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Using Job Demands–Resources Theory to Predict Work–Life Balance among Academicians in Private Universities in Egypt during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract: Employers are divided into those who support their employees to achieve work–life balance and others who believe that employees should devote anything in their life to fulfilling work obligations. Employees in different occupations struggle to balance their work and life adequately. Especially during the pandemic, the barriers between work and life diminished. This study proposes that self-efficacy could be a potential moderator under personal resources. Drawing on the Job Demands–Resources Theory (JD–R) and Conservation of Resources Theory (COR), this study empirically tested the role of emotional demands and supervisor support in predicting the academicians' perception of work–life balance in Egypt during the COVID-19 pandemic. Data were collected from 504 academicians employed in the top 10 private universities in Egypt. Results reveal that emotional demands and supervisor support were related to work–life balance. Self-efficacy moderated the relationship between supervisor support and work–life balance. However, self-efficacy did not moderate the relationship between emotional demands and work–life balance. Our findings provide new insights, contribute to the literature on the work–life balance topic among academicians during the pandemic, and enhance the universities' understanding of implementing strategies to help achieve a work–life balance.

Keywords: work–life balance; job demands–resources; COVID-19; academician; Egypt

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1. Introduction

Organisations in the modern era encounter a number of obstacles as a result of the changing character of the environment. One of the numerous problems for an organisation is to satisfy its employees with a good working environment in order to cope with the continually changing and evolving environment, achieve success and stay competitive [1]. Ref. [2] described several motivational factors at the workplace, such as the nature of the work, the sensation of accomplishment from their employment, the acknowledgment, responsibility and opportunity for personal growth and development. These factors can boost employee motivation, leading to increased internal happiness, which will lead to contentment.

One of the main factors that increase employees' job satisfaction and life satisfaction and decrease emotional exhaustion, anxiety and stress among individuals is work–life balance (WLB) [3]. Today, balancing work and life domains is critical to all individuals. The connection between work and life and the topic of work–life balance is gaining significant interest among the public and researchers [4]. Employees that are happy with their personal and professional lives are more motivated, passionate and enthusiastic about their jobs. WLB is one of Egypt's critical sources of employee satisfaction and happiness [5]. It is no longer regarded as "welfare" but rather as an effective strategy that a company should implement to retain its qualified talent and preserve its psychological well-being [6,7]. However, many factors could influence the individual's work–life balance. Ref. [8] divided

the factors that affect the WLB into four elements. The first element is the evolving social trends. The second element is work factors, such as workload and occupational change. The third element is the non-work factors, such as medical concerns and childcare. The fourth element is the environmental factors, such as national culture, government policies and globalisation.

The environmental factors had a drastic change after the COVID-19 pandemic started in December 2019, affecting millions worldwide [9–12]. Subsequently, the governments imposed measures to minimise the spread of the virus, such as lockdowns, the closing of schools and organizations and social distancing regulations until vaccines were available [12,13]. COVID-19 is still there in 2022, establishing public health emergency worldwide [14,15]. The global pandemic is an unprecedented global crisis affecting the worldwide socio-economy [16]. Many organisations have ceased operations due to various obstacles during the pandemic. Some sectors, such as airlines, hotels and restaurants, are badly hit, while many experience a slowdown in parts of the economy [17]. The global pandemic has led to many layoffs. Increased uncertainty makes employees devote their life obligations to fulfilling their work requirements [18,19]. Globally, 81 percent of the workforce experienced the new idea of working from home for the first time without being trained on how to manage work from another location in an effective way [11,20].

Thus, this study focuses on the work–life balance of academicians at Egyptian higher education institutions, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, as this sector faces many challenges [21]. Even though the Egyptian education system is ancient, higher education institutions in Egypt face challenges in achieving high competitiveness and sustainability [22]. The massive competition between universities has increased due to globalization, technology usage and demographic changes. The university's competitiveness added an extra burden on faculty members because they usually work hard to meet university expectations, affecting their well-being. Teaching, researching, publishing and administrative work are some of the most demanding academic activities [23]. These job demands affect academics' physical and psychological health [24]. As explained in [23], academics are emotionally and physically exhausted and drained; they cannot fulfill their commitments to society and family because they need much energy. Referring to the UN World Happiness Report in 2013, Egypt was listed as an unhappy nation, with 130th ranking out of 155 countries [25]. In 2017, Egypt moved to 104th of 155 nations. Several reasons for unhappiness among Egyptians include work stress, emotional distress and lack of autonomy. Therefore, this study builds upon prior research with a novel research question: How has WLB changed during COVID-19 among academicians in Egypt?

To answer this question, this paper presented supervisor support as a job resource since it has a significant influence on the work–life balance among academicians [26]. In the Middle East, social relationships are valuable, as no one can live without his/her social networks. These networks shape the individual's behaviour, such as increasing his/her self-esteem, raising self-confidence and decreasing stress and anxiety [27]. Moreover, addressing emotional demands is also new to the literature and needs further investigation, especially among academicians, who are confronted with multiple emotional demands [28,29]. In addition, individuals working in the academic field must have a high level of self-efficacy because they act as role models to their students [30]. Self-efficacy is crucial because it helps people handle the complex and stressful conditions that often face academia [31]. Additionally, self-efficacious employees tend to believe in and value themselves; thus, this helps them to have more skills and enhances their resources, making them balance their work and life [32–34]. Therefore, the current paper highlights some of the main predictors of WLB that show their incredible effect on academics' work–life balance during COVID-19.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Work–Life Balance

Work–life balance is a topic that is receiving considerable interest in the human resource development literature, and it is a great way to boost individual and organisational

effectiveness [4,35–38]. WLB is more important than the employee compensation package [39]. The terms "work" and "life" have been defined in the literature with much ambiguity [40]. Work refers to paid employment, and life relates to anything that happens outside of work but is most commonly used to refer to family or home life [41]. WLB can be expressed in various ways [42,43]. In [44], WLB was explained as having a high degree of work–life enrichment and the absence of conflict. At the same time, ref. [33] claimed that WLB occurs when there is an equal distribution of the individuals' resources in their work, family and personal life. Most meanings pertain to a person's job and personal life being balanced [45,46]. Therefore, WLB is "the extent to which an individual can adequately manage the multiple roles in their life, including work, family and other major responsibilities" [47] (p. 3308).

WLB encompasses a larger range of personal experiences than work–family balance alone. Therefore, it is more process-oriented and focuses on balancing demands [48]. Refs. [3,49] suggested that WLB is a much larger concept that applies to all working individuals, not only married couples with children or working mothers. Ref. [50] argued that WLB is helpful for both men and women pressured by work and family obligations. The concept of WLB first emerged in the United Kingdom in the 1970s. However, it was first implemented in the United States in the 80s and 90s [45,51]. Although it is not a new topic, it is attracting considerable interest in the work and life literature [35,36]. Previously, the term work–family balance was first introduced in the press and journals. After some time, there was a shift in naming the WLB [45].

Therefore, employers must understand two crucial aspects of the WLB concept. First, WLB is an ongoing process that will change, and new features will be added to it because organisations and employees are continuously evolving. Second, organisations should differ in their WLB policies and practices depending on employees' needs because they differ from one individual to another [4,45].

Businesses should be a significant source of assistance for workers in managing their professional and personal lives [52]. In particular, academic jobs are among the most stressful for organisations providing educational services. One reason is that academic professionals face difficulties achieving WLB as they usually conform to multiple job demands that exceed their working hours [53]. Thus, organisations should encourage the labor force to equate their work and life as replacements to help them trade off their time at work or at home [54].

2.1.1. Work–Life Balance among Academicians

Academicians are the backbone of educational institutions, and their well-being is a concern [37,55–57]. Hence, the government, policymakers and university management should be aware that the multiple demands confronted by academic staff lead to high levels of uncertainty regarding the ability to manage personal and work–life obligations [58].

Moreover, the inability of a faculty member to achieve the required balance leads to many problems, such as poor mental health, anxiety, stress, depression, reduced productivity and job satisfaction, which may lead to the academician quitting the profession [59]. Ref. [60] recently argued that the issue of WLB is critical in the academic field, and the conflict between the two domains leads to adverse outcomes in both work and health. This scenario is also very common in the Middle East; WLB in the Middle East is disturbed. Because academicians' tasks never end, faculty members suffer from long working hours, high workloads and a lack of support from their immediate supervisors. In addition, employees lack job autonomy, as they do not have the freedom to organise their work schedules and workload, which leads to high turnover rates [61].

Furthermore, a lack of job control and decision-making power harmed academicians' capacity to manage work and life [37]. Hence, WLB among academicians is a significant challenge that may lead to burnout [37]. Despite the importance of institutions in understanding the factors that increase academicians' occupational stress, mental health and

well-being, limited research has addressed the well-being of academics worldwide [62]. Specifically, studies conducted in Egypt on human resource management are rare [63].

Achieving WLB among academicians is vital; it is a source of happiness and well-being [64]. It is also essential because individuals in Egypt value the time spent with their families, which prevents them from achieving a counterpoise between their work and life calls [63]. Consequently, the WLB among academic staff should be addressed. To ensure that accurate and proactive responses are taken, universities must also pay particular attention to the causes of WLB and its beneficial results, such as job satisfaction, burnout and the intention to quit.

Some factors impact faculty members' well-being and job satisfaction, such as competition and the uncertainty of contracts [65]. In addition, integrating technology and online classes requires more academic preparation and training, which may also lead to academic frustration, affecting their WLB [53,66]. Other factors that impact academics' WLB include workload, academic stress, campus culture, supervisor support, co-worker support and promotion [53]. It was found in [67] that the teaching profession is considered one of the most stressful jobs in Egypt—not only in Egypt but worldwide. This classification is because more than a third of the educational domains have been stressed because of the COVID-19 impact [62].

2.1.2. Work–Life Balance at the Time of the COVID-19

In March 2020, the higher education system in Egypt started its transition stage due to the impact of COVID-19 [66]. In addition, ref. [68] studied the effect of COVID-19 on the Egyptian educational process and found that COVID-19 dramatically impacts how global education is delivered. Egypt's education system has turned to online learning as an alternative to conventional learning. Classes were conducted using Zoom, Webex, Microsoft Teams or other online platforms. Online learning that involves information and communication technology (ICT) or technology-based teaching and learning is not as easy as expected [15]. Owing to these technological advancements, academicians are reachable all day, increasing their workload and mental demands [14].

Additionally, due to online teaching, responsibility increased for instructors. They should try to maintain an interactive and creative experience for their students [69]. Moreover, they have other commitments, such as understanding the students' anxiety from online learning, which raises the level of emotional demands; they also try to create new examination methods and solve technical problems that arise now and then [9,66,68].

Egypt is one of the countries with a shallow rate of people working from home [20]. There was a notable radical increase in the number of employees working from home post-pandemic, supported by data from wuzzuf.net, an online platform that connects job seekers with employers. Data on wuzzuf.net showed that the number of jobs conducted remotely increased by 12 percent, and the number of candidates seeking jobs completed from home increased remarkably [20]. This shift happened suddenly, without having the opportunity to train employees on working effectively from home. Accordingly, many employees face challenges, especially in managing the work and home spheres. One example is that working mothers had difficulty handling their children because, at that time, schools and childcare centers were closed physically. They switched to e-learning systems, which forced parents to follow up on their children's learning processes and work simultaneously. Therefore, the pandemic has altered our lives. WLB has become a public health issue that researchers and practitioners cannot ignore during pandemics.

The pandemic shows that WLB is more crucial than ever because of the blurred lines between work and life [60,70]. Earlier, employees believed working from home would facilitate balancing work and life obligations. Working from home for an extended period is not usually a facilitator during the pandemic, but it can increase the workload. Currently, working from home becomes challenging because the number of working hours increases, the ability to manage home responsibilities becomes difficult and technological advancements force employees to be accessible at any time of the day and even during

weekends. The pandemic shifted work from face-to-face to virtual ones, increasing faculty members' demands [38,60].

Furthermore, "business hours" has been replaced with "any hours" or, more specifically, "all hours." In a study conducted on 500 employees from the UK, respondents explained that they have concerns over the video calls they receive and that their time is usually interrupted by work-related issues [71]. Academics in Egypt are currently experiencing mental health problems due to the pandemic. This view is supported by [56], who claimed that mental health is the most common concern globally.

Furthermore, the global demands for higher education are also increasing the transition occurring due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which was discussed earlier, negatively influencing academicians' working environment. The higher education system is one of the sectors affected by current changes [62]. Nearly 1.3 billion learners worldwide cannot attend university [72]. There is evidence that academics worldwide suffer from job stress, which affects their mental and psychological well-being [60,73]. Even at the beginning of 2022, when academicians started gradually to return to on-campus work, there is a perception of increased workload and problems with presenteeism and well-being [14].

Therefore, researchers are increasingly interested in studying the impact of the negative environment of higher education on academics' mental health and well-being [73]. These changes have increased job demands among academicians and decreased the positive impact of job resources, which negatively affected their WLB. One of the increased job demands among academics is the emotional demand discussed in the following section.

2.2. Job Demands

Emotional Demands

Job demands are a source of stress that leads to high work–life conflict [32]. They are commonly defined as time-based demands, such as overtime and non-standard work schedules, strain-based demands or cognitive demands, such as task difficulty and mental load. Affect-based or emotional demands include negative mood and leader or co-worker hostility. Physical demands, such as manual jobs, require intense labor [33]. The Job Demands and Resources Theory (JD–R) is perceived as one of the most influential theories supporting employees' well-being. Thus, the JD–R theory will contribute to understanding the work–life balance among academicians in Egypt. The JD–R theory proposed two main categories in all occupations: job demands and resources [74]. Job demands are referred to "as those physical, psychological, social or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained physical and/or psychological (i.e., cognitive or emotional) effort and are therefore associated with certain physiological and/or psychological costs" [75] (p. 296). Thus, the JD–R theory is best adopted in this research to test the negative effect of job demands on academicians' work–life balance.

This study focuses on one type of job demands, which are emotional demands. Emotional demands refer to the aspects faced by employees in the workplace that require continuous emotional effort when dealing with clients [76,77]. Another definition by [78] states that emotional demands arise from an individual's emotional aspects. Furthermore, emotional demands are considered hindrances; hence, their impact on well-being is enormous [79]. Therefore, addressing emotional demands is extremely important in occupations related to teaching, especially since there is a lack of studies addressing the relationship between emotional demands and employees' well-being [28,80]. Education is a service industry; any service industry that requires dealing with people creates emotional pressure on service providers [81]. These results were supported in [82] in a representative sample of the Dutch working population, stating that human service organisations require great attention to how emotional demands may affect employees because they deal with clients the most (e.g., education).

Moreover, the human service industry requires interaction with individuals of different social levels, diseases, feelings and attitudes. This working environment creates an atmosphere of emotional demands [83]. Academicians deal with multiple students and

sometimes their parents, and administrative tasks, including student issues, may create an emotional burden because they need to satisfy their students and keep them as calm as possible. Likewise, in the Harvard Business Review, nearly 94 percent of service professionals work more than 50 h weekly [84]. Hence, stressful working conditions reduce the ability of employees to achieve work–life balance [85]. This was explained by [86], who found that emotional demands have a negative relationship with work–life balance. Ref. [28] argued the importance of studying the effect of emotional demands on individuals' well-being because previous studies demonstrated that fostering employees' well-being is one of the initiatives to enhance their work–life balance [85,87].

The COVID-19 pandemic is one of the stressful situations that have increased work–life balance and burnout among employees and could be due to emotional exhaustion, which is usually ignored by almost all organisations [70]. COVID-19 forced academicians to work online, learning via online platforms during the pandemic increased emotional demands, and academicians became accessible at any time of the day [88,89]. Moreover, this pandemic has increased individuals' stress levels because academicians must hide their emotions and the actual effect of emotional stress, known as "emotional labor," to accomplish their work. Therefore, to minimise emotional demands at the workplace, there should be a supportive supervisor who understands and encourages employees to overcome challenging situations. To summarise, JD–R theory hypothesises two major effects: the first concerns health issues that arise when people are subjected to excessive employment expectations that exceed their capabilities, known as job demands. The second effect is related to the motivating elements of the job resources. In other words, when job demands are high, WLB will be negatively affected, and when job resources are high (because of internal and external motivating capabilities), employees are encouraged to meet their goals. In turn, employee WLB is expected.

Therefore, it is hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 1 (H1). *Emotional demands negatively affect work–life balance.*

2.3. Job Resources

Supervisor Support

Job resources are known as the structural and psychological assets that accelerate the individual's role functioning and role performance [35]. These resources are essential as they enable employees to face life challenges, especially their work–life issues [35]. However, still, there is a lack of studies addressing the resources needed to achieve work–life balance [54,90]. The effect of the job resources is better explained through the JD–R theory. Job resources are referred to "those physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that either/or (1) reduce job demands and the associated physiological and psychological costs; (2) are functional in achieving work goals; (3) stimulate personal growth, learning and development" [75] (p. 296). Employees can find job resources at their organisation through their interrelationships with others or their job characteristics [91]. Job resources, such as supervisor support, have been linked to reduced feelings of fatigue. These job resources will help academic staff members to overcome the negative consequences of job demands [92].

Supervisor support, an essential job resource, has emerged as a significant predictor in the teaching profession [93]. Ref. [94] (p. 7) defined family-supportive supervisors as "those individuals who empathise with the employee's desire to seek a balance between work and family responsibilities." Recently, ref. [58] referred to supervisor support as a kind of support that includes employees' motivation feedback, providing them with the needed resources and increasing their career development opportunities. Consequently, supervisors have been designated as guardians of employees, as they are accountable for employees' family obligations [18]. Supervisor support is regarded as an informal source of support for employees [95,96]. This informal source of support is perceived as more critical

and adequate for employees, unlike formal support (flexible work arrangements) [97]. Formal policies are necessary for any organisation but are insufficient to minimise employees' work–family conflict because they are not always available [98].

Moreover, supervisors can be supportive in different ways, as explained by [99] in their meta-analysis, which identified two types of social support: content-general and content-specific. Content-general support is the degree to which a supervisor cares about employees' general well-being. Content-specific support refers to how a supervisor supports employees to satisfy specific demands [96]. In addition, it was found that the more precise the social support provided by the supervisor, especially if it is work–family related, the less work–family conflict is among employees [94]. It was argued in [58] that supervisor support is a kind of reinforcement for employees, which will inspire them and create a positive working environment.

Furthermore, leading employees are critical; therefore, the supervisor's role is vital during the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall, supervisors should work hard to create family-friendly environments. They could help understand employees' anxiety and stress when conducting meetings during working hours. In addition, leave breaks and weekends for employees' life and family time, not misusing the technological platforms by connecting with employees at all hours, provide connections to necessary job resources and reduce uncertainty as much as possible. Ref. [59] explained that social support from the work domain helps faculty members effectively utilise WLB programs and practices, increasing their positive energy and helping them achieve tenure and full-tenured professors. Moreover, aside from job resources, personal resources can be vital for attaining WLB. Therefore, it is hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 2 (H2). *Supervisor support positively affects work–life balance.*

2.4. Personal Resources

Self-Efficacy

Personal resources refer to the individual's positive self-assessment related to resilience and his/her ability to impact and control the surrounding environment [100]. Refs. [54,101] proposed that the definition of personal resources implies that they can be used as a moderator in the JD–R theory because they can decrease the negative effects of the job demands and enhance the positive effects on the job resource. Additionally, refs. [102–104] argued that personal resources decrease the effect of job demands on positive outcomes. Moreover, they enhance the employees' ability to utilise the job resources provided to help them deal better with the work conditions, thus increasing their well-being and engagement [105,106].

Therefore, the Conservation of Resources Theory (COR) is best applied in this study explaining the moderating effect; it provides useful insights into factors influencing work–life balance [3]. Because when academicians are confronted with job demands, such as emotional demands, these demands will eventually drain their job and personal resources, affecting their ability to achieve work–life balance [74]. This view was explained by [107,108] that individuals lose their resources once faced with multiple job demands. As a result, academicians in Egypt exert lots of effort to protect their personal resources. Academicians with greater resources will be more resistant to losing other resources, as losing them will make them feel demotivated, affecting their ability to achieve work–life balance.

Moreover, this study focuses on the two main assumptions of COR theory. The first is that employees invest their resources to deal with threatening conditions and prevent themselves from adverse outcomes [109]. Second, employees will strive to protect their resources and accumulate these resources. Resources tend to generate other resources, thus creating resource caravans, resulting in positive outcomes like better coping and well-being [110,111]. Therefore, the COR theory not only assumes moderating role of personal resources in the relationship between demands and adverse outcomes so that self-efficacy lessens anxiety and boosts motivation while tackling challenging roles, but also employees with high levels of self-efficacy have been found to typically be better at

using and producing job resources and applying a variety of different and more effective coping mechanisms than those with low levels of self-efficacy [112].

Self-efficacy is one of the personal resource dimensions used in the current study. Ref. [113] (p. 3) defined self-efficacy as "beliefs in one's capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments". Consequently, self-efficacy is an important topic to address in the teaching profession because it significantly influences academic teaching, academic achievement and learning behaviour. It is also related to better workplace social relationships [37].

Therefore, high self-efficacy will determine one's level of optimism, the amount of time exerted, the degree of tension encountered and the extent to which one perseveres in the face of challenges and uncertainties [114]. Individuals with practical experience and who credit their achievements for themselves are more likely to encounter an improvement in self-efficacy [104,113]. Therefore, self-efficacy can be influential in maintaining work–life balance among academicians. It can also be a potential moderator in explaining organisational outcomes [37]. These outcomes demonstrate that individuals with high self-efficacy tend to have a more remarkable ability to control their thoughts and actions, leading to better outcomes, such as work–life balance. Employees with a high level of self-efficacy tend to effectively utilise the resources provided to them, such as supervisor support, and overcome demanding situations, such as emotional demands [112,115]. As a result, self-effciacy is an important personal resouces that can act as a moderator in the JD–R theory [105,116]. These findings were found ealier by [33,37,117] that a high level of self-efficacy would weaken the effect of job demands leading to work–life balance. Moreover, ref. [100] argued that personal resources have a moderating effect on the relationship between job resources and organisational outcomes, but this interaction is not empirically tested a lot [118]. Therefore, it is hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 3 (H3). *Self-efficacy moderates the relationship between emotional demands and work–life balance, such as the relationship becoming weaker when self-efficacy is high.*

Hypothesis 4 (H4). *Self-efficacy moderates the relationship between supervisor support and work–life balance, such that the relationship becomes stronger when self-efficacy is high.*

Adopting the JD–R and COR theories will, therefore, aid academicians in overcoming the adverse effects of job demands that can drain their job and personal resources and thereby heighten work–life balance. Both theories are most appropriate for the current study since they enable academicians to use their resources to deal with challenging circumstances. Therefore, based on the above discussion, the research framework is presented in Figure 1.

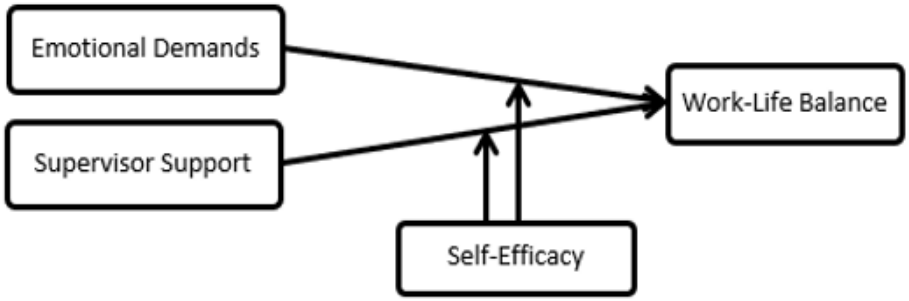

Figure 1. Research Framework.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Population and Sample

This study focuses on the academicians working in the top 10 private universities in Egypt. Egyptian private universities are enrolling more students each year; in 2017/2018, there were 170,435 students enrolled; in 2019/2020, there were 194,659 students enrolled;

in 2020/2021, there were 221.700 [119]. This pace of growth demonstrates that private universities in Egypt hold a sizable market share. In addition, private institutions in Egypt are preferable to public ones because they have an edge in various areas, such as promoting students' self-assurance, presentation abilities and self-presentation in their academic programs [120]. Moreover, Mohamed Helmy El-Ghor, secretary-general of Egypt's Council of Private Universities, acknowledged that private universities in Egypt confront higher job demands than public ones; this is due to the great rivalry they face, particularly from institutions in Turkey and Jordan that charge less than Egyptian universities [121].

In addition, national rankings assist institutions in improving their reputation by identifying deficiencies and assessing how effectively universities perform in various categories. Therefore, focusing on the top 10 private universities is for two reasons: (1) universities ranked as one of the top 10 is a vital indicator of the resources provided at a specific institution; at the top-ranked universities, academicians can receive the support needed, such as supervisor support. The level of informal support is considered high in private universities because the number of faculty members employed is not large, which makes it easier for supervisors to help and encourage their academicians. Secondly, the top 10 private universities have significantly larger job demands than the standard private universities. As their academicians are usually burdened by the accreditations they have to work on, publications are usually required as it is a tool to increase the university ranking. These reasons demonstrate the importance of studying work–life balance among academicians in the top 10 private universities in Egypt.

The top 10 private universities in Egypt were listed by UniRank, the largest international education directory and search engine. Undoubtedly, all universities strive to meet certain standards in order to meet the UniRank Egyptian Private Universities' criteria. These requirements include face-to-face instruction, four-year undergraduate degree and university accreditation by the Ministry of Higher Education [122]. The top 10 private universities in Egypt are included in Table 1, along with a breakdown of the number of academic staff at each. Data were collected from academicians employed at the top 10 Egyptian private universities who are full-time and working for at least one year at their respective universities. The sampling technique used multi-sampling; first, quota sampling technique was used to determine the number of questionnaires distributed at each private university. Second, purposive sampling was used to target specific groups who can provide the desired information because they meet certain criteria [74,123,124].

Table 1. Number of participants from the top 10 private universities in Egypt.

Rank	University Name	Number of Academicians	Number of Questionnaires Distributed	Number of Questionnaires Collected and Used	Response Rate
1	American University in Cairo	408	36	30	84%
2	Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport	1441	127	106	
3	German University in Cairo	812	71	60	
4	Misr University for Science and Technology	756	66	56	
5	Misr International University	427	37	32	
6	The British University in Egypt	716	63	53	
7	Modern Sciences and Arts University	1054	93	77	
8	Future University in Egypt	405	36	30	
9	Nahda University	91	8	7	
10	Modern University for Technology and Information	712	63	53	
	Total	6822	600	504	

3.2. Data Collection

A total of 600 questionnaires were distributed; out of the total 600 questionnaires distributed, a total of 504 were collected and used, giving a response rate (84%), as shown in Table 1. The data were collected from August 2021 to January 2022. Table 2 exhibits the profile of the respondents.

Table 2. Profile of Respondents.

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	136	27.0
	Female	368	73.0
Age	Less than 25	40	7.9
	25 to 30	212	42.1
	31 to 35	119	23.6
	36 to 40	44	8.7
	41 to 45	33	6.5
	46 to 50	24	4.8
	51 to 55	15	3.0
	56–60	8	1.6
	61 and above	9	1.8
Marital Status	Single	243	48.2
	Married	242	48.0
	Other	19	3.8
Number of Children	No children	290	57.5
	1 child	80	15.9
	2 children	95	18.8
	More than 2 children	39	7.7
Academic Position	Graduate Teaching Assistant	147	29.2
	Assistant Lecturer	212	42.1
	Lecturer	88	17.5
	Associate Professor	34	6.7
	Full Professor	23	4.6
University Name	American University in Cairo (AUC)	30	6.0
	Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport (AAST)	106	21.0
	German University in Cairo (GUC)	60	11.9
	Misr University for Science and Technology (MUST)	56	11.1
	Misr International University (MIU)	32	6.3
	British University in Egypt (BUE)	53	10.5
	Modern Sciences and Arts University (MSA)	77	15.3
	Future University in Egypt (FUE)	30	6.0
	Nahda University (NU)	7	1.4
	Modern University for Technology and Information (MTI)	53	10.5
School/College	College of Management	206	40.9
	College of Engineering	117	23.2
	College of Computer Science	22	4.4
	College of Nursing	6	1.2
	College of Pharmacy	25	5.0
	College of International Transport and Logistics	25	5.0
	College of Medicine	4	0.8
	College of Arts and Humanities	11	2.2
	College of Languages	56	11.1
	College of Economics and Political Sciences	2	0.4
	College of Mass Communication	30	6.0
Number of Working Years	1 to 5	245	48.6
	6 to 10	134	26.6
	11 to 15	88	17.5
	16 to 20	22	4.4
	21 and above	15	3.0
Highest Education Level	Doctorate's Degree	145	28.8
	Master's Degree	212	42.1
	Bachelor's Degree	147	29.2

3.3. Measurements of Variables

The current study provides 24 measuring items from the existing literature; minor modifications occurred to visualise the context clearly, in addition to nine demographic questions that identify the respondents' profiles.

3.3.1. Emotional Demands

Emotional demands describe the extent to which an academic staff member is emotionally stressed at work. It was measured using four items developed by [125]. Four items were adapted using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from (1) To a very small extent to (5) To a very large extent. Sample of the items include "My work put me in emotionally disturbing situations" and "I have to relate to other people's personal problems as part of my work." The Cronbach alpha for the original scale reported was 0.87.

3.3.2. Supervisor Support

Supervisor support shows how much a supervisor supports and motivates academicians at their institutions. Supervisor support was assessed using adapted items from the VBBA scale [126]. Nine adapted items using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from (1) Strongly Disagree to (5) Strongly Agree were used to assess the supervisor support construct. The items include "I can count on my supervisor when things are difficult in my job" and "If necessary, I can ask my supervisor for help." The Cronbach alpha for the original scale was 0.88.

3.3.3. Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy refers to the extent to which an academician tends to believe and value his/herself. Self-efficacy was measured by a scale developed by [127]. Seven items adopted from the original scale were measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from (1) Strongly Disagree to (5) Strongly Agree. The items include "I can manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough" and "It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals". The Cronbach alpha for the original scale was 0.82–0.93.

3.3.4. Work–Life Balance

WLB describes the degree to which an academician feels he/she can adequately balance his/her work and life. A four-item work–life balance is adopted from [128]. Items were measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from (1) Strongly Disagree to (5) Strongly Agree. Four items were adopted from the original scale. The items include "I currently have a good balance between the time I spend at work and the time I have available for non-work activities" and "I have difficulty balancing my work and non-work activities." The Cronbach alpha for the original scale ranged from 0.84–0.94.

3.3.5. Control Variables

Past research has found that gender [129–131], marital status [130,132], the number of children [132,133] and academic rank [134] are influential factors affecting academicians' work–life balance. Accordingly, the four control variables are evaluated using nominal scales to assess their impact on work–life balance.

4. Results

4.1. Measurement Model Assessment

This study employed SmartPLS 4 software for model assessment. Ref. [135] presented some guidelines for the measurement model assessment. Firstly, the convergent validity was evaluated by the outer loadings' values and the average variance extracted (AVE). According to [135], convergent validity is found if the values of the outer loadings are less than 0.40; therefore, these indicators should be eliminated. Regarding the AVE, ref. [135] recommended that the AVE value should be above 0.50. Thus, convergent validity was not a problem in this study because the values of the outer loading were above 0.40, and the AVE exceeded 0.50. Regarding the reliability of the scales, researchers can assess the

internal reliability either by composite reliability or by using Cronbach's alpha [136]. As for Cronbach's alpha, it has some disadvantages compared to composite reliability. It provides lower values than composite reliability. In other words, it underestimates the internal consistency reliability; it is less precise because items are unweighted and is more inflexible, unlike composite reliability. Composite reliability is more precise because it assesses the reliability while considering the outer loadings of the indicators [135]. For these reasons, the current study assessed internal reliability by using composite reliability. Table 3 exhibits the outer loadings, AVE and composite reliability.

Table 3. Item loadings, AVE and Composite Reliability.

Constructs	Items	Loadings	AVE	Composite Reliability
Work–life Balance	WLB1	0.893	0.731	0.915
	WLB2R	0.727		
	WLB3	0.877		
	WLB4	0.911		
Emotional Demands	ED1	0.812	0.627	0.870
	ED2	0.689		
	ED3	0.858		
	ED4	0.800		
Supervisor Support	SS1	0.760	0.570	0.921
	SS2	0.723		
	SS3	0.838		
	SS4R	0.682		
	SS5	0.822		
	SS6R	0.506		
	SS7	0.828		
	SS8	0.865		
	SS9R	0.706		
Self-Efficacy	SE1	0.602	0.524	0.885
	SE2	0.756		
	SE3	0.763		
	SE4	0.737		
	SE5	0.699		
	SE6	0.731		
	SE7	0.765		

Moreover, discriminate validity was examined by evaluating the cross-loadings, which measure the outer loading of an assigned construct that should be higher than any of its cross-loadings on other constructs [136,137]. Furthermore, discriminant validity using the Fornell and Larcker Criterion shows that the AVE's square root is greater than its correlation with any other construct. Lastly, ref. [138] recommended the Heterotrait Monotrait (HTMT) approach to test the discriminate validity. The rule of thumb states that a high HTMT value should not exceed 0.90 if the constructs used in the model are very similar. However, if the constructs used are conceptually different, then the value of the HTMT 0.85 is accepted [135].

The measurement model is demonstrated in Figure 2. Consequently, Table 4 displays the cross-loadings; as shown, all of the indicators' loadings associated with its' latent construct are higher than the loading on all other constructs [139]. Table 5 shows the Fornell and Larcker criterion, including the correlations between the study variables, and Table 6 presents the HTMT criterion that confirms that discriminate validity was not a problem in this study.

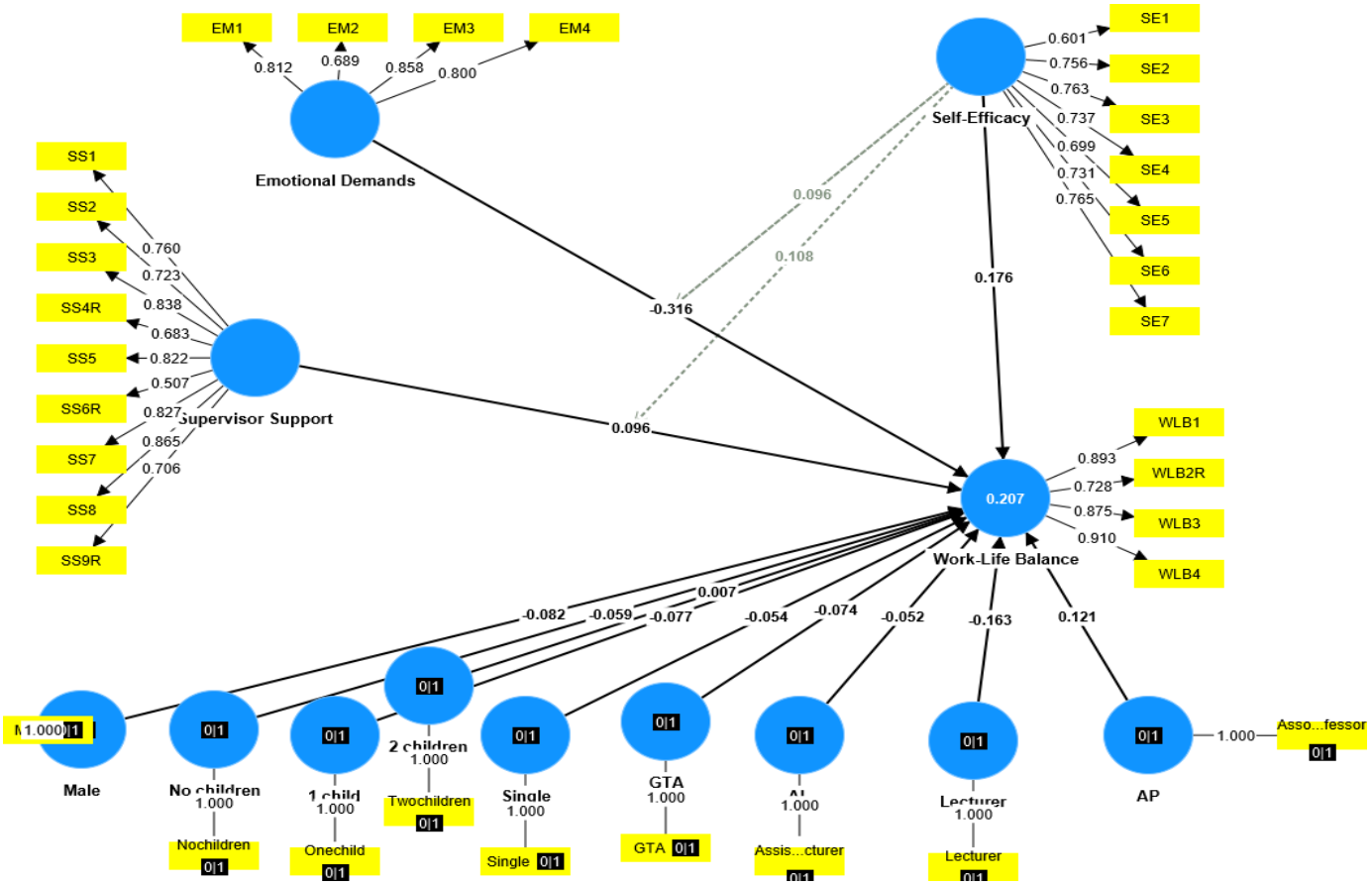

Figure 2. Measurement Model Assessment.

Table 4. Cross Loadings.

	WLB	ED	SS	SE
WLB1	**0.893**	−0.323	0.204	0.237
WLB2R	**0.727**	−0.280	0.149	0.109
WLB3	**0.878**	−0.306	0.206	0.231
WLB4	**0.911**	−0.318	0.213	0.283
ED1	−0.359	**0.812**	−0.318	−0.136
ED2	−0.188	**0.689**	−0.160	0.031
ED3	−0.269	**0.858**	−0.201	−0.111
ED4	−0.277	**0.800**	−0.133	−0.105
SS1	0.200	−0.207	**0.760**	0.184
SS2	0.173	−0.189	**0.723**	0.186
SS3	0.180	−0.213	**0.838**	0.268
SS4R	0.110	−0.198	**0.682**	0.155
SS5	0.205	−0.254	**0.822**	0.249
SS6R	0.073	−0.144	**0.506**	0.112
SS7	0.173	−0.176	**0.828**	0.253
SS8	0.191	−0.172	**0.865**	0.297
SS9R	0.185	−0.266	**0.706**	0.196
SE1	0.028	−0.014	0.263	**0.602**
SE2	0.299	−0.182	0.283	**0.756**
SE3	0.154	−0.064	0.258	**0.763**
SE4	0.137	−0.029	0.198	**0.737**
SE5	0.202	−0.122	0.161	**0.699**
SE6	0.119	0.019	0.154	**0.732**
SE7	0.133	−0.012	0.134	**0.765**

Note: WLB = Work–life Balance. SS = Supervisor Support. ED = Emotional Demands. SE = Self-Efficacy.

Table 5. Discriminant Validity using Fornell and Larcker Criterion.

	WLB	ED	SS	SE
WLB	**0.855**			
ED	−0.358	**0.792**		
SS	0.228	−0.270	**0.755**	
SE	0.259	−0.117	0.288	**0.724**

Note. The bolded diagonals represent the square root of the AVEs, while the other entries represent the correlations.

Table 6. HTMT Criterion.

	WLB	ED	SS	SE
WLB				
ED	0.411			
SS	0.246	0.299		
SE	0.238	0.134	0.313	

Post the run of the PLS algorithm in SmartPLS to assess the measurement model; the unstandardized latent variable scores calculated the mean and standard deviation scores for all of the study variables. It is shown that academicians employed at the top 10 private universities in Egypt do not have work–life balance (M = 2.825, SD = 0.982). Table 7 exhibits all study variables' means and standard deviation scores.

Table 7. Means Scores, Standard Deviation Scores for the Study Variables.

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Work–life Balance	2.825	0.982
Emotional Demands	3.153	0.938
Supervisor Support	3.761	0.796
Self-Efficacy	3.772	0.622

4.2. Structural Model Assessment

The results of the current study revealed that the R^2 is 0.207 (20.7%). This value is considered medium, according to the [140] rule of thumb. The variance explained for the endogenous variable above 26% is considered large, above 13% is considered medium, and above 2% is considered small. Furthermore, effect sizes were calculated to assess the impact of the removal of one exogenous variable on the R^2 of the endogenous variable and the model's exploratory power. As a rule of thumb, values 0.02, 0.15 and 0.35 depict small, medium and large effect sizes, respectively [140]. As for the interaction effect in the moderation analysis, the f^2 effect size is used to determine how much moderation contributes to the explanation of the endogenous variable [135]. Ref. [141] proposed that 0.005, 0.01 and 0.025 small, medium and large are more realistic effect size values for testing moderation. Tables 8 and 9 present the effect size for the direct relationships and the interaction effects, respectively.

Table 8. Effect Size for the Relationships between Emotional Demands, Supervisor Support and Work–life Balance.

H	Relationship	f^2	Magnitude
H1	ED → WLB	0.111	Small
H2	SS → WLB	0.010	None

Table 9. Effect Size of the Moderating Effect of Self-Efficacy on the Relationship Between Emotional Demands, Supervisor Support, and Work–life Balance.

H	Relationship	f^2	Magnitude
H3	ED*SE → WLB	0.011	Medium
H4	SS*SE → WLB	0.018	Medium

Moreover, the significance of the direct paths and interaction effects was determined using the bootstrapping resampling method with 5000 resamples [135]. The relationship between the control variables and work–life balance was tested as part of the structural model assessment. The control variables were transformed into dummy variables for the analysis [135]. The results revealed that, in the number of children, those with no children (β = −0.067, $p > 0.05$), one child (β = −0.084, $p > 0.05$), two children (β = −0.022, $p > 0.05$) were all not significantly associated with work–life balance. The gender of females (β = 0.052, $p > 0.05$) was not significantly associated with work–life balance. Moreover, the marital status of married (β = 0.323, $p > 0.05$) was not significantly linked to work–life balance; similarly, single (β = 0.209, $p > 0.05$) was not significantly associated with work–life balance. In addition, it is noticed that the academic rank of a graduate teaching assistant (GTA) (β = −0.140, $p > 0.05$), assistant lecturer (β = −0.103, $p > 0.05$), a lecturer (β = −0.066, $p > 0.05$), an associate professor (β = 0.096, $p > 0.05$) were all not significantly associated with work–life balance. Therefore, none of the control variables had a significant effect on work–life balance in this study.

Figure 3 illustrates that emotional demands negatively affect WLB (β −0.316, t = 7.57, $p < 0.01$). As for supervisor support, it is shown to have a significant positive relationship with work–life balance (β =0.096, t =2.08, $p < 0.05$). These findings support H1 and H2. Furthermore, Figure 3 demonstrates the interaction effect's path coefficients and significance level. Results revealed that self-efficacy significantly positively affected the relationship between emotional demands and work–life balance ((β =0.096, t =2.315, $p < 0.05$). This moderating effect is not supported because the hypothesis assumed that self-efficacy would negatively affect the relationship between emotional demands and work–life balance, such as the relationship becoming weaker when self-efficacy is high. Therefore, H3 is not supported. Regarding the moderating effect of self-efficacy on the relationship between supervisor support and work–life balance, the results revealed a significant positive moderation (β = 0.108, t = 3.072, $p < 0.01$). Therefore, H4 is supported. Figure 4 presents the slope analysis of the significant interaction effect to demonstrate the results further.

Results of the simple slope analysis were conducted to better understand the nature of the moderating effects. As shown in Figure 4, the line is much steeper for high self-efficacy, which shows that at a high level of self-efficacy, the effect of supervisor support on work–life balance is stronger in comparison to a low level of self-efficacy.

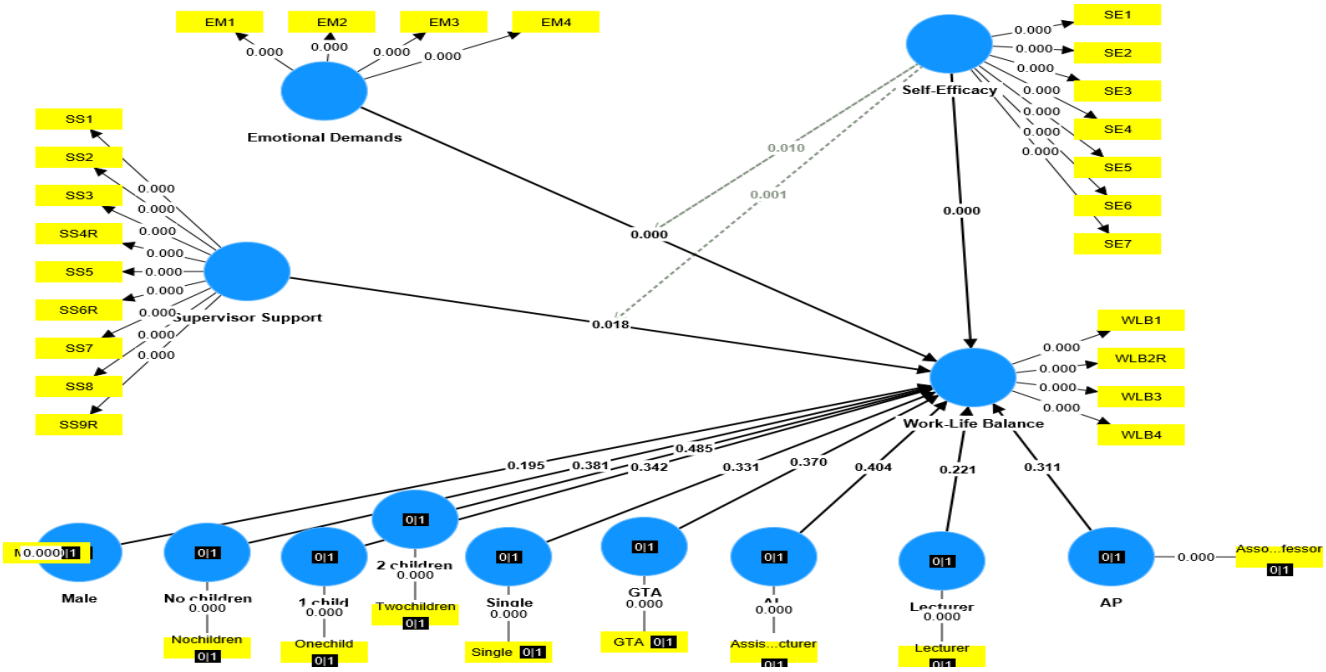

Figure 3. Structural Model Assessment.

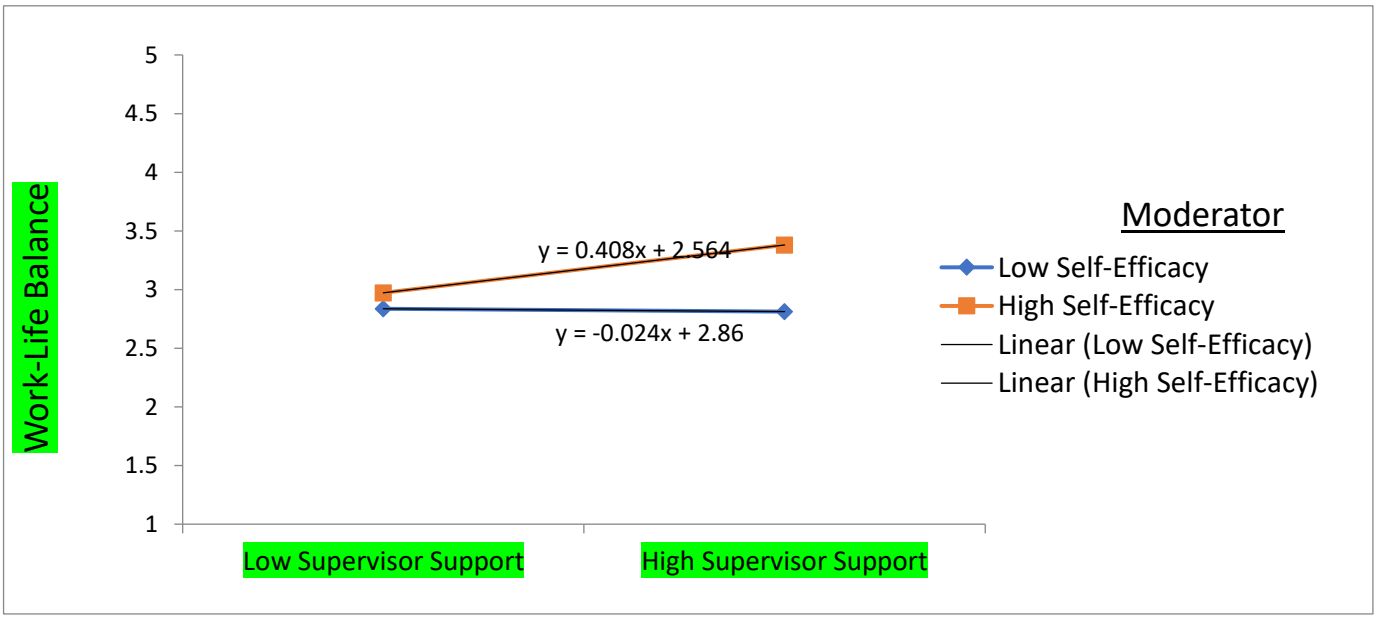

Figure 4. Slop Analysis for the Moderating Effect of Self-Efficacy on the Relationship between Supervisor Support and Work–life Balance.

5. Discussion

The present study examined the effect of emotional demands and supervisors' support on work–life balance moderated by self-efficacy. The data were collected from academicians employed in the top 10 private universities in Egypt. The results showed that emotional demands significantly negatively impacted work–life balance. These findings are similar to [77,79,81,142–145]. The increased emotional demands and their negative impact on work–life balance might be because of the more significant job pressures that contemporary universities face [146]. It was noted in [147] that job demands are seen as expenses; therefore, job stress results when costs exceed an individual's energy. Moreover, the majority of the respondents' working experience was 1–5 years (48.6%); this shows that academicians

with low tenure were confronted with more emotional demands than more experienced academicians because they still lack experience in dealing with different students. Moreover, they are not well experienced managing multiple job demands. These job demands increased during COVID-19 as academicians had to adapt to a new way of work without previous planning. This transition involved the need to accomplish their task and adapt to frequent changes in work practices; academicians had to learn new technology that increased their emotional demands, affecting their ability to balance work and life [64].

Consequently, Egypt's private universities need to focus on the root causes of emotional demands and take steps to regulate them. It is common knowledge that an academic job is emotionally taxing due to the service sector nature of the work and the frequent interaction with clients. Therefore, lowering emotional needs could be difficult. However, policymakers must teach academics to control their emotions and deal with emotionally trying circumstances, "emotional intelligence" [148].

Moreover, this study's findings showed that supervisor support positively correlated with work–life balance. These results are like those of previous research [35,93,95,149,150]. The social exchange theory holds that when someone acts for another, they often anticipate something in return, which supports the idea that social support at work is crucial as it helps both the employee and the organisation. In other words, an employee will be more devoted, dedicated and productive when the supervisor in an organisation gives them all the support and resources they need [151]. Supervisors may generally encourage their staff members by showing them compassion and optimism. Furthermore, the role of supervisors increased during the COVID-19 pandemic as they had to work simultaneously to inspire and uplift staff members while also comprehending their dread and worry and providing them with the assistance they needed, which is not specified in their job descriptions. As a result, studies must now focus on how managers should guide and oversee their staff during a crisis because there is a dearth of studies in that field [152].

Regarding the moderating effect of self-efficacy, the findings showed that self-efficacy significantly moderated the relationship between emotional demands and work–life balance. However, the hypothesis was rejected because self-efficacy did not weaken the effect of emotional demands on work–life balance. These results might be because the type of personal resource used for the current study may impact the study's findings. Self-efficacy is perceived as a cognitive resource; however, academicians need to spend more on practical resources like time management. Time management may assist them effectively managing their job demands and lessen the impact on work–life balance during the pandemic and remote work strategy. Moreover, most respondents were between 25 to 30 years old (42.1%); it was suggested that age could influence self-efficacy, such as mature people can develop, think and control themselves more than young ones [153].

Moreover, this questionnaire was collected during the COVID-19 pandemic, when academicians were working through online platforms. In Egypt, there is a shallow rate of people working from home, and suddenly they are required to work remotely while maintaining an interactive and creative experience for their students, which increases their responsibilities [69]. According to the COR theory, the increased level of job demands among academicians depletes their personal resources. Thus, personal resources should be balanced with job demands so that individuals can appropriately use them, known as the job-personal resources theory [147].

Lastly, self-efficacy significantly moderated the relationship between supervisor support and work–life balance. By giving academicians positive feedback, supervisors may increase their feelings of self-efficacy, happiness, and stress reduction [154]. Because it enables people to maintain a healthy balance between their personal and professional lives, self-efficacy has been identified as a crucial personal resource [32]. Self-efficacy is equally vital for the well-being of those working in the teaching profession [93]. Likewise, those with high levels of self-efficacy tend to be more optimistic and active at work [115]. This outcome enables self-efficacious people to use the resources provided by their jobs, meet their obligations, and achieve work–life balance.

5.1. Theoretical and Managerial Implications

Work–life balance (WLB) concerns employees, organisations and societies worldwide [155]. Modern workplaces are stressful because people live in a virtual world, and universities are networked, global and varied, intensifying academicians' job demands and complicating their lives, blurring the lines between work and non-work life. These changes have prompted researchers to study the predictors of work–life balance to achieve effective and efficient practices to enhance their well-being and hence attain WLB that would help universities' management or policymakers.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributed to the JD–R and COR theories and their relationship with work–life balance. Moreover, this research answered the call of [7,26,63,156] to study the work–life balance topic in the Middle East. These researchers argue that most of the work–life balance studies were addressed in Western countries, and there is a lack of research conducted in the Middle East. These nations have different cultures, traditions, values and customs than those of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region; therefore, their results cannot be applied to the Middle East [156]. According to Hofstede (1984), approaches to reducing work–life conflict vary across cultures owing to differences in norms, values and beliefs [156,157]. Hofstede introduced four dimensions that describe the cultural difference between nations: (1) Power distance, indicating the degree to which the less powerful members of a culture group accept and expect that power is unequally distributed; (2) Individualism versus collectivism, indicating the degree to which people in a society are bonded or integrated into groups; (3) Uncertainty avoidance, indicating the degree to which a society tolerates uncertainty and ambiguity; (4) Masculinity versus femininity, indicating the degree to which masculine values relative to women's values are preferred in the society [158]. Ref. [159] explained that the degree of power distance is high in the Middle East compared to Western counties, such that, in Egypt, decisions are taken by the Ministry of Higher Education in Egypt. This high level of centralization and low levels of autonomy creates obstacles to development [160]. As for the collectivist versus the individualism dimension, the Middle East is more socially oriented compared to the West. This means the Middle East is a collectivist culture while the West is an individualistic culture. Egyptians emphasize the quality of relationships as their primary source of fulfilment [161]. Regarding the femininity and masculinity dimension, Middle Eastern countries have a higher degree of masculinity compared to Western countries [159]. However, women are increasingly joining the labour market, and they occupy important positions, but still, men in Egypt have always been seen as independent, assertive, powerful and capable of leadership [68]. In the uncertainty avoidance dimension, Egypt has a preference for avoiding uncertainty, which is exhibited in high work stress, higher anxiety, rules and rituals [162]. Therefore, this study fulfils this demand by researching work–life balance among academicians in Egypt. This research highlights how universities in Egypt should understand work–life balance. Moreover, this study extends the JD–R theory to include work–life balance [163]. Ref. [164] explained that the JD–R theory has to be extended to different occupations and contexts and include different variables.

This study enhances the understanding of universities in Egypt to provide job resources and improve academicians' personal resources that support them in their jobs [30]. The workplace methods, rules and procedures that safeguard employees from psychological suffering at work can help achieve this [165]. Therefore, it will also serve as a practical guide for universities to maintain and facilitate academicians' work–life balance, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic. Facilitating academicians' work–life balance can be achieved by helping them deal with emotionally demanding situations and through the role of policymakers who can reduce the factors that increase emotional demands. Moreover, giving a workshop to train academicians on how to regulate their emotions. This study also focused on the importance of having a supportive supervisor in the workplace. The academicians will not use work–life balance practices unless supervisors encourage them. Therefore, policymakers should always train the supervisors on how to lead and support their academicians' work–life issues, especially during the crisis. In addition, this study highlighted

the vital role of self-efficacious academicians because high self-efficacy among individuals will enable them to defeat their stressful situations and successfully use their job resources to achieve work–life balance. Academicians have to get trained on how to appropriately use their self-efficacy because misusing it can lead to multiple problems at the workplace, such as a person overestimating his/her capabilities might lead to incorrect decisions [166].

Thus, ref. [99] found that the more attention paid to employees' work–life balance, the better the development of HR systems. Hence, academicians cannot achieve a work–life balance without the support of the university. Ref. [96] suggest that the government and universities should provide family-friendly policies and encourage academicians to use them.

5.2. Limitations and Directions for Future Research

This study has certain limitations, even though the study's conclusions offer empirical evidence for improving academics' work–life balance on both theoretical and practical levels. First, this study employed cross-sectional analysis; as a result, the causality of relationships between the tested variables may not be detected because the data are collected simultaneously [123]. However, building the causality relationships between variables based on theories can address this limitation [167]. Thus, to discuss the direct and moderating relationships, the study's strongly supported hypotheses drew on both the JD–R and the COR theories. Second, full-time academic staff members at the top 10 private institutions in Egypt who have been employed there for at least a year provided the data for the current study. As a result, it will be possible to generalise the study's findings to academicians working at the top 10 private universities who are only meeting the mentioned criteria. Another limitation is that the survey participants' desire to participate was impacted since the data were gathered during the pandemic. The researcher's ability to visit institutions and persuade academics to participate in the study was also hampered, contributing to the time required to gather the data. Last but not least, the current study relied on online questionnaires for collecting the data, which is consigned with bias. Thus, during the questionnaire preparation process, a few steps have been taken to reduce common method bias. It assured respondents of their anonymity and confidentiality, allocating the items randomly, including both reversed and unreversed questions in a construct and providing relevant mid-point labels for the Likert scale. Harman's single-factor test and the correlation test were also conducted to further demonstrate the lack of common method bias [168]. However, given the possibility of bias, the findings should still be evaluated with care.

There are several approaches to broaden this study on the academics employed in Egypt's top 10 private universities. The top 10 public universities in Egypt can be the subject of research to determine how academic staff members' personal resources, job demands and job resources might affect their work–life balance. Additionally, research may be performed on all private or public universities in Egypt, not just the top 10. In the future, a comparison between public and private educational institutions can be made to thoroughly understand the context of academics' work–life balance because private institutions are substantially distinct from public sector educational institutes. Future research initiatives may include additional Middle Eastern nations to generalise the findings, other cultures or nations, like Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, as the study's scope was restricted to Egypt. It will be easier to understand what it is like to live in various parts of the world and how other institutions in various nations handle the demands and resources of the workplace by studying various cultures. The establishment of a Ministry of Happiness in the United Arab Emirates, for instance, has a favourable influence on a number of occupations there and may have an impact on how job resources are used to lessen the negative consequences of job demands and increase people's satisfaction and happiness. Future studies could use this study as a guide to expand on other distinctive professions, particularly in Egypt and the Middle East, and compare the findings with others, such as physicians and attorneys. Applying the JD–R and COR theories to other professions will require testing more variables under the job demands, job resources and personal resources. These variables, such as working hours, psychological and physical demands, organizational-based self-esteem

and optimism, should be pertinent to the study's context. Finally, future research should conduct a longitudinal study on academicians' work–life balance to show the causality of relationships between the study variables. It should be noted that a longitudinal study is not feasible, as it is time- and money-consuming. Consequently, if there is adequate time to do the research, a longitudinal study may be possible [123].

6. Conclusions

Employment is crucial for all individuals, but it does not mean it ruins people's lives [169]. Therefore, this study addressed new challenges that affect academicians' work–life balance beyond previous studies on job demands and resources. In addition, this study presented solutions for problems that usually arise among academicians, especially work–life balance-related issues. Finally, this work adds to the expanding body of information on the WLB.

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