



The Role of Work-Life Balance and Skills Development on Sustainable Employee Engagement in Hospitals

Pemi Puji Apriani^{1*}; Setyo Riyanto²; Dewi Nusraningrum³; Kasmir⁴

¹⁾ 67124010007@student.mercubuana.ac.id, Universitas Mercu Buana, Jl. Meruya Selatan No.1, RT.4/RW.1, Meruya Sel., Kec. Kembangan, Kota Jakarta Barat, Daerah Khusus Ibukota Jakarta, Indonesia

²⁾ setyo.riyanto@mercubuana.ac.id, Universitas Mercu Buana, Jl. Meruya Selatan No.1, RT.4/RW.1, Meruya Sel., Kec. Kembangan, Kota Jakarta Barat, Daerah Khusus Ibukota Jakarta, Indonesia

³⁾ dewinusraningrum@mercubuana.ac.id, Universitas Mercu Buana, Jl. Meruya Selatan No.1, RT.4/RW.1, Meruya Sel., Kec. Kembangan, Kota Jakarta Barat, Daerah Khusus Ibukota Jakarta, Indonesia

⁴⁾ kasmir@mercubuana.ac.id, Universitas Mercu Buana, Jl. Meruya Selatan No.1, RT.4/RW.1, Meruya Sel., Kec. Kembangan, Kota Jakarta Barat, Daerah Khusus Ibukota Jakarta, Indonesia

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Abstract

This study systematically synthesizes empirical evidence on the roles of work–life balance (WLB) and skills development in shaping sustainable employee engagement in hospital settings, with particular attention to healthcare contexts in developing countries, especially Asia. A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) was conducted following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines as a reporting framework. Relevant studies were identified through comprehensive searches of major international databases, including Scopus, ScienceDirect, Springer, Wiley, Sage, IEEE, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. From an initial pool of 7,394 articles, a systematic screening and eligibility process resulted in 124 peer-reviewed empirical studies included in the final synthesis.

The findings indicate that work–life balance is consistently associated with reduced stress and burnout, improved psychological well-being, and sustained employee engagement among healthcare workers. Skills development—particularly through training, upskilling, reskilling, and digital-based learning—emerges as a key mechanism for strengthening competence, motivation, and workforce adaptability. The review further reveals that studies simultaneously examining both variables remain limited, indicating a fragmented research landscape. Organizational factors such as leadership support, organizational culture, and digital readiness, together with individual resilience and intrinsic motivation, frequently moderate or mediate these relationships.

Rather than estimating effect sizes, this SLR provides a conceptual synthesis that consolidates fragmented findings and highlights research gaps, including the dominance of cross-sectional designs and the need for more integrative and longitudinal studies. Practically, the results underscore the importance of aligning work–life balance initiatives with continuous skills development to foster sustainable employee engagement in healthcare organizations.

1. INTRODUCTION

The healthcare sector is currently facing growing challenges related to workforce sustainability as a result of digital transformation, demographic changes, and increasing job demands. Hospitals, particularly in developing countries, are characterized by high workloads, emotional labor, staff shortages, and rigid work arrangements, which place substantial pressure on healthcare workers (Çoban, 2022; Ferdous et al., 2023). These conditions have intensified concerns regarding work–life balance, skills development, and sustainable employee engagement, especially in the post-pandemic context where employee well-being has become a strategic organizational priority (Einwiller et al., 2021; Lu et al., 2023).

Within the framework of modern human resource management, sustainable employee engagement is no longer viewed merely as employees' commitment to organizational objectives, but rather as a balanced allocation of time, energy, and emotional resources across work responsibilities, family life, personal interests, and health maintenance (Braganza et al., 2021; Magrizos et al., 2023). This perspective is particularly relevant for Generation Y (Millennials) and Generation Z healthcare workers, who now constitute a substantial proportion of the hospital workforce. Prior studies indicate that these generations place greater emphasis on work flexibility, meaningful work, continuous learning opportunities, work–family integration, and psychological well-being compared to earlier generations (Nazir et al., 2021; Rožman et al., 2023). However, empirical evidence suggests that many hospitals—especially in developing countries—have not fully adapted their human resource systems to accommodate these evolving expectations, resulting in elevated levels of burnout, disengagement, and turnover intention among younger healthcare professionals (Ferdous et al., 2023; Znidaršič & Marič, 2021).

Although scholarly interest in work–life balance, skills development, and employee engagement has increased significantly, the empirical literature remains highly fragmented and heterogeneous. Studies differ considerably in terms of conceptual definitions, measurement indicators, occupational focus, and national contexts (Stankevičienė et al., 2021; Zahari & Kaliannan, 2023). In hospital settings, work–life balance is operationalized through diverse indicators such as working hours, shift flexibility, family time, recovery opportunities, and boundary management between work and non-work domains (Hassard & Morris, 2022; Lamprinou et al., 2021). Similarly, skills development is measured through varying dimensions, including training intensity, digital competency acquisition, career development pathways, and technology-enabled learning (Bozionelos et al., 2020; Capatina et al., 2024). Employee engagement itself is assessed using multiple psychological and behavioral indicators, such as energy, dedication, resilience, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Chi et al., 2023; Nazir et al., 2021). This heterogeneity complicates efforts to derive consistent conclusions and limits the generalizability of findings across healthcare contexts.

Furthermore, research conducted in hospital settings within developing countries remains unevenly represented in high-impact international journals. This imbalance increases the risk of publication bias, as studies reporting statistically significant or positive relationships between work–life balance, skills development, and employee engagement are more likely to be published, while research highlighting contextual constraints, implementation challenges, or limited organizational resources receives less attention (Chiwawa & Wissink, 2021; Fletcher et al., 2020). As a result, the existing literature may portray an overly idealized representation of human resource practices that does not fully capture the structural and institutional realities faced by hospitals in resource-constrained environments.

Given these limitations, this study adopts a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to synthesize existing empirical evidence while explicitly acknowledging that the robustness of its findings is inherently dependent on the methodological quality of the primary studies included. Variations in research design, data sources, and analytical techniques across prior studies may influence the strength and consistency of reported relationships (Stankevičienė et al., 2021; Zahari & Kaliannan, 2023). Therefore, issues of study heterogeneity and potential publication bias are carefully considered in interpreting the results of this review.

Accordingly, this study aims to systematically examine how work–life balance and skills development jointly contribute to sustainable employee engagement among Generation Y and Generation Z healthcare workers in hospital settings. By integrating indicators related to time allocation, energy management, commitment, family life, leisure activities, and health, this review seeks to develop a more context-sensitive and realistic conceptual framework for sustainable engagement in modern healthcare organizations. The findings are expected to provide both theoretical contributions to sustainable human resource management literature and practical guidance for hospital managers and policymakers in designing adaptive, inclusive, and workforce-centered human resource strategies aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (Angelici & Profeta, 2021; Lu et al., 2023).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Work-Life Balance

Work–life balance (WLB) is understood as an individual's ability to manage and proportionally balance work demands with personal life, thereby minimizing role conflict and excessive psychological strain (Lamprinou et al., 2021; Stankevičienė et al., 2021). In the healthcare sector, work–life balance has become increasingly critical due to job

characteristics marked by high work intensity, long working hours, and significant emotional involvement in service delivery processes (Çoban, 2022; Ferdous et al., 2023; Znidaršič & Marič, 2021). Yang et al., (2025) showed that Gen Z has high expectations regarding work-life balance, and the fulfillment of these expectations is positively correlated with their level of employee engagement. Generation Z demonstrates a strong emphasis on maintaining a healthy balance between work and personal life, valuing clear boundaries between professional and private domains. Generally, Gen Z prefer structured working hours and tend to avoid overtime unless it is deemed absolutely necessary (Giunta et al., 2025). A number of studies indicate that the implementation of flexible work arrangements, supervisory support, adaptive organizational policies, and the utilization of remote work practices contribute to reducing burnout levels and enhancing job satisfaction among healthcare professionals (Angelici & Profeta, 2021; Einwiller et al., 2021; WOLOR et al., 2020). On the other hand, the advancement of digitalization has also influenced the boundaries between work and personal life. While the use of technology supports communication efficiency and work coordination, it may also give rise to an “always-on” work culture if not accompanied by adequate regulations and guidelines (Hassard & Morris, 2022; Magrizos et al., 2023; Ng et al., 2022). Therefore, work–life balance is regarded as a fundamental factor in maintaining the emotional stability of healthcare workers while simultaneously supporting organizational sustainability.

Skill Development

Skills development refers to a set of processes aimed at enhancing employee competencies through various mechanisms, such as formal training, coaching, digital learning, and other organizational practices designed to strengthen individuals’ adaptive capacity in responding to dynamic job demands (Bozionelos et al., 2020; Jeske & Linehan, 2020). Rabiul et al., (2023) shows that HR development practices, including skills training, have a significant impact on employee engagement through the mediation of psychological safety and meaningfulness. In the healthcare sector, skills development encompasses technical and digital training, collaborative learning, and the application of innovative approaches such as gamified training, which are intended to improve knowledge retention and learning motivation (Capatina et al., 2024; Marinho et al., 2021). Toska et al., (2025) explained that healthcare systems operating under resource constraints are likely to experience widening disparities in education and training opportunities, driven by inadequate nurse-to-patient ratios and limited investment in professional development. These structural limitations may, in turn, undermine employee engagement and contribute to disengagement within the workforce.

A number of studies indicate that the consistent implementation of training programs contributes to increased self-confidence, resilience, and perceptions of organizational support, which ultimately strengthen employee engagement levels (Haq et al., 2023; Haryono et al., 2020; Sabuhari et al., 2020). Moreover, the success of skills development programs is strongly influenced by supervisory support and innovative leadership practices, which act as catalysts in ensuring the effective implementation of such programs (Bashir et al., 2020; Joel et al., 2023). Thus, skills development functions not only as a means of enhancing technical competence but also as a psychological instrument that fosters the perception that employees are valued and continuously invested in by the organization.

Sustainable Employee Engagement

Sustainable employee engagement refers to a state of employee involvement that is consistently maintained over the long term, rather than merely reflecting short-term emotional reactions to specific work situations. Such engagement develops when employees experience psychological well-being, receive adequate organizational support, and have access to continuous opportunities for self-development (Braganza et al., 2021; Lu et al., 2023). When employees perceive high organizational support, they are more likely to experience a supportive work climate, feel valued for their contributions, and exhibit stronger engagement in their roles (Gathmyr, 2025). In the healthcare sector, the sustainability of employee engagement plays a strategic role, as it is associated with reduced burnout levels, increased organizational commitment, and the maintenance of high-quality patient care (Chi et al., 2023; Perkins & Pryor, 2021). Engagement contributes to improved performance while simultaneously facilitating proactive safety communication, especially in high-risk healthcare contexts (Amnha et al., 2025).

A number of literature reviews indicate that sustainable employee engagement is influenced by the interaction between work–life balance practices, skills development, and supportive leadership (Haryono et al., 2020; Joel et al., 2023; Capatina et al., 2024). Employees who are able to maintain a healthy work–life balance while simultaneously experiencing continuous competency development tend to exhibit higher levels of work energy, dedication, and organizational loyalty (Nazir et al., 2021; Rožman et al., 2023). Thus, sustainable employee engagement can be understood as an outcome of employees’ emotional well-being and the availability of growth opportunities facilitated by the organization.

3. METHOD

This study adopts a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to synthesize empirical evidence on the roles of work–life balance and skills development in shaping sustainable employee engagement in hospital settings. The review process follows the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines as a reporting

framework to ensure transparency, structure, and replicability. Relevant studies were identified through systematic searches of major scientific databases, including Scopus, ScienceDirect, Emerald Insight, Springer, Taylor & Francis, Wiley, Web of Science, IEEE, Sage, and Google Scholar, using Boolean combinations of keywords related to work–life balance, skills development, employee engagement, and healthcare contexts. The review uses Boolean search queries as follows: ("work life balance" OR "work-life balance" OR "work family balance" OR "work stress" OR "workload management") AND ("health sector" OR "healthcare" OR "hospital" OR "nurse" OR "doctor"); ("skill development" OR "training" OR "talent management" OR "capacity building" OR "professional development" OR "e-learning" OR "upskilling" OR "reskilling") AND ("health sector" OR "healthcare" OR "hospital" OR "medical staff"); ("employee engagement" OR "sustainable engagement" OR "work engagement" OR "employee commitment" OR "employee involvement") AND ("health sector" OR "healthcare" OR "hospital" OR "nursing" OR "medical staff"); ("work life balance" OR "work-life balance" OR "work family balance") AND ("employee engagement" OR "sustainable engagement" OR "work engagement") AND ("health sector" OR "healthcare" OR "hospital"); ("skill development" OR "training" OR "talent management" OR "professional development" OR "capacity building") AND ("employee engagement" OR "sustainable engagement" OR "work engagement") AND ("health sector" OR "healthcare" OR "hospital"). The selection of keywords was conducted carefully to ensure that the retrieved literature was relevant, focused, and supported by empirical studies.

The search was restricted to peer-reviewed English-language journal articles published between 1998 and 2024. The initial search yielded 7,394 records, which were subsequently screened to remove duplicates and irrelevant studies based on titles and abstracts, resulting in 4,240 articles. Full-text eligibility assessment was then conducted using predefined inclusion criteria focusing on empirical studies in hospital or healthcare settings that examined work–life balance, skills development, employee engagement, or their interrelationships, leading to 1,036 articles for in-depth evaluation. During the eligibility assessment, particular attention was given to methodological clarity and empirical rigor to minimize bias arising from low-quality primary studies. Ultimately, 124 studies met all eligibility criteria and were included in the final synthesis. Findings from these studies were systematically evaluated and synthesized to identify thematic patterns, integrated relationships, and research gaps, while a complementary bibliometric analysis was conducted on a subset of included articles to map keyword co-occurrence and dominant research clusters. The complete study selection process is documented in the PRISMA flow diagram to enhance methodological transparency and reproducibility.

RQ1: How does work–life balance influence sustainable employee engagement in the healthcare sector?

RQ2: How does skills development contribute to enhancing sustainable employee engagement among healthcare workers?

RQ3: Do work–life balance and skills development play a simultaneous role in supporting sustainable employee engagement in the healthcare sector?

RQ4: What organizational or individual factors moderate or mediate the relationship between work–life balance, skills development, and sustainable employee engagement?

RQ5: What research gaps are identified in the literature related to work–life balance, skills development, and sustainable employee engagement in the healthcare sector, and what directions should future research take?

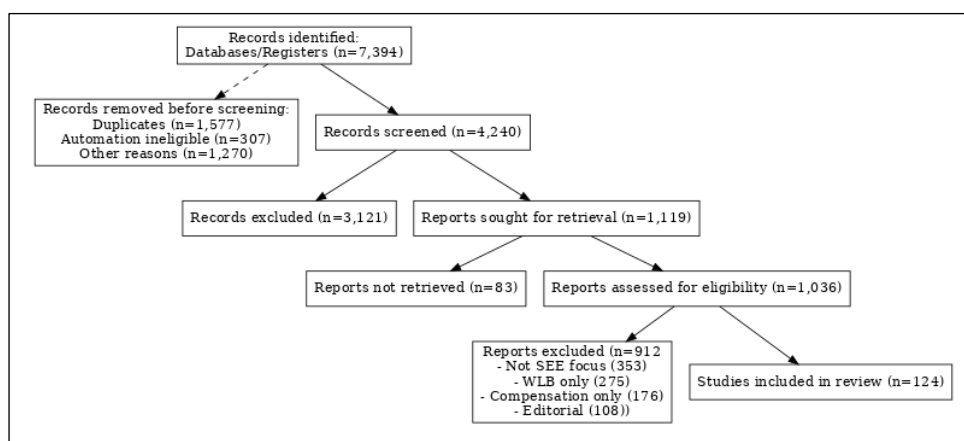


Figure 1. PRISMA Employee Engagement, Work–life balance, and Skill Development

The article selection process presented in Figure 1 indicates that only 124 studies, or approximately 1.67% of the total 7,394 initial publications, met the criteria for inclusion in this systematic literature review. The high rate of article exclusion—particularly studies that examined work–life balance or skills development in isolation—reinforces

of terms such as *integration* and *family* indicates that WLB issues are often associated with burnout and psychosocial well-being, particularly in sectors characterized by high emotional demands, such as healthcare (Znidaršič & Marič, 2021). During the pandemic, attention to WLB intensified as organizations sought to create harmony between work and personal life to safeguard employee well-being (Mello & Tomei, 2021). Several studies also link WLB practices to increased commitment and engagement among medical professionals, especially in response to heightened work pressure in the post-COVID-19 period. In addition, issues related to digitalization and the implementation of remote work have contributed to shaping the “new normal” of working conditions, which directly influence work–life balance dynamics (Hassard & Morris, 2022; Ng et al., 2022). The bibliometric analysis further demonstrates a strong association between the keywords *life balance*, *flexibility*, and *autonomy*, reinforcing empirical findings regarding the strategic role of WLB. In the context of healthcare workers, balancing work and personal life contributes to reducing stress risk while simultaneously supporting the development of sustainable employee engagement.

The skills development cluster, marked in brown, demonstrates strong interconnections among keywords such as *skill*, *training*, *capacity building*, and *innovation* within a single thematic network. This pattern of relationships indicates that skills development is positioned in the literature as part of organizational strategies aimed at enhancing work motivation and the adaptive readiness of the workforce (Marinho et al., 2021). A number of studies emphasize that training programs, e-training, and digital-based competency development contribute to increased motivation and resilience among healthcare workers in coping with complex work dynamics (Bozionelos et al., 2020; Capatina et al., 2024; van Laar et al., 2022). Other findings by Haq et al., (2023) and Haryono et al., (2020) suggest that skills enhancement through the use of technology not only strengthens competencies but also reinforces employee engagement and job satisfaction. Moreover, working conditions and motivational factors have been reported to play a role in strengthening the relationship between skills development, performance, and employee engagement (Bashir et al., 2020). Fletcher et al., (2020) emphasize the importance of organizational context, noting that skills development programs need to be tailored to the characteristics of the public sector, including the healthcare sector. These empirical findings are consistent with the bibliometric mapping results, which highlight the interconnection of keywords such as *technology*, *adoption*, and *implementation* within the skills development cluster.

The meaningfulness and psychological well-being cluster, represented in green, highlights the emergence of key terms such as meaningfulness, engagement, resilience, job satisfaction, and personal growth. This pattern of interconnections indicates that training practices and the implementation of work–life balance not only generate structural impacts within organizations but also have significant implications for employees’ psychological aspects. Several studies confirm that the combination of work–life balance and skill development contributes to strengthening employee resilience and commitment, particularly in hospitals with high workload demands (Le et al., 2024; Perkins & Pryor, 2021). Furthermore, individual factors, such as personal resilience and intrinsic motivation, have been reported to function as mediators in this relationship (Koon, 2022; Lamprinou et al., 2021). Nazir et al., (2021) add an important perspective by emphasizing that sustained employee engagement needs to be linked to perceptions of work meaningfulness and purpose—dimensions that remain relatively underexplored in the healthcare sector. Consequently, employee engagement tends to emerge when work is perceived as a meaningful and personally valuable activity. These findings are particularly relevant for Generation Y and Z healthcare workers, for whom meaningful work, psychological well-being, and continuous skill development constitute critical determinants of sustained engagement.

The hospitality and healthcare sector cluster, highlighted in red, features the emergence of keywords such as *hospitality industry*, *nursing*, *healthcare*, and *service quality*, indicating that public service sectors, including healthcare and hospitality, constitute a primary focus in studies on work–life balance and employee engagement. Both sectors are characterized by intensive, empathy-oriented work, making work–life balance practices and training programs crucial variables for maintaining workforce retention (Angelici & Profeta, 2021). Several studies demonstrate that organizational culture, leadership support, and the level of hospital digitalization play important roles in strengthening the effects of work–life balance and skills development on employee engagement (Ferdous et al., 2023; Magrivos et al., 2023). In addition, diversity and inclusion factors within multicultural healthcare organizations have also been reported to influence levels of employee engagement, as discussed by Opara et al., (2020). Research findings in the healthcare sector further emphasize that crisis contexts, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, have amplified the importance of work flexibility and digital-based training in supporting employee engagement (Marinho et al., 2021; Znidaršič & Marič, 2021).

The emergence of the keywords *balance*, *skill*, and *engagement* as connecting nodes across clusters indicates that work–life balance and skills development are not positioned as stand-alone topics, but rather as complementary elements in shaping sustainable employee engagement. Empirical findings suggest that work–life balance supported by access to training and competency enhancement contributes to the development of a more loyal and productive healthcare workforce (Chi et al., 2023; Jeske & Linehan, 2020). This pattern is reflected in the bibliometric analysis, where the keywords *life balance* and *skill* appear within the same network of interconnections. Such interconnectedness reinforces the theoretical assumption that employee engagement is built not only through flexible work structures, but also through the availability of continuous professional growth opportunities. Accordingly, the VOSviewer findings

provide empirical support for the core focus of this SLR, namely that work–life balance and skills development constitute two essential pillars in the formation of sustainable employee engagement, particularly in hospitals and the healthcare sector, which are characterized by high work pressure and continuously evolving competency demands.

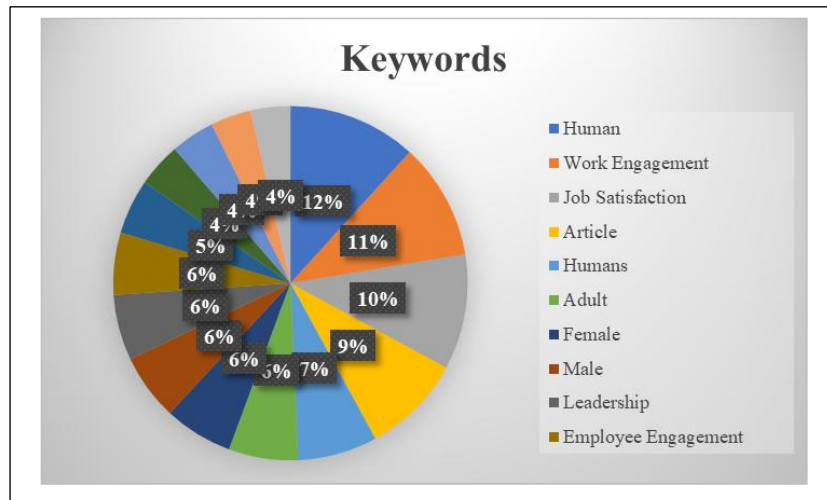


Figure 3. Keywords

The keyword analysis results presented in Figure 3 show that the most dominant themes in the related literature include *Human* (12%), *Work Engagement* (11%), and *Job Satisfaction* (10%). This distribution pattern indicates that most previous studies position human involvement in work and job satisfaction as central elements in discussions of sustainable employee engagement. The emergence of keywords such as *Employee Engagement*, *Leadership*, and *Adult* further underscores academic attention to the role of leadership and workforce demographic characteristics within organizational contexts. Meanwhile, the presence of the terms *Female* and *Male* reflects research interest in gender differences in studies of employee engagement and skills development, particularly within hospital environments. Overall, this keyword pattern reinforces the research direction that examines the interrelationships among work–life balance, skills development, and sustainable employee engagement, and confirms that human aspects and work engagement remain the primary focus in scholarly discourse in this field. This pattern suggests that sustainable employee engagement is predominantly framed as a human-centered and psychologically driven construct rather than a purely structural or policy-based outcome.

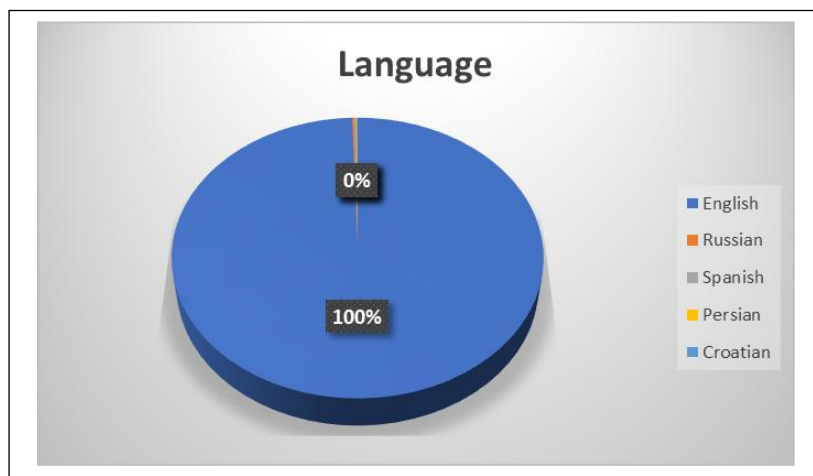


Figure 4. Language

Figure 4 shows that English overwhelmingly dominates as the primary language of publications addressing employee engagement, work–life balance, and skills development in hospital settings. Of the total articles analyzed, 1,360 publications—representing nearly all of them—were written in English. In contrast, the use of other languages, such as Russian (3 articles), Spanish (2 articles), Persian (1 article), and Croatian (1 article), appears only in very limited numbers and is not proportionally significant.

The dominance of English indicates that global scholarly discourse on employee engagement and work–life balance has largely developed within English-language literature, typically produced by reputable international journals and rooted in Western contexts. This situation presents both opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, it

demonstrates that employee engagement has become part of the mainstream of global research. On the other hand, this dominance reflects the limited contribution of non-English publications from countries with diverse work cultures, particularly within the healthcare sector. This linguistic dominance may partially explain why empirical models of work–life balance and employee engagement tend to reflect Western or Anglophone perspectives, potentially limiting contextual sensitivity for hospitals in non-English-speaking regions.

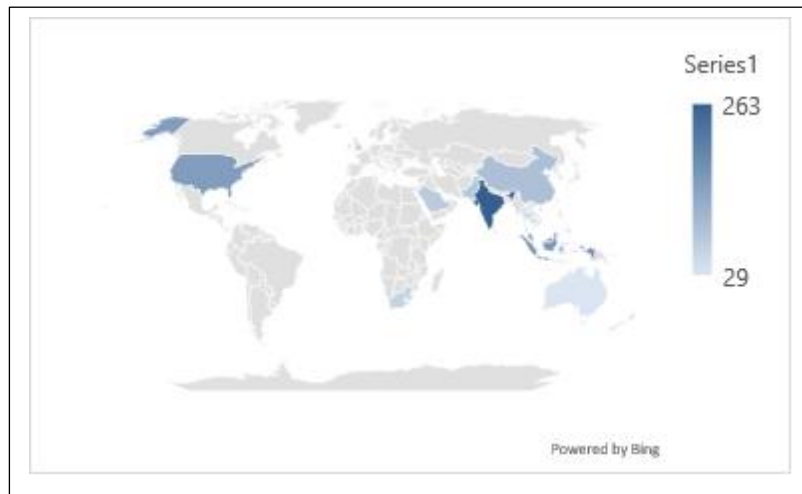


Figure 5. Researcher Country

Figure 5 illustrates the geographical distribution of researchers involved in studies on employee engagement, work–life balance, and skills development. The data show that India ranks highest, with 263 researchers, followed by Indonesia with 172 researchers and the United States with 157 researchers. Research contributions are further dominated by several other Asian countries, such as Malaysia (144), China (95), Pakistan (84), and Saudi Arabia (75). In contrast, the involvement of researchers from Western countries is relatively lower, as reflected by the United Kingdom with 63 researchers and Australia with 29 researchers.

The dominance of Asian countries—particularly India, Indonesia, and Malaysia—indicates that issues of work–life balance and employee engagement have become major concerns in developing countries, especially within hospitals and the healthcare sector, which often face human resource constraints and high work pressure. This phenomenon also reflects that these countries are undergoing an accelerated transformation of work systems driven by digitalization, rising healthcare service standards, and the need for stronger workforce retention. While much of the existing research has been conducted in developed countries, the context of developing countries—with their unique challenges related to limited healthcare resources—remains underexplored (Chiwawa & Wissink, 2021; Dlouhy & Casper, 2021). In this context, themes such as well-being and skill empowerment are increasingly being explored in developing countries seeking to catch up in human resource management policies and practices. Therefore, integrating these variables into a global analytical framework—particularly through the use of longitudinal research designs—becomes essential to provide stronger theoretical and practical contributions to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the healthcare sector (Rožman et al., 2023; Zahari & Kaliannan, 2023). This geographical concentration highlights the need for more explanatory and comparative models that move beyond descriptive insights toward multi-level analyses across regions.

Overall, the geographical distribution of researchers confirms that work–life balance and skills development are no longer confined to managerial discourse in developed countries, but have evolved into strategic necessities in developing nations. Accordingly, this SLR is situated within a highly relevant context for strengthening the global understanding of employee engagement, with particular emphasis on Asia as an emerging research hub in this field.

5. CONCLUSION

This study provides a comprehensive synthesis of the literature on work–life balance and skills development as key drivers of sustainable employee engagement in the healthcare sector through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) supported by bibliometric analysis. It is important to emphasize that this study does not employ a meta-analytical approach and therefore does not estimate pooled effect sizes or apply fixed-effect or random-effect statistical models. Instead, the findings are derived from a qualitative and integrative synthesis of prior empirical studies, aiming to identify thematic patterns, conceptual linkages, and research gaps rather than to quantify causal magnitudes.

The synthesis indicates that work–life balance is consistently associated in the literature with reduced burnout, improved psychological well-being, and higher levels of employee engagement among healthcare workers (RQ1). Similarly, skills development—through training, upskilling, reskilling, and digital competency enhancement—is widely

reported as a mechanism for strengthening employee confidence, adaptability, and organizational commitment (RQ2). However, these relationships are interpreted cautiously, as the reviewed studies differ substantially in terms of research design, measurement instruments, sample characteristics, and contextual settings.

Importantly, this review reveals that only a limited number of studies examine the simultaneous role of work–life balance and skills development in shaping sustainable employee engagement (RQ3). As a result, the conclusions regarding their combined influence should be understood as conceptual and pattern-based rather than statistically aggregated. The findings further suggest that organizational and individual contextual factors—such as leadership support, organizational culture, digital readiness, resilience, and perceptions of work meaningfulness—frequently moderate or mediate these relationships (RQ4), reinforcing the need for more integrative and theoretically grounded analytical frameworks.

From a methodological standpoint, the dominance of cross-sectional designs and the absence of longitudinal and multi-level studies in much of the existing literature highlight a significant limitation in drawing strong causal inferences. Consequently, the research gaps identified in this review (RQ5) point to the need for future studies to adopt more rigorous designs, including longitudinal, comparative, and—where appropriate—meta-analytical approaches that carefully consider model selection, effect size estimation, and heterogeneity assessment.

In conclusion, this study contributes by consolidating fragmented empirical evidence into a coherent conceptual understanding of sustainable employee engagement in the healthcare sector, while explicitly acknowledging the methodological boundaries of an SLR-based synthesis. Rather than offering definitive effect estimates, the conclusions provide a theoretically informed foundation for future empirical testing. For healthcare organizations, the findings underscore the strategic importance of aligning work–life balance initiatives with continuous skills development, while for researchers, they highlight the necessity of methodological rigor to avoid misinterpretation and ensure valid conclusions in future investigations.

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