
mLAC Journal for Arts, Commerce and Sciences (m-JACS)
Volume 4, No.5, April 2026, P 1-11
ISSN: 2584-1920 (Online)

**WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND JOB SATISFACTION: A BIBLIOMETRIC
ANALYSIS OF WOMEN CENTRIC RESEARCH**

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Paper Received: 23.01.2026 | Revised: 26.03.2026 | Accepted: 30.04.2026

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.59415/mjacs.336> | ARK: <https://n2t.net/ark:/26340/MJACS.v4i5.336>

Abstract

This comprehensive bibliometric study conducts an in-depth examination of the evolving publication trends and the intricate intellectual landscape surrounding research focused specifically on work-life balance and job satisfaction within women-centred settings. To achieve its objectives, the study employs data sourced from a meticulously curated academic database, combined with advanced analytical tools such as VOS viewer software. This approach enables the researchers to illustrate how scholarly output has transformed over time. Notably, the findings indicate a substantial increase in the number of publications on this subject, particularly since the year 2002, highlighting a growing interest in these critical issues.

The analysis of co-authorship networks reveals a significant trend toward increased collaboration among researchers, showcasing a more interconnected academic community. This growing cooperative spirit is evidenced by the formation of robust research groups that coalesce around shared themes that not only address the specific focus of work-life balance and job satisfaction but also traverse various academic disciplines. Furthermore, the assessment of contributions at the country level provides valuable insights into which geographical regions are producing the most significant research outputs within this domain, thereby underscoring the global relevance of the topic. Additionally, a full counting co-occurrence analysis of conceptual mapping has illuminated certain key themes that are central to the discourse in this field. These themes, such as "employee wellbeing," "job performance," "economic structure," and "gender roles," are identified as particularly critical areas of focus that warrant further exploration. The visualized bibliometric patterns generated through this study enhance our understanding of the structural dynamics at play and the pivotal concepts that are actively shaping the direction of research in work-life balance and job satisfaction. Ultimately, this bibliometric analysis not only sheds light on the current state of research but also provides a solid quantitative foundation for future scholarly inquiries, paving the way for continued exploration and deeper understanding of these essential topics.

Keywords: Bibliometric Analysis, Women Centric Research, Job Satisfaction, Work-Life Balance, Women in Workforce.

1. INTRODUCTION

Work-life balance and job satisfaction are critical factors influencing the well-being and productivity of women in higher education. The integration of professional and personal responsibilities has become increasingly challenging, particularly for women, who often bear a disproportionate burden of caregiving and domestic duties. This response explores the relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction among women in higher education, drawing on insights from various studies to provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges, influencing factors, and potential solutions (Varalakshmi et al., 2023) (Ali, S. E. 2024).

1.1 The Importance of Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance is essential for maintaining job satisfaction and overall well-being. It refers to the ability to manage the demands of work and personal life effectively, ensuring that neither domain encroaches excessively on the other. For women in higher education, achieving this balance is often complicated by the dual responsibilities of academic and family life. Research indicates that work-life balance significantly influences job satisfaction and employee performance, particularly among female employees (Haerani et al., 2023).

Studies have shown that female employees who experience a better work-life balance tend to have higher job satisfaction and improved performance (Haerani et al., 2023) (Jamunarani & Syed, 2024). Conversely, poor work-life balance can lead to stress, burnout, and decreased job satisfaction, which may ultimately affect productivity and retention in higher education institutions (P, Aithal, & D, 2024) (Sumathi & Velmurugan, 2020).

1.2 Challenges in Achieving Work-Life Balance

Women in higher education face unique challenges in achieving work-life balance. These challenges often stem from the intersection of professional and personal responsibilities, which can be exacerbated by institutional and societal factors (Adebayo, A. et al. 2020) (Lawson, K. M. et al. 2023).

1.3 Gendered Roles and Caregiving Responsibilities

Loa Gordon et al. (2024), Women often bear the primary responsibility for caregiving and domestic duties, which can conflict with the demands of an academic career. This is particularly true for academic mothers, who face the dual burden of teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities alongside childcare and household management (Medina et al., 2024) (Gupta, S. (2021). The gendered nature of caregiving roles creates a significant barrier to achieving work-life balance, as women are often expected to prioritize family responsibilities over professional obligations.

1.4 Workload and Institutional Expectations

The academic profession is characterized by high workloads, including teaching, research, and administrative duties. Women in higher education often face the pressure to meet these demands while also fulfilling family responsibilities, leading to work-family conflict (Begum et al., 2024) (Bashir & Khan, 2022). The demanding nature of academic work, coupled with the lack of support from institutions, further exacerbates the challenge of achieving work-life balance (Sasikumar, G. M. & Sujatha, S. 2024) (S. P. Ashtikar & G. Manoharan 2024).

1.5 Lack of Institutional Support

Institutional support is crucial for helping women achieve work-life balance. However, many higher education institutions lack policies and programs that address the specific needs of female employees (Pillay, V. 2022). For example, the absence of flexible work arrangements, childcare support, and mentorship programs can hinder women's ability to balance their professional and personal lives (P, Aithal, & D, 2024) (Wani, 2023).

1.6 Impact of Work-Life Balance on Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is closely linked to work-life balance. Women in higher education who experience a better work-life balance tend to have higher job satisfaction, as they are able to manage their professional and personal responsibilities more effectively (Haerani et al., 2023) (P, Aithal, & D, 2024). Conversely, poor work-life balance can lead to dissatisfaction, which may result in decreased productivity, increased turnover, and reduced commitment to the institution (Sumathi & Velmurugan, 2020) (J. H. S. & Syed, R. 2024).

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The bibliometric analysis of job satisfaction and work-life balance for women-centric careers reveals a complex interplay of variables that influence the experiences of women workers in the workplace. The studies as a whole indicate, particularly among women, the crucial role that work-life balance plays in influencing job satisfaction and performance, and they emphasize the necessity for additional targeted research to address the specific challenges that women face in various work contexts. Additionally, this study highlights the growing necessity for flexible work schedules as well as the psychological consequences of work-life balance on female employees. The main results of the research are as follows.

2.1 Job satisfaction and work-life balance

Work-life balance is crucial for female workers' job satisfaction and performance. According to research, especially

for women working for various organizations (Haerani et al., 2023), maintaining a balance between one's personal and professional life significantly improves one's job satisfaction and productivity. Flexible work arrangements are now viewed as a critical instrument for preserving the mental health and job satisfaction of female employees (Chen et al., 2024) (Jackson, L. T. & Fransman, E. I. (2018), and the psychological impacts of work-life balance are becoming increasingly understood.

2.2 Challenges and Trends

Malaysian female engineers struggle to balance work and life since there is little study that addresses their specific requirements. This highlights a knowledge gap about the challenges women in engineering jobs encounter with work-life balance (Chen et al., 2024). The digital era has introduced new dynamics, with flexible work hours blurring the boundaries between one's personal and professional life. The need for gender-sensitive laws that address the unique challenges women face in the digital age has been brought to light by this (Owusu, 2024).

2.3 Cultural and Contextual Factors

Cultural and contextual variables have a big impact on how women view work-life balance. The study claims that women from different socioeconomic backgrounds do not always place a high priority on achieving a work-life balance, highlighting the need for culturally aware approaches to policymaking (Susilowati et al., 2024).

Even though the study provides valuable insights into women's job satisfaction and work-life balance, it also highlights the necessity for additional, more inclusive research. Future studies should focus on the impact of digitalization and cultural diversity on work-life balance, particularly in underserved regions and sectors, to develop more effective strategies for enhancing women's work satisfaction and productivity.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

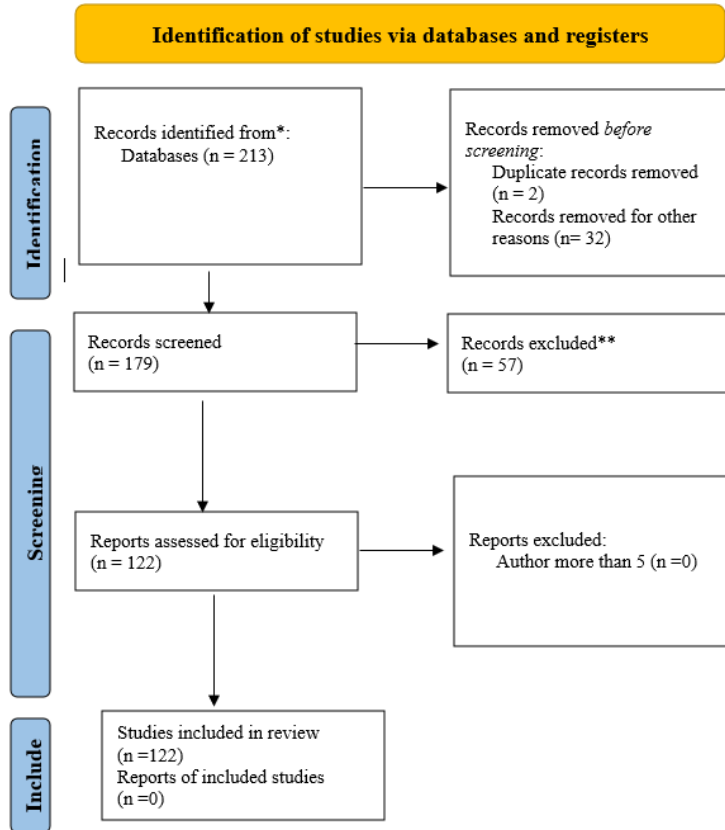
3.1 Research Design: This study employed a quantitative bibliometric approach to examine academic trends related to job satisfaction and work-life balance, with a focus on research that centres on women. Using specialized search words that include terms like "work life balance," "job satisfaction," and "women" aided in the methodical data collection from established academic databases like OpenAlex. The dataset comprised publication information, abstracts, keywords, author names, country, and references. The next step was to apply a collection of bibliometric techniques using VOS viewer. The keyword co-occurrence analysis produced three conceptual clusters sociological/gendered frameworks, organizational behaviour themes, and foundational balance constructs that allowed for a nuanced reading of research directions. Metrics like frequency, centrality, and link strength were used to identify thematic dominance and degree of cooperation. Visualizations were made to improve both analytical clarity and presentation impact. By combining structural and conceptual observations, this methodology offered a comprehensive, layered view of the academic landscape, which may be used to inform future study and legislative implementations. Co-authorship mapping revealed dense but fragmented academic networks, while country cooperation networks identified significant cross-national partnerships. Citation network analysis discovered important works and intellectual clusters, thus illuminating fundamental contributions and thematic development.

3.2 Objectives:

- To track how publication numbers have changed
- To evaluate geographic patterns of collaboration
- To identify dominant thematic clusters

4. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 PRISMA Model



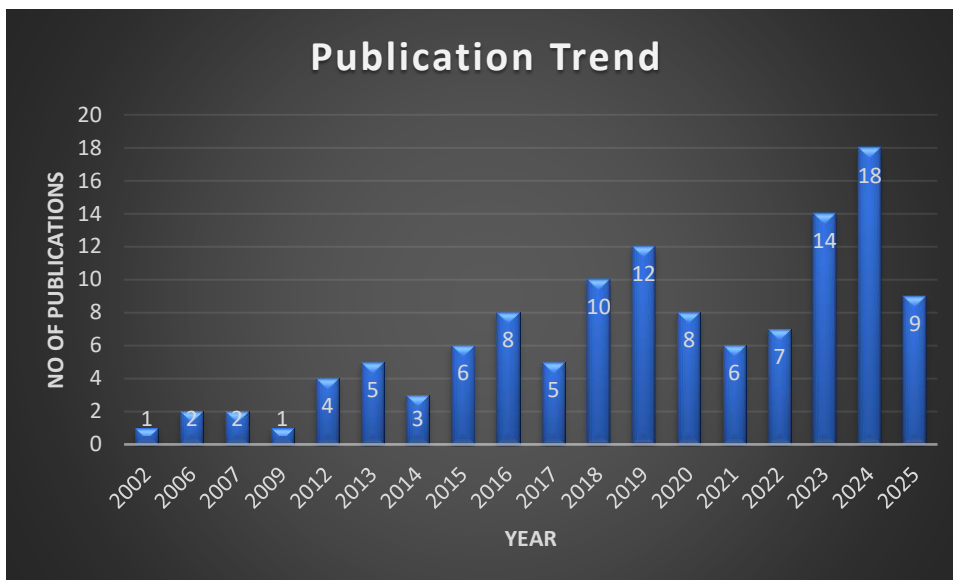
Consider, if feasible to do so, reporting the number of records identified from each database or register searched (rather than the total number across all databases/registers).

**If automation tools were used, indicate how many records were excluded by a human and how many were excluded by automation tools.

Source: Page MJ, et al. *BMJ* 2021;372:n71. doi: 10.1136/bmj.n71.

Interpretation: Database searches found the first pool of 213 papers using the systematic review's screening criteria and PRISMA flow chart. Following the identification phase, 2 duplicate entries and 32 files deemed unsuitable owing to inaccessibility or formatting issues were removed, leaving 179 records qualified for first screening. Then the titles and abstracts of these 179 papers were assessed; 57 of them were rejected for failing to satisfy the inclusion requirements in terms of relevance, quality, and alignment. Demonstrating that the requirements had been well established and appropriately executed, the last 122 full text papers underwent an eligibility screening process free of any other exceptions. Remarkably, none of the 122 papers exceeded the allowed threshold for the number of authors, although it was taken into account as a possible exclusion criterion; hence, all 122 were preserved for the last assessment.

4.2 Trend of Publication



Interpretation: The annual publication trend from 2002 to 2025 demonstrates a significant shift in scholarly attention to the topic. The first few years, from 2002 to 2009, are rather quiet, suggesting either a growing academic curiosity or a lack of understanding. Research output began to pick up steam between 2012 and 2016, indicating an increase in relevance that may be connected to societal changes or early legislative discussions. The rapid progress between 2017 and 2020 points to an expansion in academic endeavors supported by institutions and increasing international recognition. The trend reaches its highest output with 18 publications in 2024, which likely indicates interdisciplinary collaboration, special issue calls, or policy-driven research programs, reaching its peak in 2023 and 2024. Although the number of publications may somewhat decline to nine in 2025, this may be the result of indexing delays or ongoing peer review processes rather than a sign of diminished interest. In general, the route indicates an increasingly cohesive research environment defined by growing academic commitment and potential practical applicability.

4.3 Network Analysis for Country Collaboration



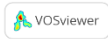
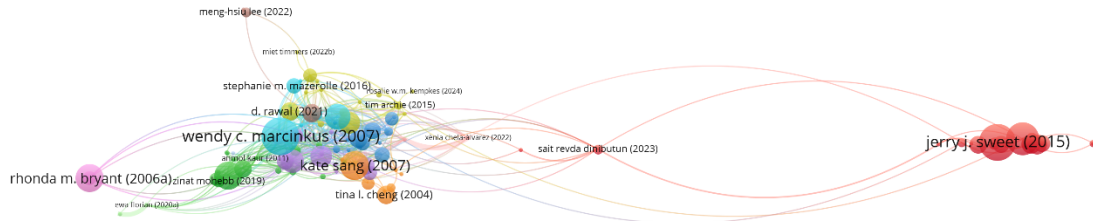
Interpretation: Using country-level nodes and linking lines to depict coauthorship or citation connections, the visualization shows global cooperation patterns within a certain research field. Countries like Malaysia and Australia establish a strong bilateral relationship, therefore pointing to many joint publications mostly in applied or regional sciences. Poland and France also gather, pointing to a potent research partnership centred on Europe, perhaps in social science fields. Separated in a distinct cluster are Italy and Japan, therefore pointing to intercontinental cooperation, possibly around technology or policy-related ideas. The different cluster hues help to define thematic or geographical clusters, so offering ideas on how research communities grow over across continents. This framework not only emphasizes important academic ties but also enables governments and colleges to spot strategic centres for promoting world research collaborations and connecting fractured networks. Cross cluster ties can be strengthened to promote multidisciplinary invention and increase the prominence of newly developing fields of study.

4.4 Co Authorship Network



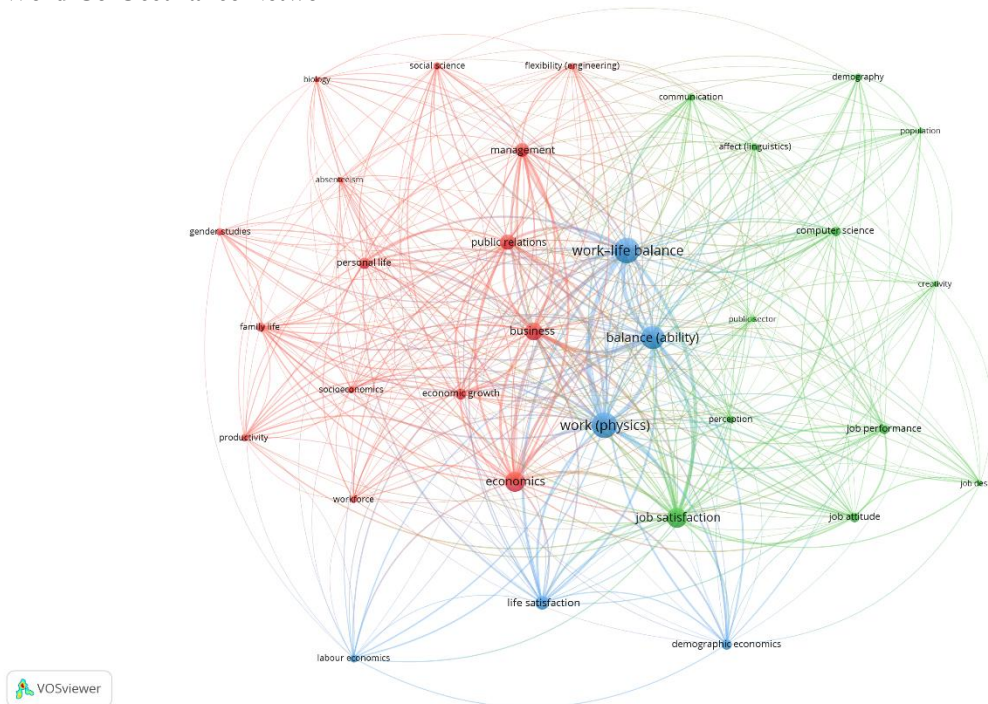
Interpretation: The coauthor ship network reveals significant dynamics within academic collaboration and provides helpful insights for enhancing research design, interdisciplinary conversation, and institutional strategy. Central hubs with significant impact in mentoring academic networks and directing thematic directions are well-known researchers like P. S. Aithal and Sonia Delrose Noronha. Their presence emphasizes possible collaboration paths, particularly for organizations looking to enhance their academic footprints or early-career researchers. Dense intra-cluster links suggest a strong, restricted experience, but they may also point to silos. Promoting cross cluster contacts bridging groups with supporting strengths can help to create varied perspectives and creative results. In addition to supporting balanced knowledge generation, the network places a special emphasis on underserved individuals who would benefit from conscious inclusion in collaborative initiatives. Additionally, these trends might affect journal selection and conference targeting, helping researchers increase their exposure and engage with active publishing groups. Such networks provide colleges with clear evidence of their academic impact, which aids with grant applications, collaborations, and rankings. Co-authorship maps are not just analytical tools; they are priceless strategic resources that enhance collaboration quality, inform academic decision-making, and create fresh opportunities across research ecosystems. Combining these ideas with topical mapping like job satisfaction or work life balance can help to more clearly explain how cooperation shapes social science discussions.

4.5 Bibliometric Citation Network



Interpretation: The VOS viewer-based depiction emphasizes a bibliometric citation network and maps academic influence inside a research corpus that focuses on subjects like work-life balance and job satisfaction. The size of each node indicates the number of times an author has been cited; each node stands for a cited author. The network is divided into colour coded clusters that reflect thematic affinities and intellectual schools of thought. One significant group, highlighted in red, focuses on the early influential study on gender equality and professional wellbeing by Wendy C. Marcinkus (2007) and Kate Sang (2004). In contrast, the green cluster, which is centred on Jerry J. Sweet (2015) and more recent works such as Xenia Chela Alvarez (2022), indicates a change in priorities, maybe including workplace conduct and mental wellbeing. The relationship between citations across clusters demonstrates how later research builds upon or extends key ideas, thereby emphasizing both intellectual continuity and divergence. Additionally, this visual map enables researchers to follow shifts in subject emphasis over time, identify frequently cited opinion leaders, and trace significant contributors. This summary will assist you in reviewing the literature for your bibliometric research, grounding your framework in reliable publications while also highlighting recent developments that are shaping the discussion in professional studies focused on women.

4.6 Key Word Co-Occurance Network



Interpretation: The visualization, which employs VOS viewer, depicts a keyword co-occurrence network that maps conceptual connections between research projects focused on work life balance, job satisfaction, and other similar interdisciplinary topics. The size of a node indicates how well-known or how often it is used in the literature, and each node represents a popular phrase in the literature. Thematic groupings are represented by the colour coded clusters, while the strength of co-occurrence is represented by the boundaries between nodes. There are three primary categories that are evident. By linking terms like gender studies, personal life, family life, productivity, and socioeconomics, the red cluster points to sociological and gendered perspectives on work life dynamics. Works that look at how sociodemographic factors influence work-life balance are likely included in this category. The green cluster is defined by job satisfaction, performance, attitude, and creativity, and it symbolizes a psychological and HR-oriented area that prioritizes employee outcomes, organizational loyalty, and personal initiative. The blue cluster highlights words like work-life balance, balance (ability), life satisfaction, and work (physics), which are fundamental conceptual frameworks and measurable indicators connected to balance theory and subjective wellbeing. In addition to demonstrating thematic consistency between studies, this map may help researchers identify important keywords, thematic gaps, and new areas for research. Especially helpful for refining your search phrases, designing questionnaires, or structuring the chapters of a literature review.

5. FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The bibliometric study offers a multidimensional picture of the academic environment surrounding work-life balance and job happiness, especially from a women-centric viewpoint. The nation partnership network displayed strong bilateral research ties, primarily between Western nations, with notable contributions from the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia. Nevertheless, the Global South especially South Asian and African regions seemed underrepresented, indicating a geographical disparity in collaborative research output.

The co-authorship network resembled disjointed collaboration, with dense clusters forming around prolific academics and institutions but minimal interaction between them. This suggests the potential for greater cooperation across institutions and disciplines. The citation network regularly referenced basic research on work happiness and work-life balance, which served as the field's intellectual foundation. Numerous nodes that mirrored studies based on HRM and psychology were particularly effective in demonstrating the prevalence of these subjects in directing ongoing research. The keyword cooccurrence analysis, which was visualized using VOS viewer, highlighted three major thematic clusters: sociological and gendered concerns (e. g., family life, socioeconomic, gender studies), organizational behaviour (e. g., job satisfaction, performance, creativity), and fundamental theoretical concepts (e. g., work life

balance, life satisfaction). Several clusters were connected by key terms like job satisfaction and work life balance, demonstrating their conceptual relevance. New words like creativity, balance ability, and adaptability suggested shifting academic interests in relation to modern work environments.

Numerous deliberate strategies are advised to encourage future research. The literature must first be geographically diverse. By increasing contributions from underrepresented regions, notably South Asia and Africa, we can enrich global perspectives, particularly when it comes to gendered workplace dynamics. Second, it's critical to foster cross cluster co-authorship; initiatives that foster interdisciplinary and Mult institutional collaboration can help bridge current divides and spark innovation.

Future studies should also examine new notions such creativity, flexibility, and life happiness to see how they relate to the work-life balance of women in contemporary jobs.

Finally, presenting results via visual storytelling such as keyword cluster maps or country collaboration flowcharts enhances discussion in academic forums. In addition to identifying current trends, this comprehensive, layered bibliometric approach offers a strategic roadmap for inclusive and evolving scholarship in social science studies on work life dynamics.

6. CONCLUSION

This bibliometric analysis offers a thorough examination of scholarly trends in work-life balance and job satisfaction, particularly focusing on research that is women-centric. The study employs several analytical layers, such as keyword cooccurrence analysis, citation network analysis, co-authorship mapping, and nation cooperation, to identify significant intellectual domains and structural shifts in the field. The keyword cluster visualization revealed three primary thematic strands: underlying theoretical ideas, psychological and organizational behaviour, and gendered social structures. Core concepts like work-life balance and job satisfaction confirmed their conceptual centrality by demonstrating strong inter cluster connectivity. New factors like creativity and adaptability point to shifting research routes that align with ongoing workforce changes.

The nation partnership and citation networks highlighted the necessity for greater inclusion of perspectives from the Global South, highlighting Western supremacy. The study, which I co-authored, discovered a local academic community with minimal interdisciplinary and cross-institutional participation. Collectively, these findings point to the fact that despite the abundance of topics covered by the field, it remains divided in terms of its worldwide and collaborative visibility.

In the end, the study suggests a more inclusive and integrated research strategy that transcends geographic, disciplinary, and methodological barriers. Future research should focus on underrepresented narratives, foster international cooperation, and incorporate novel ideas that reflect the reality of the modern workplace. Such endeavours will be crucial in promoting equity, relevance, and rigor in social science studies of the dynamics of work life.

7. STATEMENTS & DECLARATIONS:

Use of AI Statement

The authors declare that they have not used generative artificial intelligence, specifically ChatGPT in the writing of this manuscript and/or in the creation of images, graphics, tables, or their corresponding captions

Conflict of Interest and Declarations:

Authorship contribution statement: Anusha K: Carrying the Experimental work, Data curation and writing the original manuscript and original draft.

Acknowledgements: Nil

Compliance with Ethical Standards:

Conflict of Interest : The authors state that they don't have any conflict of interest.

Animal and Human Participants: Nil

Informed consent : Authors stated that there is no informed consent in the article.

Funding : Nil

Data availability: All the data included in this research article will be provided on request

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