-life conflict due to limited resources, rigid work schedules, and societal expectations that place a disproportionate burden of family care on women (Agaba et al., 2023; Kaboyo, 2023). Consequently, these demands can lead to role strain and resource depletion, which are linked to stress, reduced job satisfaction, and impaired performance (Hobfoll, 1989; Greenhaus & Allen, 2019).

In Uganda, research on teachers' work-life balance has highlighted issues such as high workload, inadequate institutional support, and traditional gender roles that expect women to prioritize family needs (Mwesigye & Kamoga, 2022). However, few studies have specifically

examined how these factors affect female teachers' performance and well-being in rural districts, despite the unique pressures they face. Since teachers are central to achieving quality education outcomes, understanding the impact of work-life balance on their job performance is crucial. According to Hussein and Wahab (2021), unresolved work-family conflict not only reduces teacher effectiveness but also contributes to absenteeism and turnover, which disrupt student learning and school performance.

Purpose of the study

To determine the relationship between work-life balance and female teachers' performance in government aided Secondary Schools in Bushenyi district.

Literature Review

Work-related factors such as workload, administrative responsibilities, and classroom management challenges significantly affect female teachers' job performance and overall well-being. Research from 2014 to 2018 highlights that these factors contribute to role strain, job dissatisfaction, and burnout, ultimately diminishing female teachers' effectiveness in the classroom. Studies indicate that heavy workloads adversely affect female teachers' ability to balance work and personal life, which in turn impacts their job performance. For example, Ampofo et al. (2014) found that female teachers in Ghana often struggle with excessive teaching loads, leading to fatigue and reduced classroom engagement. The study noted that the demands of lesson planning, grading, and student support reduced the time and energy available for instructional activities, thereby affecting performance.

Similarly, Obi and Obi (2014), studying female teachers in Nigeria, reported that administrative responsibilities such as record-keeping, student counseling, and event planning often disrupt classroom instruction. These additional duties increase role overload and stress, which diminish job satisfaction and reduce teachers' ability to effectively manage and engage students. A study by Emeka and Igbinomwanhia (2015) in Nigerian universities found that excessive administrative duties significantly decreased female teachers' motivation and job satisfaction. Female educators who were frequently tasked with responsibilities beyond teaching, such as overseeing events and handling disciplinary matters, often felt overwhelmed. This resulted in disengagement in the classroom and a decline in teaching quality. Expanding on this, Kinyili,

Karanja, and Namusonge (2015) examined workload effects on female university staff in Kenya and found similar challenges among secondary school teachers. They noted that female teachers who faced both teaching and administrative tasks reported lower levels of job satisfaction and commitment. The study also emphasized that a lack of institutional support, such as flexible scheduling or reducing non-teaching duties, worsened the adverse effects on teachers' performance.

Research by Azhar and Mahmood (2016) in Pakistan further showed that female teachers burdened with non-teaching responsibilities reported higher stress and lower job satisfaction. Duties such as organizing extracurricular activities and handling disciplinary issues reduced time and focus for teaching. Consequently, many experienced burnout, which negatively affected classroom effectiveness.

Bhat and Zia (2015), studying female teachers in India, also found that extensive workloads and frequent administrative duties lowered teaching engagement. Non-instructional tasks detracted from the time and energy teachers could devote to student-centered activities. Married female teachers with family responsibilities were particularly affected, as professional and domestic roles compounded their stress. Additionally, Liyanage and Galhena (2014) in Sri Lanka highlighted that female teachers who were able to focus primarily on teaching without heavy administrative burdens reported higher job satisfaction and greater commitment to their students. This suggests that minimizing administrative responsibilities enables teachers to devote more energy to improving instructional quality and classroom management.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive research design, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches through questionnaires and interviews to examine the relationship between work-life balance and job performance among female secondary school teachers in Bushenyi District. The target population comprised female teachers, headteachers, and one District Education Officer (DEO), totaling 397 participants. Using Morgan and Krejcie's (1970) table, a sample of 206 was selected, including 191 female teachers, 14 headteachers, and one DEO. Purposive sampling was used to select the DEO and headteachers due to their administrative roles and insights into teacher

performance, while simple random sampling was employed to select female teachers, ensuring objectivity and representativeness. Data were collected using an interview guide and a structured questionnaire. The interview guide, designed around themes of leadership, supervision, and resource allocation, was used with the DEO and headteachers, while the questionnaire, consisting of Likert-scale, multiple-choice, and open-ended questions, was administered to female teachers after pre-testing for reliability. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically to identify patterns in experiences and challenges, while quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS version 22. Descriptive statistics summarized responses, and Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationship between work-life balance and job performance.

Results

Table 1: Response Rate

Instruments	Sample size	Returned	Percentage (%)
Interviews	15	15	100
Questionnaires	191	150	89

Source: Field data 2025

Table 1 presents the response rate for both interviews and questionnaires administered during the study. All 15 planned interviews were successfully conducted and returned, representing a 100% response rate. Similarly, of the 191 distributed questionnaires, 170 were returned, yielding an 89% response rate. According to Amin (2005), a response rate of 70% or above is considered acceptable for data analysis in social science research. Therefore, the response rates obtained in this study exceed the recommended threshold, indicating high participant engagement and reliable data collection.

Table 2: The Level of Work-Life Balance among Female Teachers (n = 150)

Statements	SA	A	NS	SD	D	Mean
In this school, female teachers are given flexible working hours	30 (20%)	45 (30%)	20 (13.3%)	35 (23.3%)	20 (13.3%)	3.20
In this school, female teachers have feedback giving mechanisms in place	25 (16.7%)	50 (33.3%)	30 (20%)	30 (20%)	15 (10%)	3.27
In this school, female teachers are often given parental leave	40 (26.7%)	35 (23.3%)	25 (16.7%)	30 (20%)	20 (13.3%)	3.30
In this school, female teachers are given child care expenses	20 (13.3%)	30 (20%)	25 (16.7%)	40 (26.7%)	35 (23.3%)	2.73
In this school, female teachers are given tools to enhance their performance	30 (20%)	45 (30%)	30 (20%)	25 (16.7%)	20 (13.3%)	3.27
In this school, female teachers are provided with mental health care package	25 (16.7%)	35 (23.3%)	35 (23.3%)	30 (20%)	25 (16.7%)	3.00
In this school, female teachers are always given paid sick leave	40 (26.7%)	35 (23.3%)	30 (20%)	25 (16.7%)	20 (13.3%)	3.33
In this school, female teachers have access to workshops and resources	35 (23.3%)	40 (26.7%)	30 (20%)	25 (16.7%)	20 (13.3%)	3.30
In this school, female teachers are given special counseling services	30 (20%)	35 (23.3%)	35 (23.3%)	30 (20%)	20 (13.3%)	3.07
Average Mean						3.21

Source: Field Data 2025

Regarding flexible working hours, 20% of respondents strongly agreed and 30% agreed that female teachers are given flexible working hours. Conversely, 23.3% disagreed, 13.3% strongly disagreed, and 13.3% were uncertain. The agreement rate of 50% was higher than the disagreement rate of 36.6%, indicating a relatively positive perception. With a mean score of 3.20 on a 5-point Likert scale, this suggests a moderate level of flexibility in working hours. However, the presence of notable disagreement and uncertainty implies that the policy may not be uniformly

applied or clearly communicated within schools. Regarding the availability of feedback mechanisms, 16.7% strongly agreed and 33.3% agreed that such systems are in place. Meanwhile, 20% were unsure, and the remaining 30% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. This shows that while half of the respondents recognize the existence of feedback systems, a significant proportion either do not experience them or are unaware of their existence. The mean score of 3.27 reflects a modestly positive level of feedback provision, suggesting that while some efforts exist, they may lack consistency or visibility among all staff.

In terms of parental leave, 50% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that it is often given to female teachers. However, 16.7% remained neutral, and 33.3% disagreed or strongly disagreed. The higher proportion of agreement suggests that parental leave is relatively common. The mean score of 3.30 confirms a favorable perception of this benefit, indicating that it contributes positively to the work-life balance of female teachers. Regarding childcare expenses, only 33.3% agreed or strongly agreed that these are covered, whereas 50% either disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 16.7% were unsure. The high rate of disagreement reveals a general lack of support in this area. The resulting low mean score of 2.73 underscores that many schools do not provide sufficient assistance with childcare costs, which may negatively impact female teachers' ability to balance professional and personal responsibilities.

For the provision of tools to enhance performance, 50% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed, 20% were neutral, and 30% disagreed or strongly disagreed. The split indicates that while half the teachers recognize some institutional support, a significant minority do not. The mean score of 3.27 suggests moderate satisfaction, implying that although performance-enhancing tools are available, there may be issues related to adequacy, accessibility, or uniformity in distribution. As for the mental health care package, only 40% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it is provided, while 36.7% disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 23.3% remained neutral. The close distribution between agreement and disagreement, along with a sizable number of neutral responses, signals uncertainty or inconsistency. The mean score of 3.00 reflects a neutral stance, suggesting that mental health care support may be underdeveloped or not well-publicized within the schools.

In relation to paid sick leave, 50% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it is provided, 20% were unsure, and 30% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. The overall trend leans toward the presence of supportive sick leave policies. The mean score of 3.33 indicates a relatively strong provision of this benefit, which is essential for supporting female teachers during illness or caregiving periods. Access to workshops and resources was affirmed by 50% of respondents, while 20% were unsure, and 30% expressed disagreement. This indicates that although many teachers perceive such opportunities as available, a substantial minority either do not benefit from them or are unaware of their availability. The mean score of 3.30 reflects a generally favorable view of professional development support, although coverage may not reach all teachers equally. Regarding special counseling services, 43.3% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that these are provided, 23.3% were unsure, and 33.3% disagreed or strongly disagreed. The nearly even split between positive and negative perceptions, coupled with a high level of uncertainty, suggests inconsistency in service provision. The mean score of 3.07 implies low to moderate availability of counseling services, likely hindered by poor communication or limited access.

Overall, the average mean score across all items was 3.21, indicating a moderate level of work-life balance experienced by female teachers in secondary schools. While there is evidence of support in areas such as paid sick leave, parental leave, and access to workshops, significant gaps exist in areas such as childcare assistance and mental health care. The frequency of neutral responses also reveals potential communication issues or policy inconsistencies.

Additionally, from the interviews, the DEO and headteachers acknowledged that female teachers in Bushenyi District face considerable challenges in managing their dual responsibilities at school and home. One headteacher from a rural-based school commented, *“Many of our female teachers are also mothers and caretakers, and they often have to wake up very early to prepare their children for school before attending to their own school duties”* (Interview, 25th June 2025). Despite these challenges, it was noted that some teachers have developed strategies such as early lesson planning, delegating some home responsibilities to spouses or relatives, and avoiding unnecessary social engagements during the term.

On the issue of institutional support systems, responses showed variation across schools. While maternity leave is standard and honored in all government-aided schools, flexible schedules and workload adjustments are limited. The DEO noted, *“We have not fully embraced flexible working hours, but in cases where a teacher has a serious family matter or medical concern, headteachers often informally adjust the timetable to support her”* (Interview, 26th June 2025). However, some headteachers admitted that the lack of an official policy on flexible scheduling hinders its wider implementation.

Table 3: The Level of Job Performance among Female Teachers (n= 150)

Statements	SA	A	NS	D	SD	Mean
I endeavor to prepare lesson plans on a timely basis	70 (46.7%)	50 (33.3%)	15 (10.0%)	10 (6.7%)	5 (3.3%)	4.10
I regularly write notes in preparation for teaching students	65 (43.3%)	55 (36.7%)	10 (6.7%)	15 (10.0%)	5 (3.3%)	4.07
I mark and check students' books regularly	60 (40.0%)	58 (38.7%)	12 (8.0%)	10 (6.7%)	10 (6.7%)	3.98
I regularly record marks and keep updated class registers	75 (50.0%)	45 (30.0%)	15 (10.0%)	10 (6.7%)	5 (3.3%)	4.17
I regularly attend to school functions like assemblies and games	55 (36.7%)	50 (33.3%)	20 (13.3%)	15 (10.0%)	10 (6.7%)	3.83
I offer guidance and counseling to students when there is a need	52 (34.7%)	60 (40.0%)	20 (13.3%)	10 (6.7%)	8 (5.3%)	3.92
I offer career guidance to students on their career choices	50 (33.3%)	55 (36.7%)	25 (16.7%)	10 (6.7%)	10 (6.7%)	3.83
I perform my weekly duties as assigned to me promptly	68 (45.3%)	52 (34.7%)	15 (10.0%)	10 (6.7%)	5 (3.3%)	4.08
I regularly communicate to the administration about students' needs	58 (38.7%)	54 (36.0%)	18 (12.0%)	12 (8.0%)	8 (5.3%)	3.94
I always report to class for teaching on a timely basis	72 (48.0%)	50 (33.3%)	15 (10.0%)	8 (5.3%)	5 (3.3%)	4.18
Average Mean						4.01

Source: Field Data 2025

The findings reveal that a majority of female teachers in government-aided secondary schools endeavor to prepare lesson plans on time. Specifically, 46.7% of respondents strongly agreed and 33.3% agreed with the statement, while only 10% expressed uncertainty or disagreement. With a high mean score of 4.10, this suggests a strong professional commitment to lesson preparation, which is essential for structured teaching and learning. The data indicate that female teachers are mindful of planning, positively contributing to instructional effectiveness and student learning outcomes. Regarding regular note writing in preparation for teaching, 43.3% of teachers strongly agreed and 36.7% agreed, whereas 6.7% were unsure, and 13.3% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. The mean score of 4.07 confirms that a significant number of female teachers take time to organize and write notes ahead of lessons. This level of preparation reflects good pedagogical practice, indicating that the majority value content readiness, enhancing classroom instruction quality. The statement on marking and checking students' books regularly yielded a mean of 3.98, with 40% strongly agreeing and 38.7% agreeing. However, 8% remained undecided, and 13.4% disagreed or strongly disagreed. While most female teachers are diligent in assessing students' written work, a small proportion appear inconsistent or uncertain, which could negatively affect students' academic progress due to delayed or inadequate feedback.

When asked about regularly recording marks and maintaining updated class registers, 50% strongly agreed and 30% agreed, with a mean score of 4.17—the second highest among all statements. Only a minority expressed uncertainty or disagreement. This high level of compliance indicates that female teachers maintain accurate and up-to-date academic records, demonstrating accountability and strong adherence to administrative responsibilities, which is critical for academic monitoring and evaluation. On the issue of attending school functions like assemblies and games, 36.7% strongly agreed and 33.3% agreed, resulting in a mean of 3.83. However, 30% either disagreed or were uncertain. These findings imply that while most teachers participate in extracurricular school functions, a group may view such involvement as secondary to classroom duties, highlighting an area for improvement in holistic school engagement. Concerning the provision of guidance and counseling to students, 34.7% strongly agreed and 40% agreed, while 13.3% were unsure, and 12% disagreed or strongly disagreed. With a mean score of 3.92, the results indicate that many female teachers play a supportive role in students' emotional and social

wellbeing. However, some respondents either lack the confidence or time to consistently offer counseling services, suggesting a need for enhanced training and support structures in schools.

In terms of offering career guidance, 33.3% strongly agreed and 36.7% agreed, while 16.7% were unsure, and 13.4% expressed disagreement. The mean score of 3.83 reflects a moderate level of involvement in career guidance. While the majority are supportive, the notable portion of uncertainty and disagreement may stem from limited resources or training in career development, calling for more formalized programs to aid students in making informed choices. With regard to performing weekly assigned duties, 45.3% strongly agreed and 34.7% agreed, yielding a mean of 4.08. Only 10% were not sure, and an equal proportion disagreed. These results show that most teachers are responsible and efficient in executing administrative and supervisory roles, reflecting dependability and a high degree of professional ethics. On the matter of communicating students' needs to school administration, 38.7% strongly agreed and 36% agreed, while 12% were unsure, and 13.3% disagreed or strongly disagreed. The mean score of 3.94 indicates that many teachers actively serve as a link between learners and administration, although hesitation or lack of initiative among some highlights a need for strengthening communication channels and empowering teachers to advocate for students more confidently. A strong majority of female teachers reported to class on time, with 48% strongly agreeing and 33.3% agreeing. The mean score of 4.18 the highest in the table demonstrates a strong culture of punctuality. This practice not only reflects discipline and dedication but also plays a critical role in maintaining instructional time and promoting positive learning habits among students.

The overall average mean score of 4.01 signifies a generally high level of job performance among female teachers in government-aided secondary schools. The results show strong professional behaviors in areas such as lesson planning, teaching preparedness, punctuality, and record-keeping. Although some gaps are observed in participation in school events, guidance services, and career counseling, the general trend underscores that female teachers are committed and reliable in their teaching roles, contributing meaningfully to student academic and personal development.

In addition, from the interviews, in discussing female teachers' job performance, the DEO described it as "*generally commendable*," especially in lesson preparation and delivery. Several

headteachers shared that female teachers tend to be more meticulous in preparing schemes of work and regularly engage students during lessons. One headteacher noted, “*Female teachers are more consistent in record keeping and maintaining neat classrooms*” (Interview, 25th June 2025). Nonetheless, performance can decline during times of family pressure, illness, or when a teacher has young children.

Regarding differences in performance between male and female teachers, some headteachers observed minimal variance, while others pointed out that male teachers might have more flexibility for extra roles like sports or administrative duties. A respondent stated, “*Male teachers sometimes take on more co-curricular activities, not because females are less capable, but because their home responsibilities limit them*” (Interview, 25th June 2025).

Performance appraisal mechanisms include lesson observation, checking students’ books, attendance registers, and student feedback. The DEO highlighted that “*performance appraisal is conducted at least once a term, though some schools do it more regularly through internal supervision*” (Interview, 26th June 2025). However, several headteachers noted the absence of a standardized appraisal tool.

Table 4: Correlations

		Work-Life Balance	Female Teachers' Performance
Work-Life Balance	Pearson Correlation	1	.665**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	150	150
Female Teachers' Performance	Pearson Correlation	.665**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	150	150

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

The findings revealed a strong positive relationship between work-life balance and job performance among female teachers in government-aided secondary schools, as indicated by ($r =$

.665, $p < .01$) and statistically significant at the 0.01 level. This suggests that as female teachers experience a better balance between work and personal life, their job performance tends to improve correspondingly. The high correlation coefficient implies a meaningful association, reinforcing the idea that supporting work-life balance initiatives could enhance teachers' productivity and effectiveness. These results highlight the importance of creating policies and school environments that foster a healthy balance between professional and personal responsibilities for female educators.

Discussion

The findings on the third objective, which indicate a strong positive relationship between work-life balance and job performance among female teachers in government-aided secondary schools ($r = .665$, $p < .01$), align closely with much of the existing literature. Several scholars have argued that the cumulative burden of instructional duties and non-teaching responsibilities undermines educators' capacity to perform effectively in the classroom. For instance, Ampofo et al. (2014) demonstrated that excessive teaching loads in Ghanaian secondary schools led to fatigue and diminished classroom engagement, mirroring this study's finding that better balance yields higher performance.

Other studies emphasize the role of institutional support in mitigating stressors that impede teaching quality. Obi and Obi (2014) showed that in Nigeria, administrative duties such as record keeping and counseling diverted teachers' attention from core instructional activities, lowering classroom effectiveness. Emeka and Igbinomwanhia (2015) found that female university educators saddled with event planning and disciplinary oversight experienced reduced motivation and teaching quality. This study extends these insights by quantifying the strength of the balance-performance link at a level ($r = .665$), suggesting that interventions aimed at rebalancing professional and personal demands could yield substantial gains in teaching effectiveness. However, not all literature frames the work-life trade-off so unambiguously. Likewise, Bhat and Zia (2015) noted that married female teachers in India often negotiate domestic and professional roles in ways that can buffer stress rather than exacerbate it. These nuanced perspectives suggest that the mere reduction of non-teaching tasks may not uniformly improve performance; support programs must also be sensitive to individual preferences and cultural contexts. This study, while

strongly supportive of balance measures, invites further inquiry into how different forms of “balance” are experienced and leveraged by teachers.

Conclusion

A significant and positive relationship between work–life balance and job performance among female teachers in government-aided secondary schools underscores the critical role that personal well-being plays in professional effectiveness. With a correlation of $r = .665$ ($p < .01$), it is evident that initiatives aimed at helping educators harmonize their work and personal lives are not merely supportive measures but strategic investments in instructional quality and student outcomes. To capitalize on these benefits, school leaders and policymakers should prioritize flexible scheduling, access to supportive services, and a culture that values teachers’ holistic needs.

Recommendations

Schools should develop and adopt flexible scheduling arrangements such as staggered start times, part-time teaching options, and provision for remote planning days to help female teachers better manage their professional and personal demands. By accommodating individual circumstances, such as childcare responsibilities or eldercare commitments, administrators can reduce work–family conflict and, in turn, bolster instructional quality and overall job performance.

Government-aided secondary schools should partner with community organizations or invest in on-site support services such as childcare facilities, counseling centers, and wellness programs. Access to reliable, affordable support resources can alleviate personal stressors, enabling teachers to remain focused and energized during instructional hours, thereby enhancing their effectiveness in the classroom.

School leaders and department heads should model healthy work–life boundaries and engage in ongoing training on best practices for promoting staff well-being. By embedding work–life balance as a core leadership value through regular check-ins, recognition of teachers’ efforts, and clear expectations regarding working hours, schools can cultivate an environment where female educators feel empowered to balance their roles, directly contributing to sustained improvements in job performance.

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