
DIMENSIONS OF WORK–FAMILY BALANCE AMONG FEMALE SCHOOL HEADS IN COTABATO

***¹Jimmyline Del Carmen Flores, ²Harris M. Sinolinding, PhD**

¹DepEd-Cotabato Division-Bantak Elementary School.

²Cotabato Foundation College of Science and Technology, Doroluman, Arakan, Cotabato,
Philippines.

Article Received: 06 April 2026, Article Revised: 26 April 2026, Published on: 16 May 2026

***Corresponding Author: Jimmyline Del Carmen Flores**

DepEd-Cotabato Division-Bantak Elementary School.

DOI: <https://doi-doi.org/101555/ijarp.8063>

2. ABSTRACT

This quantitative study validated the dimensional structure of work–family balance (WFB) among female school heads in the Schools Division of Cotabato, Philippines. Building on qualitative findings from Phase 1 that identified four themes—Role Flexibility, Time Alignment, Stress Containment, and Family as a Strength for Work—a 39-item survey instrument was administered to 255 female school heads selected through stratified random sampling across three congressional districts. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity confirmed the appropriateness of the dataset for factor analysis ($\chi^2 = 4167$, $df = 741$, $p < .001$). Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using maximum likelihood extraction with varimax rotation revealed a four-factor structure with meaningful loadings across all factors. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) validated the model, retaining 37 of 39 items, all with statistically significant factor loadings ($p < .001$). Model fit indices indicated acceptable fit (RMSEA = 0.0657; CFI = 0.808; TLI = 0.795). All four dimensions were rated Always: Role Flexibility (WM = 4.79), Stress Containment through Resolution (WM = 4.80), Family as a Strength for Work (WM = 4.72), and Time Alignment (WM = 4.65). These findings confirm that female school heads in Cotabato consistently and actively practice multidimensional work–family balance strategies, and that the validated four-factor model provides a robust, empirically grounded framework for measuring and understanding WFB in the Philippine school leadership context.

3. KEYWORDS: *Work-family balance; female school heads; exploratory factor analysis; confirmatory factor analysis; role flexibility; time alignment; stress containment; Cotabato.*

4. INTRODUCTION

School heads in the Philippines occupy complex professional roles that simultaneously demand instructional leadership, administrative management, community engagement, and responsiveness to institutional and policy demands. For female school heads, these professional expectations intersect with persistent gendered domestic responsibilities—caregiving, household management, and familial emotional labor—creating conditions that make work–family balance (WFB) both critically important and structurally challenging to maintain. Research consistently documents that women in educational leadership experience heightened emotional exhaustion, role strain, and multitasking fatigue (Dela Rama & Namocot, 2025; Tahil & Purcia, 2023; Corpuz et al., 2023).

Despite growing attention to WFB among educators, context-specific validated models for measuring and understanding work–family balance among female school heads in Philippine public schools remain absent (Barniso & Ocdenaria, 2025; Borreba & Potane, 2024). Most existing research is descriptive, measuring WFB through instruments developed in Western or non-educational contexts without grounding in the lived realities of Filipino school leaders. This study addresses that gap by developing and validating a measurement model rooted in empirically derived qualitative findings, building on Carlson et al.'s (2009) multidimensional WFB framework and integrated with Role Theory, Conservation of Resources Theory, and Enrichment Theory.

5. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design. A quantitative research design employing Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used to validate the dimensional structure of work–family balance among female school heads.

Locale and Respondents. The study was conducted in the Schools Division of Cotabato and Kidapawan City, Philippines, across three congressional districts: Congressional District 1 (n = 75), Congressional District 2 (n = 100), and Congressional District 3 (n = 80), for a total sample of 255 female school heads selected through stratified random sampling from a population of 783.

Instrument. A 39-item structured survey questionnaire was developed from the four themes identified in the Phase 1 qualitative study: Role Flexibility, Time Alignment, Stress

Containment, and Family as a Strength for Work. Items were rated on a five-point frequency scale (1 = Never to 5 = Always), operationalizing the behavioral strategies described by school heads during Phase 1 interviews.

Statistical Analysis. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity assessed dataset suitability for factor analysis. EFA using maximum likelihood extraction with varimax rotation identified the underlying factor structure. CFA validated the measurement model by examining factor loadings, standard errors, z-values, and significance levels. Model fit was evaluated using RMSEA, CFI, and TLI indices.

6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Dataset Suitability for Factor Analysis

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity yielded $\chi^2 = 4167$ ($df = 741$, $p < .001$), confirming that inter-item correlations were sufficient and the dataset appropriate for factor analysis. This result validates the transition from qualitative themes to quantitative measurement, confirming that items derived from school heads' lived experiences are empirically interrelated and collectively measure meaningful latent constructs.

Table 1. Bartlett's Sphericity Test.

Test	χ^2	df	p
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	4167	741	< .001

Exploratory Factor Analysis: Four-Factor Structure

EFA revealed a stable four-factor structure. Factor 1 exhibited strong and moderate loadings ranging from 0.434 to 0.697 across 12 items conceptually aligned with role management, behavioral adaptation, and boundary-setting strategies. Factor 2 showed loadings between 0.331 and 0.657 across 11 items, representing emotional support, family resilience utilization, and stress management through family resources. Factor 3 produced loadings from 0.312 to 0.707 across 12 items, covering time scheduling, advance planning, coordination, and boundary protection of family time. Factor 4 yielded three items with loadings of 0.339–0.392 focused on deliberate stress containment and resolution practices. Uniqueness values ranged from approximately 0.450 to 0.970; items with high uniqueness were examined in the CFA stage for possible removal. The four-factor structure is consistent with Carlson et al.'s (2009) multidimensional WFB framework and Wayne et al.'s (2017) multidimensional model of balance satisfaction and effectiveness.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis: Model Validation

CFA validated the four-factor structure with 37 of 39 items retained after removing two items with weak or non-significant loadings. All retained items demonstrated statistically significant factor loadings (all $p < .001$, except one item in Factor 4 at $p = .018$). Factor 1 (Role Flexibility) retained 12 items (Items 22, 25–35; loadings: 0.2138–0.3380). Factor 2 (Family as a Strength for Work) retained 10 items (Items 10, 11, 13–16, 18, 23, 24, 36; loadings: 0.2529–0.3678). Factor 3 (Time Alignment) retained 12 items (Items 1–6, 8, 9, 17, 37–39; loadings: 0.2269–0.5125). Factor 4 (Stress Containment) retained 3 items (Items 12, 19, 20; loadings: 0.2083–0.2708). The retention of 37 of 39 items demonstrates strong construct validity across all four dimensions.

Table 2. Model Fit Indices.

Fit Index	Value	Acceptable Threshold
CFI (Comparative Fit Index)	0.808	> 0.80 (acceptable)
TLI (Tucker-Lewis Index)	0.795	≈ 0.80 (near-acceptable)
RMSEA	0.0657	< 0.08 (acceptable)
RMSEA 90% CI	0.0608–0.0707	Within acceptable range
χ^2 (Exact Fit Test)	1308 (df = 622, $p < .001$)	Considered with other indices

The RMSEA of 0.0657 falls within the acceptable range (< 0.08), indicating reasonable model approximation. The CFI (0.808) and TLI (0.795) are slightly below ideal thresholds but reflect acceptable fit given the multidimensional complexity of work–family balance as a behavioral and psychosocial construct (Hair et al., 2010). The significant χ^2 is expected in studies with $n = 255$ and reflects the test's sensitivity to sample size rather than model inadequacy. Collectively, the fit indices support the validity of the four-factor model as an empirically grounded framework for measuring WFB among female school heads.

Dimension-Level Findings

All four validated dimensions were rated Always, confirming that school heads consistently and actively practice work–family balance strategies across all areas. Stress Containment through Resolution was highest (WM = 4.80), followed by Role Flexibility (WM = 4.79), Family as a Strength for Work (WM = 4.72), and Time Alignment (WM = 4.65). The high rating for Stress Containment reflects school heads' consistent engagement in emotional regulation before workday entry, end-of-day reflective processing, and pre-work resolution of

family concerns—behaviors consistent with Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989) and Chang et al.'s (2017) emphasis on stress management as foundational to WFB.

Table 3. Summary of Work–Family Balance Dimension Mean Scores.

Dimension	Weighted Mean	Description
Factor 4: Stress Containment through Resolution	4.80	Always
Factor 1: Role Flexibility	4.79	Always
Factor 2: Family as a Strength for Work	4.72	Always
Factor 3: Time Alignment	4.65	Always

Role Flexibility (WM = 4.79) was characterized by consistent adjustment of communication styles, use of physical and psychological role-transition cues, conscious role presence, and the integration of family-derived values into school leadership. This dimension reflects Role Theory's emphasis on boundary strategies and behavioral adaptation as mechanisms for reducing role conflict (Rafnsdóttir & Heijstra, 2013; Ammons, 2013). Family as a Strength for Work (WM = 4.72) captured school heads' active drawing on family resilience, emotional support, and experiential insights to sustain leadership effectiveness—confirming Enrichment Theory (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006) that family experiences positively transfer to professional domains. Time Alignment (WM = 4.65) reflected proactive weekly planning, protected family time blocks, task delegation, and continuous schedule renegotiation—consistent with Hirschi et al.'s (2019) action regulation model for goal sequencing across domains.

7. CONCLUSION

This quantitative study validates a four-dimensional model of work–family balance among female school heads in Cotabato, demonstrating that WFB is a multidimensional, active, and consistently practiced construct. EFA and CFA together confirm the four-factor structure—Role Flexibility, Family as a Strength for Work, Time Alignment, and Stress Containment through Resolution—with acceptable model fit and strong construct validity. All dimensions are rated Always, establishing that school heads in this context demonstrate high and consistent WFB competency. The validated model provides a locally grounded, empirically supported framework that can be used by educational administrators, HR departments, and policymakers to systematically assess, monitor, and support work–family balance among

female school leaders. Future research should examine how these WFB dimensions correlate with leadership effectiveness, teacher outcomes, and school performance outcomes.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The researcher sincerely thanks all 255 female school head respondents across the three congressional districts of the Schools Division of Cotabato for their cooperation. Gratitude is extended to the Schools Division Superintendent and to CFCST Graduate School for the institutional support.

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