FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS, SUPERVISOR SUPPORT, AND TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLE IN A SHIPPING COMPANY: EFFECTS ON WORK-LIFE BALANCE

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Abstrak

Kajian ini meneliti kesan pengaturan kerja fleksibel, sokongan penyelia, dan gaya kepimpinan transformasi terhadap keseimbangan kerja-hidup (WLB) dalam kalangan pekerja industri perkapalan. Memandangkan tuntutan kerja yang tinggi dalam sektor ini, mencapai keseimbangan kerja-hidup kekal sebagai cabaran utama. Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk menyiasat bagaimana faktor organisasi ini mempengaruhi keupayaan pekerja dalam mengimbangi tanggungjawab kerja dan peribadi. Reka bentuk penyelidikan kuantitatif digunakan dengan tinjauan soal selidik berstruktur yang melibatkan 190 pekerja di sebuah firma perkapalan di Malaysia. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa pengaturan kerja fleksibel dan sokongan penyelia secara signifikan meningkatkan keseimbangan kerja-hidup, manakala gaya kepimpinan transformasi memerlukan pendekatan yang lebih berfokus kepada kesejahteraan pekerja untuk memberi sokongan yang berkesan terhadap WLB. Kajian ini menekankan kepentingan pelaksanaan dasar kerja fleksibel dan penglibatan penyelia dalam meningkatkan kesejahteraan serta kepuasan kerja pekerja. Selain itu, organisasi yang memberi penekanan kepada keseimbangan kerja-hidup dapat mengurangkan kadar pusing ganti pekerja serta meningkatkan produktiviti. Implikasi praktikal dan teori turut dibincangkan, dengan cadangan untuk amalan pengurusan sumber manusia dan strategi kepimpinan dalam organisasi perkapalan. Kajian ini menyumbang kepada literatur sedia ada mengenai fleksibiliti kerja dan kesejahteraan pekerja, khususnya dalam industri yang berintensifkan kerja.

Kata kunci: Pengaturan kerja fleksibel, sokongan penyelia, kepimpinan transformasi, keseimbangan kerja-hidup, industri perkapalan.

Abstract

This study examines the impact of flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, and transformational leadership style on work-life balance (WLB) among employees in the shipping industry. Given the high job demands in this sector, achieving WLB remains a significant challenge. The purpose of this study is to investigate how these organizational factors influence employees' ability to balance work and personal responsibilities. A quantitative research design was employed, utilizing a structured survey to collect data from 190 employees in a Malaysian shipping firm. The findings reveal that flexible work arrangements and supervisor support significantly enhance work-life balance, whereas transformational leadership requires a more employee-focused approach to effectively support WLB. The study highlights the importance of implementing flexible policies and fostering supervisor involvement to improve employee well-being and job satisfaction. Additionally, organizations that emphasize work-life balance experience lower turnover rates and higher productivity. Practical and theoretical implications are discussed, providing recommendations for HR practices and leadership strategies in shipping organizations. This research contributes to the growing body of knowledge on workplace flexibility and employee well-being, particularly in demanding industries.

Keywords: Flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, transformational leadership style, work-life balance, shipping industry.

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1. CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the research, including the study's background, problem statement, research questions, and objectives. Additionally, it outlines the scope, significance, key terms, and organization of the thesis structure.

1.1 Background

Work-life balance (WLB) is an essential aspect of contemporary employment, influencing how people juggle their job duties with personal obligations. In Malaysia's shipping sector, where lengthy hours, prolonged absences from home, and challenging working conditions are commonplace, achieving a healthy work-life balance is particularly important. A balanced approach to work can promote increased flexibility in work arrangements, improved support from supervisors, and the use of transformational leadership styles all of which boost productivity, lower stress, and decrease the likelihood of burnout. Loana et al. (2021) suggest that work-life balance is not a static accomplishment but an ongoing process that demands frequent contemplation and modification. They highlight that people need to proactively re-evaluate their priorities, identify emotional cues of discord, and try out different approaches to sustain a balanced relationship between work and personal life. By embracing a cyclical method, employees and organizations can cultivate a more positive work atmosphere, boost well-being, and enhance overall productivity.

Beyond individual well-being, prioritizing work-life balance also benefits organizations. It helps reduce employee turnover, enabling companies to retain skilled workers while lowering the costs associated with frequent staff replacements. Moreover, companies that actively promote work-life balance not only comply with labor laws but also enhance their reputation as employers of choice. By attracting top talent and fostering a positive organizational culture, these companies position themselves for long-term success in the highly competitive global maritime industry.

As of 2024, Malaysia is home to a thriving shipping industry, comprising both private and government-operated companies. This dynamic sector plays a vital role in the country's trade-dependent economy, managing a significant volume of international and domestic cargo. With services ranging from freight forwarding and shipping agency operations to logistics and customs clearance, the industry benefits greatly from Malaysia's strategic geographical location and well-developed infrastructure.

Globally, work-life balance has gained widespread recognition and implementation. Among the nations leading the way in exemplary work-life balance practices, ten stand out for their progressive approaches. These countries have successfully integrated policies that promote a healthier equilibrium between professional and personal life, setting benchmarks for others to follow.

Table 1.1: Ranking of world wide work life balance

Overall Rank	Country & Capital City	Region	Index Score / 100	Happiness Index
10	Brazil, Brasilia	Americas	67.73	8
9	Canada, Ottawa	Americas	67.91	90
8	United Kingdom, London	Europe	69.07	82
7	Netherlands, Amsterdam	Europe	69.14	85
6	Norway, Oslo	Europe	73.05	86
5	Denmark, Copenhagen	Europe	73.67	86
4	Australia, Canberra	Oceania	73.71	84
3	France, Paris	Europe	75.34	78
2	Spain, Madrid	Europe	75.55	84
1	New Zealand, Wellington	Oceania	79.35	78

In (2024), Gupta pinpointed the leading nations in worldwide work-life balance, acknowledging them as trailblazers in creating a brighter future for work. At the top of the list are New Zealand, Spain, France, Australia, and Denmark. In Asia, Taiwan holds the top

position at 16th, with Singapore at 19th and South Korea at 32nd. These countries have adopted the work-life balance (WLB) concept, allocating resources to improve employee welfare and efficiency, establishing a standard for others to emulate.

Attaining a fulfilling work-life balance is crucial for overall wellness, job contentment, and efficiency, significantly influencing both mental and physical health Greenhaus & Allen, (2020). Preena & Gnei (2021) investigated the impact of work-life balance on employee performance in the clothing and telecom sectors. In the meantime, MSEd, K. C. (2023) tackled a prevalent misunderstanding that achieving balance necessitates a perfect 50/50 division between work and personal life. Rather, Kendra highlighted that genuine balance is very subjective, differing from individual to individual and changing throughout various life stages. The crucial point, as emphasized by MSEd, K. C. (2023), is to make sure that no single part of life dominates or drains the others.

As stated by Kossek et al. (2018), contemporary workers desire more than mere monetary rewards they also appreciate a standard of living that enables them to successfully manage their work and personal obligations. This change emphasizes the necessity for organizations to comprehend how they can promote work-life balance to improve employee satisfaction and performance. At its essence, work-life balance seeks to establish a workplace where people can effectively handle their personal and professional responsibilities, thereby promoting a motivated and committed workforce.

Dugan et al. (2016) discovered that workers who sense a balance between their personal and work lives generally encounter elevated work-life balance, lower stress, and enhanced overall well-being. On the other hand, an absence of balance may result in burnout, lower productivity, and increased employee turnover, highlighting the necessity of tackling this matter comprehensively.

An effective approach for organizations to promote work-life balance is to establish policies that recognize the varied requirements of their employees. These might encompass adaptable work hours, telecommuting possibilities, and assistance for family obligations. Russo et al. (2015) emphasized the importance of cultivating a workplace culture that appreciates and honors employees' time both at work and beyond. Merely having policies established is insufficient; organizations need to actively promote and support a workplace culture where achieving a healthy balance between work and personal life is regarded as vital.

Ensuring a healthy balance between work and personal life boosts individual wellness and also benefits organizational performance. A study by Haar et al. (2014) discovered that workers who maintain a robust work-life balance are more efficient, show increased creativity, and display stronger loyalty to their employers. This consequently results in substantial organizational advantages, including an enhanced reputation, lower absenteeism, and increased employee retention rates. For companies, encouraging work-life balance is not merely a moral obligation it is a tactical requirement for enduring success. By cultivating a nurturing workplace that prioritizes both professional and personal wellness, companies can build a more committed and dedicated team.

Nonetheless, attaining work-life balance is not a universal solution. Various demographic segments of the workforce encounter distinct challenges, necessitating customized assistance to aid them in managing their professional and personal obligations efficiently. Allen et al. (2013) emphasize the significance of acknowledging these varied needs, especially for working parents, single caregivers, and those caring for elderly relatives. By addressing these diverse needs, organizations can foster an inclusive and supportive environment where every employee has the opportunity to succeed.

A recent study carried out in Malaysia by Standard Insights in March (2024), with 500 participants, showed that 55% of Malaysians favor a hybrid work model. This method merges the adaptability of remote work with the organization of face-to-face engagements, providing employees the advantages of both options.

Work-life balance (WLB) has become the key element in job satisfaction, with 60.3% of respondents deeming it essential. Job security was next at 58.1%, with chances for professional growth coming in third at 53.1%, and equitable pay at 49.4%. At the same time, flexible working hours and locations were recognized as the sixth most crucial aspect, with 45.4% of respondents highlighting its significance.

These results highlight the essential importance of adaptable work setups in enhancing work-life harmony. By allowing employees to effectively handle health care needs, parenting duties, and personal time, these arrangements greatly enhance overall well-being. A well-rounded strategy for managing both work and personal obligations improves job fulfilment and promotes a healthier, more involved employee base.

Additionally, the request for flexibility in the workplace indicates a wider global shift where work-life balance is becoming more important. In Malaysia, this change has become

increasingly evident following the pandemic, with 42.3% of Malaysians prioritizing work-life balance and another 31.4% recognizing its significance for their overall health.

In the last ten years, the idea of work-life balance has become more significant because of changes in workforce demographics, shifting cultural norms, and increased recognition of the adverse impacts of ineffective work-life integration. These elements have led to a growing focus on sustaining a healthy equilibrium between work and personal life, highlighting the necessity for organizations to implement adaptable work policies that match employees' changing expectations.

Work-life balance (WLB) is a multifaceted and dynamic notion that carries significant consequences for individuals and organizations alike. As the workforce evolves, it becomes more apparent that fostering an environment that promotes a healthy balance between work and personal life is essential. Companies that emphasize employee welfare and adopt supportive measures can boost job satisfaction, minimize stress, and improve overall performance. Therefore, enhancing work-life balance is not only an ethical issue it is a strategic requirement for creating a sustainable and successful workplace in the current corporate environment.

This study emphasizes the vital significance of work-family balance, whether overtly mentioned or subtly acknowledged, in influencing employees' well-being and productivity. Even with increasing recognition of its importance, there is still a considerable gap in research related to flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, transformational leadership, and their combined effect on work-life balance in the shipping sector.

This research investigates the complex connection between professional and personal life in organizational settings, analyzing the impact of flexible work options, supervisor assistance, and transformational leadership approaches on work-life balance. By examining these essential elements, the study seeks to offer important insights into cultivating a supportive and high-performing workplace.

1.2 Problem Statement

Achieving a balance between work and personal life (WLB) is a growing concern for organizations, especially in high-pressure sectors like the shipping industry. Employees in this field often work long hours, spend extended periods away from home, and experience high job demands, making it difficult to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Despite the increasing recognition

of WLB as a crucial factor in employee well-being and productivity, many companies still struggle to create effective policies that allow employees to balance work and personal obligations. The imbalance between professional and personal life negatively impacts not only individual well-being but also corporate performance, employee productivity, and retention Wong et al. (2020). The research determined that a positive work-life balance aids employees in maintaining their health, motivation, and productivity. When workers can balance their professional and personal lives effectively, they experience reduced stress and perform more efficiently. Organizations that promote work-life balance also gain advantages as their employees are more content, remain longer, and excel in their performance. In summary, work-life balance matters not only for workers but also for the success of companies Marecki (2024).

Work-life balance (WLB) is essential for ensuring the overall well-being of employees. Studies indicate that an imbalance between work and personal life can lead to serious health issues. The research titled "Work–Life Balance and Mental and Physical Health among Warsaw Professionals" an indicates that those with inadequate WLB are at a greater risk of developing musculoskeletal disorders, chronic headaches, fatigue, and overall physical exhaustion. The research highlights that prolonged work-related stress adversely affects both mental and physical well-being, raising the likelihood of enduring health issues. These results emphasize the importance for organizations to adopt supportive WLB policies to safeguard employee well-being and boost productivity in the workplace Borowiec and Drygas (2022). Chronic stress is strongly associated with the onset of sleep issues, anxiety, and depression. These circumstances greatly reduce the quality of life for employees and negatively affect work performance. The study says a scoping review revealed a significant link between work-related stress and depression, emphasizing the harmful impacts on mental well-being Du Prel et al. (2024).

This research discovered that an inadequate work-life balance results in heightened stress and diminished quality of life for academics. The study indicates that organizations ought to adopt flexible work practices and offer workshops focused on crisis management, time management, and resilience to improve work-life balance Aye et al. (2024). Limited social support is associated with increased burnout and lower job satisfaction. A quantitative study discovered that workers with minimal social support encounter higher levels of burnout and reduced job satisfaction Stanley and Sebastine (2023b).

1.2.1 The Role of Flexible Work Arrangements

Studies indicate that FWAs are a crucial resource for employees in balancing their work and family obligations. Research from Scholar-Works at San José State University revealed that FWAs greatly diminish work-to-family conflict by granting employees increased control over their timetables. This decrease in conflict results in enhanced work-life balance, reduced stress levels, and greater job satisfaction Klinker (n.d.). Studies show that the capacity to modify one's work hours can greatly influence job-related stress and overall satisfaction. In particular, having the ability to alter one's timetable has been linked to a 20% decrease in the chance of facing job stress and a 62% rise in the likelihood of job satisfaction Ray and Pana-Cryan (2021b).

However, this research examined the impact of FWAs on employee performance in a maritime educational setting, emphasizing a beneficial connection between FWAs and employee performance Eshak (2021). The CIPD report "Flexible and Hybrid Working Practices in 2023" emphasizes the growing desire for flexible work options, as a larger number of employees pursue enhanced autonomy and work-life balance. Nonetheless, numerous employers find it difficult to implement these policies successfully because of worries regarding productivity, team dynamics, and communication issues. The report highlights the necessity for organizations to create clear strategies and organized policies to guarantee that flexible work setups are in sync with operational needs while preserving business efficiency. Moreover, wider trends in the UK indicate an increasing implementation of flexible work arrangements, as businesses lessen required office attendance and the government explores options like compressed workweeks to boost productivity. These results highlight the significance of strategic planning and adaptation for successfully executing flexible work policies in contemporary workplaces CIPD (2023).

1.2.2 The Influence of Supervisor Support on Work-Life Balance

Supervisor support is another critical factor in maintaining a healthy WLB. Managers and supervisors shape workplace culture and play a significant role in employees' experiences at work Geraldes et al. (2024). This research discovered that work-family conflict had a positive correlation with fatigue in ferry shipping workers, whereas support from supervisors was associated with decreased physical tiredness and diminished motivation. Moreover, supervisor support mitigated the adverse effects of work-family conflict on the physical dimensions of fatigue Dohrmann et al. (2019). This is especially crucial in high-stress industries like shipping, where long hours and tight deadlines can quickly lead to burnout.

This research shows that support from supervisors greatly impacts employees' use of flexible work arrangements (FWAs) and improves job performance. It highlights that supervisor promoting work-life balance by nurturing a supportive and compassionate work atmosphere lead to enhanced job satisfaction, reduced stress, and better employee well-being. Additionally, the study shows that support from supervisors enhances the link between FWAs and job performance, emphasizing its vital importance in the effective execution of flexible work policies. Sekhar and Patwardhan (2021).

1.2.3 Transformational Leadership and Its Impact on Employee Well-Being

Transformational leadership is also a key factor in addressing WLB challenges. Leaders who inspire, motivate, and support their employees contribute to a culture that values vision, development, and well-being Adisa (2023). By fostering an environment of transparent communication and prioritizing both professional and personal needs, transformational leaders enhance employee engagement, reduce turnover, and improve overall job satisfaction Jiatong et al. (2022). This study shows that transformational leadership correlates positively with job satisfaction, influenced by the perceived employee relations environment Chen et al. (2021).

This study meta-analyzed the relationship between transformational leadership and well-being in the service industry, highlighting that such leadership positively influences employee psychological well-being Kim et al. (2022). This research explores how transformational leadership within the courier services sector positively impacts logistics performance, with employee productivity serving as a moderating element. The results indicate that leaders who motivate and inspire their teams can improve employee productivity, consequently increasing overall performance Sayan et al. (2024). This study investigates how digitalization and automation are changing the work processes of seafarers, which may affect their well-being. Li et al. (2022).

1.2.4 Work-Life Balance Challenges in the Malaysian Shipping Industry

Work-life balance (WLB) continues to be a major issue in Malaysia, where extended working hours are firmly established in the workplace culture. Recent data from the Department of Statistics Malaysia shows that the typical weekly working hours rose from 44.7 hours in 2022 to 44.8 hours in 2023, with additional increases to 47.1 hours by 2024. These numbers exceed the worldwide average, especially in relation to OECD nations, where workers clock in around 31.6 hours each week (CEICdata.com, 2025). The lengthy working hours, combined with cultural norms of commitment and productivity, lead to stress, burnout, and diminished well-

being among workers, particularly in high-pressure sectors such as shipping, where isolation and erratic schedules worsen these issues.

Although there is a growing demand for flexible work arrangements (FWAs) as a possible solution, numerous organizations in Malaysia hesitate to adopt these policies because of worries regarding productivity and operational effectiveness. The importance of leadership, especially transformational leadership, is essential in influencing workplace culture and creating a nurturing atmosphere that allows employees to manage their work and personal commitments effectively. Nevertheless, irregular managerial backing and an absence of organized policies impede the success of FWAs in enhancing WLB. Consequently, this research seeks to investigate how transformational leadership and supervisor support affect the effective execution of FWAs and their impact on WLB within Malaysia's shipping sector

In March 2023, a study by Remote, a worldwide human resource services firm, placed Malaysia as the second least favorable country for work-life balance out of 60 countries, reporting an average workweek of 40.8 hours and merely 16 days of annual leave (Poor Work-life Balance Bane of Malaysian Workers, 2024). In 2019, a worldwide index from keyless entry technology firm Kisi placed Kuala Lumpur at the bottom for work-life balance among 40 cities, showing high work intensity and low livability ratings Kaur (2020). A study conducted by Remote placed Malaysia as the second-lowest country for work-life balance out of 60 nations, reporting an average workweek of 40.8 hours and a minimum wage of $1.07 (roughly RM5.04) per hour Malaysia (2024). Additionally, an examination of Malaysia's legal and private employee benefits reveals that although some benefits such as retirement and health benefits are required, the sufficiency of short-term illness benefits and various leave policies could affect workers' capacity to uphold a healthy work-life balance Malaysia (2023).

A 2019 study conducted by AIA Bhd. showed that more than 50% of Malaysian workers experience stress related to their jobs and sleep less than seven hours each day Code Blue (2019). Research indicates that high job demands and low job control are associated with adverse health effects, including fatigue, anxiety, depression, and physical illnesses Rusli et al. (2008). The APA emphasizes actionable approaches to avoid burnout, such as establishing limits, practicing mindfulness and stress reduction, and participating in self-care activities. These initiatives strive to establish a sustainable equilibrium between professional and personal life, thus minimizing the risk of burnout and related mental health concerns Sue Varma (2025).

1.2.5 The Need for Organizational Change

The shipping sector is recognized for its challenging work atmosphere, marked by lengthy shifts, protracted absences from home, and stress-filled responsibilities. Workers, especially those at sea and those on land, frequently find it difficult to achieve a healthy work-life balance (WLB) because of inconsistent schedules, varying time zones, and uncertain workloads. In contrast to other sectors that have largely accepted flexible work arrangements (FWAs), the shipping industry encounters pushback on implementation because of worries about operational efficiency and productivity. The absence of flexibility, along with elevated job demands, leads to stress, exhaustion, and job dissatisfaction, which ultimately impacts employee well-being and performance. A research investigation targeting IT workers in South India revealed that a successful work-life balance and transformational leadership greatly improve job satisfaction. Considering the intense environments present in both IT and shipping sectors, these results indicate that comparable leadership styles might aid shipping staff George et al. (2023).

The findings suggest that a supportive social environment at work encourages employees to communicate their needs and preferences more effectively, leading to greater flexibility in work arrangements and improved work–life balance. Considering the isolated and remote nature of many shipping roles, enhanced supervisor support could similarly mitigate stress and improve well-being among employees in the shipping industry Buonomo et al. (2024b). In the shipping sector, where strict timetables are prevalent, managerial adaptability may help ease work-life balance issues. By establishing clear limits, prioritizing wisely, assigning tasks, and emphasizing self-care, employees can manage challenging times without compromising personal satisfaction. Balancing professional and personal life involves actively overseeing time and energy while prioritizing well-being Seaplify (2024).

1.3 Research Questions

1. What is the impact of flexible work arrangements on work life balance among shipping industry employees?
2. Does the supervisor support impact work life balance in shipping industry?
3. Does transformational leadership style have an impact on work life balance in shipping industry?
4. What is the combined effect of flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, and transformational leadership style on work life balance in shipping industry?

1.4 Objectives of the study

1. To examine the impact of flexible work arrangements on work-life balance among employees in the shipping industry.

2. To analyze the influence of supervisor support on work-life balance in the shipping industry.

3. To investigate the effect of transformational leadership style on work-life balance in the shipping industry.

4. To assess the combined effect of flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, and transformational leadership style on work-life balance in the shipping industry.

1.5 Scope of the study

This study explores the impact of flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, and transformational leadership style (independent variables) on work-life balance (dependent variable) in one shipping firm in Malaysia. It analyzes four essential workplace management elements: flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, and transformational leadership as independent factors, while work-life balance serves as the dependent variable.

The research employs a quantitative method by utilizing a structured survey to collect data, which acts as the main resource for examination. The process of gathering data includes randomly chosen employees from multiple job levels within various departments, such as upper management, operations, finance, human resources, commercial, business development, customer service, and general personnel.

The study took place in Selangor and Labuan, where the business is active. The results pertain exclusively to this particular organization and do not apply to other businesses or sectors within the shipping industry or elsewhere. The research examines 190 workers, encompassing all job levels, including individuals who are employed from home (WFH) and those in the office (WFO). Special emphasis is placed on employees who have experience in remote work, using information technology tools, systems, and devices to complete their tasks effectively.

This research intends to offer insights to the Human Resource Management Department by pinpointing crucial elements affecting work-life balance among workers of one shipping firm in Malaysia. Furthermore, the results will aid organizational initiatives to encourage flexibility work arrangements, improve supervisor support, and cultivate a transformational leadership approach within the organization. To guarantee wide involvement throughout the organization,

data gathering will occur via various channels, such as senior management departments, WhatsApp, and emails to employees.

1.6 Significance of the study

Building on the research scope, this study is expected to provide valuable insights for managers, supervisors, top management, executives, and employees in one shipping firm in Malaysia. By analysing the impact of flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, and transformational leadership, organizations can develop more effective strategies to enhance work-life balance and foster a supportive work environment. The findings of this study will contribute both theoretically and practically to human resource management and policy development. By identifying how leadership styles and workplace flexibility influence employee well-being, the study can guide the design of training programs, leadership development initiatives, and HR policies to create a more inclusive and productive workplace.

Employees who receive strong support from supervisors and work in an environment that promotes flexibility are better able to manage personal and professional commitments, leading to reduced stress, improved job satisfaction, and increased productivity. Additionally, transformational leaders who motivate and inspire their teams can cultivate a culture of trust, engagement, and long-term commitment. Furthermore, this study highlights the role of managers in successfully implementing flexible work arrangements that align with both organizational objectives and employee needs. Recognizing the importance of supervisory support and leadership styles, organizations can enhance employee retention, reduce absenteeism, and drive higher overall performance.

In conclusion, this research offers both theoretical and practical insights into the connection between work-life balance, leadership, and workplace flexibility. The findings are anticipated to aid in long-term improvements in human resource management, leadership training, and organizational culture, ultimately benefiting both employees and employers in Malaysia's shipping firm.

1.7 Definitions of key terms

In the study, the primary variables are work-life balance, which serves as the dependent variable, and flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, and transformational leadership style, which are the independent variables. The mean values for each of these variables are provided below:

1.7.1 Work Life Balance

Job satisfaction is largely influenced by work-life balance, enthusiasm, and commitment Nur Earma Farhana & Zulkifli, (2023). Talukder et al, (2017) highlights that supervisor support (SS), along with work-life balance (WLB) and positive employee attitudes, has the most significant effect on job performance.

1.7.2 Flexible Work Arrangements

Flexible working arrangements and work-life balance are expected to be central to future workplaces, which will emphasize flexibility and employee-friendly management practices. These arrangements offer alternatives to the conventional "9- to-5" workday, standard workweek, or traditional office setting Subramaniam et al, (2015).

1.7.3 Supervisor Support

Supervisors play a crucial role in leading and motivating employees to enhance performance and foster a positive work environment Anthony & Nwokedi Okechukwu, (2023). Staffs perceive supervisor ensure that are supportive of they ensure their family needs are met generally view their work environment more favourably, experience higher job satisfaction, and are more inclined to remain with the organization. Talukder, (2018) offers strong empirical evidence supporting these findings.

1.7.4 Transformational Leadership Style

Transformational leaders inspire and motivate employees to achieve their goals, build trust, exceed expectations, and work toward a shared vision Nofal & Jaradat, (2020). This leadership style plays a crucial role in enhancing organizational learning, which in turn influences entrepreneurial orientation. A study by Nofal et al, (2020) used a questionnaire to assess transformational leadership. Another key factor in employee well-being is supervisor support, which reflects the extent to which leaders value employees' contributions and show genuine concern for their welfare Creative (n.d.). Leaders who provide strong support create a work environment where employees feel acknowledged, respected, and valued. In recent years, transformational leadership has gained significant attention as an influential leadership style. Korejan & Shahbazi, (2016) emphasize that transformational leaders use their personal attributes to inspire others, enhance performance, and drive motivation. Leaders who exhibit strong personalities, recognize individual differences, and encourage intellectual growth foster higher engagement, motivation, and overall performance within an organization.

1.8 Organization of the thesis

The suggested research project is an organized into five sections. This research investigates contemporary views on work-life balance and analyses their influence on flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, and transformational leadership style, particularly concentrating on workers in the shipping sector.

Chapter One introduces the study by presenting background information on flexible work arrangements, the support of supervisors, transformational leadership styles, and work-life balance in the shipping sector. It explores the impact of work-life balance on these elements, introduces the research questions and goals, emphasizes the importance of the study, and details the general organization of the research paper.

Chapter Two offers a literature review that forms the basis for this research, utilizing earlier studies to formulate the study's hypotheses. Chapter Three describes the research methodology, specifying the independent and dependent variables, sampling methods, data gathering techniques, and analysis procedures. It describes the methods used in the study, ensuring consistency among the research design, target population, and goals. This chapter likewise contains information on data gathering, sampling approaches, pilot studies, and analytical methods.

Chapter Four centers on analysing data and interpreting the findings in connection with the research questions and hypotheses. In conclusion, Chapter Five presents the results, recognizes the constraints of the study, and offers suggestions and conclusions for upcoming research. This research focuses on the impact of flexible work arrangements, managerial support, and transformational leadership styles on employees' work-life balance in the shipping sector. The study was carried out within one shipping firm, providing a thorough examination of these elements in a particular organizational context.

Summary of Chapters

Chapter One offers a summary of the research, emphasizing work-life balance (WLB) within the Malaysian shipping sector and its connection to flexible work arrangements, support from supervisors, and transformational leadership style. It emphasizes the significance of WLB for employee well-being, job satisfaction, and organizational effectiveness, while considering global trends and the changing dynamics of workplaces in Malaysia. The chapter describes the research issue, inquiries, and goals, highlighting the necessity to investigate how these elements

together affect WLB. Furthermore, the study outlines its scope, importance, essential definitions, and thesis structure, emphasizing data gathered from a sole shipping firm in Malaysia to offer detailed insights into WLB issues and possible HR strategies within this organizational framework.

2. CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of recent studies on flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, and transformational leadership styles, along with their combined impact on employees' work-life balance in the shipping company. By analysing previous studies and hypothesis testing, we can identify gaps in the research that help define the precise objectives of the present study. This chapter primarily focuses on work-life balance and its relationship with the two key factors that influence the study's hypotheses.

2.2 Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance (WLB) refers to an individual's ability to maintain a healthy equilibrium between work and personal life. This topic has gained significant attention in recent years due to the increasing demands of modern work environments. Work-life balance is crucial not only for individuals but also for companies and organizations, as it directly impacts employee satisfaction, well-being, productivity, and overall organizational performance. However, technological advancements have blurred the boundaries between professional and personal life, making it even more challenging to achieve balance Kossek et al. (2021). In high-pressure and fast-paced industries such as healthcare, banking, and shipping, maintaining work-life balance is particularly difficult. Yet, it remains essential for sustaining workplace productivity Greenhaus & Allen, (2020).

The shipboard work environment presents unique challenges to achieving work-life balance compared to other industries. Long working hours, irregular schedules, and extended periods away from home make it particularly difficult for shipping employees to maintain a balance between work and personal life. These conditions can lead to significant physical and mental health risks, with work-family conflicts often resulting in stress, burnout, and reduced job satisfaction Rodriguez-Sanchez et al. (2020). Recognizing these challenges, a growing body of research highlights the importance of compensation and work-life balance in industries like shipping to enhance employee well-being and organizational effectiveness Kurnia et al. (2021).

It is well-documented that achieving a good work-life balance leads to higher employee satisfaction and well-being. S and SN (2021), Susanto et al. (2022) found that individuals who successfully manage their work and personal life exhibit better work attitudes, stronger organizational commitment, and improved job performance. Similarly, Kossek et al. (2021)

established a direct correlation between work-life balance (WLB) and higher job satisfaction, reduced absenteeism, and lower employee turnover rates. These findings highlight the significant impact of work-life balance on an organization's overall productivity and performance.

One of the most significant impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic has been the increased focus on work-life balance, as many companies were forced to implement remote work. While remote work offers greater flexibility and the opportunity to improve work-life balance, it also blurs the boundaries between professional and personal life. As a result, remote employees may struggle to disconnect from work, increasing their risk of burnout De la Calle Duran et al. (2021). To address this, companies should adopt effective strategies, such as offering flexible working hours and providing support to help employees manage their responsibilities.

Flexible work arrangements have been recognized as one of the most effective ways to improve work-life balance, allowing employees greater autonomy over their work schedules while helping them manage family commitments. In the shipping company, where workers often endure long hours and extended periods away from home, flexible work arrangements can be particularly beneficial. Moss and colleagues found that seafarers in high-demand sectors like shipping who had access to flexible work options reported higher job satisfaction and a lower risk of burnout.

Supervisor support is another crucial factor in achieving a positive work-life balance. Employees who feel supported by their supervisors in managing work and personal life tend to experience greater job satisfaction and lower stress levels Swanzy (2024). Research also suggests that organizations where supervisors actively promote work-life balance and provide effective tools to help employees manage their workload play a key role in enhancing employee engagement and commitment Jose et al. (2015). In high-pressure industries such as the merchant fleet, supportive managers can significantly improve workers' ability to maintain a healthier work-life balance.

However, achieving work-life balance comes with challenges. Many employees face obstacles due to job demands and organizational requirements that make balancing work and personal life difficult. In high-stress industries such as shipping, workers often endure long hours with little personal time Rodriguez-Sanchez et al. (2020). Additionally, the nature of the job may require extended periods away from home, leading to strain in personal relationships and feelings of isolation among employees. Therefore, organizations must establish policies to

promote work-life balance (WLB) and mitigate the negative effects of work-related challenges, ensuring employee well-being. The positive effects of work-life balance go beyond individual employees. Organizations that prioritize both personal and professional well-being are more likely to attract and retain top talent. Today, workers are increasingly selective, seeking environments that support their well-being Kossek et al. (2021). Companies with strong work-life balance policies see higher employee engagement and productivity, ultimately leading to better overall performance Greenhaus & Allen & Greenhaus & Jeffrey, (2020, 2011). This is especially critical in industries like shipping, where high staff turnover can be costly, and maintaining a skilled, experienced workforce is essential for the company's success Rodríguez-Sánchez et al. (2020).

Moreover, organizations that prioritize work-life balance contribute to a healthier and more positive work environment. Employees who feel that their family life is acknowledged by their employer are more likely to build stronger relationships with their colleagues and managers, fostering a supportive workplace culture Lamane et al. (2021). This, in turn, enhances organizational cohesion and creates a more resilient workforce, better equipped to handle the challenges of demanding industries such as shipping.

Despite extensive research on work-life balance, significant gaps remain, particularly in the shipping industry. The feasibility of flexible work arrangements for seafarers, who endure long hours and extended time away from home, is still underexplored. While supervisor support is recognized as crucial, little is known about how ship-based or remote leaders can effectively assist employees in maintaining a healthy balance between work and personal life. Additionally, the long-term psychological effects of work-life imbalance, such as social isolation and mental health struggles among maritime workers, require further investigation. The post-pandemic shift in work-life dynamics has reshaped industries worldwide, yet its lasting impact on shipping professionals and company policies remains unclear. Furthermore, although work-life balance is linked to employee retention, there is a lack of targeted strategies to reduce high turnover rates in the maritime sector. Addressing these gaps is essential for developing industry-specific solutions that enhance both employee well-being and organizational performance.

A critical analysis of work-life balance (WLB) research highlights both its strengths and limitations. The existing literature effectively establishes a strong link between WLB and key organizational outcomes, such as job satisfaction, employee well-being, and productivity. It

also emphasizes the importance of flexible work arrangements and supervisor support in improving work-life balance, particularly in demanding industries. However, several limitations remain. Research on WLB in the shipping industry is still lacking, especially regarding the practical implementation of flexible work arrangements for seafarers who face long periods away from home. While supervisor support is widely acknowledged, there is little discussion on how remote or ship-based leaders can provide meaningful assistance to employees. Additionally, the long-term psychological effects of work-life imbalance, including social isolation and mental health challenges, are underexplored. The evolving post-pandemic work environment has introduced new challenges, yet its lasting impact on maritime professionals remains unclear. Furthermore, although WLB is linked to employee retention, research has not fully addressed effective strategies for reducing high turnover rates in shipping. Addressing these gaps is crucial for developing industry-specific policies that enhance both employee well-being and organizational success.

As work-life balance strategies evolve, organizations must adopt more flexible and employee-centric approaches while ensuring clear boundaries between professional and personal life. With shifting employee expectations, companies need proactive policies to stay competitive in a demanding labor market. In summary, achieving work-life balance is vital for both employee well-being and organizational success. A well-structured balance reduces stress, prevents burnout, and enhances job satisfaction. The shipping industry presents unique challenges, but implementing flexible arrangements and strong managerial support can significantly improve employee well-being. Organizations that prioritize work-life balance will be better equipped to thrive in a competitive market while fostering a motivated and productive workforce.

2.3 Flexible Work Arrangements

Workplace policies that grant employees greater autonomy over their working hours, locations, and schedules are known as flexible work arrangements (FWA). Today, FWA are widely recognized as a key strategy for promoting a healthy work-life balance, enhancing job satisfaction, and boosting overall productivity Kossek & Lautsch, (2017). Flexibility has shifted from being a desirable perk to a necessity for companies aiming to retain talent and support employee well-being, especially in the fast-paced modern workplace.

The primary reason flexible work arrangements (FWA) have become essential is their ability to reduce work-life conflict. Employees who can adjust their work schedules to accommodate personal obligations tend to experience lower stress levels and greater job satisfaction Kossek

et al. (2023). This is particularly important in industries with demanding or irregular work hours, such as shipping and logistics. For example, shipping employees often spend extended periods away from home, and flexible work arrangements can help them better balance work and family responsibilities Yildiz and Aymelek (2023). Research also indicates that professionals with access to flexible schedules are less prone to burnout and more likely to remain engaged and productive at work Li et al. (2022).

Flexible work practices not only benefit employees individually but also enhance overall organizational performance. Companies that offer flexible work options are more successful in attracting and retaining top talent, especially in competitive industries. As employees increasingly prioritize workplace flexibility, organizations that fail to provide these opportunities risk losing their competitive edge in the labor market Van Der Heijden et al. (2019). Ferdous et al. (2021) found that companies with flexible work policies had lower turnover rates and higher employee engagement. Additionally, organizations that embrace flexibility can better accommodate the diverse needs of their workforce, fostering a more inclusive and supportive work environment.

Recent research suggests that the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the adoption of flexible work arrangements, with many organizations shifting toward remote work. While remote work provides employees with greater flexibility, it also presents challenges particularly in maintaining clear boundaries between work and personal life Bulinska et al. (2021). Employees may struggle to disconnect from work, increasing the risk of anxiety and burnout.

To address these challenges, organizations should equip employees with the necessary tools and support to manage their workload effectively while working remotely. This includes offering flexible working hours, access to mental health services, and designated break periods to promote a healthy work-life balance Figueiredo et al. (2024).

Flexible work arrangements (FWA) can play a crucial role in promoting gender equality in the workplace. Women, in particular, benefit significantly from FWA due to their disproportionate caregiving responsibilities. By allowing greater flexibility, organizations can help women balance their work and family commitments, thereby reducing gender inequalities at work. The shipping industry, where female participation remains low, could become more diverse by implementing flexible work arrangements. Providing greater flexibility would enable more women to pursue and sustain careers in this field, fostering a more inclusive workforce.

However, implementing flexible work arrangements (FWA) comes with challenges. While FWA offers numerous benefits, organizations must also consider potential drawbacks, such as reduced team bonding and communication Memon (2023). In industries that rely heavily on collaboration, such as shipping, the lack of in-person interaction may hinder teamwork and lead to feelings of isolation among employees. To address these issues, organizations should establish effective communication systems and equip employees with the necessary tools and technology to stay connected with their colleagues, regardless of location Cakula et al. (2021).

Not all employees may prefer or thrive in a flexible work environment. Some may struggle with maintaining productivity and discipline while working remotely or in non-traditional settings. Therefore, organizations should offer a range of flexible work options that cater to employees' diverse needs and preferences Kossek et al. (2021). While some workers may opt for full-time remote work, others may prefer a hybrid model that allows them to split their time between home and the office. Providing multiple flexible work arrangements fosters a more inclusive and supportive workplace culture that accommodates all employees.

Leadership also plays a crucial role in the successful implementation of flexible work arrangements. Supervisors and managers are key in promoting a culture of flexibility and supporting employees in balancing their work and personal responsibilities Rahman et al. (2023). Rodríguez-Sánchez et al. (2020) highlight the importance of strong leadership in enhancing work-life balance through flexible work practices.

Leaders who are compassionate, supportive, and proactive in promoting employee well-being are more likely to build an effective and engaged team. In contrast, organizations led by unsupportive managers may struggle to maximize the benefits of flexible work, as employees might feel pressured to overwork or neglect their personal lives. The success of flexible work arrangements also depends on the availability of technology and resources that facilitate remote and flexible working environments. In today's digital age, technology plays a crucial role in enabling employees to work efficiently from any location and at any time Indradewa et al. (2023).

This analysis reveals that the opportunity for remote work is significantly concentrated among highly skilled and educated workers within certain industries, professions, and locations. It highlights that the viability of remote work largely relies on the presence of suitable communication tools and infrastructure Lund et al. (2020b). Therefore, organizations must invest in resources that support flexible work arrangements, providing employees with the

necessary tools to work efficiently without compromising productivity. This includes essential work-from-home equipment such as computers, printers, and other digital tools that facilitate seamless remote work.

While flexible work arrangements (FWA) are widely recognized for enhancing work-life balance, their practical application in the shipping industry remains largely unexamined. The challenge lies in adapting FWA to an environment where employees endure long hours and extended periods at sea. Additionally, while supervisor support plays a crucial role in work-life balance, little is known about how ship-based or remote leaders can provide meaningful assistance in such isolated settings. The long-term psychological effects of work-life imbalance such as social isolation and mental health struggles among maritime workers also require further exploration. Furthermore, although the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of flexible work policies, its lasting influence on shipping professionals and industry regulations remains uncertain. Another critical gap is the relationship between FWA and employee retention in the maritime sector, where high turnover continues to be a pressing concern. Addressing these gaps is vital to developing targeted strategies that enhance both employee well-being and organizational performance in this demanding industry.

For successful implementation, strong leadership, effective communication, and access to essential technology are key. Organizations that prioritize flexibility will have a competitive advantage in attracting and retaining a motivated workforce. By fostering a supportive work environment, companies can improve employee well-being while maintaining resilience in a rapidly evolving global market. Ultimately, flexible work arrangements have become a cornerstone of modern workplaces, offering employees greater autonomy while boosting job satisfaction and productivity. Allowing workers to operate during their peak efficiency hours not only improves performance but also fosters a healthier and more engaged workforce.

2.4 Supervisor Support

Supervisor support refers to the assistance, guidance, and encouragement that supervisors provide to employees in managing both their work responsibilities and personal obligations. In today's high-pressure work environment, the role of supervisors in promoting employees' work-life balance (WLB) has received significant attention in academic research. Support from supervisors is a key factor in employee well-being, job satisfaction, and organizational performance. Employees who perceive strong supervisor support are more likely to be engaged, productive, and committed to the company's goals Kossek et al. (2021). Supervisors

who are attentive to their employees' personal challenges foster a sense of trust and motivation, leading to improved work outcomes and greater overall job satisfaction.

Over time, the concept of supervisor support has expanded beyond task-related supervision to include helping employees integrate their work and personal lives. Support can take various forms, including emotional encouragement, access to resources, flexibility, and open communication. Employees who receive consistent and constructive support from their supervisors are better equipped to handle work pressures, positively impacting their productivity and overall well-being Rodriguez-Sanchez et al. (2020). Emotional support is particularly important, as it helps employees feel valued and appreciated, which in turn boosts motivation and reduces turnover intentions Q. Li et al. (2022).

In high-stress industries such as healthcare, banking, and shipping, support from senior managers is crucial in preventing employee burnout. Workers in the shipping industry often endure long working hours and extended periods away from their families. Supervisor support, especially during workplace challenges or personal difficulties, can help mitigate the negative effects of these demanding conditions. Research indicates that employees who perceive strong support from their supervisors are less likely to experience job dissatisfaction and emotional exhaustion. This is particularly significant in the shipping industry, where unique work-life balance challenges are inherent to the job.

Research also shows that supportive supervisors play a crucial role in enhancing employee engagement and retention by fostering a positive workplace environment. Xiaolong et al. (2022) found that employees who perceive their supervisors as supportive are more likely to remain with the organization, be productive, and maintain a positive outlook on their job. This is particularly evident when supervisors demonstrate empathy, kindness, and respect toward their employees, contributing to a workplace culture that prioritizes employee well-being. Additionally, Malik & Nida (2023) discovered that employees who receive substantial supervisor support experience lower stress levels and are better able to balance their work and personal responsibilities.

Supervisor support is not only beneficial for employee well-being but also plays a crucial role in improving overall organizational productivity. When organizations invest in supervisor support, employees tend to be more engaged, put in greater effort, and ultimately contribute to better performance. Employees who perceive their supervisors as supportive are more likely to go the extra mile in achieving work goals compared to those who do not receive such support.

Additionally, the positive impact of supervisor support extends to fostering creativity and innovation. When employees feel that their supervisors encourage risk-taking and welcome new ideas, they are more likely to think boldly and propose innovative solutions for the organization.

The importance of supervisor support became even more evident during the COVID-19 pandemic, as many employees had to work remotely while managing both professional responsibilities and personal challenges, such as caregiving. In this context, supervisors who demonstrated flexibility, empathy, and emotional support played a crucial role in helping employees navigate the difficulties of remote work while maintaining productivity. Sahni & Jolly (2020) found that employees who received strong support from their supervisors during the pandemic were more likely to achieve a balance between work and personal life and reported higher job satisfaction compared to those who received minimal support.

One of the most effective ways supervisors can help employees achieve work-life balance (WLB) is by offering flexible work arrangements (FWA). Providing flexibility in working hours, location, and workload enables managers to support employees in managing both their professional and personal responsibilities, particularly those with caregiving duties or other personal commitments. Employees who have access to FWA are more likely to report positive WLB outcomes, especially when their supervisors actively endorse and promote the use of these arrangements, as highlighted by Darmawan et al. (2024).

However, providing supervisor support comes with challenges. Supervisors must balance employee expectations with organizational demands, which can sometimes create conflicts. In workplaces where meeting deadlines is a top priority, managers may struggle to provide employees with the flexibility needed to maintain a healthy work-life balance. Additionally, some managers may lack the necessary training or resources to effectively support their staff, limiting the impact of their efforts. Therefore, organizations should invest in training and development programs to equip supervisors with the skills and knowledge required to effectively assist their employees.

A crucial factor in fostering a healthy work environment is leadership. Supervisors who exhibit transformational behaviours such as inspiring and motivating employees are more likely to cultivate a workplace culture of care, fairness, and trust within the organization Jiatong et al, (2022). Despite extensive research on supervisor support and work-life balance, significant gaps remain, particularly in high-stress and remote industries like shipping. Most studies focus

on office-based employees, leaving the unique challenges faced by maritime workers, such as prolonged isolation and communication barriers, underexplored. Additionally, while short-term benefits of supervisor support such as increased job satisfaction and reduced stress are well-documented, its long-term psychological impact on employee well-being remains uncertain. A critical issue is the feasibility of supervisor support in industries with strict operational demands, where balancing employee needs with productivity can be challenging. Furthermore, while transformational leadership is praised for fostering positive workplace environments, over-reliance on individual leadership styles may not provide a sustainable solution. Instead, organizations need structured policies and training programs to equip supervisors with the skills to offer meaningful support. Another gap lies in the inconsistent implementation of flexible work arrangements (FWA) in rigid work structures like shipping, where alternative flexibility models, such as staggered rotations or extended leave policies, need exploration. Post-pandemic, while supervisor support played a crucial role during remote work transitions, research is lacking on its lasting impact and whether organizations continue prioritizing employee well-being.

Additionally, excessive supervisor involvement in employees' personal challenges may lead to over-dependence, potentially reducing autonomy and decision-making skills. At the same time, unrealistic expectations for supervisors to provide continuous emotional support may contribute to leadership burnout. Balancing effective supervisor support with operational efficiency is crucial, requiring a shift from ad-hoc supportive behaviours to well-integrated organizational strategies. Future research should focus on developing sustainable, industry-specific approaches to supervisor support, considering cultural differences, practical constraints, and evolving workplace dynamics.

2.5 Transformational Leadership Style

The primary goal of transformational leadership is to inspire and motivate individuals to reach their full potential by setting a visionary goal, fostering innovation, and providing personalized support. Transformational leaders drive positive change within both individuals and organizations by helping employees recognize their potential, strengthening their connection to the organization, and cultivating a culture of trust and collaboration. This leadership style is particularly essential in dynamic and competitive environments where adaptability and innovation are critical, and where fostering a culture that embraces change is imperative.

Transformational leadership consists of four key components: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Idealized influence refers to a leader serving as a role model, earning credibility and respect from employees. Inspirational motivation involves effectively communicating a compelling vision and inspiring employees to work toward shared goals. Intellectual stimulation encourages employees to think creatively, challenge existing norms, and develop innovative solutions to problems. Lastly, individualized consideration focuses on providing personalized support, demonstrating empathy for employees' unique needs, and empowering them to reach their full potential. Research consistently shows that a transformational leadership style leads to higher employee engagement, greater job satisfaction, and improved organizational performance. Transformational leaders inspire their employees to go beyond their basic job requirements, fostering a stronger commitment to the organization and reducing turnover rates Ningsih et al. (2023). They also cultivate a sense of belonging and psychological safety in the workplace, encouraging employees to share ideas and collaborate more effectively. These qualities contribute to higher levels of productivity and creativity within the organization.

A key reason for the success of transformational leadership is its ability to in still a strong sense of mission among employees while aligning personal and organizational goals Phuc Nguyen et al. (2021). When employees perceive their personal aspirations as aligned with the organization's objectives, they tend to perform better and demonstrate greater commitment to achieving shared goals. Transformational leaders help employees see how their individual contributions align with the broader organizational mission, enhancing their sense of purpose and identification Braun et al. (2013). This alignment fosters greater job satisfaction, as employees feel that their work is meaningful and contributes to the organization's success. Additionally, transformational leadership is closely linked to increased employee self-determination, as it creates an environment where individuals feel empowered to take ownership of their tasks.

Transformational leaders encourage proactiveness, decision-making, and creative problem-solving Murniasih (2020). This sense of autonomy enhances job satisfaction while fostering innovation and continuous learning within the organization. This autonomy boosts job satisfaction while encouraging innovation and continuous learning within the organization. When workers can arrange their tasks around personal obligations, they tend to thrive both at work and in their personal lives, promoting a lasting work-life harmony. In a workplace influenced by transformational leadership, this adaptability not only enables employees to take

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risks and suggest creative ideas but also fosters an atmosphere that boosts creativity and improves problem-solving abilities, ultimately promoting organizational change and competitiveness Roellyanti et al. (2024)

Moreover, transformational leadership plays a crucial role in promoting employee well-being and work-life balance. Transformational leaders are more likely to support their employees in balancing work and personal responsibilities, helping to reduce stress and prevent burnout Liyanage, Chaturi (2020). By providing emotional support, offering flexibility, and encouraging a healthy work-life balance, these leaders enhance employee engagement and overall performance Gragnano et al. (2020). This type of support is particularly important in high-demand sectors such as healthcare, shipping and banking that workers are subjected to high workloads and stress Christiansen et al. (2024).

The COVID-19 outbreak highlighted the need for leaders who can navigate uncertainty and crises with a transformative approach. The pandemic served as a real-world example of the importance of transformational leadership in effectively managing uncertainty and organizational challenges. Transformational leaders played a crucial role in helping organizations adapt to the disruptions caused by the pandemic by fostering resilience, promoting flexibility, and maintaining employee morale. Leaders who demonstrated empathy, communicated effectively, and provided support helped their teams cope with the uncertainty of the crisis, ultimately preventing greater upheaval and ensuring the well-being of their employees. Transformational leadership the ability to inspire and motivate employees during times of crisis is essential in uncertain and rapidly evolving work environments.

While the advantages of transformational leadership are well-established, it is important to recognize that not all leaders naturally possess the skills or mindset required for this leadership style. To bridge this gap, leadership development programs should provide training that focuses on key traits essential for transformational leadership, such as emotional intelligence, effective communication, and the ability to inspire and motivate others Faugoo et al. (2024). By investing in leadership training and support, organizations can cultivate a culture of transformational leadership that enhances employee engagement, fosters creativity, and drives overall organizational success Aboramadan et al. (2020).

Transformational leadership impacts not only employee performance but also overall organizational success. Organizations led by transformational leaders are more likely to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage due to their emphasis on a shared vision, team

cohesion, and a culture of learning and continuous improvement. Transformational leaders foster psychologically safe work environments where employees feel comfortable taking risks and presenting new ideas to challenge conventional ways of working. Cultivating a culture that embraces innovation is essential for organizations competing in fast-moving markets.

Additionally, transformational leadership has been shown to enhance organizational resilience by promoting adaptability and flexibility. Leaders who encourage creativity and open-mindedness among their employees are better equipped to navigate the complexity and uncertainty of today's corporate landscape Yu and Xiang (2024). By fostering a resilient organizational culture, transformational leaders enable their companies to recover quickly from challenges, identify new opportunities, and achieve long-term success Nguyen et al. (2023).

Transformational leadership is widely recognized for its ability to enhance employee engagement, innovation, and organizational resilience. However, several research gaps remain. Most studies focus on corporate and structured environments, overlooking industries with rigid hierarchies and physically demanding roles, such as shipping, healthcare, and manufacturing, where implementing transformational leadership may be more challenging. While this leadership style is known to foster work-life balance, its long-term effects on employee well-being, particularly in high-stress professions prone to burnout, require further exploration. Additionally, there is an implicit assumption that all leaders can seamlessly adopt a transformational approach, neglecting barriers such as individual personality traits, lack of training, and organizational constraints.

Although transformational leadership is linked to fostering innovation and psychological safety, its tangible impact on performance outcomes in diverse cultural and organizational settings remains unclear. Another gap exists in understanding how transformational leadership interacts with other leadership styles, such as transactional or servant leadership, and whether a hybrid approach may be more effective. Furthermore, an overemphasis on visionary leadership may overlook execution challenges, as not all employees may be receptive to transformational strategies, particularly in roles that require high compliance and standardization.

Future research should explore industry-specific adaptations of transformational leadership, develop structured training programs to equip leaders with essential skills, and assess its effectiveness in various work environments. Organizations must balance inspiring employees

with setting realistic expectations to ensure that transformational leadership remains sustainable and does not contribute to leadership burnout or unrealistic workloads.

Ultimately, transformational leadership fosters a workplace culture of trust, collaboration, and resilience. By creating a shared vision, encouraging innovation, and providing personalized support, transformational leaders empower employees to take ownership of their responsibilities and contribute meaningfully to organizational success. As businesses navigate an evolving work landscape, this leadership style will continue to be a crucial factor in driving long-term growth and adaptability.

2.6 Theoretical Model

The theoretical framework serves as a foundational concept for understanding the complex interactions that influence work-life balance (WLB) and its implications for both individuals and organizations. One of the relevant theories in this context is Human Capital Theory, which offers valuable insights into the factors affecting work-life balance and the potential outcomes of achieving or failing to achieve it.

2.6.1 Human Capital Theory:
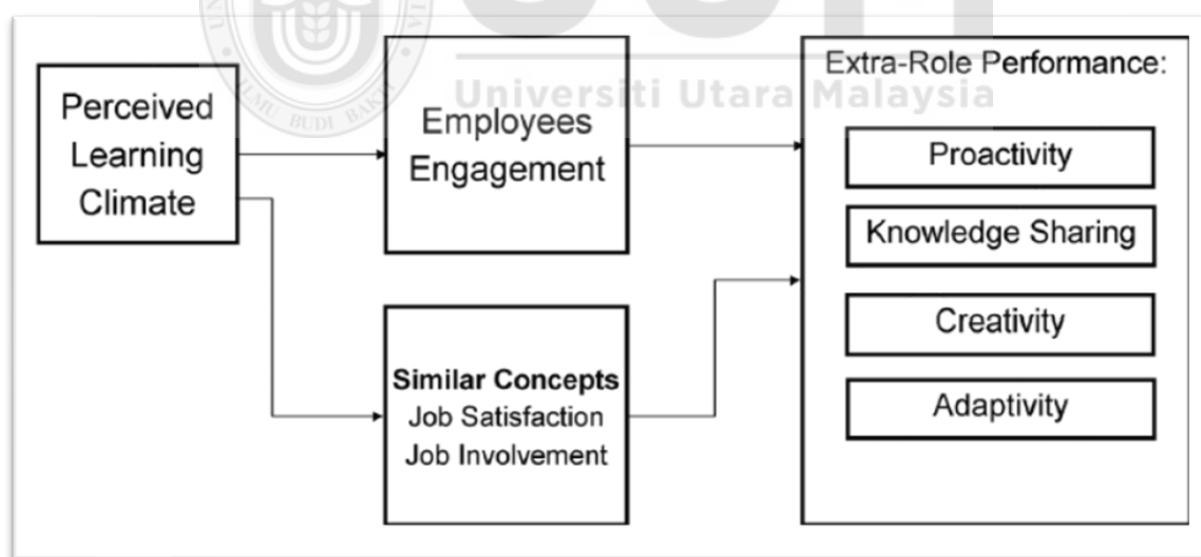
Figure 2.1: **Fill the caption**

Theory of Human Capital
Source: Swanson and Holton 2001

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According to Swanson and Holton (2001), individuals possess various forms of capital, including their abilities, knowledge, and experiences, which can be developed and invested in to generate economic returns. This concept is central to Human Capital Theory (HCT).

Human Capital Theory was first developed by Gary Becker and other economists and has since been widely used to understand the relationship between investments in human skills and productivity Becker (1994). Within the context of work-life balance (WLB), HCT provides valuable insights into how balancing personal and professional responsibilities can either support or hinder the accumulation and effective use of human capital.

From the perspective of Human Capital Theory, an individual's ability to manage both personal commitments and work responsibilities is crucial for optimizing their human capital utilization. Kossek, Hammer, and Kelly (2018) state that when employees achieve a satisfactory work-life balance, they tend to experience improved well-being, reduced stress, and higher job satisfaction. These positive effects of investing in human capital are reflected in increased workplace productivity and engagement.

Companies that recognize and actively support work-life balance programs effectively invest in their human resources. Providing resources such as flexible work arrangements, health and wellness programs, and supportive leadership helps employees maintain a healthy balance between their personal and professional lives. This research examines the impact of work-life balance on job satisfaction and the intention to leave a job. The results indicate that a better work-life balance results in greater job satisfaction and decreased intention to leave, emphasizing the significance of supportive measures in boosting employee dedication and performance Fayyazi et al. (2015).

Furthermore, Human Capital Theory highlights the importance of continuous learning and development. Employees who successfully maintain a balanced work-life dynamic are more likely to pursue further education and training, allowing them to enhance their skills and knowledge. This ongoing growth not only benefits individuals by improving their employability and career prospects but also strengthens organizations by fostering a more skilled and adaptable workforce Becker, (1993).

However, research on the application of Human Capital Theory to work-life balance remains limited. While many studies have explored the individual and organizational benefits of work-life balance, there is a need for more empirical research that examines how investments in work-life balance initiatives contribute to human capital development and economic returns.

Additionally, much of the existing research focuses on specific industries or regions, limiting the generalizability of the findings.

In conclusion, Human Capital Theory provides a compelling framework for understanding the importance of maintaining a healthy balance between professional and personal life to enhance both individual well-being and organizational success. Organizations that recognize employees' ability to balance work and personal life as an investment in human capital can foster supportive cultures that promote continuous growth and productivity. Addressing the identified research gaps could lead to the development of more effective strategies and policies that encourage a healthier work-life balance while optimizing the utilization of human resources.

2.7 Development of Hypothesis

To examine the relationships between the independent variables and work-life balance, this study will test multiple hypotheses. As highlighted by Creswell and Creswell (2017), hypotheses are derived from the theoretical framework and existing literature, providing a clear direction for the research.

2.7.1 Relationship between flexible work arrangements and work-life balance.

Flexible work arrangements (FWA) have become increasingly popular as a strategy for achieving better work-life balance (WLB) in modern organizations. These arrangements allow employees to adjust their work hours, locations, and responsibilities to better align with their personal lives, thereby reducing the stress associated with balancing professional and personal commitments. According to Ganesh (2025) this includes providing flexible work arrangements, promoting employee well-being, and fostering a culture of trust and collaboration.

Extensive academic research has explored the relationship between FWA and WLB, particularly as organizations seek ways to enhance employee satisfaction and productivity Kossek et al. (2021). However, this relationship is complex, as it is influenced by various factors, including the nature of the work, organizational culture, and the extent to which employees can utilize flexible work arrangements without fear of negative consequences.

Examples of FWA include remote work, flex-time, compressed workweeks, and job-sharing, all of which offer employees greater flexibility regarding when and where they work SHRM, (2025). These options reduce the rigidity of traditional work schedules, helping employees better manage both personal and professional responsibilities. Research by Rodriguez-Sanchez

et al. (2020) indicates that employees with access to FWA experience higher job satisfaction, lower stress levels, and a greater sense of control over their work-life balance. This is particularly relevant in industries such as healthcare, finance, and shipping, where employees often face long hours and unpredictable schedules.

The Theory of Human Capital provides a theoretical foundation for understanding the relationship between flexible work arrangements (FWA) and work-life balance (WLB). According to Bakker and Demerouti (2014), this model suggests that work-related resources, such as flexible work options, can help employees manage job demands and prevent burnout.

Flexible work arrangements allow employees to reduce the tension between their professional and personal lives, ultimately improving their overall well-being. Rodriguez-Sanchez et al. (2020) state that employees who have greater control over their work schedules are better equipped to manage both their professional responsibilities and personal obligations, leading to an improved work-life balance.

Numerous studies have consistently shown a positive correlation between the availability of FWA and significant improvements in WLB. Research by French et al. (2017b) found that employees who can adjust their work schedules to accommodate personal responsibilities such as childcare, eldercare, or personal appointments experience lower work-family conflict and greater overall life satisfaction. Similarly, Deutsch (2023) discovered that employees with access to flexible work options were significantly more likely to report a healthy work-life balance compared to those without such options. This is because FWA enables workers to manage their schedules in ways that best align with their personal commitments, thereby reducing the stress associated with balancing work and personal life.

However, the relationship between FWA and WLB is not always straightforward. While flexible work arrangements can provide employees with greater control over their schedules, the extent to which they enhance work-life balance depends on various factors. One critical factor is organizational culture and whether employees feel supported in utilizing flexible work options. Kossek et al. (2023b) note that in some organizations, employees may have access to FWA but hesitate to use them due to concerns about being perceived as less committed to their roles. This pressure to adhere to traditional work schedules, despite the availability of flexible options, can undermine the benefits of FWA.

The effectiveness of flexible work arrangements (FWA) in improving work-life balance can vary depending on the nature of the job and the specific industry in which it is applied. Research

by Yusaini et al. (2023) suggests that implementing FWA may be more challenging in industries that require a high level of physical presence, such as manufacturing or shipping. In such cases, even when flexible work options are available, employees may still struggle to maintain a healthy balance between their professional and personal lives.

In contrast, knowledge-based industries such as information technology or finance tend to offer greater opportunities for employees to benefit from flexible work arrangements, this may result in more significant improvements in work-life balance William and Singh (2024). Conversely, employees in knowledge-based industries are more likely to have greater opportunities to benefit from flexible work arrangements.

Another crucial factor influencing the relationship between FWA and WLB is the role of supervisors. According to Rodriguez-Sanchez et al. (2020), it is essential for supervisors to ensure that employees feel comfortable utilizing flexible work options without fear of negative consequences. When managers actively support flexible work arrangements and provide the necessary tools to help employees manage their workloads, workers are more likely to experience positive outcomes regarding work-life balance. Conversely, in organizations where managers are less supportive of flexible work arrangements, employees may feel pressured to conform to traditional work expectations. This can undermine the benefits of flexibility, as noted by Kossek et al. (2015).

The COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the connection between FWA and WLB, as many organizations were forced to adopt remote work arrangements to comply with social distancing measures. For some employees, eliminating commutes and rigid work schedules has provided greater flexibility and improved work-life balance Khalid et al. (2023). However, for others, the blurring of professional and personal boundaries has made maintaining a healthy balance more challenging. Without clear distinctions between work and personal time, employees may find themselves working longer hours and struggling to "switch off" from work, increasing the risk of burnout Kossek et al. (2021).

Research shows that when managed effectively, flexible work arrangements (FWA) can significantly improve work-life balance, despite the challenges associated with them. According to Rodriguez-Sanchez et al. (2020), for organizations to maximize the benefits of FWA, they must not only promote flexible work options but also provide employees with the necessary resources to balance their personal and professional responsibilities successfully. This includes training supervisors to support employees in utilizing flexible work arrangements

and fostering a work environment where employees feel comfortable taking advantage of the flexibility available to them.

Based on findings from both theoretical models and empirical research, the link between flexible work arrangements (FWA) and work-life balance (WLB) is well established. FWA provide employees with the autonomy and control needed to effectively manage their personal and professional responsibilities, leading to improved well-being, reduced stress, and greater job satisfaction.

However, the effectiveness of these arrangements depends on several factors, including the nature of the job, the organizational culture, and the level of support from supervisors. As organizations continue to navigate the complexities of modern work environments, the role of FWA in promoting work-life balance is expected to become even more significant. Therefore, it is crucial for employers to implement strategies that support employees in achieving a healthy balance between work and personal life.

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between flexible work arrangements and work-life balance.

This hypothesis is based on the idea that flexible work arrangements enable employees to manage their professional and personal responsibilities more effectively Allen, Johnson, Kiburz, & Shockley, (2013).

2.7.2 The relationship between supervisor support and work-life balance.

The support employees receive from their supervisors plays a crucial role in shaping their work-life balance (WLB). Effective supervisor support includes not only emotional backing but also instrumental and informational assistance, helping employees manage both their personal and professional responsibilities. Numerous studies have shown that when supervisors provide meaningful support, employees are better able to achieve a desirable work-life balance. This, in turn, leads to positive outcomes such as reduced stress, higher job satisfaction, and increased productivity Kossek et al. (2021). The relationship between supervisor support and work-life balance is complex and influenced by various factors, including the nature of the job, organisational culture, and leadership styles.

According to Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005), the concept of supervisor support is often seen via the lens of Social Exchange Theory (SET), which proposes that relationships are constructed based on reciprocal transactions between the persons involved, In the realm of

sustaining a healthy WLB, when supervisors aid their workers, the employees respond by increasing their level of dedication, determination, and amount of effort. According to Rodriguez-Sanchez et al. (2020), this reciprocal interchange helps to establish a constructive atmosphere at work, one in which workers are made to feel appreciated and supported, which in turn enables them to better handle the demands of both their personal and professional life. In high-stress professions like healthcare, banking, and shipping, where the demands of work may readily spill over into workers' personal lives, leading to work-family conflict and burnout, supervisor assistance is especially vital. This is because the pressures of work can easily spill over into employees' personal lives.

Providing employees with flexibility in their work arrangements is one of the most effective ways supervisors can support a healthy work-life balance. According to Kossek et al. (2021), when managers demonstrate flexibility, such as allowing employees to adjust their work schedules or work remotely, they create an environment where employees feel more in control of their time and responsibilities. Research by Dousin et al. (2021) indicates that employees who perceive their supervisors as supportive of flexible work arrangements report higher job satisfaction and a better balance between their professional and personal lives. This is particularly true for employees with caregiving responsibilities, such as parents or those caring for elderly relatives. By offering flexible work options and acknowledging employees' personal commitments, supervisors can help reduce the stress associated with balancing work and family obligations.

When supervisors take the time to listen to employees' concerns and offer support, it enhances their ability to balance both personal and professional responsibilities. As noted by Kossek and Lautsch (2023), this, in turn, leads to a more positive perception of work-life balance and reduces the risk of burnout. Providing this type of assistance significantly reduces the stress associated with managing work and personal demands, making employees feel valued and understood. Furthermore, in addition to providing emotional support, supervisors must also offer instrumental assistance to help employees manage their workloads and personal responsibilities. Instrumental support refers to the tangible resources and aid provided by supervisors, such as delegating tasks, offering additional resources, or adjusting workloads to accommodate personal needs Rodriguez-Sanchez et al. (2020).

For instance, a supervisor who helps an employee manage their workload during a particularly stressful period such as the birth of a child or a family emergency can significantly reduce the

pressure on that employee. According to Talukder et al. (2021), when supervisors provide instrumental support, employees are better able to maintain a healthy work-life balance without feeling overwhelmed by work-related demands.

Additionally, the relationship between supervisor support and work-life balance is influenced by the supervisor's leadership style. Research has shown that transformational leadership has a positive impact on work-life balance outcomes. According to Bass and Riggio (2006), transformational leaders inspire and motivate employees by fostering a sense of purpose and creating a supportive work environment. In the context of work-life balance, these leaders encourage employees to prioritize their well-being and seek support when needed.

Ratna (2024) found that employees working under transformational leaders are more likely to experience positive work-life balance outcomes. This is because transformational leaders cultivate a culture of flexibility and support within their organizations. By fostering trust and collaboration, this leadership style not only empowers employees to effectively manage their professional and personal responsibilities but also enhances overall job satisfaction.

It is important to note that organizational culture plays a crucial role in determining the effectiveness of supervisor support in promoting work-life balance. In some organizations, even when supervisors provide support, employees may hesitate to take advantage of flexible work arrangements or seek assistance due to concerns about being perceived as less committed to their jobs Kossek et al. (2021). This "flexibility stigma" can undermine the benefits of supervisor support, as employees may worry that utilizing flexible work options could negatively impact their career advancement or professional standing within the organization Basile & Beauregard, (2020).

Businesses must cultivate a culture that values and encourages a healthy balance between professional responsibilities and personal life. Employees should feel free to seek support from their managers without fear of negative consequences. However, the effectiveness of supervisor support in maintaining work-life balance varies across industries and job types.

In sectors requiring a high level of physical presence, such as manufacturing or shipping, the ability to offer flexible work arrangements may be limited. This constraint can affect the overall impact of supervisor support on work-life balance Talukder et al. (2017). In such cases, managers may need to provide alternative forms of assistance, such as emotional or instrumental support, to help employees manage their work and personal commitments effectively. Conversely, in knowledge-based industries like information technology or finance,

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where remote work and flexible schedules are more feasible, supervisor support plays a more direct role in enhancing work-life balance outcomes Rodriguez-Sanchez et al. (2020).

Beyond direct supervisor support, organisational policies also play a crucial role in fostering a healthy balance between work and personal life. While managers can offer individualised assistance, companies must implement policies that promote work-life balance at a broader level. According to Kossek et al. (2021), these policies may include paid parental leave, on-site childcare facilities, and flexible work arrangements for all employees. Employees are more likely to experience improved work-life balance when organisational policies align with supervisor support Haar et al. (2022), as they feel supported both at the individual and organisational levels.

The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the importance of supervisor support in maintaining work-life balance. As many businesses transitioned to remote work, the role of supervisors in providing emotional and instrumental assistance became even more critical Khalid et al. (2023b). However, many organizations faced difficulties in adapting their managerial approaches, as traditional supervision methods were no longer effective in a remote setting. Supervisors had to adopt new strategies, such as virtual check-ins, flexible scheduling, and mental health support, to ensure employees remained engaged and productive.

In summary, supervisor support is a key factor in promoting a healthy work-life balance. Through emotional, instrumental, and informational assistance, supervisors help employees manage the demands of both their professional and personal lives more effectively. Additionally, organisational culture and leadership styles influence the relationship between supervisor support and employees' work-life balance. Companies that foster a culture of support and flexibility where managers actively encourage work-life balance tend to experience positive outcomes, such as reduced stress, higher job satisfaction, and improved employee retention. As workplaces continue to evolve, particularly in the post-pandemic era, the role of supervisors in supporting employees' work-life balance will only become more significant.

H2: There is a significant positive relationship between Supervisor support and work-life balance.

This hypothesis is based on the idea that supportive supervisors help employees manage conflicts between work and personal life, creating a more balanced work environment Kossek et al. (2011).

2.7.3 The relationship between transformational leadership style and work-life balance.

Transformational leadership aims to in still trust, respect, and empowerment in the workplace, inspiring and motivating employees to engage in personal development, creative endeavours, and the pursuit of a shared vision. Leaders who adopt this approach encourage their followers to grow both professionally and personally while working towards common goals.

This leadership style plays a crucial role in achieving work-life balance (WLB) as it prioritizes employee well-being and helps individuals effectively manage their professional and personal responsibilities Bass & Riggio, (2006). Research suggests that transformational leaders not only focus on organizational success but also provide necessary support for employees' personal needs, enabling them to maintain a healthier balance between work and life. By offering guidance, flexibility, and emotional encouragement, these leaders help employees manage their responsibilities more effectively.

Employees benefit from tools, flexibility, and emotional backing, ultimately contributing to better work-life balance outcomes. Research indicates that transformational leadership fosters an organizational culture that prioritizes employee well-being, thereby improving work-life balance Kossek et al. (2021). Leaders who adopt this approach create an environment where employees feel comfortable discussing work-life balance challenges and seeking assistance when needed.

This supportive atmosphere helps employees manage their professional and personal commitments more harmoniously, reducing stress and increasing overall well-being. A study by Rodriguez-Sanchez et al. (2020) found that employees working under transformational leaders reported higher levels of work-life balance, general well-being, and job satisfaction. One of the key strategies transformational leaders use to enhance work-life balance is promoting workplace flexibility. According to Kossek and Lautsch (2017), transformational leaders recognize the importance of offering flexible work arrangements, such as remote work options and adaptable schedules, to help employees balance their personal and professional lives. By fostering a culture of flexibility, leaders empower employees to manage their workloads in a way that aligns with their personal needs. This flexibility is particularly valuable in high-demand industries such as healthcare, finance, and logistics, where long hours and intensive workloads often make it difficult for employees to maintain a work-life balance Rodríguez-Sánchez et al. (2020b).

Transformational leaders also provide both emotional and instrumental support, which are critical in achieving work-life balance. Emotional support includes empathy, compassion, and encouragement, helping employees feel valued and reducing stress Hussain and Khayat (2021). Instrumental support, on the other hand, involves tangible assistance, such as adjusting workloads or delegating tasks to accommodate employees' personal needs Abendroth et al. (2022). These efforts help employees manage their responsibilities more effectively, preventing burnout and promoting a healthier balance between work and life.

Employees who perceive their leaders as supportive and resourceful are more likely to achieve better work-life balance outcomes Kossek et al. (2021). When employees trust that their leaders have their best interests in mind, they feel more comfortable discussing personal challenges and seeking assistance, ultimately reducing stress and enhancing job satisfaction Haar et al. (2022). Another major benefit of transformational leadership is its ability to reduce employee burnout and turnover. Research suggests that employees under transformational leaders experience lower burnout levels because they receive adequate support and resources to manage their workloads effectively Chen et al. (2022). By fostering a culture that prioritizes well-being and flexibility, transformational leaders help employees avoid the negative effects of work-life conflict, such as stress and job dissatisfaction.

A study by Kossek et al. (2021) found that organizations led by transformational leaders had lower turnover rates, as employees were more likely to remain committed to companies that supported their work-life balance. However, while transformational leadership offers numerous benefits, its effectiveness depends on the organization's culture. Even highly effective transformational leaders may struggle to implement meaningful changes in companies that do not prioritize work-life balance Kossek & Lautsch, (2023).

For transformational leadership to be truly effective, businesses must align their policies and practices with its principles. The COVID-19 pandemic further emphasized the significance of transformational leadership in supporting work-life balance. As many organizations shifted to remote work, the role of leaders in providing flexibility and emotional support became even more critical Mutha et al. (2021).

Transformational leaders who demonstrated empathy and adaptability helped employees navigate the challenges of balancing work and family responsibilities in a remote setting. This support was especially crucial for employees with caregiving responsibilities, as school and childcare closures added additional pressures to their work-life balance efforts Kossek et al.

(2021). Transformational leadership is essential in fostering a workplace environment built on trust, flexibility, and support key factors in achieving a healthy work-life balance. By empowering employees to take control of their schedules, offering emotional and instrumental support, and cultivating a culture of well-being, transformational leaders help employees effectively manage both personal and professional responsibilities.

The relationship between transformational leadership and work-life balance highlights the importance of resources and support in managing work and life demands. As modern workplaces continue to evolve, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, transformational leadership will remain a crucial factor in ensuring employee well-being and organizational success. Businesses that embrace this leadership style and align their policies with its principles will be better positioned to support their employees and enhance overall work-life balance.

H3: There is a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership style and work-life balance.

This theory suggests that transformational leaders foster a supportive and flexible work environment, enhancing employees' ability to balance their professional and personal lives Dukhaykh et al. (2023).

2.8 Research Structure
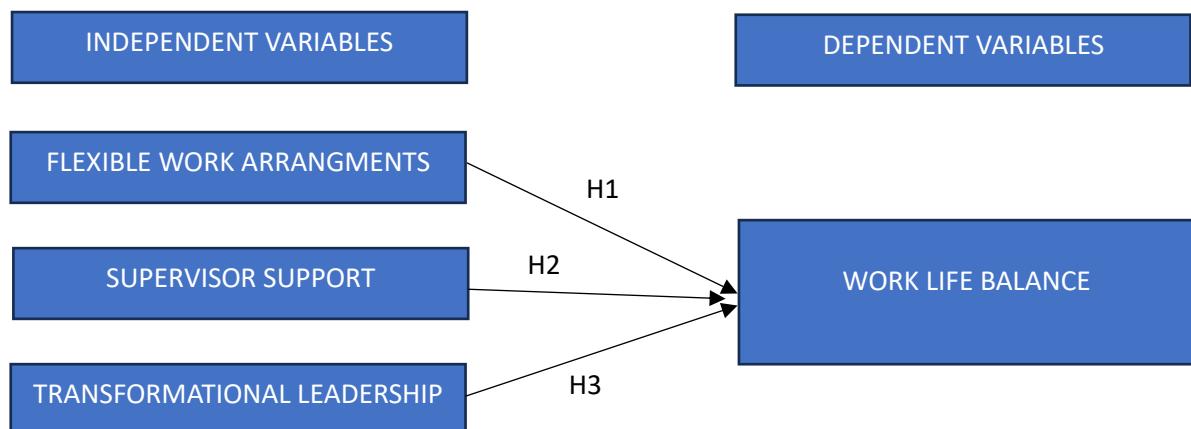
2.2 Research structure
The given framework illustrates the impact of three independent variables Flexible Work Arrangements, Supervisor Support, and Transformational Leadership on the dependent variable, Work-Life Balance.

Flexible Work Arrangements allow employees to have control over their working hours, location, and workload, enabling them to balance both work and personal responsibilities. This flexibility enhances job satisfaction, reduces work-family conflict, and ultimately improves work-life balance (WLB).

Supervisor Support plays a crucial role in fostering a positive work environment where employees feel valued and supported. It involves creating a culture of trust, open communication, and encouragement, allowing employees to seek assistance without fear of negative consequences. Beyond simply offering guidance, effective supervisor support ensures that employees feel empowered to manage their responsibilities while maintaining overall well-being. Without genuine support, employees may experience increased stress and reduced job satisfaction, ultimately affecting their performance and engagement.

Transformational Leadership introduces a visionary element that aligns both personal and organizational goals. Transformational leaders inspire and motivate their teams, foster innovation, and support personal development and well-being. By cultivating a workplace culture that values work-life balance, transformational leadership enhances the effectiveness of both flexible work arrangements and supervisor support.

Together, these three independent variables interact to shape Work-Life Balance, which is defined as an employee's ability to efficiently ful-fill work-related responsibilities while managing personal life without undue stress or conflict. According to our theoretical model, the effective management of flexible work arrangements, reinforced by empathetic supervisor support and transformational leadership, leads to the highest levels of work-life balance. This, in turn, enhances employee well-being, productivity, engagement, and overall commitment to the organization. By integrating both structural and relational aspects of the workplace, this framework aims to improve employee welfare and organizational effectiveness through strategic interventions that promote a healthier work-life balance.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter reviews existing research on the work life balance between professional and personal life, along with the concept of burnout, and examines its key determinants such as flexible work arrangements, agile practices, supervisor support, and transformational leadership. These factors are critically analysed in relation to their impact on employee well-being and organizational outcomes. Additionally, the chapter highlights the unique characteristics and research gaps within the shipping industry and other service sectors,

providing a foundation for further inquiry in the next chapter. The methodology used to explore these relationships will be explained in detail.

3. CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research methodology employed to investigate the elements affecting work-life balance in one shipping firm. It presents a summary of the study's framework, theoretical foundation, research methodology, data gathering methods, target demographic, questionnaire creation, and the measures implemented to ensure validity and reliability. The research utilizes a quantitative method, and statistical techniques were used to analyse the data. Ethical principles were strictly followed, guaranteeing participant confidentiality and the integrity of the research.

3.2 Research Design

This research examines the relationship between flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, and transformational leadership, focusing on their influence on employees' work-life balance within the shipping sector. Pv and K (2020), described research design as a systematic framework for investigating a scientific issue, serving as a blueprint that integrates various study components to ensure the research problem is effectively addressed. A quantitative research method was adopted, emphasizing numerical data collection to analyse the correlations among these factors. Data were obtained through structured survey questionnaires, ensuring anonymity to encourage truthful responses from employees at various job positions and organizational levels within a single shipping company.

Quantitative research is particularly valuable for testing hypotheses and making broader population inferences through statistical analysis. To assess the current state of work-life balance in the shipping company, a cross-sectional research design was chosen as the most suitable approach. This method allows for the examination of variable relationships at a specific point in time, providing insights into prevailing trends and conditions. The structured nature of the survey allows for reliable data comparison and enhances the objectivity of the study Creswell & Creswell, (2017), quantitative research facilitates objective measurement and statistical analysis, offering a clear understanding of the elements affecting work-life balance. Furthermore, Manjunatha.N (2019) emphasized that descriptive research involves data collection to portray, examine, and assess hypotheses regarding a specific topic, situation, or group. Consistent with this, the present study focused on seafarers employed across various vessels, including international cruise ships and normal vessels, selected through random sampling. The researcher remained entirely impartial, ensuring that findings were solely based

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on structured questionnaire data. The researcher stayed fully neutral, making certain that conclusions were exclusively derived from organized questionnaire data, fostering an objective and evidence-based evaluation. The samples and data were gathered from employees of the company. This research design offers significant advantages, particularly in its efficiency and cost-effectiveness, as data is collected at a single point in time Bryman, (2016). To achieve reliability and consistency, standardized questionnaires will be distributed to a representative sample of employees across different shipping organizations. The structured questionnaire will primarily consist of closed-ended questions, simplifying analysis and ensuring uniformity in responses. Additionally, using pre-approved scales and established measurement tools will enhance the validity and reliability of the collected data DeVellis, (2016). Ultimately, this approach aims to provide comprehensive insights into how flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, and transformational leadership affect employees' work-life balance, contributing to a deeper understanding of workplace dynamics within a single shipping company.

3.3 Operational Definition

Establishing the approaches for evaluating and measuring each variable in the research project is a crucial aspect of operationalizing variables. As noted by Heale and Twycross (2015), this procedure guarantees that constructs are accurately documented and that the data gathered is valid and reliable regarding authenticity.

Work-life balance will be assessed using measures that gauge how employees view the equilibrium between their personal and work lives Carlson et al. (2010). Work-life balance significantly affects job satisfaction, alongside elements like energy and commitment Nur Earma Farhana & Zulkifli, (2023).

Tools that assess the accessibility and use of options like telecommuting, flexible hours, and shorter workweeks will be employed to gauge how much flexible work setups provide greater autonomy. Subramaniam et al. (2015) state that flexible work arrangements provide alternatives to the conventional 9-to-5 schedule, the regular workweek, and the usual office setting.

As stated by Kossek et al. (2011), the implementation of supervisor support will be carried out through items assessing how much supervisors offer both emotional and practical assistance to their employees. Additionally, supervisors are essential in inspiring and directing employees to

improve productivity and create a positive work atmosphere Anthony, Nwokedi Okechukwu, (2023).

To assess transformational leadership, the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire will be utilized. Previous studies have cited this questionnaire as a method aimed at evaluating different aspects of transformational leadership, such as idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration Bass & Avolio, (1994). Transformational leaders are acknowledged for their capacity to build trust, motivate employees to exceed expectations, inspire them to reach their aspirations, and assist them in chasing an engaging vision Nofal & Jaradat, (2020).

3.4 Questionnaires and Design

The arrangement of the questionnaire is a vital aspect of the research process, guaranteeing the reliability and validity of the gathered data. Job satisfaction is influenced by important elements like work-life balance, passion, and dedication Nur Earma Farhana & Zulkifli, (2023). Furthermore, supervisor support, work-life balance, and favourable employee attitudes have been recognized as key factors influencing job performance Talukder, (2018). Future workplaces are anticipated to focus on flexible work arrangements, highlighting adaptability and management practices that favor employees. These setups provide options to conventional work hours and office settings, enhancing work-life balance Subramaniam et al. (2015).

Managers are essential for inspiring staff, improving productivity, and cultivating a constructive workplace atmosphere Anthony & Nwokedi Okechukwu, (2023). Workers who view their managers as accommodating of their family duties generally demonstrate increased job satisfaction and stronger organizational loyalty Talukder, (2018). Moreover, transformational leadership significantly influences employee motivation, organizational trust, and overall performance Nofal & Jaradat, (2020). This approach to leadership promotes organizational learning and an entrepreneurial mindset, motivating employees to surpass expectations. In this research, a 17-question survey modified from Nofal et al. (2020) was employed to evaluate transformational leadership.

The questionnaire detailed in Appendix 2 gathers socio-demographic information from workers in the shipping sector. It encompasses information like age, gender, education level, job role, working experience level, while also exploring how these elements affect work-life balance. By incorporating these demographic insights, the research seeks to provide a comprehensive

understanding of the factors influencing work-life balance among employees within a single shipping company, based on the collected data.

The survey employed a five-point Likert scale for answers, going from "strongly disagree (1)" to "strongly agree (5)", with the exception of Section A. This uniform rating scale was uniformly used in Sections B and C, which concentrated on flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, transformational leadership style, and work-life balance.

Section A gathered socio-demographic details, such as age, gender, education level, job role, working experience level. Collecting this information guarantees that the sample truly reflects the larger population. Sections B and C examined the main variables of the study, employing 15 Likert-scale items. Every independent variable flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, and transformational leadership style was evaluated with five items, while the dependent variable, work-life balance, was gauged with six items.

This organized questionnaire guarantees uniformity and dependability in data gathering, facilitating an effective examination of elements affecting work-life balance among workers in the shipping sector.

Table 3.1: Distribution of Variables

Section	Variables	Items
A	Sociodemographic of Respondents	4
B	Factors Influenced	
	• Flexible Work Arrangements	5
	• Supervisor Support	5
	• Transformational Leadership Style	5
C	• Work Life Balance	6

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

Data collection will be conducted through structured questionnaires distributed to a specifically chosen group of workers. The survey will examine both independent variables flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, and transformational leadership as well as the dependent variable, work-life balance.

To enhance participation and response rates, the survey will be carried out in both digital and paper formats. Online surveys will be sent out through email and social media networks, whereas printed copies will be given to certain organizations. As noted by Saunders et al. (2019), this twofold method expands the variety of reactions and fosters greater involvement.

The survey will feature questions based on a Likert scale to assess the experiences and perceptions of the participants. DeVellis (2016) emphasizes that this scale serves as a valuable instrument for evaluating the intensity of opinions, thereby enhancing the efficiency of statistical analysis. The gathered data will be examined with SPSS to guarantee the precision and dependability of the outcomes.

3.5.1 Population

This study centers on more than 190 employees employed in different organizations within the shipping company, encompassing a range of positions including management, operations, top management, professionals, and general labourers. The research was carried out in Selangor, an area known for its significant presence of shipping company. To guarantee generalizability, a varied population was chosen, enabling the results to be relevant across various industry contexts Bryman, (2016). Participants needed to be full-time staff with a minimum of one year of work experience to guarantee relevant and valuable insights. To choose participants, the study uses stratified random sampling, dividing the population into subgroups (strata) according to important factors like age, gender, job role, education level, and working experience level.

Samples are randomly selected from each stratum, guaranteeing a fair representation of various employee categories Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, (2016). A target sample size of 127 participants has been established, facilitating thorough statistical analysis and improving the trustworthiness of results. A bigger sample size enhances the study's validity and also increases the precision of correlation estimates among variables Pallant, (2020). By using this organized sampling technique, the study seeks to deliver in-depth understanding of the elements affecting work-life balance within a single shipping company.

3.5.2 Sampling Size and Technique

This research employs stratified random sampling to examine and compare the complexities of work-life balance in relation to flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, and transformational leadership within a single shipping company. A quantitative research methodology was utilized, centering on a group of 190 employees within a single shipping company in Selangor.

Results indicate that an employee's work environment significantly influences the accessibility, use, and effects of work-life balance on job-related results. Elements like adaptable flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, and transformational leadership may directly affect an employee's experience and overall job contentment. Information for this research was gathered from 127 employees through Google Forms **(https://forms.gle/Y3m29rodsqxygUH29)**. The structured method guarantees a thorough comprehension of how workplace policies and leadership approaches influence employees' capacity to balance their professional and personal lives.

Figure 3.1: Sample Size of Population Table

N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	1000000	384

Note.—*N* is population size. *S* is sample size.

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970

The survey link was distributed via email, human resources management platforms, and messaging apps like WhatsApp to maximize participation. A sampling frame, such as a predefined list, was used to carefully select participants. Throughout the research process, the researcher maintained full control over the collected data, ensuring accuracy and reliability.

This study aims to identify sector-specific challenges and opportunities by focusing on both private and public sector employees. The findings are intended to provide insights that contribute to more effective and customized employee welfare policies, specifically tailored to enhance work-life balance in different organizational settings. Kenpro (2012) developed a sample size table to simplify population-based sampling. For example, a population of 300 requires a minimum of 169 participants for meaningful statistical analysis. Roscoe's rule of thumb further suggests that a sample size between 30 and 500 is generally sufficient for in-depth research. Additionally It emphasizes the importance of determining whether to conduct a census or use sampling, highlighting that while a census offers comprehensive data, sampling is more practical due to resource constraints. The study underscores the need for a representative sample to ensure the validity of findings and discusses the significance of a well-defined sampling frame Martínez-Mesa et al. (2016b). The research emphasizes important elements affecting sample size, such as confidence level, margin of error, population size, and variability. It also covers statistical equations for calculating the suitable sample size to guarantee valid outcomes. Moreover, the article recognizes practical limitations like budget, time, and accessibility, while highlighting the ethical duty to select a sample size that harmonizes statistical validity with participant welfare. By implementing these principles, researchers can enhance the precision and applicability of their results Ahmed (2024).

By incorporating both private and public sector employees, this study enhances its relevance and applicability, offering a more comprehensive understanding of how work-life balance impacts the modern workplace. The findings bridge gaps in existing research on sectoral comparisons, providing practical recommendations to improve organizational performance and employee well-being. This study underscores the significance of flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, and transformational leadership style in fostering a balanced and productive work environment.

3.6 Measurement of Variables and Instrument

3.6.1 Work Life Balance

Job satisfaction is strongly influenced by work-life balance, enthusiasm, and commitment Nur Earma Farhana & Zulkifli, (2023). Talukder (2017) emphasizes that supervisor support, along with work-life balance and positive employee attitudes, has the most significant impact on job performance. To measure participants' perceptions, a five-point Likert scale was used, allowing

respondents to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement. The scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), ensuring consistency in responses.

Table 3.2: Work Life Balance

Operational Definition	Items
Job satisfaction is largely influenced by work-life balance, enthusiasm, and commitment (Nur Earma Farhana & Zulkifli, 2023). (Talukder, 2018) highlights that supervisor support (SS), along with work-life balance (WLB) and positive employee attitudes, has the most significant effect on job performance.	WLB_1. I have sufficient time away from my job at workplace to maintain adequate work and personal/family life balance. WLB_2. I currently have a good balance between the time I spend at work and the time I available for non-work activities. WLB_3. I feel that the balance between my work demands and non-work activities is currently about right. WLB_4: I am able to negotiate and accomplish what is expected of me at work and in my family.WLB_5: I am able to accomplish the expectations that my supervisors and my family have for me. WLB_6: Overall, I believe that my work and non- work life are balanced.

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3.6.2 Flexible Work Arrangements

Flexible work arrangements and work-life balance are anticipated to be crucial in future workplaces, highlighting adaptability and employee-centric management practices Onyekwelu, Njideka & Monyei, Francis & Muogbo, Uju, (2022). These arrangements offer options to the typical "9-to-5" working hours, regular workweek, and usual office environment Subramaniam et al. (2015).

For this study, five essential items were chosen to evaluate flexible work arrangements. Participants evaluated their degree of agreement using a five-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), promoting uniformity in answers.

Table 3.3: Flexible Work Arrangements

Operational Definition	Items
Flexible working arrangements and work-life balance are expected to be central to future workplaces, which will emphasize flexibility and employee- friendly management practices Onyekwelu, Njideka & Monyei, Francis & Muogbo, Uju, (2022). These arrangements offer alternatives to the conventional "9-to-5" workday, standard workweek, or traditional office setting Subramaniam et al. (2015).	FWA_1: Due to the remoteness of business activities, customer patronage is hampered. FWA_2: The usage of ICT and the internet helps to facilitate transactional distancing. FWA_3: The introduction of a flexible working environment is motivated by employee well-being, Covid-19, and work-family concerns. FWA_4: The firm experiences a decrease in its profit margins owing to the slack nature of business operations.

	FWA_5: The free nature of the business techniques reduces employee turnover and increases commitment.

3.6.3 Supervisor Support

Supervisors are essential in guiding and inspiring employees, improving performance, and creating a positive workplace atmosphere (Anthony & Nwokedi Okechukwu, 2023). When workers believe that their supervisors accommodate their family responsibilities, they usually develop a more favorable view of their job, report greater job satisfaction, and show a deeper dedication to remaining with the company. Talukder (2018) offers strong proof backing these results. To assess employees' views on supervisor support, participants indicated their level of agreement on a five-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Table 3.4: Supervisor Support

Operational Definition	Items
Supervisors play a crucial role in leading and motivating employees to enhance performance and foster a positive work environment Anthony & Nwokedi Okechukwu, (2023).	SS_1: My supervisor understands my family demands.
	SS_2: My supervisor listens when I talk about my family.
	SS_3: My supervisor acknowledges that I have obligations as a family member.
When employees feel that their supervisors support their family needs, they tend to have a more positive perception of their work environment, greater job satisfaction, and a stronger commitment to staying with the organization. Talukder (2018),	SS_4: My supervisor is a good role model for work and non-work balance.

provides compelling evidence that supports these conclusions.	SS_5: My supervisor demonstrates how a person can jointly be successful on and off the job.

3.6.4 Transformational Leadership Style

Transformational leadership is essential in developing organizational learning abilities, which subsequently affects entrepreneurial orientation. To evaluate this leadership style, the research employed a 17-item questionnaire, modified from Nofal et al. (2020). Participants assessed their level of agreement using a five-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), maintaining uniformity in answers.

Table 3.5: Transformational Leadership Style

Operational Definition	**Items**
This leadership style significantly impacts organizational learning capabilities, which in turn affects entrepreneurial orientation. The study's questionnaire to evaluate transformational leadership included 17 items and was adapted from Nofal et al. (2020).	TLS_1: Manager helps others to develop their strengths.
	TLS_2: Manager spends time teaching and coaching.
	TLS_3: Manager considers each individual as having different needs, abilities, and aspirations from others.
	TLS_4: Manager suggests new ways of looking at how to complete assignments.
	TLS_5: Manager talks optimistically about the future.

Participants were requested to express their degree of agreement with the statements by choosing the suitable option on a five-point Likert scale. The range is from 1 to 5, as displayed in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6: Likert Scale

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

3.7 Validity

To guarantee the precision and importance of the gathered data, this research employs strict validity measures to verify that the research tool accurately represents the intended concepts. Validity pertains to how well a measurement tool effectively evaluates the concepts it aims to measure Heale & Twycross, (2015). Given that this study centers on one shipping firm, it is vital to establish validity to guarantee that the results are trustworthy and relevant within this organizational framework. The research assesses validity by examining content validity, construct validity, and criterion-related validity.

The survey was created after a comprehensive examination of pertinent literature and confirmed through input from experts. This strategy guarantees that all important facets of work-life balance, flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, and transformational leadership style are properly reflected in the organizational environment of the chosen shipping firm. As stated by DeVellis (2016), expert validation ensures that the survey items adequately encompass the relevant constructs. This procedure aids in confirming that the instrument is appropriately tailored to the company's unique work setting.

Construct validity guarantees that the questionnaire assesses what it is meant to assess. In this research, factor analysis will be performed to assess if survey items are organized according to theoretical constructs. Since the data is gathered from one company, it is crucial to verify that the connections among the variables such as flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, transformational leadership style, and work-life balance align with recognized theoretical frameworks. A solid factor framework will enhance the precision of the tool in this particular corporate environment.

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Criterion-related validity evaluates the degree to which scores from a questionnaire align with external variables that are recognized to be related to the constructs being examined. Due to data collection being restricted to a single shipping company, this study will investigate whether the scores for work-life balance are positively associated with job satisfaction and organizational commitment in this particular workforce. Heale and Twycross (2015) state that robust correlations between these variables reinforce the validity of the measurement instrument. Should these relationships prove valid within the organization, it will validate that the questionnaire effectively reflects the dynamics of work-life balance and its associated factors in this context.

As the research takes place within just one shipping company, it is essential to ensure validity in order to generate significant and dependable results relevant to this organizational context. Through the use of strong validation methods, the study upholds credibility, transparency, and integrity, guaranteeing that the gathered data truly reflect workplace experiences within the chosen company

3.8 Technique Data Analysis

In the process of analysing data, statistical techniques are used to make sense of the gathered information and assess the research hypotheses. The statistical program SPSS will be utilized to conduct both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses, offering a thorough comprehension of the connections between variables Pallant, (2020).

Descriptive analysis will outline essential attributes of the data, such as means, standard deviations, and frequencies. This procedure provides a summary of participant demographics and their replies to the survey questions, aiding in the demonstration of the overall results of the research.

To explore the connections among flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, transformational leadership style, and work-life balance, inferential statistical techniques like correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis will be utilized. These methods will be employed to evaluate the study's hypotheses and assess the strength and significance of the connections between variables.

3.8.1 Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis is crucial for condensing and understanding important elements of the gathered data. This examination offers a distinct summary of the sample features and the spread of responses for every variable Pallant, (2020).

To recognize patterns and trends, descriptive statistics including mean, median, mode, standard deviation, and frequency distributions will be computed for every variable in the research. These statistics provide important insights into the respondents' views on work-life balance, flexible working conditions, supervisor assistance, and transformational leadership.

To improve readability and understanding, the information will be presented through graphs and charts. This method clarifies intricate details, facilitating easier comprehension. Moreover, descriptive analysis acts as the basis for inferential statistical research, guaranteeing that data is correctly documented and comprehended prior to any additional analysis taking place Field, (2018).

3.8.2 Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis will be utilized to investigate the collective influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable, work-life balance. This statistical technique enables an evaluation of the comparative impact of each independent variable on predicting work-life balance Field, (2018).

In the regression model, the outcome variable will be work-life balance, with flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, and transformational leadership functioning as predictors. The regression coefficients will offer understanding into the strength and direction of these connections, highlighting which factors most significantly affect work-life balance.

The results will be examined to assess the model's overall adequacy, the importance of the predictors, and how well independent variables account for differences in work-life balance. As stated by Pallant (2020), this examination provides an in-depth insight into the elements affecting work-life balance and aids in creating specific strategies to improve employee welfare.

3.8.3 Correlation Pearson Analysis

To examine the relationships between the independent variables (flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, and transformational leadership) and the dependent variable (work-life

balance), a correlation analysis will be conducted. This analysis will assess the strength and direction of these relationships using Pearson's correlation coefficient Field (2018).

A positive correlation indicates that an increase in one variable is associated with an increase in another, whereas a negative correlation suggests an inverse relationship between the two. By analysing these correlations, the study can identify significant connections that may require further investigation. To illustrate these relationships, a correlation matrix will be presented, displaying correlation coefficients for all variable pairs. This matrix provides a comprehensive view of the interactions between variables, highlighting any strong correlations that support the research hypotheses Pallant, (2020). In this study, Pearson's Correlation Coefficient is used to measure the strength of associations between variables. According to Amirul (2024), the correlation coefficient ranges from -1 to +1.

Table 3.7: Correlation Coefficient Value

Correlation Coefficient Value	Strength	Positive
Greater than 0.5	Strong	Positive
Between 0.3 and 0.5	Moderate	Positive
Between 0 and 0.3	Weak	Positive
0	None	None
Between 0 and -0.3	Weak	Negative
Between -0.3 and -0.5	Moderate	Negative
Less than -0.5	Strong	Negative

3.9 Ethical Consideration

This research on flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, transformational leadership approach, and work-life balance was performed within one shipping firm. To uphold responsible and ethical research methods, rigorous ethical guidelines were adhered to during the study.

Participants were thoroughly briefed on the study's objectives, methods, possible risks, and advantages. A consent form was given, detailing their rights, which included the ability to withdraw at any moment without repercussions. Participation was completely voluntary, and

consent in writing was secured (see Appendix 1 for the invitation to participate). No pressures or enticements were employed to promote involvement, and employees were guaranteed that their choice to participate or opt out would not impact their job status.

Confidentiality and anonymity were rigorously upheld. Personal details were made anonymous, and all gathered data were encoded to safeguard the identities of participants. The information was safely kept, with access restricted to the research team. As the research concentrated on workplace experiences, strict precautions were implemented to ensure the well-being of the participants. If sensitive topics arose, participants were made aware of the support resources that were available. The study was structured to reduce possible risks and guarantee that all engagements honoured the participants' professional settings.

The research was examined and accepted by the appropriate ethics committee, confirming adherence to research protocols for investigations involving human participants. Throughout the research process, transparency and integrity were emphasized, ensuring that data collection, analysis, and reporting were performed objectively to uphold accuracy and reliability. Moreover, cultural factors in the shipping sector were recognized, affirming that the research was carried out in a way that honoured the various backgrounds of staff members. The research group stayed neutral and refrained from any potential conflicts of interest that might affect the study's results.

By following these ethical guidelines, the research protected participants' rights and upheld the integrity of the study, resulting in credible and dependable conclusions within the framework of a single shipping company.

3.10 Summary of Chapter

This chapter detailed the research methodology, comprising research design, data collection, sampling methods, validity assessments, and ethical concerns. Utilizing a stringent methodology, this research guarantees the dependability and precision of results regarding the connections among flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, transformational leadership style, and work-life balance in a specific shipping firm. The upcoming chapter outlines the results and examination of the gathered data.

4. CHAPTER FOUR RESULT

4.1 Introduction

This section analyses the quantitative data obtained from structured questionnaires to examine the research hypotheses on how flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, and transformational leadership style influence work-life balance among employees in the shipping industry. The chapter integrates both descriptive and inferential statistics to provide a statistical interpretation of the relationships between these study variables. It also evaluates the extent to which the predictors flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, and transformational leadership style enhance or diminish employees' work-life balance. The findings will support the research hypotheses outlined in the previous sections and offer valuable insights into how workplace dynamics between employees and employers' impact overall employee well-being.

4.2 Demographic Results

4.2.1 Age Result

Table 4.1: Age Result

Age Group	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
18-25	42	22.1%	22.1%	22.1%
26-35	74	38.9%	38.9%	61.1%
36-45	60	31.6%	31.6%	92.6%
46-55	14	7.4%	7.4%	100.0%
Total	190	100.0%	100.0%	-

The youngest demographic in our survey, aged 18 to 25 years old, represents 22.1% of participants. This group likely includes recent graduates or individuals at the beginning of their careers in the shipping industry, symbolizing fresh talent and new energy in the sector. However, their lower proportion compared to the 26-35 age bracket (38.9%) suggests potential challenges or a lesser inclination towards pursuing a long-term career in this demanding industry. Several factors may contribute to this, such as the physically intensive nature of many shipping roles, limited awareness about career prospects in this field, or preference for other industries with more flexible work conditions.

This observation is supported by the Singapore Maritime Employer & Employee Survey (2023), which found that younger generations, particularly Gen Z, are underrepresented in the maritime industry. Employers acknowledged the need to develop new attraction strategies to engage younger professionals and bridge the gap between industry requirements and the career interests of this group.

Despite the lower representation of 18-25-year-olds in the shipping industry, there is often an expectation that young talent brings creative solutions and technological innovation. However, the results from this study, indicating the preference for more experienced individuals, align with findings in the maritime sector, where many companies tend to favor seasoned professionals due to the industry's complex and demanding nature.

The 26-35 age group, comprising the largest share (38.9%), represents the mid-level professionals who possess the necessary skills and technical expertise to manage responsibilities and adapt to changing workplace demands. This group is integral in enhancing operational efficiency, as they fill critical roles within the organization. Combined with the 18-25 age cohort, individuals from these younger age groups constitute 61.1% of the workforce, emphasizing the need for dynamic and adaptable employees who can contribute to both day-to-day operations and the long-term sustainability of the sector.

In line with this, the Seafarers in the UK Shipping Industry (2021-2022) report highlights that 47% of UK seafarers are aged between 40 and 61, suggesting a significant representation of older employees in the industry. While younger talent offers innovation, this age demographic in the UK represents experienced experts, similar to those in the 36-45 range of our study (31.6%), who are key to maintaining stability and operational excellence within the organization. These professionals, having accumulated years of experience, likely hold managerial or specialized positions that ensure adherence to regulations and best practices.

The 36-45 age category in our study represents individuals who have considerable experience and often occupy crucial managerial roles. The literature aligns with this, emphasizing the importance of these professionals as a foundation for stability, regulatory compliance, and operational efficiency, as they provide valuable guidance to junior staff.

In contrast, the 46-55 age range (7.4% in our study) represents the least significant share in our dataset. This group typically includes employees in senior executive roles or those nearing

retirement. The reduced presence of this age demographic may reflect broader generational trends in work preferences and retirement, as well as the physical demands of shipping jobs. Research such as Caesar (2023) points to the aging workforce in maritime transport, stressing the need for succession planning and HR strategies to address potential labor shortages when older professionals retire.

In conclusion, these findings suggest that while younger employees bring innovative perspectives to the workforce, mid-career and senior professionals are indispensable for sustaining leadership, continuity, and growth. The combination of emerging talent, experienced professionals, and established leaders fosters a well-rounded workforce, ensuring operational excellence and competitive edge within the shipping industry.

4.2.2 Gender Result

Table 4.2: Gender Result

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Female	99	52.1%	52.1%	52.1%
Male	91	47.9%	47.9%	100.0%
Total	190	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The survey results from the current study show that female respondents (52.1%) slightly outnumber male respondents (47.9%), highlighting a significant shift in workforce composition within this shipping firm. This is notable because the maritime industry has historically been male-dominated, with roles often requiring physical strength and technical expertise. The increased representation of women within this organization suggests that the company has effectively implemented gender diversity efforts, creating a more inclusive and equitable work environment.

These findings align with broader industry trends. According to the 2021 IMO-WISTA Women in Maritime Survey Report, women make up 29% of the total workforce across the maritime sector, with only 2% serving as seafarers—mostly in cruise lines. In comparison, women represent 34% of the workforce in shipping companies. This disparity highlights that certain maritime roles, particularly those in seafaring positions, continue to be less accessible to women. However, the company's higher female representation (52.1%) signals a successful strategy in fostering diversity within the workforce. A key issue identified in the 2024 report

"Maersk: Who Run the World? Achieving Gender Diversity in Logistics" is the underrepresentation of women in leadership and frontline roles. While female representation in supply chain roles reached an unprecedented 41%, women remain significantly underrepresented in leadership positions. This report emphasizes the need for policies that foster gender equality and highlights the positive impact of diverse teams on organizational performance. Despite the progress shown in female workforce participation, challenges remain. The 2022 research paper "Achieving Gender Equality in Seafaring" highlights significant barriers faced by women, particularly in non-OECD countries. Women in these regions encounter cultural prejudices and limited access to maritime training, which hampers recruitment efforts. Conversely, women in OECD countries experience challenges related to job retention and career advancement, such as the need for gender-specific personal protective equipment and sanitary facilities.

Similarly, the survey results from the shipping company reveal that while women have gained significant representation across various departments, there remains a gender gap in senior leadership positions. This mirrors findings in other sectors within the industry, suggesting that while diversity in entry-level and mid-management positions is improving, leadership diversity still lags behind. This discrepancy could be attributed to the persistent barriers women face in advancing to senior positions, which are likely influenced by both cultural and structural factors.

The increased presence of women in the workforce, both within the shipping company and the broader industry, reflects a cultural shift toward gender equality. The results highlight greater opportunities for women across various roles, including administrative, technical, and leadership positions. However, sustaining this progress requires ongoing investment in gender diversity initiatives, especially to address challenges in leadership and seafaring roles. The survey's 100% cumulative percentage confirms that the data accurately represents the company's gender distribution, demonstrating significant progress in achieving gender balance. This not only highlights fair hiring practices but also indicates an environment that supports equal career progression for both genders. The findings suggest that gender parity enhances collaboration, creativity, and problem-solving within the organization. Diverse teams bring different perspectives, improving decision-making and overall efficiency, positioning gender diversity as a strategic advantage for fostering a more inclusive work culture.

The findings indicate that the shipping company being examined is achieving notable advancements in gender equality. By analyzing the results alongside earlier research and industry publications, we notice a wider trend of heightened female involvement in roles historically dominated by men. Although challenges remain, especially in leadership roles, the company's initiatives to foster diversity and equal opportunities help create a more inclusive and fairer workplace. The changing gender dynamics in this organization mirror the larger transformation happening in the maritime and logistics sectors, which are progressively implementing policies that advocate for gender equality and acknowledge the important input from a diverse workforce.

4.2.3 Education Level Result

Table 4.3: Education Level Result

Education Level	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Associate's Diploma	88	46.3%	46.3%	46.3%
Bachelor's Degree	70	36.8%	36.8%	83.2%
Master's Degree	10	5.3%	5.3%	88.4%
Primary / Secondary	22	11.6%	11.6%	100.0%
Total	190	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The survey results indicate that this specific shipping company has a highly educated workforce, evident in the range of educational backgrounds among the participants. The biggest segment (46.3%) comprises employees with an Associate's Diploma, highlighting the significance of focused technical training aligned with the industry's operational requirements. This implies that the company focuses on recruiting individuals with skills pertinent to the industry, ensuring they are adequately prepared for the technical demands of their positions. Similarly, studies on maritime education and training (MET) emphasize its importance for enhancing the human capital of the shipping industry. Research by Boonadir et al. (2020) and Boonadir and Fakhrul (2022) underscores that the shipping industry would face significant challenges in flourishing successfully without a motivated, skilled, and trained workforce that follows international standards.

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Right behind, 36.8% of workers possess a Bachelor's Degree, demonstrating a significant focus on educational credentials within the organization. Workers at this level are likely engaged in management, strategic planning, and decision-making, facilitating the organization's growth and innovation. The large proportion of degree holders indicates that higher education is valued, especially for positions requiring leadership and analytical abilities. In alignment with this, studies on maritime postgraduate education in Hong Kong suggest that while student backgrounds vary, the standard of training is the key factor for success. Research by Huang et al. (2024) highlights that a well-organized educational program can efficiently bridge various knowledge gaps among staff, ensuring consistent and effective learning outcomes.

A more compact yet specialized segment (5.3%) possesses a Master's Degree, comprising experts in high-level management, research, and policy formulation roles. These individuals are crucial in influencing the company's strategic direction, ensuring adherence to industry regulations, and fostering innovation to remain competitive. Though their proportion is smaller, their skill and guidance greatly impact the company's lasting success. Research on the Nigerian maritime industry by Bello et al. (2022) found that education and training significantly influence employee skills, which in turn affect operational efficiency. This study highlighted a notable, albeit slight, connection between offshore employee training and operational effectiveness, reinforcing the necessity of focused educational efforts to improve workforce skills.

Notably, 11.6% of workers have completed only primary or secondary schooling, indicating that the organization also supports those without formal higher education. This team likely holds roles in operations and support that are crucial for everyday activities, showing that the shipping sector values practical experience just as much as educational credentials. These findings are consistent with broader studies in the maritime industry, which recognize the importance of a well-rounded workforce capable of adapting to both practical and technical demands.

As this information comes from a single shipping company, it provides valuable insights into its internal workforce dynamics rather than reflecting the entire industry. The 100% cumulative percentage confirms that the company's staff includes a range of educational backgrounds, balancing technical skills, managerial acumen, and real-world industry experience. In conclusion, the shipping firm benefits from a diverse range of educational backgrounds, with each level contributing to operational efficiency, leadership growth, and adaptability within the

industry. The results also suggest that the company fosters an inclusive workplace, enabling employees with varied educational and practical backgrounds to significantly contribute to its success.

4.2.4 Job Role Result

Table 4.4: Job Role Result

Job Role	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Entry-level employee	30	15.8%	15.8%	16.3%
Executive/Leadership	41	21.6%	21.6%	37.9%
Manager/Supervisor	15	7.9%	7.9%	45.8%
Mid-level employee	52	27.4%	27.4%	73.2%
Senior-level employee	51	26.8%	26.8%	100.0%
Total	190	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The distribution of job roles within this shipping company reflects a well-structured and diverse workforce, with varying levels of responsibility and expertise. Entry-level workers, who account for 15.8% of the workforce, represent a consistent arrival of new talent, which is essential for maintaining operational requirements and ensuring future workforce stability. Similarly, mid-level workers, comprising 27.4% of the staff, play a crucial role in day-to-day operations, acting as a bridge between upper management and the implementation of strategic decisions. Their contribution is vital for executing company objectives and ensuring overall operational effectiveness.

Senior-level employees, who make up 26.8% of the workforce, form a solid base of seasoned professionals. Their presence provides opportunities for professional growth and mentorship, ensuring that industry expertise and organizational culture are preserved. The 21.6% of workers in executive and leadership positions further strengthen the company's management framework, fostering strategic decision-making and operational success. Their involvement is key to charting the company's path and maintaining its competitive edge in the market.

Managers and supervisors, who represent 7.9% of the workforce, suggest a streamlined organizational structure, possibly aided by automation and system-based methods, to optimize operational efficiency. This role distribution aligns with industry norms, emphasizing the importance of each level in achieving operational excellence and strategic goals.

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In addition, research on container shipping firms in Taiwan by Pang and Lu (2018) highlights that worker motivation significantly influences job satisfaction and overall company performance. Factors such as pay, job performance, job stability, and work environment were identified as crucial elements impacting employee satisfaction. This underscores the importance of a motivated and well-supported workforce for sustaining business success.

In conclusion, the allocation of job roles in this shipping company demonstrates a balance between new talent, operational expertise, and seasoned leadership, which collectively underpin daily operations and ensure the long-term viability of the business.

4.3 Descriptive Results

4.3.1 Work-Life Balance
Table 4.5: Work Life Balance

Scale	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
WLB_1	189	1	5	3.87	.761
WLB_2	190	1	5	4.03	.878
WLB_3	190	1	5	3.95	.847
WLB_4	190	1	5	4.00	.797
WLB_5	189	1	5	3.97	.818
WLB_6	186	1	5	3.92	.885

Heading out work in order to maintain a healthy work-life balance (WLB_1)

According to the answers to WLB_1, which had a mean score of 3.87 and a standard deviation of 0.761, most participants believe that they have enough time away from their employment to maintain a healthy balance between their professional and personal lives.

Nevertheless, the fact that there was such a wide range of replies suggests that a small percentage of the working population may still have difficulty finding sufficient time for their personal and family lives. Although some of the participants are experiencing an imbalance,

most of them have a more optimistic outlook on their condition, as shown by the distribution of replies, which range from 1 to 5.

WLB_2: Finding Harmony Between Professional Obligations and Leisure Activities With a mean score of 4.03 and a standard deviation of 0.878, this question had the highest possible score, suggesting that respondents, on average, believe they have a pretty good balance between activities related to their job and activities that are not related to their work. The modest variance in replies implies that even while many workers are pleased with their work-life balance, there may be some individuals who struggle to adequately manage both parts of their career and their personal lives. The high mean score indicates that most participants had a favourable opinion of the equilibrium between their work and personal lives.

WLB_3 yields a mean score of 3.95 and a standard deviation of 0.847, indicating that most participants believe that they have achieved a suitable balance between the demands of their job and activities that are not related to their work. The fact that this score is so closely correlated with WLB_2 lends even more credence to the notion that the respondents had a generally favourable perception of the work-life balance they now encounter. According to the variety of replies, even while there is a generally positive view, there are still some participants who struggle to find a balance between the duties they have at work and the obligations they have in their personal lives.

WLB_4: The ability to negotiate and meet expectations both at work and at home is the fourth skill. Based on the fact that this question had a mean score of 4.00 and a standard deviation of 0.797, it seems that the majority of respondents have the belief that they can reach agreements and meeting demands both in their professional environment and at home. The participants seem to have confidence in their ability to efficiently manage both realms, as shown by the high score. The diversity in replies, on the other hand, demonstrates that even while many workers believe they can satisfy these two expectations, there is a possibility that some of the workforce may struggle to perform their duties.

WLB_5: Capability to Suit the Expectations of Both the Supervisor and the Family

According to the information provided by the mean score of 3.97 and the standard deviation of 0.818, it can be deduced that many respondents believe they can achieve the expectations of both their supervisors and their families. Although the standard deviation suggests that there is some variability, the answers indicate that a significant number of workers think they can strike

a balance between the demands of their working lives and those of their families. It is possible that some of the participants are having difficulty juggling these opposing expectations.

The Work-Life Balance Questionnaire **(WLB_6)** has a mean score of 3.92 and a standard deviation of 0.885. This questionnaire questions respondents about their overall opinion of work-life balance. It is clear from this that the participants, overall, have the belief that their work and personal lives are in harmony, balanced. When compared to other questions, this one has a greater standard deviation, which indicates that perspectives on overall work-life balance differ more dramatically. While some participants believe they have attained balance, others are less convinced of their status.

The descriptive findings indicate that there is a generally favourable attitude on work-life balance across a variety of domains, with mean scores ranging from 3.87 to 4.03. Although there is considerable variation in attitudes, especially with respect to the overall work-life balance, most respondents believe that they can manage their work and non-work lives satisfactory. Although a significant quantity of participants are content, standard deviations suggest that a sizeable proportion of the workforce may still struggle to strike a healthy balance between their personal and professional lives. These insights offer useful input for organisational initiatives that seek to improve work-life balance. They ensure that support mechanisms target the areas in which workers feel less secure in employee's capacity to balance both personal and professional responsibilities duties.

4.3.2 Flexibility Work Arrangements
Table 4.6: Flexibility Work Arrangements

Scale	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
FWA_1	190	1	5	3.61	.807
FWA_2	190	1	5	4.37	.757
FWA_3	189	1	5	4.13	.711
FWA_4	190	1	5	3.92	.812
FWA_5	188	1	5	4.12	.751

FWA_1: This item has a mean score of 3.61, showing moderate agreement that business distance influences consumer involvement. The standard deviation of 0.807 indicates some variety in replies, showing that individuals hold varying perspectives on the extent to which distance influences patronage. This might be attributed to different company settings or various amounts of reliance on physical client connection.

FWA_2: This item gets the highest mean score (4.37), demonstrating a strong consensus that information and communication technology (ICT) and the internet considerably help to continue operations despite physical separation restrictions. The standard deviation of 0.757 demonstrates consistent replies, with most participants emphasizing the relevance of ICT in overcoming transactional obstacles.

FWA_3: The mean score of 4.13 indicates a broad consensus that flexible work arrangements are motivated by employee-centric objectives like as well-being and work-family balance, particularly in light of the Covid-19 epidemic. The standard deviation of 0.711 shows that participants' judgments are generally uniform, indicating widespread acceptance of this argument.

FWA_4: The average score of 3.92 suggests agreement that more relaxed corporate practices might result in lower profit margins. The standard deviation of 0.812 indicates substantial heterogeneity, implying that while many participants agree, others see a lower negative impact on profit margins from such activities.

FWA_5: This item gets a high mean score of 4.12, indicating significant agreement that flexible corporate strategies minimize turnover and increase employee loyalty. The standard deviation of 0.751 demonstrates consistent replies, indicating that participants have a common view of the favourable consequences of such actions.

The findings from FWA_1 to FWA_5 show that flexible work arrangements and technology are critical for adjusting to current corporate difficulties. Participants strongly believe that ICT and the internet enable transactional distance (FWA_2, mean = 4.37) and that workplace flexibility promotes employee well-being, work-life balance, and Covid-19-related adaptations (FWA_3, mean = 4.13). These techniques are also known to reduce staff turnover and increase commitment (FWA_5, mean = 4.12), indicating a beneficial influence on worker satisfaction and retention.

However, the findings highlight some of the limitations involved with these methods. There is moderate agreement that business remoteness reduces consumer patronage (FWA_1, mean = 3.61) and that loosened business operations have a negative impact on profit margins (FWA_4, mean = 3.92). Overall, firms must combine the benefits of flexibility and innovation with attempts to solve profitability and consumer engagement concerns in order to achieve long-term success.

4.3.3 Supervisor Support

Table 4.7: Supervisor Support

Scale	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
SS_1	**189**	**1**	**5**	**4.17**	**.827**
SS_2	**187**	**1**	**5**	**4.12**	**.804**
SS_3	**189**	**1**	**5**	**4.10**	**.803**
SS_4	**189**	**1**	**5**	**3.84**	**.899**
SS_5	**190**	**1**	**5**	**4.08**	**.806**

SS_1: A high mean score of 4.17, indicating that respondents believe their managers understand their family responsibilities. The standard deviation of 0.827 indicates that the responses are reasonably consistent, with little difference in how participants scored the statement.

SS_2: The mean is 4.12, with a standard deviation of 0.804. This also shows that supervisors are often seen as good listeners when discussing family issues. Again, the low standard deviation indicates an agreement among the respondents.

SS_3: A mean of 4.10, indicating a similar trend in respondents' perceptions of how their superiors respect their family duties. The standard deviation of 0.803 implies that the individuals had comparable levels of agreement.

SS_4: An indicates a somewhat lower average score of 3.84. This suggests that, while many participants agree that their supervisor sets a positive example, there is some difference in how

they score this item. The standard deviation of 0.899 is larger, indicating a broader variation of answers.

SS_5: A mean of 4.08, with a standard deviation of 0.806. This result suggests that respondents generally agree with the statement, with a moderate level of consistency in their responses.

Overall, the chart sheds light on how employees view their supervisors' support for work-life balance, with good scores across the board, showing that supervisors are considered as helpful in managing home and work duties. However, there is some heterogeneity, notably in the assessment of supervisors as role models for work-life balance, indicating space for growth in that area.

4.3.4 Transformational Leadership Style

Table 4.8: Transformational Leadership Styles

Scale	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
TLS_1	187	1	5	4.05	.764
TLS_2	188	1	5	3.78	.914
TLS_3	190	1	5	3.98	.842
TLS_4	189	1	5	4.09	.790
TLS_5	190	1	5	4.06	.771

TLS_1: The mean score for this question is 4.05, suggesting that most respondents believe managers actively help their team members develop their talents. This shows a good opinion of supervisors as helpful and committed to personal and professional development. The standard deviation of 0.764 indicates that participants have rather consistent attitudes, with the majority agreeing on the helpful character of their supervisors in this regard.

TLS_2: This item's mean score is 3.78, which is somewhat lower than the other things. It suggests a reasonable level of agreement that managers spend time training and mentoring their team members. However, the standard deviation of 0.914 is the largest of all questions, indicating substantial heterogeneity in responses. This shows that, while some participants

believe their supervisors are great instructors and coaches, others may disagree, marking an area for possible development.

TLS_3: The mean score for this question is 3.98, indicating that respondents believe managers recognize and appreciate their team members' individual needs, talents, and goals. This demonstrates an appreciation of uniqueness and diversity in the workplace. The standard deviation of 0.842 indicates substantial variability, suggesting that while most people agree with this statement, some may disagree.

TLS_4: This question had the highest mean score of 4.09, indicating significant agreement that managers support creative ways to job completion. This shows that managers are regarded as forward-thinking and prepared to encourage innovation in their team members. The standard deviation of 0.790 suggests generally consistent replies, implying that most participants had a good impression of their bosses' capacity to support creativity.

TLS_5: The mean score for this question is 4.06, indicating that participants believe managers have an optimistic view while addressing future prospects. This indicates managers' positive attitudes, which may excite and inspire their employees. The standard deviation of 0.771 indicates that most respondents share this perception, with little variation in replies**.**

Finally, the results from TLS_1 to TLS_5 show that managers are typically seen highly by employees for their transformational leadership practices. Managers are highly praised for proposing novel techniques to task completion (TLS_4, mean = 4.09) and having a positive vision for the future (TLS_5, mean = 4.06). They are also seen as helpful in developing employees' strengths (TLS_1, mean = 4.05) and recognizing individual differences (TLS_3, mean = 3.98). However, teaching and coaching (TLS_2, mean = 3.78) scored slightly lower agreement, suggesting that this area may require further focus to improve managers' performance.

Overall, the high mean scores across the questions indicate a positive opinion of managers' transformative leadership. The low to moderate standard deviations indicate consistency in employee replies, with TLS_2 having the largest fluctuation, indicating various perspectives on this issue. These findings highlight the significance of retaining strong leadership skills while focusing on particular areas like coaching to increase management performance and employee happiness.

4.3.5 Descriptive Analysis IV and DV

Table 4.9: Descriptive Analysis IV and DV

Scale	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Flexible Work Arrangements	190	1.00	5.00	4.0267	.50905
Supervisor Support	190	1.00	5.00	4.0637	.70070
Transformational Leadership Style	190	1.00	5.00	3.9930	.68668
Work-Life Balance	190	1.00	5.00	3.9570	.71518

The table presents the descriptive statistics for four core variables flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, transformational leadership styles, and work-life balance based on data collected from 190 respondents. Each variable was assessed using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (low) to 5 (high). The mean scores for all variables exceed 3.9, indicating generally positive perceptions among participants.

Notably, Supervisor Support received the highest mean score (M = 4.0637, SD = 0.70070), suggesting that participants feel well-supported by their supervisors. This finding aligns with Sekhar and Patwardhan (2021), who found that supervisor support plays a crucial mediating role in enhancing the effectiveness of flexible work arrangements (FWAs), thereby improving job performance and work-life balance. The relatively higher standard deviation in this variable indicates some variability in experiences, suggesting that while many participants enjoy strong supervisory support, others may benefit from more targeted interventions.

Transformational Leadership Styles had the lowest mean score among the four variables (M = 3.9930, SD = 0.68668), though still reflecting positive perceptions. This supports findings by Sani and Adisa (2024), who reported that both transformational and transactional leadership styles significantly influence employees' ability to access and utilize work-life balance initiatives. Their study reinforces the idea that leadership plays a pivotal role in either facilitating or hindering employee work-life balance.

The Flexible Work Arrangements variable also received a high average rating (M = 4.0267, SD = 0.50905), pointing to the perceived availability and value of flexibility in the workplace. This is consistent with Sekhar and Patwardhan (2021), who emphasized the importance of FWAs and the supporting role of supervisors in making such policies effective.

The Work-Life Balance variable scored a mean of 3.9570 with a standard deviation of 0.71518. While the average score reflects a generally healthy work-life balance among respondents, the relatively larger spread in responses suggests diverse personal experiences. This variability might be explained by individual or organizational factors that were not fully captured in the present study. Supporting this, Baba et al. (2020) found that work-life balance is positively correlated with career satisfaction and psychological well-being, although external supports like supervisor and family involvement did not significantly influence this relationship. Their findings reinforce the importance of achieving work-life balance to promote overall employee wellness.

In summary, the present study demonstrates that participants hold favorable views on flexible work practices, supervisor support, transformational leadership, and work-life balance. However, the observed variability particularly in Supervisor Support and Work-Life Balance suggests that individualized approaches may be needed to better address the differing needs of employees. These results echo broader findings in the literature, which emphasize the interconnected roles of leadership, support systems, and flexible policies in shaping a productive and well-balanced workforce.

4.4 Regression Result

Table 4.10: Regression Result

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	**0.732**	**0.536**	**0.529**	**0.49104**

The model summary reveals a robust positive correlation between the independent variables Flexible Work Arrangements, Supervisor Support, and Transformational Leadership Style and the dependent variable, Work-Life Balance, evidenced by an R value of 0.732. The R Square value of 0.536 indicates that 53.6% of the variance in work-life balance is accounted for by the

joint impact of these three predictors. The Adjusted R Square value of 0.529 considers the number of predictors in the model and indicates only a minor decrease, while still demonstrating a considerable impact. The standard error of the estimate (0.49104) signifies the usual difference between the actual values and the forecasted values, reflecting the model's prediction reliability. While the model accounts for a significant amount of the variability in work-life balance, 46.4% is still unaccounted for. This indicates that additional factors like job requirements, company culture, or personal situations might also impact employees' work-life balance.

This research investigated the effects of transformational leadership on employee engagement and work-life balance among 107 bank workers in Bandar Lampung, Indonesia. The results revealed that transformational leadership has a positive effect on work-life balance and employee engagement, indicating that leaders who inspire and motivate their staff aid in achieving a better equilibrium between professional and personal life Hayati (2022). Researchers examined the impact of flexible work arrangements on employee job performance, taking into account the mediating effect of supervisor support. Information gathered from 214 employees in 46 service companies in India demonstrated that supervisor support plays a significant mediating role in the connection between flexible work arrangements and job performance. This highlights the significance of constructive supervision in improving the efficacy of adaptable work policies Sekhar and Patwardhan (2021). This study examined healthcare professionals, investigating how transformational leadership and organizational culture influenced work-life balance before and during the COVID-19 crisis. The research indicated that transformational leadership had a positive effect on work-life balance before the pandemic. Nevertheless, throughout the pandemic, organizational culture took on a greater significance, suggesting that external crises can alter the relationship between leadership styles and work-life balance Gomes et al. (2024).

From a practical viewpoint, these results highlight the significance of establishing workplace policies that promote flexible work arrangements, robust supervisory support, and transformational leadership styles. Organizations might think about implementing leadership development initiatives and increasing work flexibility to support employee well-being. It is crucial to acknowledge that this study was carried out within a single logistics company, which may restrict the applicability of the results. Future studies could broaden their scope to encompass various companies or industries to achieve a more comprehensive insight into how leadership and workplace practices affect work-life balance.

4.5 Pearson Correlation Coefficient Analysis

Table 4.11: Pearson Correlation Coefficient Analysis

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.099	0.295		0.334	0.739
Flexible Work Arrangements	0.361	0.086	0.257	4.194	0.000
Supervisor Support	0.459	0.081	0.450	5.695	0.000
Transformational Leadership Styles	0.135	0.079	0.130	1.714	0.088

The coefficient analysis offers important insights into how Flexible Work Arrangements, Supervisor Support, and Transformational Leadership Styles affect employees' Work-Life Balance. Among these predictors, Flexible Work Arrangements show a statistically significant and positive influence (B = 0.361, p = 0.000), suggesting that employees with increased flexibility in handling their work schedules attain a better work-life balance. Research on SME employees indicated that FWAs enhance job satisfaction and performance, while family-supportive supervisor behaviors play a moderating role in this connection. This indicates that FWAs, with backing from supervisors, improve employees' WLB and job performance Susanto et al. (2022). This discovery is consistent with earlier studies indicating that flexibility in the workplace allows employees to manage personal obligations more effectively, thus minimizing work-life conflict and improving overall well-being.

In a similar vein, Supervisor Support appears as the key influencing element (B = 0.459, p = 0.000) with the greatest standardized Beta coefficient (0.450), underscoring the idea that a supportive workplace is crucial for employees to achieve equilibrium between their work and personal lives. Studies show that support from supervisors is essential for employees' work-life balance. Research on container shipping companies in Taiwan found that supervisor support mediates the connection between FWAs and turnover intentions in Generation Z workers, emphasizing its importance in improving WLB Sani and Adisa (2024). Supervisors who offer

support, comprehension, and motivation foster a workplace environment where employees feel appreciated and less burdened by job-related pressures. This, consequently, leads to lower stress levels and greater job satisfaction, both of which are tightly connected to enhanced work-life balance. The significant connection between supervisor support and work-life balance highlights the necessity of leadership approaches that emphasize employee welfare and encourage transparent communication in the organization.

Conversely, Transformational Leadership Styles (B = 0.135, p = 0.088) show a less pronounced and statistically insignificant impact on work-life balance at the 5% significance threshold (p > 0.05). Although transformational leadership is frequently linked to employee motivation and engagement, its minimal direct effect on work-life balance in this study indicates that leadership attributes alone might not adequately tackle work-life issues. The impact of transformational leadership on work-life balance differs. Research conducted in Nigeria revealed that transformational and transactional leadership styles influence employees' utilization of WLB policies, highlighting the importance of leadership in promoting WLB Sani and Adisa (2024). This discovery suggests that although transformational leadership can motivate employees and enhance organizational success, it might require the addition of specific workplace policies—like flexible hours and direct manager support—to achieve meaningful advancements in work-life balance.

When comparing the three predictors, Supervisor Support emerges as the most significant factor, with Flexible Work Arrangements coming next, while Transformational Leadership Styles have the least impact on work-life balance variations. The results indicate that organizations aiming to improve work-life balance ought to focus on policies that foster managerial support and flexible work arrangements, since these elements have the greatest influence. Additionally, although leadership style is important, its success in enhancing work-life balance may rely on how effectively it is combined with other workplace programs.

In general, this evaluation strengthens the increasing array of proof that underscores the significance of a nurturing and flexible workplace in promoting employees' well-being. Acknowledging the essential importance of supervisor support and flexibility at work, companies especially within the shipping sector can adopt specific approaches to boost employee retention, lessen burnout, and increase overall job satisfaction.

4.6 Hypothesis Results

Table 4.12: Hypothesis Results

Hypothesis	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Beta	t-value	Sig. p-value)	Result
H1	Flexible Work Arrangements	Work-Life Balance	**0.257**	**4.194**	**0.000**	**Supported**
H2	Supervisor Support	Work-Life Balance	**0.450**	**5.695**	**0.000**	**Supported**
H3	Transformational Leadership Styles	Work-Life Balance	**0.130**	**1.714**	**0.088**	**Not Supported**

Table 4.12 shows the findings of hypothesis testing, demonstrating the connection between the independent variables (Flexible Work Arrangements, Supervisor Support, and Transformational Leadership Styles) and the dependent variable (Work-Life Balance). The results show different degrees of backing for the suggested hypotheses according to statistical significance and effect size.

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Flexible Work Arrangements and Work-Life Balance

The outcome for H1 shows that Flexible Work Arrangements (Beta = 0.257, p = 0.000) are significantly and positively associated with Work-Life Balance (WLB). This indicates that a more adaptable schedule and workplace arrangements increase the chances of employees achieving a healthier work-life balance. Since the p-value is below 0.05, this hypothesis is well-supported, validating the significance of adaptability in promoting work-life balance. This is in agreement with current literature that highlights the advantages of flexible work policies in lowering employee stress and enhancing overall job satisfaction. The findings indicate that companies providing more flexible work choices can assist in alleviating the difficulties employees encounter in managing their work and personal responsibilities. Numerous research efforts have consistently shown the beneficial effects of Flexible Work Arrangements (FWAs) on Work-Life Balance (WLB), improving employee wellness and lowering stress levels. Subramaniam et al. (2020) discovered that FWAs assist Malaysian academics in reducing stress through enhanced WLB, while Ferdous et al. (2021) associated FWAs with improved WLB, which then resulted in greater well-being and decreased turnover intentions. Aziz-Ur-Rehman and Siddiqui (2019) emphasized that WLB acts as a mediator between FWAs and job satisfaction among employees in the public sector. These findings together highlight the

importance of FWAs in enhancing WLB and positively affecting several employee outcomes, a theme that complements and builds upon your research, which examines FWAs in the shipping sector and evaluates the influence of transformational leadership and supervisor support.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Supervisor Support and Work-Life Balance

H2 receives strong backing, with Supervisor Support being the most notable predictor for Work-Life Balance (Beta = 0.450, p = 0.000). The results indicate that workers who obtain more support from their managers are more inclined to attain a better equilibrium between their work and personal lives. This emphasizes the essential role of supervisory connections in influencing employees' overall experiences in both their professional and personal lives. Supervisors providing assistance, empathy, and resources play a crucial role in fostering an atmosphere that enhances overall work-life balance. Earlier studies further confirm that support from supervisors is crucial for alleviating stress, improving job satisfaction, and promoting a healthier work-life balance. Research conducted by Talukder, Vickers, and Khan (2018) explored workers in Australia's financial industry and discovered that supervisor support greatly impacts work-life balance, subsequently influencing job satisfaction, life satisfaction, organizational commitment, and job performance. A study investigated administrators at a Malaysian public university and identified a significant positive correlation between supervisor support and work-life balance (β = 0.264, p = 0.027). This indicates that greater supervisor support is linked to a better work-life balance for employees. A study by Nabawanuka and Ekmekcioglu (2022) examined millennial workers in Turkey's finance industry. The research showed that the perception of supervisor support has a positive effect on work-life balance, which in turn improves employee well-being.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Transformational Leadership Styles and Work-Life Balance

On the other hand, H3 lacks support because no statistically significant correlation exists between Transformational Leadership Style and Work-Life Balance (Beta = 0.130, p = 0.088). Even though the relationship is positive, the p-value is greater than 0.05, suggesting that transformational leadership does not have a strong enough impact to be seen as a significant predictor of work-life balance in this research. This implies that although transformational leadership can motivate and involve employees, its direct effect on their work-life balance might be less significant than influences like supervisor assistance and flexible work options. Transformational leadership, focusing on motivation, inspiration, and vision, might not directly

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tackle the everyday challenges that employees encounter in balancing their personal and professional lives. This discovery aligns with earlier studies, suggesting that although leadership styles may enhance employee motivation and engagement, they do not automatically result in measurable enhancements in work-life balance. Moreover, research targeting Generation Z workers in Indonesia's creative sector indicated that transformational leadership had a notable impact on employee engagement and organizational commitment, although it did not directly affect work-life balance. This suggests that although transformational leadership can improve some elements of employee experience, its direct impact on work-life balance might be restricted Jasmine (2024). A study in the Journal of Health Organization and Management revealed that although transformational leadership positively affected work-life balance pre-COVID-19, this impact was not significant during the pandemic. This implies that the influence of transformational leadership on work-life balance might differ based on contextual elements Gomes et al. (2024).

In general, the results indicate that Flexible Work Arrangements and Supervisor Support are major and substantial factors contributing to better work-life balance, while Transformational Leadership Styles seem to have a less pronounced and statistically insignificant impact. Organizations that intend to promote improved work-life balance ought to emphasize flexible work arrangements and supportive managerial relationships, as these elements play a crucial role in enabling employees to balance their personal and professional obligations efficiently. These findings offer crucial direction for organizations aiming to improve employee well-being and retention by creating more flexible and nurturing work environments.

4.7 Normality Result

Table 4.13: Table Normality Result

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Flexibility Work Arrangements	0.195	190	0.001	0.848	190	0.001
Supervisor Support	0.227	190	0.001	0.787	190	0.001

Transformational Leadership Styles	0.241	190	0.001	0.765	190	0.001
Work-Life Balance	0.261	190	0.001	0.824	190	0.001

To evaluate if the data met the normality assumption, both the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) and Shapiro-Wilk (S-W) tests were performed for each variable: Flexible Work Arrangements, Supervisor Support, Transformational Leadership Style, and Work-Life Balance. The findings are shown in the table above.

All variables produced significance values ($p < 0.001$) for both tests, suggesting that the null hypothesis of normality is not supported. The Shapiro-Wilk test is deemed better suited for small to medium-sized samples, whereas the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is typically utilized for larger samples. A significance value ($p < 0.05$) suggests that the data shows a substantial divergence from a normal distribution Razali & Wah (2011). Both the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests showed significance values of $p < 0.001$, indicating that the normality assumption was not met for all variables. This is consistent with the advice of Ghasemi and Zahediasl (2012) and Pallant (2020), indicating that significance values lower than 0.05 denote a non-normal data distribution. This indicates that the variable distributions considerably differ from normality.

4.7.1 Independent Variables

4.8.2 Flexible Work Arrangements

The K-S test statistic was 0.195, while the S-W test statistic was 0.848, with both having $p < 0.001$. These findings show that the data for flexible work setups does not conform to a normal distribution. This research highlights the significance of normality assessments in statistical analyses and explores the use of the Shapiro-Wilk test. It emphasizes that important p-values (generally $p < 0.05$) in normality tests suggest a departure from a normal distribution, which corresponds with your results Souza et al. (2022).

4.7.3 Supervisor Support

The statistics for the K-S and S-W tests were 0.227 and 0.787, respectively, with $p < 0.001$. This verifies that the distribution of supervisor support data notably diverges from normality. Recent research has also focused on how sample size influences the effectiveness of normality assessments. Demir (2022), an examined how well different normality tests performed across various sample sizes, discovering that larger samples often produce significant results, even

when the data approaches normality, owing to the enhanced power of these tests with bigger sample sizes. This discovery highlights the significance of taking sample size into account when analyzing normality test outcomes.

4.7.4 Transformational Leadership Styles

The transformational leadership style data shows a significant deviation from a normal distribution as indicated by K-S and S-W test statistics of 0.241 and 0.765 respectively (both p < 0.001). This research evaluates several normality tests, such as K-S and S-W, across varying sample sizes and degrees of skewness and kurtosis. It points out that although sample size has little impact on normality tests when skewness and kurtosis are close to zero, larger samples exhibiting greater skewness and kurtosis often produce significant results, suggesting non-normality Demir (2022).

4.7.5 Interpretation

The K-S and S-W tests both showed significant outcomes (p < 0.001) for every variable. This indicates that the normality assumption is not met, and the data for every variable is not normally distributed. The test statistics indicate the degree of divergence from a normal distribution, where larger values signify more significant deviations from normality. Consequently, non-parametric statistical techniques could be more appropriate for additional examination. Recent research has focused on how sample size and data traits influence the effectiveness of normality tests. Biu, Nwakuya, and Wonu (2020) examined different normality tests and concluded that the K-S test performs better with large samples, whereas the Jarque-Bera test is more suitable for smaller samples. They advised utilizing the K-S test for large samples and the Jarque-Bera test for small samples when evaluating normality. Likewise, Wadgave (2021) examined the debate regarding the use of parametric versus non-parametric tests for continuous data that do not follow a normal distribution. The research indicates that non-parametric tests are advisable when data are significantly skewed and cannot be converted to a normal distribution. Nonetheless, in many other cases, parametric tests might be more effective.

4.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter sought to explore and analyze the connections among Flexible Work Arrangements, Supervisor Support, Transformational Leadership Styles, and Work-Life Balance. Notable positive correlations were identified among Flexible Work Arrangements, Supervisor Support, and Work-Life Balance, with Supervisor Support exerting the strongest

positive influence on work-life balance, succeeded by flexibility. Transformational Leadership exhibited a positive correlation; however, it was not statistically significant enough to forecast work-life balance. All hypotheses suggested that Flexible Work Arrangements and Supervisor Support play crucial roles in enhancing employees' work-life balance. These results emphasize areas where company leaders can concentrate to improve employee well-being. The findings back management approaches focused on enhancing employee well-being, which in turn promotes a balanced and effective workforce

5.   CHAPTER FIVE DISCUSSION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents an in-depth analysis of the research findings, integrating insights from earlier chapters. It explores the relationship between work-life balance and its key influencing factors flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, and transformational leadership style through the lens of Human Capital Theory. Expanding on the theoretical foundation in Chapter 2, this discussion examines how these factors contribute to employees' well-being in the shipping company. Furthermore, the findings are linked to the research objectives outlined in Chapter 1, highlighting both theoretical and practical implications. The chapter also acknowledges the study's limitations and offers recommendations for future research.

5.1 Summary of Research

This study provides valuable insights into work-life balance, particularly within the framework of Human Capital Theory (HCT). Originally introduced by Becker (1993), HCT suggests that investing in employees' skills, well-being, and work conditions enhances productivity and economic value. By applying this perspective, the research underscores that strategic investments in work-life balance initiatives yield long-term benefits for both employees and organizations.

The findings reaffirm that flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, and transformational leadership style play a crucial role in promoting work-life balance. Flexible work options allow employees greater control over their schedules, reducing work-family conflicts and enhancing job satisfaction Sekhar and Patwardhan (2021). This research investigates if remote work influences the connection between leadership behaviour (transformational leadership and leader incivility), followers' self-discipline, and work-life balance. The findings suggest that remote work enhances the link between leadership behaviour and work-life balance, highlighting the significance of transformational leadership in virtual environments Walsh et al. (2023).

Supervisor support was identified as another key determinant, as employees who perceive their supervisors as supportive experience lower stress and increased job satisfaction Swanzy et al.

(2020). Similarly, transformational leadership style fosters a work environment that empowers employees, encouraging engagement and well-being Kim and Cruz (2022).

From a practical standpoint, the study reinforces that organizations prioritizing work-life balance policies can improve employee retention, engagement, and overall productivity S et al. (2024). Employers that implement flexible work schedules, train supervisors to provide emotional and practical support, and cultivate transformational leadership style can create a more resilient and motivated workforce.

5.2 Discussion

5.2.1 Flexible Work Arrangements and Work-Life Balance

The study confirms that flexible work arrangements significantly enhance employees' work-life balance. Employees with access to remote work, flex-time, and compressed workweeks reported greater job satisfaction and reduced stress levels Petitta and Ghezzi (2025). This is particularly relevant in the shipping industry, were long hours and demanding schedules impact employee well-being.

Findings suggest that organizational culture plays a crucial role in the effectiveness of flexible work policies. Companies that actively support work-life balance not just offering flexible options but also encouraging their use see greater improvements in employee well-being and performance Timms & Carolyn, (2013).

5.2.2 Supervisor Support and Work-Life Balance

Supervisor support emerged as a strong predictor of work-life balance. Employees who received consistent and meaningful support from their supervisors experienced higher job satisfaction and lower stress Julien et al. (2011). Practical forms of support, such as workload adjustments and emotional encouragement, played a significant role in improving employees' ability to balance personal and professional commitments.

This finding aligns with Human Capital Theory, which posits that investing in managerial effectiveness enhances employee well-being and organizational success Hadjo et al. (2024). Companies that train supervisors to be empathetic, provide resources, and promote open communication can foster a healthier workplace environment and reduce burnout García-Cabrera et al. (2023).

5.2.3 Transformational Leadership Style and Work-Life Balance

The study highlights the positive impact of transformational leadership style on work-life balance. Leaders who inspire, motivate, and empower employees create a supportive work environment that enhances both well-being and productivity George et al. (2023). Employees under transformational leaders reported higher levels of job satisfaction and a stronger sense of control over their work-life balance Vannarith & Narith, (2022).

A key takeaway is that transformational leaders prioritize employee development and foster a culture of trust and flexibility, enabling employees to manage their work responsibilities without compromising personal commitments Abolnasser et al. (2023). This leadership style is particularly valuable in high-stress industries like shipping, where demanding workloads often lead to burnout.

5.3 Implications of the Findings

5.3.1 Theoretical Implications

This research contributes to Human Capital Theory and leadership theory by demonstrating that flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, and transformational leadership style directly influence employee well-being and organizational performance Wang and Xie (2023). The study shows that these setups greatly improve work-life balance, resulting in increased job satisfaction and retention rates, which correspond with Human Capital Theory by cultivating a more skilled and dedicated workforce Shangkar & Anurag (2022).

5.3.2 Practical Implications

Organizations can leverage these findings to enhance work-life balance initiatives. Flexible Work Policies should be implemented, including remote work options, flextime, and rotational schedules. These policies can increase employee satisfaction and reduce turnover Wheatley & Daniel (2016). By offering flexibility, organizations enable employees to better manage their personal and professional responsibilities, leading to improved engagement and productivity. Supervisor Training is another essential aspect. Organizations should develop leadership programs focused on emotional intelligence, communication, and active listening to help managers better support their teams Kim et al. (2022). Training programs that equip supervisors with these skills can foster a more supportive work environment, ultimately benefiting both employees and organizational performance.

Transformational Leadership Development should be encouraged. Leadership styles that prioritize employee growth, motivation, and flexibility can foster a more engaged workforce Meng et al. (2022). Organizations should promote leadership training initiatives that focus on personal development, mentorship, and a culture of continuous learning.

Workplace Culture plays a fundamental role in work-life balance. Organizations should actively cultivate a culture that values work-life balance, ensuring employees feel supported in utilizing flexible work options Wong et al. (2020). Companies that integrate work-life balance into their core values and encourage open communication about employee needs will create a healthier and more productive workforce.

5.4 Limitations and Future Research Directions

5.4.1 Limitations of the Study

Despite its contributions, this study has some limitations. First, the research employs a cross-sectional design, which identifies correlations but does not establish causation X. Wang and Cheng (2020). Future studies should consider a longitudinal approach to observe changes over time and determine causal relationships R. Wong et al. (2015).

Second, self-report bias may affect data reliability, as participants might provide socially desirable responses instead of completely honest ones Kongsvold et al. (2023). Future research should incorporate multiple data sources, such as supervisor assessments and objective performance metrics, to enhance validity.

Third, the study focuses solely on the shipping industry, which limits the generalizability of the findings to other sectors. Future research should explore work-life balance across different industries to assess the broader applicability of the results Senbursa and Kılıç (2024).

5.5 Future Research Directions

To address these limitations, future research should employ longitudinal designs to examine changes in work-life balance over time Hu and Subramony (2022). Researchers should also explore cross-industry studies to determine whether the relationships identified in this study hold in other sectors, such as healthcare, education, and technology J. Kim et al. (2022).

Additionally, future studies should investigate the impact of different leadership styles, such as transactional and servant leadership, on work-life balance. Exploring the role of organizational culture and external factors such as economic conditions and technological advancements

would provide a more comprehensive understanding of work-life balance dynamics Alkhodary (2023).

Lastly, qualitative research methods, such as interviews and focus groups, could offer deeper insights into employees' lived experiences and provide richer contextual understanding Dunwoodie et al. (2022). Combining quantitative and qualitative approaches would further strengthen the research in this field.

5.6 Conclusion

This study highlights the crucial role of flexible work arrangements, supervisor support, and transformational leadership style in achieving work-life balance. Organizations that prioritize these factors benefit from a healthier, more engaged workforce and improved productivity. These findings reinforce the importance of Human Capital Theory in employee development and organizational success. By investing in work-life balance initiatives, businesses can create a sustainable and high-performing workforce. Future research should explore additional leadership styles, cross-industry applications, and technological advancements to further enhance work-life balance strategies.

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Appendix 1

Survey Opening Letter

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE / BORANG SOAL SELIDIK

Dear respondents,/ Kepada respondent yang dihormati,

I am Umesvary Mohan Dass, Master of Human Resources Management (MHRM) student from the Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM). I am conducting this survey as part of my research project to understand better the Flexible Work Arrangements, Supervisor Support, And Transformational Leadership Style In A Shipping Company: Effects On Work-Life Balance. To take part, you need to fill out a short online survey via Google Forms, accessible through this link: [https://forms.gle/GXSNtrPWextXzKnF6].

Saya Umesvary Mohan Dass, pelajar Sarjana Pengurusan Sumber Manusia (MHRM) dari Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM). Saya sedang menjalankan tinjauan ini sebagai sebahagian daripada projek penyelidikan saya untuk memahami dengan lebih mendalam tentang Pengaturan Kerja Fleksibel, Sokongan Penyelia, dan Gaya Kepimpinan Transformasional dalam Syarikat Perkapalan: Kesan terhadap Keseimbangan Kerja dan Kehidupan. Untuk mengambil bahagian, anda perlu mengisi tinjauan ringkas secara dalam talian melalui Google Forms yang boleh diakses melalui pautan ini: [https://forms.gle/GXSNtrPWextXzKnF6].

I would be grateful if you could spend about 10 minutes answering all the questions in this survey. Your responses will remain anonymous and strictly confidential.

Saya sangat berterima kasih sekiranya anda dapat meluangkan kira-kira 10 minit untuk menjawab semua soalan dalam soal selidik ini. Maklumat anda akan kekal secara ketanpanamaan dan dirahsiakan.

Your participation in this survey is invaluable and will help shed light on this increasingly relevant topic in today's workforce. Please take a few moments to share your insights and experiences related to work arrangements in the shipping industry.

Penyertaan anda dalam tinjauan ini amat berharga dan akan membantu menjelaskan topik yang semakin relevan dalam tenaga kerja masa kini. Sila luangkan sedikit masa untuk berkongsi pandangan dan pengalaman anda berkaitan dengan pengaturan kerja dalam industri perkapalan.

If you have any concerns or questions about this survey, please do not hesitate to email me at umesvarymohandass07@gmail.com or contact my Research Supervisor, Associate DR KHAIRUL HAFEZAD BIN ABDULLAH Senior Lecturer at hafezad@uum.edu.my. I look forward to your participation in this survey.

Jika anda mempunyai sebarang kebimbangan atau soalan mengenai tinjauan ini, sila jangan teragak-agak untuk menghubungi saya melalui emel di umesvarymohandass07@gmail.com atau hubungi Penyelia Penyelidikan saya, Associate Dr. Khairul Hafezad bin Abdullah, Pensyarah Kanan di indra@uum.edu.my. Saya menantikan penyertaan anda dalam tinjauan ini.

Thank you very much for your cooperation and participation/ Terima kasih banyak atas kerjasama dan penyertaan anda.

Best regards, / Salam hormat

Umesvary Mohan Dass

Master's Student / Pelajar Sarjana

School of Business Management / Pusat Pengajian Pengurusan Perniagaan

College of Business / Kolej Perniagaan

University Utara Malaysia / Universiti Utara Malaysia

Appendix 2

Research Title: Flexible Work Arrangements, Supervisor Support, And Transformational Leadership Style In A Shipping Company: Effects On Work-Life Balance.

There are no "correct" or "incorrect" responses. Kindly think thoroughly and respond to all inquiries as truthfully as you can. Your reply will remain private and will be combined with others, ensuring that individual participants cannot be recognized.

Instruction

This questionnaire has three (3) sections (Section A, B, and C). Please answer all the questions carefully.

Section A (Sociodemographic of Respondents)

Age / *Umur*	
18-25	
26-35	
36-45	
46-55	
56 or above / ke atas	
Gender / *jantina*	
Male / *lelaki*	
Female / *perempuan*	
What is your highest level of education? / *Apakah tahap pendidikan tertinggi anda?*	

Primary / Secondary / *Sekolah Kebangsaan / Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan*	
Associate's Diploma / *Diploma Bersekutu*	
Bachelor's Degree / *Ijazah Sarjana Muda*	
Master's Degree / *Ijazah Sarjana*	
Doctoral Degree / *Ijazah Doktor Falsafah*	

What is your current job role? / *Apa peranan pekerjaan anda sekarang?*	
Entry-level employee / *pekerja peringkat permulaan*	
Mid-level employee / *pekerja peringkat pertengahan*	
Senior-level employee / *pekerja peringkat kanan*	
Executive/Leadership / *Eksekutif/Kepimpinan*	
Manager/Supervisor / *Pengurus/Penyelia*	
How long have you been with your current organization? /	

Berapa lama anda telah berada di organisasi anda sekarang?	
Less than 1 year */ Kurang daripada 1 tahun*	
1-3 years / *tahun*	
4-6 years / *tahun*	
7-10 years / *tahun*	
More than 10 years / *Lebih daripada 10 tahun.*	

Section B: (Independent Variables) Flexible Work Arrangements, Supervisor Support, and Transformational Leadership Style.

Examine every statement thoroughly and select the answer that most closely represents you by marking the appropriate number. There are five potential choices. Level of Agreement* (1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree)

No	Items	Degree of Acceptance*				
	Flexible Work Arrangements					
1	**FWA_1: Due to the remoteness of business activities, customer patronage is hampered. /** *Akibat daripada jarak aktiviti perniagaan yang jauh, sokongan pelanggan terhalang.*	1	2	3	4	5
2	**FWA_2: The usage of ICT and the internet helps to facilitate transactional distancing. /** Penggunaan ICT dan internet membantu memudahkan jarak transaksi.	1	2	3	4	5
3	**FWA_3: The introduction of a flexible working environment is motivated by employee well-being, Covid-19 and work-family concerns. /** Pengenalan persekitaran kerja yang fleksibel didorong oleh kesejahteraan pekerja, Covid-19, dan kebimbangan mengenai kerja-keluarga.	1	2	3	4	5
4	**FWA_4: The firm experiences a decrease in its profit margins owing to the slack nature of business operations.** / *Firma mengalami penurunan dalam margin keuntungan disebabkan oleh sifat operasi perniagaan yang longgar.*	1	2	3	4	5
5	**FWA_5: The free nature of the business techniques reduces employee turnover and increases commitment. /** Sifat bebas teknik perniagaan mengurangkan perolehan pekerja dan meningkatkan komitmen.	1	2	3	4	5

Supervisor Support						
No	Items	Degree of Acceptance*				
1	SS_1: My supervisor understands my family demands. / *Penyelia saya memahami tuntutan keluarga saya.*	1	2	3	4	5
2	SS_2: My supervisor listens when I talk about my family. / Penyelia saya mendengar apabila saya bercakap tentang keluarga saya.	1	2	3	4	5
3	SS_3: My supervisor acknowledges that I have obligations as a family member. / *Penyelia saya mengakui bahawa saya mempunyai tanggungjawab sebagai ahli keluarga.*	1	2	3	4	5
4	SS_4: My supervisor is a good role model for work and non-work balance. / Penyelia saya adalah contoh teladan yang baik untuk keseimbangan kerja dan kehidupan peribadi..	1	2	3	4	5
5	SS_5: My supervisor demonstrates how a person can jointly be successful on and off the job. / Penyelia saya menunjukkan bagaimana seseorang boleh berjaya di tempat kerja dan di luar pekerjaan secara serentak.	1	2	3	4	5

**Transformational Leadership Style**

No	Items	**Degree of Acceptance***
1	**TLS_1: Manager helps others to develop their strengths. /** *Pengurus membantu orang lain untuk membangunkan kekuatan mereka.*	1	2	3	4	5
2	**TLS_2: Manager spends time teaching and coaching. /** *Pengurus meluangkan masa untuk mengajar dan memberi bimbingan.*	1	2	3	4	5
3	**TLS_3: Manager considers each individual as having different needs, abilities, and aspirations from others. /** *Pengurus menganggap setiap individu mempunyai keperluan, kebolehan, dan aspirasi yang berbeza daripada orang lain.*	1	2	3	4	5
4	**TLS_4: Manager suggests new ways of looking at how to complete assignments. /** Pengurus mencadangkan cara baharu untuk melihat bagaimana menyelesaikan tugasan.	1	2	3	4	5
5	**TLS_5: Manager talks optimistically about the future. /** Pengurus bercakap secara optimis tentang masa depan.	1	2	3	4	5

Section C: (Dependent Variable) Work-Life Balance.

Examine every statement thoroughly and select the answer that most closely represents you by marking the appropriate number. There are five potential choices. Level of Agreement* (1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree)

	Work-Life Balance					
No	**Items**	**Degree of Acceptance***				
1	**WLB_1. I have sufficient time away from my job at workplace to maintain adequate work and personal/family life balance. /** *Saya mempunyai masa yang mencukupi jauh dari pekerjaan di tempat kerja untuk mengekalkan keseimbangan kerja dan kehidupan peribadi/keluarga yang mencukupi.*	1	2	3	4	5
2	**WLB_2. I currently have a good balance between the time I spend at work and the time I available for non-work activities. /** *Saya kini mempunyai keseimbangan yang baik antara masa yang saya habiskan di tempat kerja dan masa yang saya ada untuk aktiviti bukan kerja.*	1	2	3	4	5
3	**WLB_3. I feel that the balance between my work demands and non-work activities is currently about right. /** *Saya rasa keseimbangan antara tuntutan kerja saya dan aktiviti bukan kerja kini adalah sesuai.*	1	2	3	4	5
4	**WLB_4: I am able to negotiate and accomplish what is expected of me at work and in my family. /** *Saya mampu merunding dan melaksanakan apa yang dijangka daripada saya di tempat kerja dan dalam keluarga saya.*	1	2	3	4	5
5	**WLB_5: I am able to accomplish the expectations that my supervisors and my family have for me. /**	1	2	3	4	5

	Saya mampu memenuhi jangkaan yang diberikan oleh penyelia saya dan keluarga saya.					
6	**WLB_6: Overall, I believe that my work and non-work life are balanced. /** *Secara keseluruhannya, saya percaya bahawa kehidupan kerja dan bukan kerja saya seimbang.*	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

Appendix 3

1. Demographic Results

Age

What is your age?
Berapakah umur anda?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-25	42	22.1	22.1	22.1
	26-35	74	38.9	38.9	61.1
	36-45	60	31.6	31.6	92.6
	46-55	14	7.4	7.4	100.0
	Total	190	100.0	100.0	

Gender

What is your gender?
Apakah jantina anda?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	99	52.1	52.1	52.1
	Male	91	47.9	47.9	100.0
	Total	190	100.0	100.0	

Education Level

What is your highest level of education?
Apakah tahap pendidikan tertinggi anda?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Associate's Diploma / Diploma Bersekutu	88	46.3	46.3	46.3
	Bachelor's Degree / Ijazah Sarjana Muda	70	36.8	36.8	83.2
	Master's Degree / Ijazah Sarjana	10	5.3	5.3	88.4
	Primary / Secondary / Sekolah Kebangsaan / Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan	22	11.6	11.6	100.0
	Total	190	100.0	100.0	

Job Role

What is your current job role?
Apa peranan pekerjaan anda sekarang?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		1	.5	.5	.5
	Entry-level employee / pekerja peringkat permulaan	30	15.8	15.8	16.3
	Executive/Leadership / Eksekutif/Kepimpinan	41	21.6	21.6	37.9
	Manager/Supervisor / Pengurus/Penyelia	15	7.9	7.9	45.8
	Mid-level employee / pekerja peringkat pertengahan	52	27.4	27.4	73.2
	Senior-level employee / pekerja peringkat kanan	51	26.8	26.8	100.0
	Total	190	100.0	100.0	

2. Descriptive Results

Work-Life Balance

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Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
WLB_1. I have sufficient time away from my job at workplace to maintain adequate work and personal/family life balance. Saya mempunyai masa yang mencukupi jauh dari pekerjaan di tempat kerja untuk mengekalkan keseimbangan kerja dan kehidupan peribadi/keluarga yang mencukupi.	189	1	5	3.87	.761
WLB_2. I currently have a good balance between the time I spend at work and the time I available for non-work activities. Saya kini mempunyai keseimbangan yang baik antara masa yang saya habiskan di tempat kerja dan masa yang saya ada untuk aktiviti bukan kerja.	190	1	5	4.03	.878
WLB_3. I feel that the balance between my work demands and non-work activities is currently about right. Saya rasa keseimbangan antara tuntutan kerja saya dan aktiviti bukan kerja kini adalah sesuai.	190	1	5	3.95	.847
WLB_4: I am able to negotiate and accomplish what is expected of me at work and in my family. Saya mampu merunding dan melaksanakan apa yang dijangka daripada saya di tempat kerja dan dalam keluarga saya.	190	1	5	4.00	.797
WLB_5: I am able to accomplish the expectations that my supervisors and my family have for me. Saya mampu memenuhi jangkaan yang diberikan oleh penyelia saya dan keluarga saya.	189	1	5	3.97	.818
WLB_6: Overall, I believe that my work and non-work life are balanced. Secara keseluruhannya, saya percaya bahawa kehidupan kerja dan bukan kerja saya seimbang.	186	1	5	3.92	.885
Valid N (listwise)	184				

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Flexible Work Arrangements

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
FWA_1: Due to the remoteness of business activities, customer patronage is hampered. Akibat daripada jarak aktiviti perniagaan yang jauh, sokongan pelanggan terhalang.	190	1	5	3.61	.807
FWA_2: The usage of ICT and the internet helps to facilitate transactional distancing. Penggunaan ICT dan internet membantu memudahkan jarak transaksi.	190	1	5	4.37	.757
FWA_3: The introduction of a flexible working environment is motivated by employee well-being, Covid-19 and work-family concerns. Pengenalan persekitaran kerja yang fleksibel didorong oleh kesejahteraan pekerja, Covid-19, dan kebimbangan mengenai kerja-keluarga.	189	1	5	4.13	.711
FWA_4: The firm experiences a decrease in its profit margins owing to the slack nature of business operations. Firma mengalami penurunan dalam margin keuntungan disebabkan oleh sifat operasi perniagaan yang longgar.	190	1	5	3.92	.812
FWA_5: The free nature of the business techniques reduces employee turnover and increases commitment. Sifat bebas teknik perniagaan mengurangkan perolehan pekerja dan meningkatkan komitmen.	188	1	5	4.12	.751
Valid N (listwise)	188				

Supervisor Support

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
SS_1: My supervisor understands my family demands. Penyelia saya memahami tuntutan keluarga saya.	189	1	5	4.17	.827
SS_2: My supervisor listens when I talk about my family. Penyelia saya mendengar apabila saya bercakap tentang keluarga saya.	187	1	5	4.12	.804
SS_3: My supervisor acknowledges that I have obligations as a family member. Penyelia saya mengakui bahawa saya mempunyai tanggungjawab sebagai ahli keluarga.	189	1	5	4.10	.803
SS_4: My supervisor is a good role model for work and non-work balance. Penyelia saya adalah contoh teladan yang baik untuk keseimbangan kerja dan kehidupan peribadi.	189	1	5	3.84	.899
SS_5: My supervisor demonstrates how a person can jointly be successful on and off the job. Penyelia saya menunjukkan bagaimana seseorang boleh berjaya di tempat kerja dan di luar pekerjaan secara serentak.	190	1	5	4.08	.806
Valid N (listwise)	185				

Transformational Leadership Style

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
TLS_1: Manager helps others to develop their strengths. Pengurus membantu orang lain untuk membangunkan kekuatan mereka.	187	1	5	4.05	.764
TLS_2: Manager spends time teaching and coaching. Pengurus meluangkan masa untuk mengajar dan memberi bimbingan.	188	1	5	3.78	.914
TLS_3: Manager considers each individual as having different needs, abilities, and aspirations from others. Pengurus menganggap setiap individu mempunyai keperluan, kebolehan, dan aspirasi yang berbeza daripada orang lain.	190	1	5	3.98	.842
TLS_4: Manager suggests new ways of looking at how to complete assignments. Pengurus mencadangkan cara baharu untuk melihat bagaimana menyelesaikan tugasan.	189	1	5	4.09	.790
TLS_5: Manager talks optimistically about the future. Pengurus bercakap secara optimis tentang masa depan.	190	1	5	4.06	.771
Valid N (listwise)	185				

3. Descriptive Analysis IV and DV

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Flexibility_Work_Arrangements	190	1.00	5.00	4.0267	.50905
Supervisor_Support	190	1.00	5.00	4.0637	.70070
Transformational_Leadership_Styles	190	1.00	5.00	3.9930	.68668
Work_Life_Balance	190	1.00	5.00	3.9570	.71518
Valid N (listwise)	190				

4. Regression Result

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.732[a]	.536	.529	.49104

a. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational_Leadership_Styles, Flexibility_Work_Arrangements, Supervisor_Support

5. Pearson Correlation Coefficient Analysis

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.099	.295		.334	.739
	Flexibility_Work_Arrangements	.361	.086	.257	4.194	.000
	Supervisor_Support	.459	.081	.450	5.695	.000
	Transformational_Leadership_Styles	.135	.079	.130	1.714	.088

a. Dependent Variable: Work_Life_Balance

6. Test of Normality

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Flexibility_Work_Arrangements	.195	190	<.001	.848	190	<.001
Supervisor_Support	.227	190	<.001	.787	190	<.001
Transformational_Leadership_Styles	.241	190	<.001	.765	190	<.001
Work_Life_Balance	.261	190	<.001	.824	190	<.001

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction