

Life Balance During Doctoral Studies: Alumni Perspectives in Educational Administration

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to study the experience of life balance during the period of doctoral studies in the perspective of alumni in the field of Educational Administration at a government university. By phenomenological study, informants are successful alumni, with 4 national award winners from the organization by using Snowball Sampling Method. The results showed that experience of life balance while studying for a doctorate in the perspective of an alumni in Educational Administration at a government university. The common characteristics of research informants can be classified into 5 areas, with the motivation to study at a doctoral study, such as personal needs according to their own interests to develop progress in their own work. They received support from their original affiliation. Successful alumni have experience in time management while studying for their Ph.D., providing a level of work-life balance in the same direction at all priorities with the most time allocated for work and study, setting aside time for their family and their own life. The factors that are most important to the management of life balance are study and work. Then, the time was allocated for balance in other areas, namely family, finances, sanitation. For problems and obstacles in life balance management, it was found that the obstacles that affected the work-life balance were stress and workload balance for which they had a way to manage by setting time in life to be proportional balance between workload and life priorities.

Keywords: life balance, doctoral degree, educational administration

Background and importance of the problem

With economic conditions in the present, each working life is committed to working to improve their quality of life. Work Life Balance (WLB) to earn a living and other aspects of life has received more attention in both the public and private sectors. This is partly due to trends and changes in key factors such as technology and communications. This allows employees to work without restrictions on location, time, and can multitask at the same time in terms of advancement in science transaction, the aspect of coordination that takes place 24 hours a day, the role of women in the work. the value of working hard to create job security or get more returns including the need for career advancement. It is the driving force that makes working longer than it takes for yourself and your family to become normal. At the same time, management and organization management must attract and maintain human resources with knowledge and abilities to stay with the organization for a long time, all of which cause the organization to have a good balance between life and work because if there is an unbalanced operation, it may affect various aspects that employees may feel unhappy with their lives and are ready to quit in order to look for alternatives or better agencies. On the side of the employees themselves, if the balance of work and personal life is balanced, as a result, life and work will be smooth and successful within the specified time resulting in happiness in life and work. So the balance between life and work is the ability to manage each individual and maintain a balance in the allocation of their roles, duties and responsibilities that exist among the various roles in life between work and personal and family life in harmony. This will help the person to have a good quality of life, and satisfaction in life and work from the ability to effectively manage a variety of roles under different environments (Phit Thepwan, 2013).

In the Thai bureaucracy, The Office of Personnel Research and Development, Office of the Civil Service Commission (2005) studied the project to enhance and develop the quality of life of government personnel: the balance between life and work, and replacement of bureaucracy system. It has been found that many measures and guidelines have been used to promote quality of life and balance between life and work of personnel, such as the issuance of the Prime Minister's Office Regulations on Welfare within the Government Sector B.E., transfer of government officials to work closer to home, Government Debt Survey, the introduction of information technology to enable government officials to operate more easily and efficiently, working time lapse. For government agencies to allocate budgets, not less than 3 percent of salary and regular expenses to be used in the development of civil servants and the work-life balance is one of the dimensions for the Human Resource Management Competency Development Pilot Project (HR Scorecard).

For the current educational development direction, the administrators of the educational institutions must accelerate the development of themselves and the school in accordance with the policies set by the Office of Educational Service Areas in which to operate in response to the said policy. This is what makes school administrators have to balance their work life properly. In school management, there are some things different from other departments because those who act as administrators of educational institutions must manage education for students to achieve their goals. This is quite difficult and unlike other administrations, school administrators are faced with complex roles in their work. time management, work-life balance has a direct impact on health, especially high-load work. The administration of educational institutions is a task that requires complexity to solve problems, emotionally related. The nature of such work without the ability to control and the ability to make self-determination. would cause stress from work causing negative effects on health both physically and mentally (Jet Rattanajina and Pornchai Sittisarakul, 2016).

The operation to be successful depends on two factors, namely organizational factors
Res Militaris, vol.12, n°3, November issue 2022

and personal factors affecting the balance between life and work of the school administrators

from the importance of the above problem. Therefore, the researcher was interested in studying the subject on Life Balance during Doctoral Studies: Alumni's Perspective in Educational Administration at a public or government university. This is to apply the results of this research to improve the quality of life and work balance of educational institution administrators.

Research objectives: To study the experience of life balance during doctoral studies from the perspective of alumni in the field of Educational Administration at a government university.

Scope of Research

This is a qualitative research using phenomenological analysis methods (Phenomenology). Data were collected by in-depth interviews because they wanted to study and explain the essence of the experiences of people with the same experience and to collect information on the experience of work-life balance of successful school administrators, relevant and in-depth. The study was to study the creation of life balance in 5 areas, namely work, family, time, finance, and intelligence.

Research Method

The informants are four successful alumni who completed a Ph.D. from Department of Educational Administration, Kasetsart University, with national awards, who were willing to cooperate in the research. Snowball sampling was used. The tools used in this research consisted of the researcher being the most important tool for collecting data for qualitative research because it is an in-depth study of the background of what appears and understands the phenomenon. which the researcher must prepare qualitative knowledge and academic knowledge about the subject to be studied.

Data collection tools were the personal information record form of the information provider, semi-structured interviews on the work-life balance experiences of successful alumni in five areas: work, family, time, finance, and intelligence. The questions are open-ended.

For data collection, the researcher met with each informant at an appointed time informing the research objectives and explaining the answers to the interview form with the informants and giving them an opportunity to ask questions before requesting consent to participate in the research. The researcher then conducted an in-depth interview with individual informants using the interview line created, with the duration of 60 – 90 minutes.

Data Analysis

Researchers aim to understand what successful alumni's work-life balance experiences are. It has a five-step analysis process based on Leonard's method, take the information obtained from the tape and from observations in the area, read it over and over again, try to notice the meaning of the descriptions every step of the way, gut off irrelevant things to the core, then the researcher decodes the text (Coding) unit by unit, which is a sentence that answers the research objectives. Once coded, the researchers organized all codes into categories (Theme) based on the content of similar and consistent codes. Therefore, those codes

were classified in the same category. The researcher considered each point and the meaning of the word, respondents' responses until the response became a model (Exemplars) or is a story that can explain the meaning of that situation. When the researcher found that it was saturated, the researcher therefore brought the category to make an issue (Category) that is an important issue for this research. and verified that the issue was accurate and comprehensive with the experience of the informants.

Research Results

General information of the contributors/informants

1. Information from the interview

1.1 Success background

From the study of the experiences of the four informants, it was found that all of them entered management positions before continuing their doctoral studies. During the course, the alumni have outstanding results, and have an interesting perspective on balancing work-life and Ph.D. studies. Based on interviews with four informants, everyone is motivated in a similar way: the need for self-improvement and to apply the knowledge to the development of educational work as follows:

1) A (fictional name), female, interested in self-development. and is committed to being an executive. While studying for a doctorate degree, she served as the director of an educational institution in the southern region, which takes time to travel to school and back to work every week. She has the view that being an executive may be able to use management methods to improve the quality of education. Therefore, she decided to study in the field of educational administration and is currently successful in her career serving as a Deputy Director of the Office of a Secondary Education Service Area.

2) B (fictional name), female, while studying, she was the director of the educational institution and is in the process of working to request a promotion to become a professional director. She decided to pursue a doctorate degree because of self-improvement. With determination, she is successful in both study and work. She is currently the academic director of the school.

3) C (fictional name), male, is a former director of an educational institution. He is currently retired. During the period of study at the doctoral level, he was in the period of entering the administrative path in the position of deputy director of the school. He decided to continue his studies because he did not graduate in education administration. He requires educational qualifications and knowledge to apply to work. During his time of study and work, he received a national award from the organization, a reputation and work for many educational institutions.

4) D (fictional name), female. During the course of study, she was an academician at the Education Council Secretariat. There are young children and families to take care of. She decided to pursue a doctorate degree because she wanted to gain knowledge and experience expertise in the field of education to apply to work. She is currently a teacher in the Department of Education, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities of a university.

1.2 Education motivation. Doing something requires motivation to choose or decide to do something. From the interviews with the four alumni, the following conclusions were drawn from their decision to continue their studies.

1) Being an administrator of an educational institution, educational administrators need to have knowledge of educational administration, so they decided to study in Doctor of Education Program, Department of Educational Administration because some alumni are already executives, and some of them are rising to higher management positions. Thus, expertise in education administration is necessary. There are techniques in management processes to improve the quality of secondary education. Therefore, they decided to continue their education in the field of education administration. When they entered the path of education administration, they saw that the knowledge of the administrators had to be developed all the time. Therefore, they chose to continue their studies in order to develop their body of knowledge and increase their knowledge. This is consistent with the interview with D that "Studying in education for both Bachelor's and Master's degrees, I'm looking for a doctorate degree as well. I want to seek knowledge, experience, and expertise in the field of education because I want to apply it in my work."

2) Having a higher educational qualification makes it possible to apply knowledge to work better because in addition to the experience and higher education qualification, more knowledge is needed to work as a manager. In addition, having a network will allow you to develop yourself and work better. "There was always a thought in myself that Education in Thailand, or in this world, the highest degree is the doctoral level, and there is a trend that has an impact on people who work in the administration must graduate from the management branch if we have the idea of studying. Then we can add two ideas together. So, let's try to take the PhD in Management," said C. Because at the job, we are an academic leader Therefore, learning is unlikely to end so that we will have a network to help us manage the network to develop a co-development of the faculty and to get students with a variety of differences," said A.

3) Support from the organization to continue their education at a higher level. If any organization encourages its personnel to have higher education qualifications, it will be one of the factors that help the personnel to decide on further education as well, such as in the case of D. There is a policy to encourage personnel to be able to continue their studies. if anyone wants to continue their studies, they can study. Even if you come to study, you can also work. Let's say if some class itself has an afternoon to study. In the morning, I have to go to work first. It's the beginning that I can study and work together. Partly, it is the policy of the management that encourages us to go to school."

4) Another point that can be concluded from the interview is that friends or acquaintances invite them to study. "A friend invited me to come to agriculture. So, I decided that, in the end, I have to study agriculture. I was hesitant that I might not study better or try to take the exam first and if you get it, I'll think about it later, so I talk to my friends about going to take the exam," said B.

2. Experience of work-life balance

2.1 Principles for managing work-life balance, finding work-life balance (Work-Life Balance) is very important for living to reach the end.

Discussion of Results

Research results on life balance between doctoral studies in the perspective of alumni in educational administration at a government university. The research team had issues that would lead to discussion of the results as follows:

1. The results of research on life balance experience during doctoral studies in the perspective of an alumni in the field of educational administration at a government university In terms of motivation for study decision, it was found that the motivation for the decision to study at the doctoral level was personal needs according to their own interests to their own work and support from the organization, probably because all human beings have a need to be met, career advancement that will lead to recognition in the same professional circle, social circle, as well as to promote career advancement and is recognized for performing duties in senior management positions. This is in line with Maslow's Need Hierarchy Theory, which states that humans have a hierarchy of needs, when they are met, they have higher levels of needs. Maslow's hierarchy of needs has five levels: physiological needs, safety needs, social needs or esteem needs, and the need for success in life or self-actualization needs in line with The ERG Theory which states that human beings have three needs: existence need, relationship need, and growth need which is the highest. It can be explained that human beings will put in effort and put their knowledge and skills to work in order to achieve advancement in work. In the same way, Maclelland's Theory of Needs states that people have three basic needs: the Need of Power, the Need of Achievement, and the Need of Affiliation. Nolphan Boonrit, who studied the factors affecting the efficiency of work performance of personnel of Chonburi Provincial Administrative Organization, found that the motivation factor for work was job success, job position, and job responsibility and working status. There was a moderate correlation with the efficiency of the personnel's work ($R=.727$) and had an effect on the efficiency of the personnel's work. The statistical significance at the .05 level was in line with Kitiya Petchdee (2015) who studied the motivation for studying at the Master's degree level of students in the Faculty of Geoinformatics, Burapha University, found that there were 6 factors: the support of others. personal reasons, occupational cost, social acceptance, institutional characteristics, and the course or field of study in the same way, Tasanee Chartthai (2012) who studied motivation and needs for graduate studies, Dhurakij Pundit University, found that 1) motivation and personal needs of students, the overall picture is at a high level, the most valuable issue is the qualification was increased or higher, followed by an increase in knowledge and experience, 2) The motivation and career needs of the students, the overall picture is at a high level, the most valuable issue is security and career advancement, followed by a career that is honored and recognized in society, 3) Institutional motivation and needs, the overall picture is at a high level, the most valuable issue is the reputation of the quality of the instructors, followed by courses related to the work that will be done or will be done in the future.

2. The results of research on life balance during doctoral studies in the perspective of an alumni in the field of educational administration at a government university in terms of work-life balance experience, it was found that successful alumni experienced time management while studying for a doctoral degree, aligning the level of work-life balance according to priorities in all directions. It is the most time that is allocated for work and study. Then they allocated time for their family and their own life, possibly because the informant was an administrator and was in the position of a civil servant. Dedication and acting in accordance with the role and the position of responsibility is, therefore, important. Therefore, if you choose to continue your studies at a higher level, the society will expect operations to remain the same or higher. So in learning to be successful, devotion of time to work and study is, therefore, the top priority, in line with Nattaphan Tattinaporn (2016) who studied the relationship between life balance and performance of hospital personnel in Surat Thani, found that the overall level of life balance of Surat Thani hospital personnel was moderate. When considering each aspect, it was found that social aspect had the highest value, followed by

work, family and self, respectively. The overall level of personnel efficiency was at a high level in descending order, namely, job recognition, job satisfaction and the need for advancement. And the performance of personnel in Surat Thani Hospital had a linear relationship with life balance at a very high level. The correlation coefficient was .774 and the predictive power was 59.90% and was consistent with Kanokwan Sriwirat (2016) who studied the balance between the life and the productive work of the professor's research.

3. The results of research on life balance during doctoral studies in the perspective of an alumni in the field of educational administration at a government university. Regarding the importance of life balance management, in the aspect of life and work balance management, it was found that the factors most important to the management of life balance were study and work. They commented that when they decided to continue their study they allocated time to study and work as much as possible so that the ability to manage time with the task is a good fit and can deliver the workload within the specified period. Then, the time was allocated for balance in other areas, namely family, finances, sanitation and rest. Perhaps because family is the first priority, due to the context of information providers as executives who have to act as administrators in the organization in their own unit, to work effectively in parallel with managing the workload of studying as well as balancing personal and family life at the same time. If there are other factors involved in studying and work, it may affect performance in both personal life, work life and school life as well, in line with Stephen Covey (2004) who stated, in his book, *The Important Habits of a Productive Person*, there is only one key factor to success: Do the things that matter first. This is also in line with Somchai Prabrat (2018) who studied the balance of life and work of employees in the canned food processing industry: a case study of 3 large companies in Songkhla province. The number of children and job titles are different. There is a balance of life and work as a whole and different issues, statistically significant at the .05 level.

4. The results of research on life balance during doctoral studies in the view of an alumni in the field of educational administration at a government university. Regarding problems and obstacles in life balance management, it was found that problems and obstacles affecting work-life balance are: stress and workload balance which can be managed by setting time in life to be proportional. Balance your workload and life priorities, perhaps because stress and stress management are essential in today's environment due to a more hustle and bustle lifestyle. There were more rapid and violent changes, more complex workload and nature. Including the difficulty of managing time outside of work as a time of personal life, due to the fact that information technology has played a greater role in the work. In addition, the tasks performed as executives in their own contexts, there is also an expectation from the followers to perform and help. It supports continuous work and is a sufficient quality support and must also follow the policy of the organization that is often urgent. This leads to stress both during work hours and outside work hours. Time management for workload and life balance are therefore important. In line with Adobe (2021), a study of the future of time found that 49 percent of employees in an organization felt that they were performing a hundred times more than expected, 48 percent felt pressured during working hours, 45 percent found it difficult to differentiate between work time and personal time, consistent with Nawan Khamma (2018) who found that work factors: compensation, welfare and job security, nature of work in terms of working conditions management, policy structure and atmosphere in the organization, career progression and work relationship had a statistically significant effect on the work stress of personnel at the .05 level.

5. The results of research on life balance during doctoral studies in the perspective of

an alumni in the field of educational administration at a government university. For the factors that contributed to happiness in life, it was found that the things that made them the happiest while studying at the doctorate level of the four informants could be summarized as 3 factors: happiness resulting from time allocation to achieve balance in life, able to submit work as schedule, the happiness that comes from the bond between teachers and friends, and the pride of themselves and their families to be able to pursue a doctorate degree may be due to the fact that individuals are able to work successfully to achieve their goals. More than that, it is the achievement that results in the people around you besides yourself. inevitably brings a feeling of joy and satisfaction with the success that has occurred. In addition, humans are social animals. In studying, it is important to result in happiness. According to Seligman (2011), happiness in a desirable life consists of a pleasant life. good life and meaningful life. The composition of happiness in human life consists of 5 elements: positive emotions, caring and attachment, having a good relationship with others, meaning and achieving goals, particularly in the part of the meaning and goal of achieving something that is about doing something that has a greater benefit than the person, which will lead to satisfaction and more strength In line with Robert Waldinger (2016), the longest study of human happiness which found that the greatest happiness in human life is the quality of relationships with those around them.

6. The results of research on life balance during doctoral studies in the view of an alumni in the field of educational administration at a government university. As for pride during study, it was found that the balance in life until success in learning depended on the ability to complete studies according to goals and have a good relationship between teachers and peers, probably because of being able to achieve the goals set. This is a goal that involves dedication, hard work and determination that makes achieving that goal even more valuable. In particular, the results of the study can be used to create benefits from both the individual and the organization. and may affect the community, society and nation level. In addition to having a good relationship between friends, teachers are the part that promotes happiness. This is in line with Pattama Panputyen (2013), who studied the factors affecting the happy learning of high school students in Kamphaeng Phet Province. Happy students are the most valuable. The second motivation for achievement was family relationships. The relationship between students and peers is consistent with Somrudee Nuansrisai (2016). In the study of happiness and quality of work life affecting organizational commitment of the personnel of the Revenue Office Region 7, it was found that happiness at work was overall in very level. The areas that were most highly assessed, being the top three, were security and progress, colleagues and the supervisor.

7. The results of research on life balance during doctoral studies in the view of an alumni in the field of educational administration at a government university In terms of setting goals in life, it was found that all the informants had clear goals in life in using the knowledge gained to develop the progress of one's own work and improve the quality of education. Having goals in life that are larger than personal interests also helps to create a feeling of happiness from being valuable, meaningful, and feeling part of a society that is greater than yourself. This makes them aware of the big goals in life. The things that have been devoted and put in effort are valuable and worth living in accordance with Methaporn Phanglak (2016) having studied the happiness in the teachers' work in Muang District, under the Office of Chachoengsao Primary Educational Service Area 1, it was found that the overall happiness of teachers at work was at a high level. The most important aspect is the relationship of success in the work. Love of work and acceptance, respectively.

Suggestions for Implementing Research

Those who are pursuing a study for Ph.D. can bring the results of this research for arranging
Res Militaris, vol.12, n°3, November issue 2022

the balance of life to be used as a guideline for allocation of balance in work, study and family life. There should be clear, concrete learning goals to be able to succeed in studying as planned. Suggestions for further research and development should be conducted as a way of balancing life that leads to success in the study for a Ph.D. degree.

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