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A bibliometric analysis of work–family balance: trends, themes, and future directions (2000–2024)

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ABSTRACT

Despite the growing importance of work-family balance (WFB), the field still lacks large-scale, quantitative, and replicable review studies. To fill this gap, this paper adopts a bibliometric approach to analyze 921 relevant articles published between 2000 and 2024 from the Web of Science database. Utilizing tools such as bibliometrix (R package), VOSviewer, and CiteSpace, the study maps the academic output and knowledge structure of the WFB field. It aims to review existing research, define the foundational knowledge framework, trace frontier trends, and lay a foundation for future studies. Results reveal a significant increase in WFB-related publications in recent years. A stable network of core authors and journals has emerged, alongside international collaboration. However, the overall influence of the field has declined over the past decade, and breakthrough research remains scarce. Co-citation analysis identifies three major knowledge clusters: work-family conflict (WFC), work-family enrichment, and supportive culture. The journal co-citation network highlights the interdisciplinary potential of WFB research. Keyword co-occurrence analysis, evolution mapping, and factor analysis indicate hotspots include cross-cultural comparisons, industry strategies, gender issues, supportive culture, and outcome variables such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment. These findings help build a theoretical framework and offer insights for policymakers and business leaders.

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to conduct a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of work–family balance (WFB) research published between 2000 and 2024. WFB is defined as ‘the process through which individuals fulfill role-related expectations that are mutually negotiated with their role partners in the work and family domains’ (Carlson et al., 2009). Although work and family constitute the fundamental components of individual life, achieving balance is, in fact, a dynamic system involving multi-level interactions among individuals, families, organizations, and society (Khairunneezam et al., 2017). This balance spans multiple dimensions, including organizational behavior, labor markets, gender issues, health and welfare, as well as individual well-being. Investigating work–family balance not only contributes to enhancing individual quality of life and realizing personal aspirations but also plays a critical role in optimizing social structures and promoting economic efficiency.

Since Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) seminal work, *Sources of Conflict Between Work and Family Roles*, which first highlighted the psychological well-being issues within the work–family framework, research in this area has evolved over the past four decades. During this period, an increasing number of theoretical frameworks have been introduced to elucidate the multidimensional nature of WFB, including role theory (Biddle, 1986), role conflict theory (Kahn et al., 1964), work–family boundary/conflict theory (Clark, 2000), social support theory (Cohen & Wills, 1985), social cognitive theory (Lent & Brown, 2008), and work–family enrichment theory (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).

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The formation of WFB and its influencing factors are multifaceted, spanning individual, familial, organizational, and societal levels. At the individual level, psychological traits such as self-efficacy and personality characteristics play a crucial role in shaping one's ability to navigate work–family dynamics. Prior research has shown that self-efficacy is associated with reduced role demands and improved work–life balance (Chan et al., 2017), lower levels of anticipated conflict in dual-role planning contexts (Cinamon, 2006), and higher job satisfaction across gender groups in Asian settings (Wang et al., 2010).

In addition, personality traits such as conscientiousness and neuroticism have been identified as important predictors of work–family outcomes. Conscientiousness tends to buffer conflict, whereas neuroticism may intensify it, particularly in contexts involving parental or caregiving roles (Opie & Henn, 2013; Wayne et al., 2004). A large-scale meta-analytic model further supports the centrality of these traits in explaining variance in work–family conflict (Miller et al., 2022). Family-related structural factors, such as the number of dependent children, also contribute significantly to increased conflict (Ernst Kossek & Ozeki, 1998).

At the organizational level, time flexibility and location flexibility (Allen et al., 2013; Beigi et al., 2018) along with organizational support (Casper et al., 2002; Dixon & Sargas, 2007) are regarded as crucial factors in mitigating work–family conflict by enabling employees to better balance their work and family roles. At the societal level, gender role expectations (Gutek et al., 1991; Posig & Kickul, 2004) and social policies (Ilkkaracan Ajas, 2012; Stier et al., 2012)—such as paid parental leave have a pronounced impact on WFB, particularly for women, by alleviating the dual pressures of work and family.

The multifaceted impact of WFB on both work and non-work life has attracted considerable attention. A favorable work–family balance not only enhances job satisfaction (Bruck et al., 2002; Raza et al., 2018), organizational commitment (Akintayo, 2010), and job performance (Ahmad, 2008; Odle-Dusseau et al., 2012) but is also associated with higher life and family satisfaction (Ernst Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). In contrast, high levels of work–family conflict are frequently accompanied by psychological stress, fatigue, and health issues (Ilies et al., 2015; Sugawara et al., 2017), highlighting the importance of achieving a proper balance.

The COVID-19 pandemic further underscored WFB issues. The normalization of remote work has increased flexibility while simultaneously blurring the boundaries between work and home (Bhat et al., 2023), especially for parents and women. This has intensified the pressures and conflicts associated with managing multiple roles (Adisa et al., 2021; Graham et al., 2021). Additionally, the pandemic amplified family responsibilities, making it more challenging for many employees to maintain a balance between work and home due to increased caregiving duties for children and the elderly (Vaziri et al., 2020). These challenges have prompted scholars to reexamine strategies to mitigate pandemic-induced work–family conflict through enhanced organizational (Elahi et al., 2022) or community support (Fisher et al., 2020), as well as digital and information technology training (Salju et al., 2023), thereby enriching subtopics within the WFB domain.

In the post-pandemic era (2023–2025), various countries and regions have implemented policies related to work and family, such as China's 14th Five-Year Plan—which proposes a legal and policy framework to support family development—Taiwan's *Work–Life Balance Promotion Manual*, the United States' paid parental leave policies and flexible work arrangements, and the European Union's Family Life Balance Directive (Directive (EU) 2019/1158). However, amidst the AI revolution and digital transformation, the effectiveness of these national and corporate policies is being reexamined in light of blurred work–family boundaries, overreliance on technology, and industry-specific disparities, thereby presenting new research challenges.

Against this backdrop, reviewing existing research and delineating new directions is critical for shaping future research agendas. This study reviews prior review efforts (Table 1) and finds that most existing reviews rely on systematic literature review methods, which typically involve small sample sizes and fail to comprehensively cover the extensive literature on work–family balance. Consequently, these reviews are limited in scope and breadth and are prone to subjective biases. In contrast, bibliometric analysis can handle larger datasets with greater objectivity and reproducibility. However, the two existing bibliometric reviews have employed relatively small samples (the largest containing only 146 articles) and have mainly focused on subtopics (e.g. job satisfaction), thereby not fully capturing the field's vast literature. To date, a large-scale, quantitative, comprehensive, and reproducible review on this topic remains absent.

Table 1. Prior related reviews.

NO.	Authors/year	Topic	Method	Size	Time span	Data
1	Rashmi & Kataria, 2022	Work-life balance	Systematic review & bibliometric	100	2010–2020	Scopus
2	Liao et al., 2019	work-family conflict	Meta-analysis	20	1990–2018	WoS
3	W. Otuya & L. M. Andeyo, 2020	work-life balance	Systematic review	50	2010–2020	Scopus
4	Chauhan & Rai, 2024	work-life integration	Systematic review	116	2010–2024	Scopus
5	Mumu et al., 2021	work-family conflict	Bibliometric	146	1994–2020	WoS
6	Reimann et al., 2022	work-family conflict	Systematic review	100	1988–2021	Scopus
7	Alshewairi, 2023	working interventions on work-nonwork conflict	Systematic review	40	2010–2022	Scopus

Table 2. Research questions (RQ).

No.	RQ	Analysis procedure
1	What is the publication and citation trend regarding WFB?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of publications by year • Number of citations by year • Most prolific authors • Most prolific sources • Most Cited Author • Most prolific Countries • Co-occurrence relationships among Countries • Co-citation Analysis • Keyword analysis • Thematic evolution analysis • Factorial analysis
2	Which authors, publications, countries, and journals are influential in the field of WFB?	
3	What is the knowledge base of WFB?	
4	What are the hotspots and future trends of WFB?	

To address the aforementioned research gap, this study employs bibliometric analysis to review the WFB literature, summarize its key contributions, explore the current knowledge structure, and reveal research hotspots and trends. Accordingly, the study aims to answer the following research questions, with the corresponding analytical methods detailed in Table 2.

The second section of this paper outlines the research methodology employed. This is followed by a performance analysis in Section 3, which presents the research output on the topic. Section 4 utilizes approaches such as co-word analysis, co-citation analysis, and factor analysis to construct the knowledge map of WFB. Finally, the discussion section summarizes the key findings and explores future research directions.

2. Methodology

2.1. Method

This study adopts bibliometric analysis as its primary research method. Bibliometrics, defined as ‘the application of mathematics and statistical methods to books and other media of communication’ (Pritchard, 1969), has evolved into a mature research tool and process as it transitioned from information science to social science research (Danvila-del-Valle et al., 2019). This approach enables the objective, quantitative processing of large-scale literature datasets (Mayr & Scharnhorst, 2015) and reveals the evolution of research themes and the structure of knowledge networks, thereby offering a comprehensive and systematic analytical framework (Jing et al., 2024; Li et al., 2024). Bibliometric methods continue to be popular in reviews of work-family-related fields, such as human resource management (Markoulli et al., 2017; Mohamed et al., 2024), management and organizational behavior (Zupic & Čater, 2015), human resource training (Danvila-del-Valle et al., 2019), human resource development (Arifin et al., 2024), work-family conflict (Mumu et al., 2021), and resource-based theory (Acedo et al., 2006).

Although alternative review methods exist—such as systematic literature reviews, meta-analyses, and narrative reviews—each has inherent advantages and limitations. Systematic reviews, with their narrow scope, may omit important studies and are more suited to niche areas, failing to capture the broader landscape of the field (Donthu et al., 2021). Meta-analysis, while capable of integrating quantitative findings from multiple empirical studies, depends on the consistency of the included studies; significant methodological heterogeneity can result in unstable statistical effects (Bornmann & Daniel, 2008; Schmidt & Hunter, 2015). Moreover, the applicability of meta-analysis is constrained by data availability,

particularly in a multidisciplinary field like work–family research where variables, measurement instruments, and study designs vary considerably, potentially compromising the comparability and interpretability of results (Ioannidis, 2008). Narrative reviews, lacking systematic quantitative analysis, often rely on subjective judgment and are prone to selection bias (Tranfield et al., 2003). In light of these considerations, bibliometric analysis is the most appropriate method for this study.

2.2. Data sources and analytical tools

To ensure the reliability of the bibliometric analysis, the Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus have been recognized as the two primary bibliographic data sources (Ding & Yang, 2022; Pranckutė, 2021). The present study is the first to conduct a systematic bibliometric analysis of the WFB field using the WoS database. WoS offers advantages in both its disciplinary breadth and rigorous journal selection standards, as well as a more complete citation network compared to databases such as CrossRef, PubMed, and Compendex (Gusenbauer & Haddaway, 2020; Pranckutė, 2021), thereby providing a more comprehensive perspective for analyzing interdisciplinary topics like WFB.

Subsequently, the data analysis is divided into two main procedures: performance analysis and knowledge mapping. These components are widely recognized as standard workflows in bibliometric analysis. (Chen, 2017; Donthu et al., 2021). Performance analysis quantifies the overall academic impact of the research topic by examining metrics such as the number of publications, citation frequencies, high-impact authors, major research institutions, and core journals, thereby assessing the research output and scholarly contributions of the field. In the knowledge mapping analysis, the study employs co-citation and keyword analyses to delineate the foundational knowledge of the field. Additionally, a thematic evolution map is constructed to analyze dynamic changes within the discipline and predict future trends, providing theoretical guidance for subsequent research.

To achieve these objectives, the study utilizes three bibliometric software tools: bibliometrix (R-tool), VOSviewer, and CiteSpace. Based on comparative evaluations of these tools' strengths and focuses (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; Moral-Muñoz et al., 2020), bibliometrix (R-tool) is primarily employed for performance analysis, while VOSviewer and CiteSpace are used to generate knowledge maps.

2.3. Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The study strictly adheres to the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines (Page et al., 2021) to ensure transparency throughout the screening process. To balance retrieval breadth and relevance—avoiding overly specific queries that might omit highly pertinent studies or overly broad searches that include many irrelevant articles—a ‘simplified query plus rigorous manual screening’ strategy was adopted.

Based on authoritative literature (Carlson et al., 2009), we consider ‘work–family balance’ and ‘work–family conflict’ as the core concepts in this field, while terms such as work–family enrichment, facilitation, and enhancement are viewed as specific manifestations of balance or conflict. Accordingly, the search query was formulated as:

$$TS = ("work - family balance" \text{ OR } "work - family conflict")$$

Additional automated search criteria included: publication dates from 1 January 2000 to 26 July 2024; adherence to the search strategy of Chen (2017); language set to English; and document types limited to articles and reviews.

This study sets the time frame for citing publications from 2000 to 2024, based on two main considerations. First, previous research has shown that publications related to this topic were relatively limited before 2003 (e.g. Mumu et al., 2021). Starting the retrieval from 2000 enables the construction of a dataset with both manageable scale and adequate representativeness. Second, although the citing documents are limited to those published after 2000, the bibliometric database includes complete reference information. As a result, highly cited publications prior to 2000 are still systematically included in the

co-citation analysis. This approach emphasizes recent research developments while also ensuring the effective identification of the field's intellectual foundations.

During the manual screening phase, the strategy proposed by Jing et al.(2024) was adopted, and strict inclusion/exclusion criteria were established, divided into content and quality criteria:

2.4. Content criteria

- **Inclusion:**

- a. The study's topic must involve WFB or WFC, or be highly relevant to the core research questions of this study;
- b. The study must employ either quantitative or qualitative methods—with quantitative studies clearly specifying sample sources, measurement instruments, and data analysis methods;
- c. Qualitative studies must detail the research design, data collection, and analysis procedures;
- d. The research subjects should consist of working individuals, organizations, or families, with a focus on work–family relationships.

Exclusion:

- a. Studies that do not address core variables of work–family relationships;
- b. Theoretical articles that solely engage in conceptual discussions;
- c. Conference abstracts, book chapters, policy documents, or news reports;
- d. Studies with opaque research methods or data sources that preclude reliability assessment.

Quality Criteria

- a. Only peer-reviewed journal articles were included to ensure academic rigor;
- b. Papers shorter than three pages were excluded;
- c. The article must provide complete information, including the title, abstract, keywords, and references.

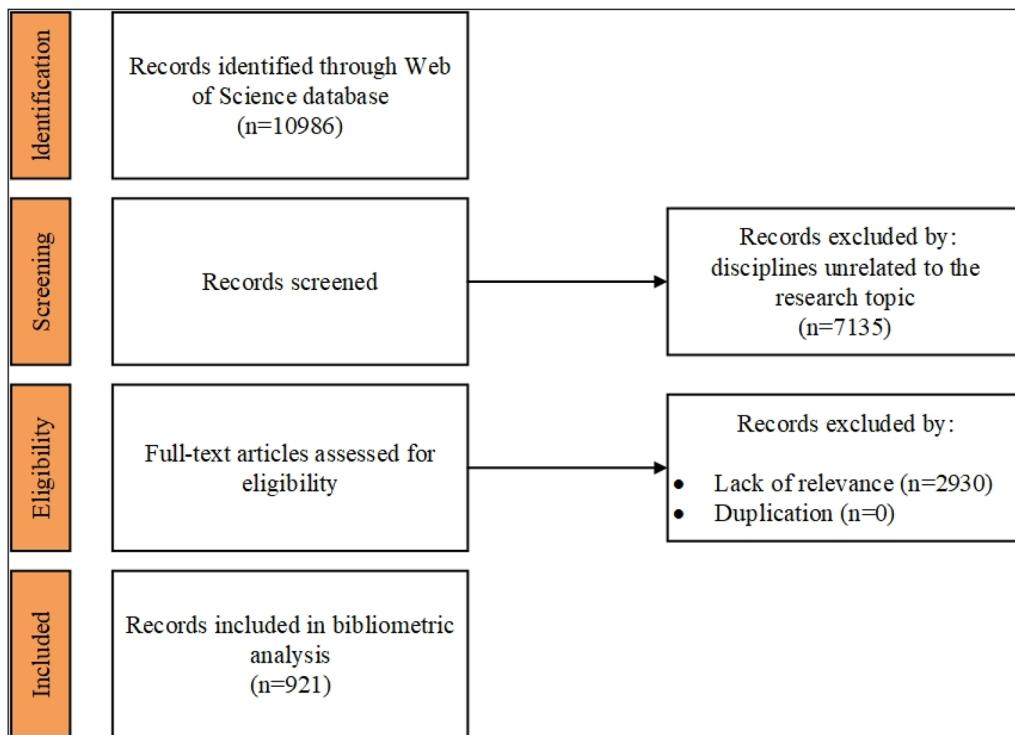
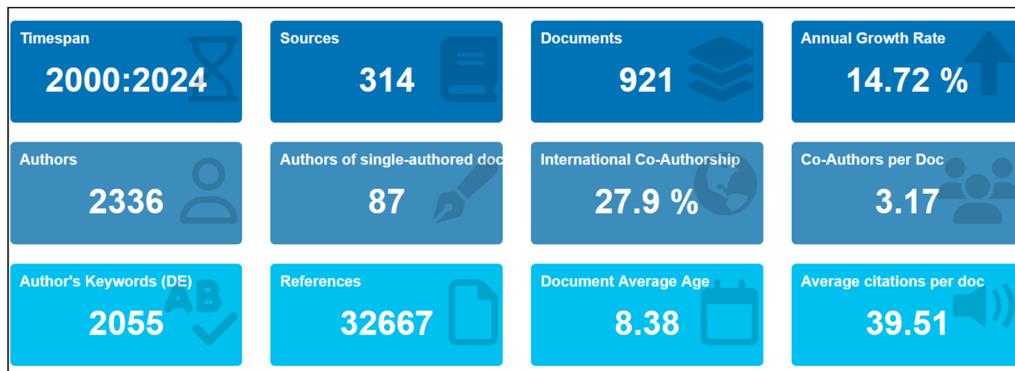
The search was conducted on 26 July 2024, in Guangzhou, following the PRISMA Flow Diagram shown in [Figure 1](#), and ultimately yielded 921 documents—exceeding the minimum sample size of 200 recommended for bibliometric analyses (Rogers et al., [2020](#)).

3. Performance analysis

3.1. Overall trends

This study analyzed 921 publications authored by 2,336 researchers from 69 countries, published across 314 journals and books, which cumulatively cite 32,667 references ([Figure 2](#)). These metrics underscore the broad academic interest in WFB and WFC. Over the period from 2000 to 2024, the number of publications has grown significantly, with an average annual growth rate of 14.72% and an accelerated increase after 2016. The peak occurred in 2022 with 85 publications, followed by slight declines to 83 in 2023 and 54 in 2024 ([Figure 3](#)).

In terms of citation metrics ([Figure 4](#)), the average total citations per article were notably high in the early years but have since fluctuated downward, partly due to the shorter citation window for more recent publications. The average age of the literature is 8.38 years, reflecting a blend of foundational contributions and contemporary research. Overall, each publication is cited an average of 39.51 times—a figure that, while modest by some standards, can indicate significant academic attention in the social sciences where citation practices and research foci often differ (Bornmann & Daniel, [2008](#); Glänzel & Moed, [2002](#)).

**Figure 1.** PRISMA flow diagram.**Figure 2.** General outline.

3.2. Author analysis

Price's law was employed to identify a core group of authors, positing that more than 50% of publications are produced by a select group. Using the formula $m = 0.749 \times \sqrt{n_{\max}}$, where n_{\max} is the maximum number of publications by a single author (9 in this sample), the minimum threshold is calculated as $m = 2.247$. Thus, authors with more than two publications are considered core authors. This criterion identified 44 core authors who collectively contributed 415 publications (approximately 45% of the total), indicating a stable core group within the field.

Among over 2,000 authors, Carlson, D.S. and Kalliath, T. are notably prolific (Table 3). Carlson has dedicated over 20 years (2001–2024) to research in WFC (Nielson et al., 2001)—proposing that robust mentoring systems alleviate employee stress through career development, psychosocial support, and role modeling (Scandura, 1992). Later, he expanded his research to include the concept of work–family positive spillover (Carlson et al., 2008), which was further developed in his influential article *Is work–family balance more than conflict and enrichment?* (Carlson et al., 2009), where he differentiates between balance, enrichment,

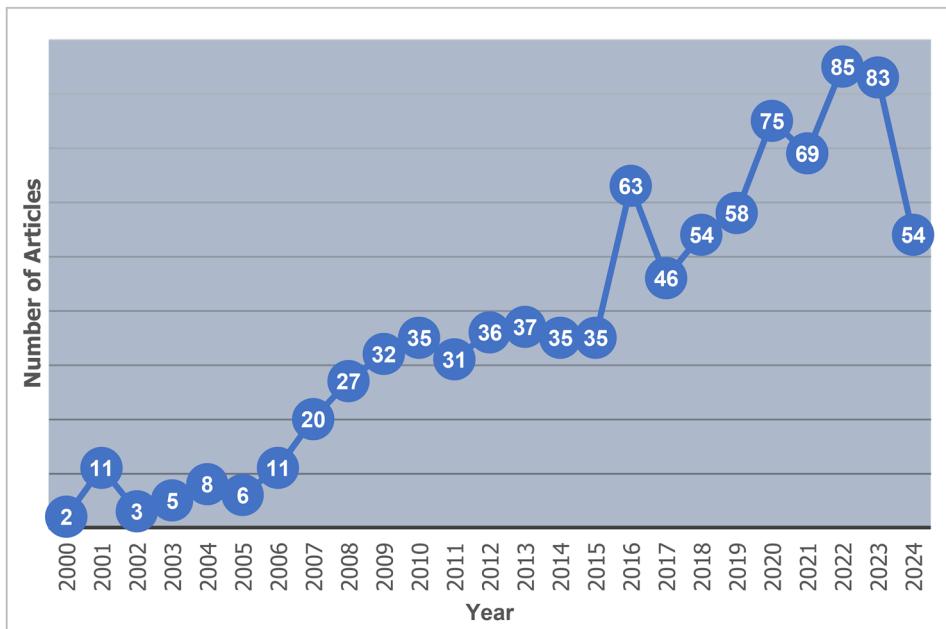


Figure 3. Annual scientific production.

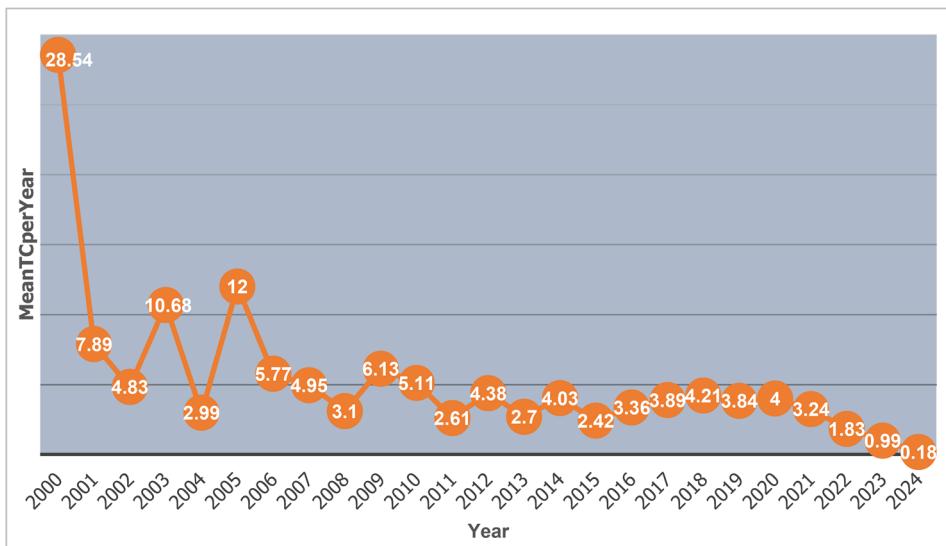


Figure 4. Average citations per year.

Table 3. Most prolific authors.

Author	Documents	Global citations	Local citations	H index	G index	M index	PY Start
D. S. Carlson	9	584	128	7	9	0.292	2001
T. Kalliath	9	690	95	9	9	0.529	2008
P. Brough	8	768	109	8	8	0.471	2008
M. J. Chambel	8	130	22	6	8	0.600	2015
B. Beham	7	249	59	7	7	0.467	2010
W. J. Casper	7	491	119	7	7	0.538	2012
S. Drobnic	7	249	63	7	7	0.467	2010
M. Matias	7	172	33	5	7	0.455	2014
O. L. Siu	7	615	102	7	7	0.438	2009
J. H. Wayne et al., 2020	7	478	114	7	7	0.778	2016

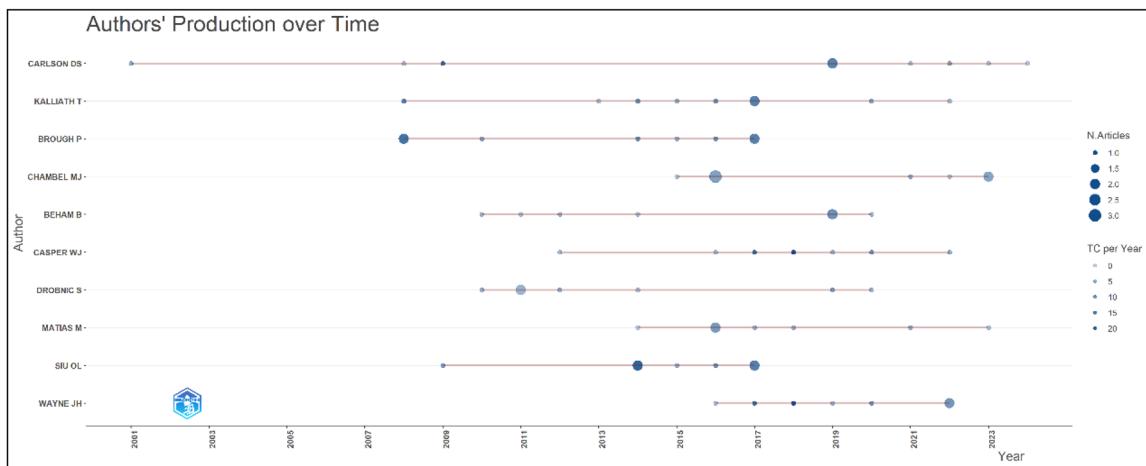


Figure 5. Author's production over time.

and conflict and introduces a novel measurement model. Adapting to emerging trends, Carlson has recently incorporated social comparison theory to explore how individuals assess their own WFB in an era of ubiquitous social media (Carlson et al., 2023) and has also examined the interplay of personal resources in remote work settings (Carlson et al., 2024).

Kalliath, T. has systematically clarified the concept of balance (T. Kalliath & Brough, 2008) (Figure 5), investigating the impact of WFC on psychological stress and testing the mediating role of job satisfaction (P. Kalliath & Kalliath, 2013). His longitudinal studies integrate social resources and affective factors (Siu et al., 2015), and his recent research has focused on how perceived supervisor support, self-efficacy, and work–family segmentation enhance employee well-being and job performance (P. Kalliath et al., 2022), etc.

In addition to publication counts, metrics such as global citations, local citations, and indices (H, G, and M) are provided to facilitate comparative analysis (Table 3).

3.3. Highly cited publication analysis

The data (Table 4) indicate that the highest-ranked paper is by S. C. Clark, (2000), with 1,346 total citations (TC) and a normalized total citation value of 1.81, underscoring its pivotal role in the field. This paper introduces the Work–Family Border Theory (WFBT), which posits that work and family constitute distinct yet interrelated domains. It emphasizes that effective boundary management—through strategies that address flexibility and permeability—is essential for mitigating role conflict and achieving WFB.

The second-ranked publication is by J. H. Greenhaus et al., (2003) in the Journal of Vocational Behavior. This study proposes a three-dimensional model—comprising time balance, participation balance, and satisfaction balance (Greenhaus et al., 2003)—to elucidate the impact of WFB on quality of life (TC: 707; average annual citations: 30.74).

S. M. Bianchi and Milkie, (2010)'s review article, *A Decade of Work and Family Research in the Early 21st Century*, is among the top-cited works with 674 citations. It systematically reviews research from 1999 to 2009, focusing on six core themes (e.g. gender and time allocation, work–family policies) and argues for the inclusion of factors such as aging and economic recession in the discourse on work–family dynamics (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010).

G. E. Kreiner et al., (2009), in his Academy of Management Journal article, 'Boundaries and Bridges: Managing the Work–Family Interface Through Boundary Work Strategies,' (Kreiner et al., 2009) introduces an operational framework for boundary management—categorized into behavioral, temporal, physical, and communicative strategies—that alleviates conflicts between work and family demands (TC: 606).

Other notable contributions include S. Aryee et al., (2005), which underscores the importance of work and family support in fostering balance (TC: 466), and E. J. Hill et al., (2001), which highlights the beneficial impact of work flexibility. Additional highly cited studies by T. A. Beauregard and Henry, (2009) and L. A. McNall et al. (2010) examine the influence of work–life balance practices on organizational performance and the positive effects of work–family enrichment, respectively. McNall's meta-analysis notably represents the first systematic integration of work–family enrichment data.

Table 4. Most total cited authors.

Author	Article	Total citations (TC)	TC per year	Normalized TC
S. C. Clark, 2000, <i>Hum Relat</i>	Work/Family Border Theory: A New Theory of Work/Family Balance	1346	51.77	1.81
J. H. Greenhaus et al., 2003, <i>J Vocat Behav</i>	The relation between work-family balance and quality of life	707	30.74	2.88
S. M. Bianchi & Milkie, 2010, <i>J Marriage Fam</i>	Work and family research in the first decade of the 21st century	674	42.13	8.25
G. E. Kreiner et al., 2009, <i>Acad Manage J</i>	Balancing borders and bridges: Negotiating the work-home interface via boundary work tactics	606	35.65	5.82
S. Aryee et al., 2005, <i>J Appl Psychol</i>	Rhythms of life: antecedents and outcomes of work-family balance in employed parents	466	22.19	1.85
L. A. McNall et al., 2010, <i>J Bus Psychol</i>	A meta-analytic review of the consequences associated with work-family enrichment	423	26.44	5.18
E. J. Hill et al., 2001, <i>Fam Relat</i>	Finding an Extra Day a Week: The Positive Influence of Perceived Job Flexibility on Work and Family Life Balance	405	16.20	2.05
T. A. Beauregard & Henry, 2009, <i>Hum Resour Manage R</i>	Making the link between work-life balance practices and organizational performance	401	23.59	3.85
S. Parasuraman and Simmers (2001), <i>J Organ Behav</i>	Type of employment, work-family conflict and well-being: a comparative study	394	15.76	2.00
M. Valcour, 2007, <i>J Appl Psychol</i>	Work-based resources as moderators of the relationship between work hours and satisfaction with work-family balance	382	20.11	4.06

Finally, S. Parasuraman and Simmers, (2001) and M. Valcour, (2007) offer novel insights by exploring the relationships between employment type, WFC, and the impact of work-time control on balance satisfaction.

3.4. Journal analysis

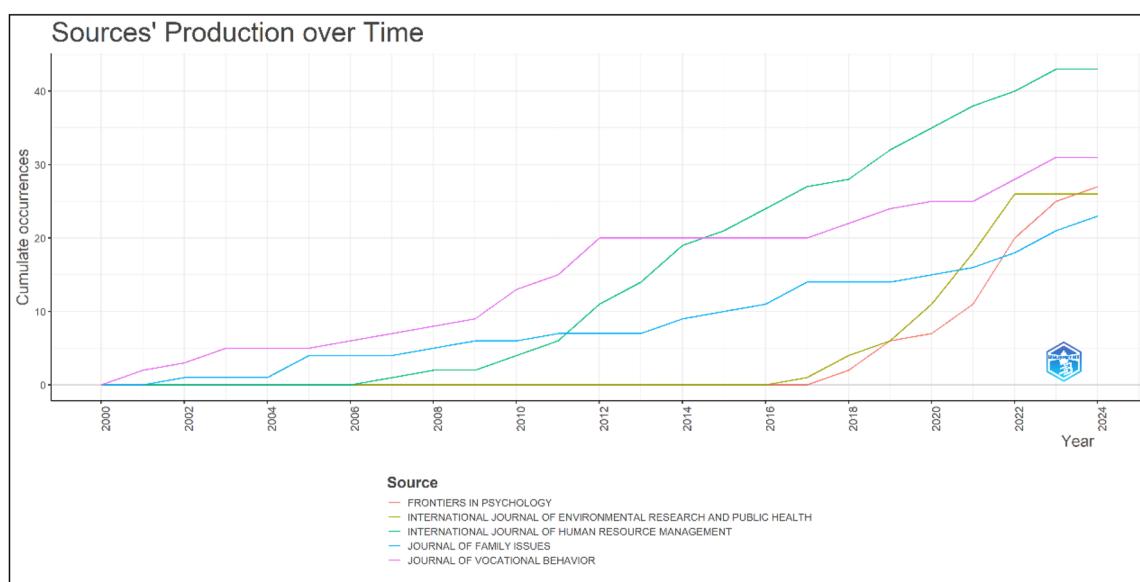
Table 5 below lists the top 10 journals ranked by publication count along with their local citation counts. Since 2009, there has been a marked increase in the number of publications across most journals (Figure 6).

The *International Journal of Human Resource Management* ranks first, reflecting its longstanding focus on international and comparative human resource issues, with articles accumulating 648 local citations. The *Journal of Vocational Behavior* follows, amassing 3,227 local citations; it primarily investigates individual work and career decision-making, offering novel insights into career choice, development, and work adjustments over the lifespan. *Frontiers in Psychology* ranks third with 228 local citations, highlighting the high impact of WFB research within applied psychology. Moreover, the list indicates a mature body of research on WFB in the fields of environmental public health and management. Based on Bradford's law, sixteen core journals have been identified (Figure 7).

Furthermore, considering that open access (OA) publishing may enhance both citation rates and the dissemination of academic work, the citation-based ranking should be interpreted with attention to the accessibility characteristics of the journals. As noted by Langham-Putrow et al. (2021) in their systematic review, approximately 47.8% of empirical studies support the existence of an Open Access Citation Advantage (OACA). Additionally, prior research has shown that journals transitioning from subscription-based models to open access often experience an increase in impact factor (Björk & Solomon, 2012). Therefore, we have added a column in Table 5 indicating whether each journal operates under a Gold OA model, allowing readers to evaluate the rankings not only in terms of citation performance but also in relation to the journal's openness and potential for global knowledge dissemination.

Table 5. Most prolific sources.

Sources	Articles	Local citations	Golden OA
<i>International journal of human resource management</i>	43	648	No
<i>Journal of vocational behavior</i>	31	3227	No
<i>Frontiers in psychology</i>	27	228	Yes
<i>International journal of environmental research and public health</i>	26	197	Yes
<i>Journal of family issues</i>	23	638	No
<i>Journal of managerial psychology</i>	21	308	No
<i>Applied research in quality of life</i>	18	107	No
<i>Journal of marriage and family</i>	18	2	No
<i>Social indicators research</i>	18	7	No
<i>Sustainability</i>	16	63	Yes

**Figure 6.** Sources' production over time.

3.5. Country analysis

Using VOSviewer (version 1.6.20) with a threshold of 15, a collaboration network among countries was generated (Figure 8). The network reveals that the United States holds the highest influence in the field (Table 6), maintaining strong collaborative ties with 18 countries—including China, the United Kingdom, and Australia—with a total link strength of 2,670. China ranks second (Table 6); besides its strong collaboration with the United States, its primary partners include India and South Korea in Asia, as well as Australia and New Zealand in the Southern Hemisphere, with total link strength of 1,075.

The intensity of international collaborations is influenced by factors such as research capacity, economic development, geographic proximity, and socio-cultural ties. Analysis of these networks offers valuable insights for the formulation of WFB policies. For example, the study *The Impact of Family Policies on Fertility in Industrialized Countries: A Review of the Literature* (Gauthier, 2007) provides an international perspective and theoretical framework that can support policy development in China—particularly in the context of evolving fertility policies—by illustrating how policy interventions can foster WFB.

4. Knowledge mapping

4.1. Co-citation analysis

Using VOSviewer (version 1.6.20), we conducted a co-citation analysis on the database references to delineate the core knowledge structure within the field. Setting a threshold of 30 citations, 147

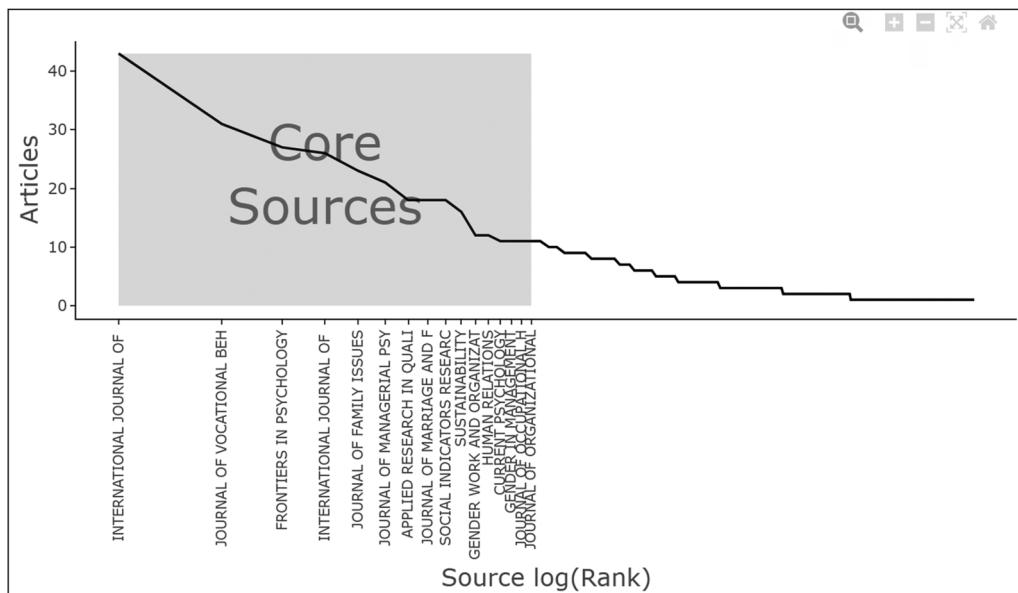


Figure 7. Sixteen core sources:

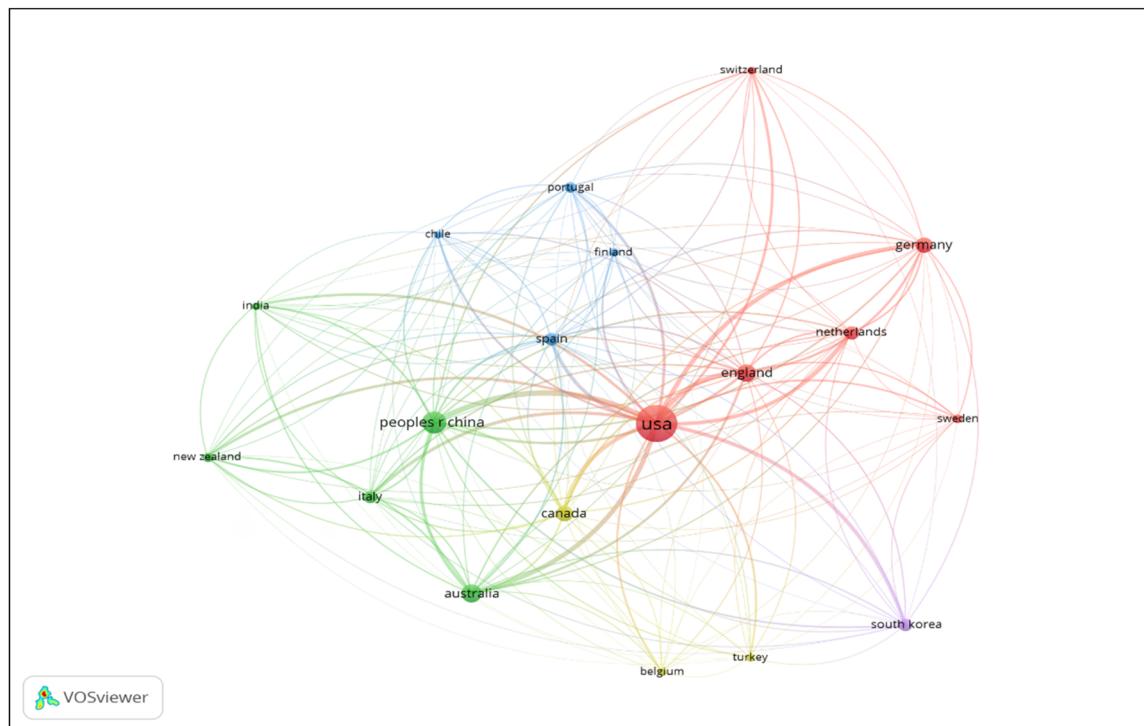


Figure 8. Co-occurrence relationships among countries.

documents were included in the analysis, resulting in three prominent clusters. The visualizations below display these clusters as both network and density maps (Figures 9 and 10).

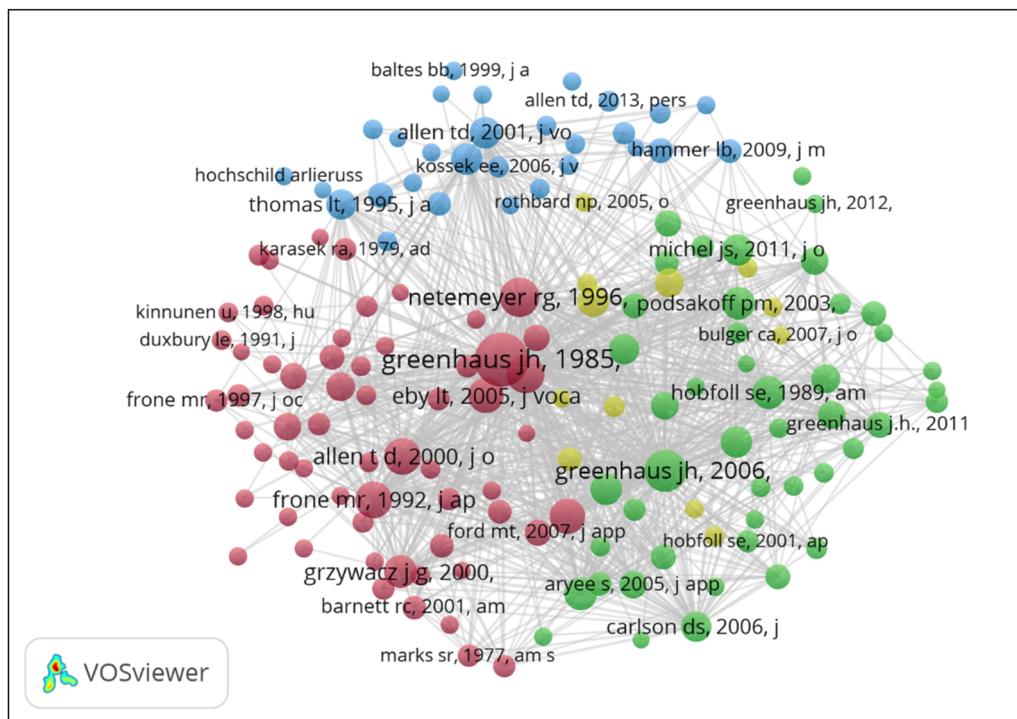
Following the latest guidelines by van Eck and Waltman (2023), each node was evaluated using two key weighted attributes:

Link: The number of other nodes with which a given node shares co-citation relationships.

Total link strength: The cumulative co-citation frequency between a node and all its linked nodes.

Table 6. Most prolific countries.

Country	Freq	Country	TC	Average citations
USA	645	USA	17305	67.10
China	251	China	2703	25.30
Australia	138	Australia	2445	38.20
UK	132	UK	2411	56.10
Canada	88	Germany	1317	31.40
Germany	83	Canada	1203	30.10
South Korea	71	Netherlands	1069	48.60
Italy	68	Korea	714	23.00
Netherlands	64	New Zealand	704	58.70
Spain	57	Turkey	576	44.30

**Figure 9.** Co-citation references network.

This methodology enables the efficient identification of core documents in the co-citation map and allows for a quantitative assessment of their academic influence. We now provide a detailed interpretation of the field's core knowledge structure by discussing the three clusters:

Cluster 1 (Red): The largest cluster, comprising 60 items, primarily focuses on WFC, one of the earliest topics to receive systematic investigation in this field. Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) [LinkS = 146; Total Link Strength = 5900] laid the theoretical foundation by categorizing conflict into three forms—time-based, strain-based, and behavior-based—and posited that conflicting role demands and resource constraints are the primary sources of conflict.

Subsequently, Frone et al. (1992) [Links = 146; Total Link Strength = 2756] differentiated the bidirectional nature of WFC into Work Interference with Family (WIF) and Family Interference with Work (FIW), emphasizing their distinct antecedents and consequences. Building on this foundation, Netemeyer et al. (1996) [Links = 146; Total Link Strength = 2744] developed and validated scales for measuring WIF and FIW, providing reliable tools for quantitative research.

Early research in this cluster primarily explained conflict from a resource and stress perspective—arguing that competition for limited resources (e.g. time, energy, psychological resources) between roles leads to conflict.

Later, studies shifted toward an ecological perspective. Grzywacz and Marks (2000) [Links = 146; Total Link Strength = 2612] expanded the focus from 'conflict' to 'spillover,' demonstrating that resources (such

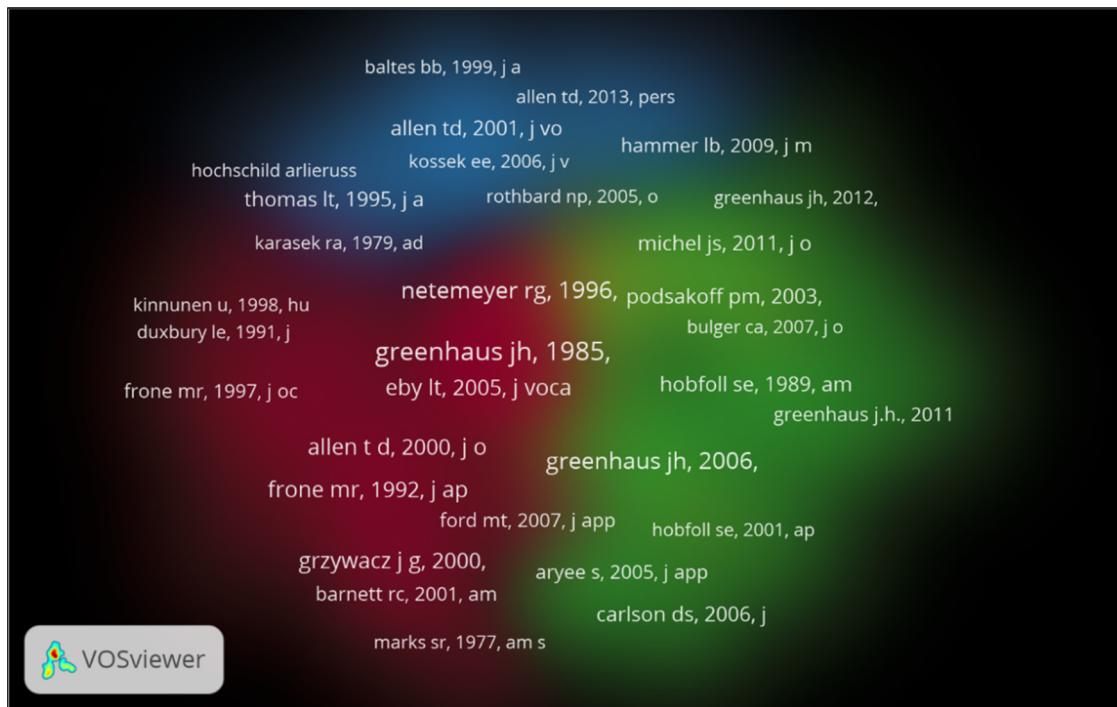


Figure 10. Co-citation references density maps.

as autonomy at work or emotional support at home) and obstacles (like work stress or family conflict) can generate both positive and negative spillover effects. This progression not only broadened the conceptual scope of WFC research but also introduced a dual perspective that integrates both positive and negative dynamics. Additionally, Byron's [Byron \(2005\)](#) meta-analysis [Links = 146; Total Link Strength = 2924] and Allen et al. [\(2000\)](#) review [Links = 146; Total Link Strength = 2575] of work-family outcomes further establish the core knowledge base by systematically exploring the antecedents and consequences of WFC.

Cluster 2 (Green): Containing 46 items shifts the research focus from WFC to work-family enrichment. Its theoretical underpinnings evolve from the conservation of resources to the concept of resource gain, with studies examining how resources are transferred between work and family to promote positive outcomes.

Based on Conservation of Resources theory ([Hobfoll, 1989](#)) [Links = 144; Total Link Strength = 2028], Edwards and Rothbard [\(2000\)](#) [Links = 146; Total Link Strength = 2037] clarified the mechanisms linking work and family, categorizing these connections into six types (e.g. spillover, compensation, and segmentation). They redefined the causal structure of these linkages to construct theories of the work-family interface. In a related development, Greenhaus and Powell [\(2006\)](#) [LinkS = 146; Total Link Strength = 3882] proposed an enrichment model that delineates both instrumental and affective pathways, through which resource or emotional transfers improve work and family life quality. Furthermore, [\(Carlson et al. 2006\)](#) [LinkS = 143; Total Link Strength = 2092] developed a bidirectional, multidimensional enrichment scale, providing robust quantitative support for the model.

Cluster 3 (Blue): Comprising 29 items, this cluster focuses on 'supportive culture' with a noticeably lower total link strength compared to the other clusters. Research here is dedicated to mitigating WFC through the lens of supportive cultural practices, including perceived Family-Supportive Organizational Practices (FSOP) and work-family culture.

[Thompson et al. \(1999\)](#) [Links = 145; Total Link Strength = 1928] introduced the concept of work-family culture, identifying dimensions such as managerial support, benefit utilization, and organizational time expectations—highlighting the role of supportive culture in reducing conflict and enhancing organizational commitment. [Allen \(2001\)](#) [Links = 146; Total Link Strength = 1972] further advanced the FSOP construct, emphasizing that employees' perceptions of organizational support are crucial for policy

effectiveness. Additionally, Anderson et al. (2002) [Links = 140; Total Link Strength = 994] examined the integration of formal policies with informal practices, while Kossek et al. (2011) [Links = 144; Total Link Strength = 1096] confirmed, via meta-analysis, the efficacy of work-family specific support interventions in reducing conflict. Collectively, studies in this cluster underscore the importance of supportive culture and managerial backing in alleviating conflict, positing that employees' subjective perceptions are central to the success of these policies. This integrative perspective provides valuable theoretical and practical guidance for optimizing organizational policy design.

4.2. Journal co-citation analysis

A journal co-citation analysis was conducted to identify the sub-research streams within the WFB literature. By setting a co-citation threshold of 30, the analysis yielded 30 nodes grouped into five clusters, as illustrated in the image below (each color represents a distinct cluster), see Figure 11.

Red cluster (Cluster 1): Focuses on family systems and gender power structures. Grounded in socio-logical theory, this cluster examines how marriage, family structure, gender roles, and social policies influence WFB. It reveals the structural roots of work-family issues and highlights interdisciplinary perspectives. The *Journal of Marriage and Family* (Link = 257; Link Strength = 978,985) is a key publication in this cluster.

Green cluster (Cluster 2): Centers on vocational psychology and organizational behavior. With a foundation in psychological theory, this cluster explores individual career development, work stress management, and organizational intervention strategies. It elucidates the psychological mechanisms and intervention pathways underlying WFB. Prominent journals include the *Journal of Vocational Behavior* (Link = 257; Link Strength = 978,985) and the *Journal of Applied Psychology* (Link = 257; Link Strength = 253,610).

Blue cluster (Cluster 3): Focuses on organizational management and human resource strategies. Rooted in management theory, this cluster investigates institutional solutions for WFB through strategic human resource management and organizational behavior research. For example, the *Academy of*

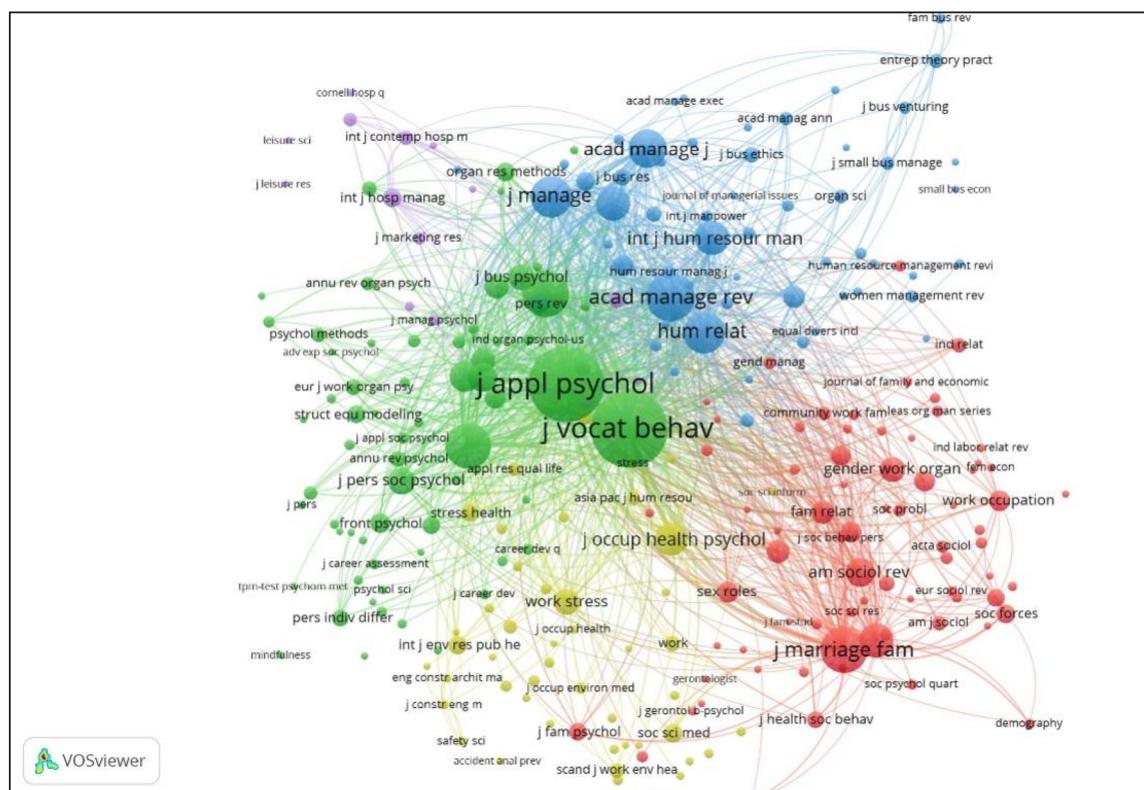


Figure 11. Co-citation sources network.

Management Review (cited 1,316 times) introduced the ‘family-friendly organization’ concept, which examines how HR policies (e.g. flexible work arrangements, childcare benefits) influence WFB.

Yellow Cluster (Cluster 4): Centers on occupational health and environmental public health. Based on occupational health psychology, this cluster examines the social and environmental determinants of WFB. It investigates how work stress, occupational safety, and environmental factors affect health outcomes, integrating perspectives from psychology, public health, and the social sciences. This cluster also addresses contemporary issues such as job burnout, psychological capital, and the health benefits and risks associated with remote work.

Purple Cluster (Cluster 5): Pertains to tourism and hospitality management. This cluster explores the impact of human resource management, sustainable development, and consumer behavior in service industries (e.g. hotels, tourism) on WFB. It emphasizes the intersection of management and marketing, investigating issues such as shift work, employee retention, and WFC. Studies in this cluster have found that ‘employee care programs’ (e.g. free accommodation) in luxury hotels can help alleviate WFC.

4.3. Co-word analysis

After establishing several knowledge clusters, a co-word analysis was performed using CiteSpace to explore core themes within the literature. The keyword mapping generated 561 keyword nodes; for clarity, only keywords with a frequency threshold of 20 are displayed ([Figure 12](#)). The top 15 keywords by frequency are:

- conflict (Freq = 350, Centrality = 0)
- work–family conflict (Freq = 263, Centrality = 0.05)
- satisfaction (Freq = 201, Centrality = 0.01)
- family conflict (Freq = 176, Centrality = 0.02)
- resources (Freq = 175, Centrality = 0.04)
- work–life balance (Freq = 165, Centrality = 0.01)
- gender (Freq = 164, Centrality = 0.09)
- job satisfaction (Freq = 163, Centrality = 0.11)
- balance (Freq = 157, Centrality = 0.04)

The frequency and betweenness centrality values indicate that ‘conflict’ and ‘work–family conflict’ are the primary focal points in current research, reflecting the high level of academic attention on these issues. Notably, ‘job satisfaction’ exhibits the highest betweenness centrality (Centrality = 0.11), underscoring its critical role as a connector across various topics and as a bridge in the knowledge network.

4.3. Theme evolution map analysis

We further employed R software to analyze the evolution of research themes over time, dividing the process into four distinct periods. The number of keywords in each theme is indicated by the size of the corresponding node. In the thematic evolution map ([Figure 13](#)), nodes that share common keywords across adjacent time slices are connected by streamlines; the width of each streamline is proportional to the number of shared keywords, thereby reflecting the degree of relatedness between themes.

The analysis reveals the following trends:

2000–2006: This initial stage of theoretical exploration focused primarily on the conflict between work and family roles. Keywords such as ‘Work-Family Conflicts,’ ‘time,’ and ‘home’ indicate that scholars concentrated on the tensions between work and family and their impact on individual lives. Core issues included uncontrollable work hours, role conflict, and imbalances in resource allocation. The appearance of terms like ‘multiple’ and ‘analysis’ reflects early attempts to dissect the sources of conflict from various

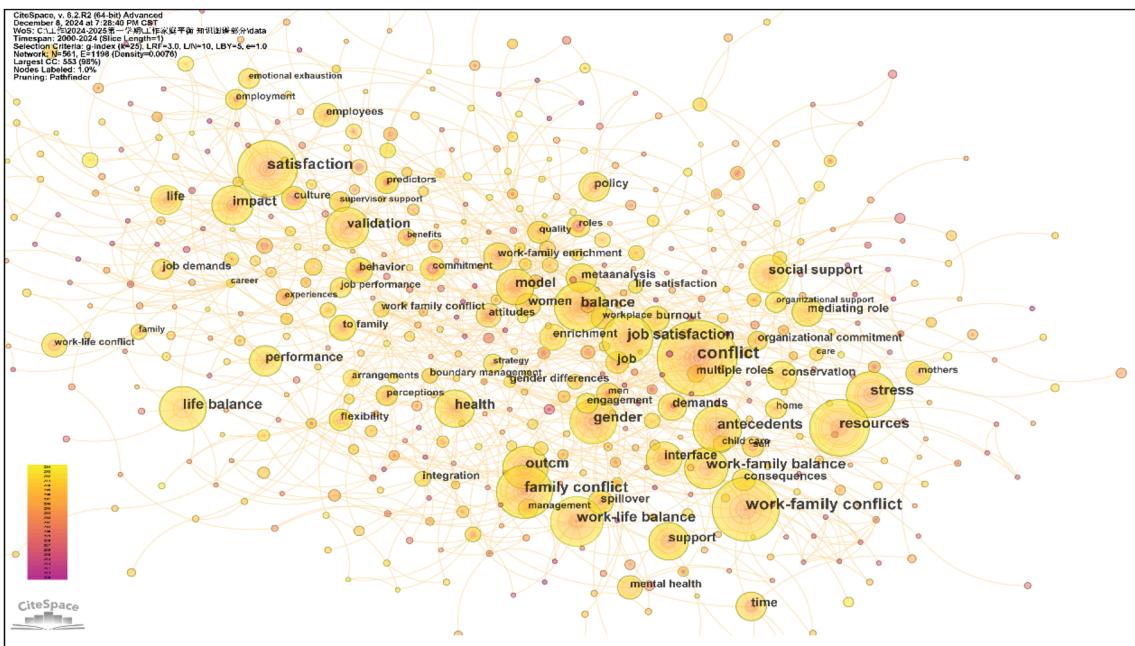


Figure 12. Keywords network.

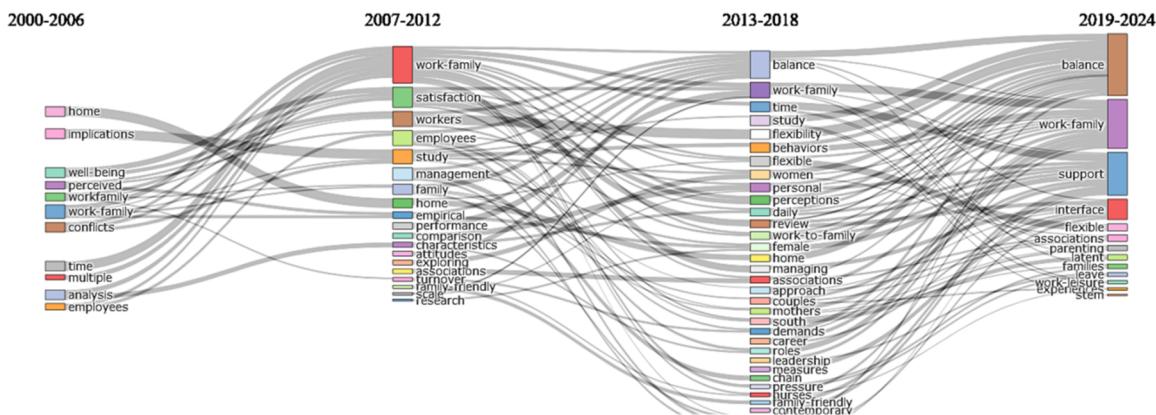


Figure 13. Trend topic over time.

angles. This phase was chiefly concerned with problem identification and the preliminary construction of a theoretical framework.

2007–2012: Research began shifting from a focus solely on conflict to exploring satisfaction and spill-over effects. Keywords such as 'work-family', 'satisfaction' and 'family friendly' suggest that the positive interrelations between work and family—and their impact on overall employee satisfaction—became central topics. During this period, studies increasingly examined practical management interventions, with family-friendly policies emerging as critical for enhancing satisfaction and reducing turnover. The rise of 'empirical' and 'comparison' in the keyword set also highlights a growing reliance on data-driven, quantitative methods.

2013–2018: This stage is marked by thematic diversification. Keywords such as ‘balance,’ ‘flexibility,’ and ‘behaviors’ reflect a growing recognition of the importance of flexible work arrangements. Research evolved to examine individual behaviors and subjective perceptions affecting WFB. The integration of a gender perspective—evidenced by keywords like ‘women,’ ‘female,’ and ‘mothers’—underscores an increased focus on the unique challenges faced by women in balancing career and family responsibilities. Moreover, the emergence of ‘leadership’ indicates new interest in the role of managers in promoting balance. Overall, this phase reflects a more contextualized approach, considering variations across cultures and occupational settings.

Table 7. Representative studies across the four phases.

Stage	First author/year	Global Citation	Summary
Phase 1: Work-family conflict (2000–2006)	J. A. Jacobs & Gerson, 2001	289	Explores how changes in workplace structure affect family life, highlighting the impact of work hours on role conflict.
	J. A. Thompson & Bunderson, 2001	139	Develops a model showing how the subjective meanings and identity relevance of time shape work-nonwork conflict, beyond time allocation alone.
	C. R. Cousins & Tang, 2004	109	Analyzes how working-time flexibility and national policy contexts shape gendered experiences of work-family conflict across the Netherlands, Sweden, and the UK.
Phase 2: Satisfaction and family-friendly policies (2007–2012)	L. A. McNall et al., 2010	423	Conducts a meta-analysis to demonstrate how work-to-family and family-to-work enrichment are positively linked to job satisfaction, family well-being, and health, highlighting enrichment as a key complement to conflict reduction.
	M. Valcour, 2007	382	Examines how work hours, job complexity, and control over work time jointly influence satisfaction with work-family balance.
	R. Baral & Bhargava, 2010	152	Demonstrates how work-to-family enrichment mediates the effects of organizational work-life interventions on job satisfaction, commitment, and citizenship behavior in an Indian organizational context.
Phase 3: Flexible work arrangements, gender, and leadership (2013–2018)	S. Braun & Nieberle, 2017	57	Develops a model showing how authentic leadership reduces employees' work-family conflict and enhances enrichment, with leaders' own work-family experiences shaping these effects.
	E. H. Ellinas et al., 2018	55	Examines how WFC, role strain, and organizational climate shape promotion and leadership intentions among academic faculty, revealing gendered barriers to advancement in medical institutions.
	A. Chong et al., 2016	6	Shows how family-to-work conflict moderates the link between prenatal breastfeeding efficacy and postpartum depression via breastfeeding duration, highlighting challenges for new working mothers
Phase 4: Teleworking , support and the COVID-19 pandemic (2019–2024)	X. M. Hong et al., 2021	63	Examines how online work overload and parenting stress among female preschool teachers during COVID-19 reduce job satisfaction via dual pathways of work-to-family and family-to-work conflict.
	S. H. Zhang et al., 2020	80	Analyzes how life stages shape telework frequency, revealing that parenthood increases WFC and reshapes gendered telework patterns through complex household dynamics.
	J. H. Wayne et al., 2020	55	Demonstrates that work and family support, especially work-based resources, are key predictors of balance satisfaction by reducing conflict and enhancing enrichment in the work-to-family direction.

2019–2024: The dual impact of technological advancement and the COVID-19 pandemic has expanded the scope of research in this field. The frequent appearance of keywords such as 'flexibility,' 'interface,' and 'support' reflects a growing focus on the interplay among flexible work arrangements, boundary management, and organizational support—particularly as telework blurs the traditional boundaries between work and family life. This renewed attention echoes Ellison's Ellison (1999) early work on the negotiation of home-work boundaries in telecommuting contexts. During this exceptional period, the overlap between the themes of 'telework' and 'family-work' has become increasingly salient. Scholars have explored issues such as how online work overload and parenting stress contribute to WFC (Hong et al., 2021), as well as how life stages shape telework frequency and gendered patterns of telework engagement (Zhang et al., 2020). The prominence of terms like 'parenting' and 'families' underscores the critical role of childcare responsibilities, while the emergence of 'latent' signals the adoption of sophisticated analytical methods such as latent variable models. Overall, this period is characterized by greater diversity and interdisciplinarity, integrating technological, pandemic, and cross-disciplinary perspectives to chart new directions for future research.

Table 7 offers a selection of representative works across the four phases. Previously discussed high-impact studies are intentionally omitted to avoid repetition.

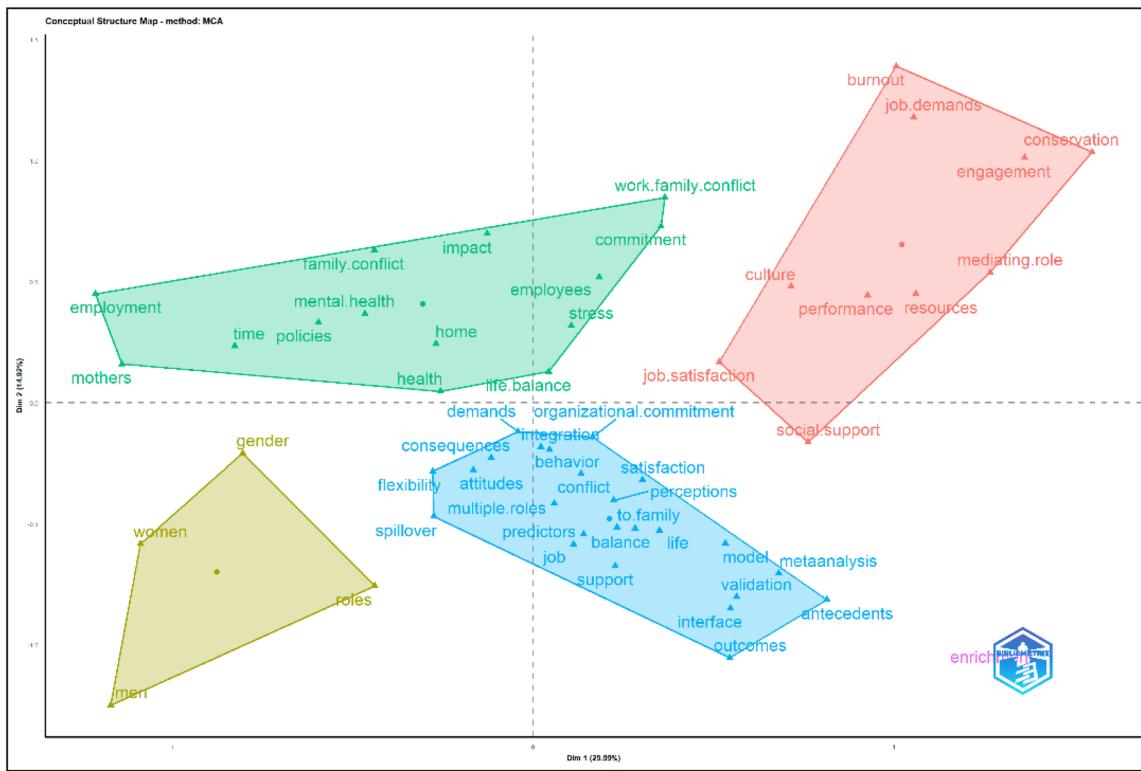


Figure 14. Factorial analysis.

4.4. Factor analysis

Using the R-tool, we conducted a factor analysis to reduce dimensionality and identify the primary themes and underlying relationships within the research field, thereby revealing latent trends and patterns. Employing multiple correspondence analysis, we generated a keyword concept map that resulted in four main clusters (Figure 14). In this map, the proximity of points representing keywords indicates similarity in their distribution; keywords closer to the central point are more prominent within the field, whereas those positioned at the periphery show weaker associations with other topics.

5. Discussion

Based on the analysis results, we now address the research questions proposed in the introduction as follows:

5.1. RQ1. What is the publication and citation trend regarding WFB?

Our performance analysis indicates an average annual growth rate of 14.72% since 2000, with accelerated growth after 2016—reflecting increasing scholarly attention. However, despite high overall citation counts, a recent decline in total citations (attributable to shorter citation windows and shifts in research focus) suggests that recent work may not yet have achieved breakthrough status. Notably, the most highly cited articles are predominantly from before 2010, indicating a longstanding lack of transformative innovation. Although a core group of authors has accumulated influential work over the years, the declining citation trends also highlight potential shortcomings in the continued relevance of existing theories under new conditions.

5.2. RQ2. Which authors, publications, countries, and journals are influential in the field of WFB?

According to Price's Law, the field has formed a relatively stable group of core authors, with 44 authors contributing about 45% of the total publications. Carlson and Kalliath are among the most representative

researchers, having long focused on topics such as WFC, positive spillover, and supportive resources. In terms of highly cited works, Clark's Clark (2000) work-family boundary theory ranks first, while studies by Greenhaus et al. (2003) on satisfaction and dimensions of balance are also highly influential. International collaboration in the WFB field is extensive, with scholars from various countries engaging in active research exchanges. Yet, our review reveals a notable scarcity of cross-cultural comparative studies—only one study in our sample addressed this aspect. In terms of journals, The International Journal of Human Resource Management and Journal of Vocational Behavior are among the most important publication platforms in this field.

5.3. RQ3. What is the knowledge base of WFB?

Our co-citation analysis identified three interdependent yet distinct knowledge clusters: work-family conflict, work-family enrichment, and supportive culture. The first two clusters trace the evolution of core theoretical frameworks, while the supportive culture cluster signals a gradual shift from theoretical exploration toward practical application. Journal co-citation analysis further reveals the interdisciplinary nature of work-family research, encompassing management, psychology, sociology, and beyond. Notably, the emergence of a 'tourism and hospitality' cluster suggests that the field is expanding into industry-specific investigations, opening new avenues for examining work-family dynamics in various sectors.

5.4. RQ4. What are the hotspots and future trends of WFB?

In the co-word analysis section, a variety of visualization tools were employed to identify several hot topics within the field. For example, the keyword 'gender' occupies a significant position in the keyword network; although it tends to be marginalized in factor analysis, it still forms a distinct cluster, indicating that it remains a core topic of discussion. Furthermore, keywords such as 'support', 'flexible', and 'job satisfaction' exhibit high centrality in both the topic evolution map and the factor analysis. This suggests that organizational support, flexible work arrangements, and employee job satisfaction continue to be prominent research areas. Consequently, scholars and practitioners should further explore how effective organizational support measures and flexible work arrangements can enhance employee job satisfaction and overall well-being.

The factor analysis results further indicate that 'consequences' and 'organizational commitment' occupy central positions, implying that research attention is more focused on the impact effects of WFB than on antecedent variables. Notably, organizational commitment—being a broader construct than job satisfaction—encompasses employees' affective identification (Hikmah Perkasa et al., 2023) and long-term willingness to invest (Muhamad et al., 2023). Therefore, organizations should prioritize enhancing employee organizational commitment as a key management objective and implement supportive policies and flexible work arrangements to bolster long-term employee engagement. Simultaneously, scholars are encouraged to further investigate the underlying mechanisms of organizational commitment and its interrelationships with WFB, job satisfaction, and organizational support, thereby constructing a more comprehensive theoretical model.

Our keyword evolution diagram shows that WFB research has shifted from early attention to WFC and role strain to mechanisms such as satisfaction, family-friendly policies, and positive spillover. After 2013, research topics became significantly more diverse, with increasing focus on flexible arrangements, gender differences, and individual behaviors. Since 2019, driven by technological advances and the impact of the pandemic, remote work, boundary management, and organizational support have become research hotspots. The field has increasingly emphasized real-world coping mechanisms and employee well-being. Overall, WFB research has evolved from problem identification toward practical intervention, and from single-perspective approaches to interdisciplinary integration.

6. Conclusion

This study employs bibliometric methods to comprehensively review the evolution and knowledge structure of the WFB field, thereby elucidating current trends, research hotspots, and future directions. Utilizing

data from the Web of Science and analytical tools such as bibliometrix, VOSviewer, and CiteSpace, we conducted a performance analysis and constructed knowledge maps based on 921 articles published between 2000 and 2024. This approach provides both quantitative evidence and a visual representation of the field's development.

6.1. Implication

From a theoretical perspective, the most significant contribution of this study lies in presenting the first large-scale bibliometric review in the field of work–family research, addressing a major gap in existing literature. Previous reviews often focused on specific subtopics (e.g. job satisfaction), or adopted systematic review approaches for qualitative integration based on small samples, which lack a comprehensive grasp of the overall structure and evolution of the field.

Given the highly interdisciplinary nature of the work–family topic, a quantitative bibliometric analysis is necessary. By incorporating a broader range of journals, a larger literature sample, and more authors and references, this study better reveals the interdisciplinary characteristics of the field and identifies the core knowledge base and major research hotspots. According to Donthu et al. (2021), a good bibliometric analysis should serve as a ‘one-stop’ source of integrated information. Our study fulfills this role and helps future scholars quickly understand the development of the field, while offering new research inspirations and knowledge discovery.

From a practical perspective, this study provides a valuable entry point for organizations seeking to design or optimize human resource strategies. The research hotspots identified—such as ‘organizational support,’ ‘flexible work arrangements,’ ‘employee well-being,’ and ‘boundary management’—suggest that human resource policies should pay closer attention to the interaction and balance between employees’ work and family lives. Creating a supportive organizational climate, enhancing managers’ awareness of family-friendly practices, and offering flexible working hours and job design are all crucial paths for improving employee satisfaction and strengthening organizational commitment. We also found that emotional exhaustion and role conflict continue to attract scholarly attention, indicating that organizations should reinforce mental health support through training and welfare systems to build a more inclusive work environment.

For policymakers, the bibliometric trends and international collaboration networks presented in this study offer data support for more forward-looking labor policies. In recent years, increasing research attention to ‘gender equality,’ ‘family-friendly policies,’ and ‘remote work standardization’ reflects growing public and academic concern over changes in workforce and family structures. Policymakers can leverage these insights to develop public policy frameworks that better respond to workplace diversity and evolving family dynamics—such as improving parental leave systems, refining flexible work legislation, and encouraging employers to implement family-friendly policies—thus promoting worker well-being and sustainable development at the macro level.

6.2. Limitation and future direction

Despite several meaningful findings, this study has some limitations that warrant attention in future research.

First, although we adopted systematic search strategies and bibliometric tools to enhance objectivity within a quantitative bibliometric framework, there remains a degree of subjectivity in aspects such as search query design, naming and interpretation of research hotspots, and identification of the knowledge base. This subjectivity may affect the accuracy and reproducibility of the results. We recommend that future researchers explore alternative search logics and parameter settings or conduct secondary analyses using the dataset published in this study to facilitate multi-perspective dialogue in the field.

Second, this study relied solely on the Web of Science Core Collection. Although this database is authoritative and representative in academic research, it may exclude relevant studies from other databases (e.g. Scopus, Google Scholar) or non-English publications, which could influence the comprehensiveness of the findings. Future research should consider incorporating literature from additional databases.

In addition, based on the discussion in [Section 5](#), we propose several further research directions:

Given the emergence of the ‘tourism and hospitality’ cluster, it is necessary to explore the industry-specific characteristics of WFB in various sectors.

Based on the co-word analysis results, topics such as ‘effective support measures’ and ‘flexible work arrangements’ have significant research value and merit continued investigation.

Scholars are encouraged to delve deeper into the underlying mechanisms of organizational commitment and its relationships with WFB, job satisfaction, and organizational support, in order to construct a more comprehensive theoretical model.

Given the critical role of cultural differences in shaping work–family dynamics (Farivar et al., 2016), such as individual coping strategies (Chandra, 2012), gender roles (Rashmi & Kataria, 2022), and policy support (Ilkkaracan Ajas, 2012), future research should examine these variations across different contexts. For example, how do the multi-role challenges faced by women in developing countries differ from those encountered by women in developed nations? Addressing such questions would yield targeted empirical insights to inform both policy and organizational practice.

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All authors have read and approved the final work.

Authors' contributions

CRediT: **Yunshi Fang**: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – original draft; **Xiaoqing Li**: Formal analysis, Investigation, Writing – review & editing; **Tini Maizura Mohtar**: Project administration, Resources, Supervision; **Brahim Chekima**: Data curation, Validation, Visualization.

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Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author, [Xiaoqing Li], upon reasonable request.

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