

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

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“The balance of one's personal and professional life with keeping the harmony of organization, management, and the prioritization of personal tasks” (Franco et al., 2021)

INTRODUCTION

- Work-life balance within school-based agricultural education (SBAE) is a contributing factor to the overall commitment of those intending to begin their journey in the educational field (Eck et al., 2021).
- Expectancy Value Theory (EVT) served as the theoretical framework of the study. EVT analyzes motivation through an expectation of success with the subjective task value (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000).
- This study focused on the cost of work-life balance as perceived by SBAE preservice teachers.

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this research was to analyze the cost of a work-life balance associated with the SBAE profession as perceived by preservice teachers. The research objectives were to...

1. Describe potential career choices of seniors in a teaching methods course.
2. Describe the perception of work-life balance costs in the SBAE profession in seniors in a teaching method course.

METHODOLOGY

- This study utilized a preexisting instrument from Tan-Wilcon and Stamp (2015).
- Items were ranked on a seven point Liker-type scale with -3 representing much easier to accomplish as a SBAE teacher and +3 as much more difficult to accomplish as a SBAE teacher.
- Post-hoc reliability returned a Cronbach's alpha of 0.77. A panel of SBAE experts assessed face and content validity.
- The instrument was distributed to students in a senior level SBAE teaching methods course and repeated yearly in the spring semesters of 2022, 2023, and 2024. Over the three years, 83% of students completed the instrument.

RESULTS/ FINDINGS

- Of the 75 seniors included in the study, 60 (80%) were likely to teach SBAE.
- When prompted to provide a potential alternative career choice outside of SBAE, about 50% of seniors provided a career in the agricultural industry.
- Another 25% listed careers in education while the remaining 25% listed various other occupations.
- Over 75% of participants felt work-life balance was very important to their future careers.



ANALYSIS

Average of Work-Life Balance Components in Comparison to Career in SBAE (N = 75)

Using the alternative career choice you identified, compare each of the following items to a career as an agricultural education teacher.	M	SD
Engaging in community organizations and activities	-1.44	1.47
Feeling fulfilled in your professional life	-1.11	0.98
Feeling fulfilled in your personal life	-0.12	1.08
Living in your chosen geographical area	-0.03	1.21
Meeting your personal wellness goals	0.09	1.27
Meeting your financial goals	0.39	1.52
Balancing quality time between work demands and family/personal demands	1.17	0.84

Note. Negative means indicate areas perceived to be easier to accomplish with a career in SBAE.

CONCLUSION

- Work-life balance is an increasingly important topic for preservice and inservice SBAE teachers (Eck et al., 2021; Solomonson et al., 2018).
- Highlighting the ability of SBAE teachers to engage in community activities, feel fulfilled in professional and personal life, and live within a chosen location, teacher educators, cooperating teachers, and state staff may increase teachers' attitudes to the benefits of a career in SBAE.
- Instruction and support should be provided in the areas of personal wellness, financial goals, and balancing family demands. To fulfill the demand for highly qualified SBAE teachers, the profession needs to be more conducive to balancing family and professional demands (Traini et al., 2019).

