

# Is It Work Life Balance: A Conceptual Review

*Calwin Rose*

Manager – Training, Jaipuria institute of Management Indore, India.

## ABSTRACT

*With this study, we're hoping to re-examine the idea of work-life balance. As much as possible about work-life balance can be encapsulated in a conceptual framework. It shows the history of the word "work-life balance" from "work-family affair" to "work-life integration." Specifically, the recent development in work-life balance concerns for employees in the service sector has been highlighted. Work-life conflict, a topic which has been extensively studied in recent past, is included. It's well-known that massive advances in technology and social media have a negative influence on employees' ability to maintain a work-life balance. Various aspects of the work-life balance are discussed, including its causes, effects, and strategies. The notion is presented in a futuristic light.*

**Keyword:** *Work-life balance (WLB), Work-life harmony, Work-life conflict, Technology, social media, Flexi Time*

## INTRODUCTION

In today's fast-paced global environment, it is becoming increasingly important to maintain a healthy work-life balance. High-speed technology developments, increased demands for both employees and employers, and a blurring of the lines between work and personal life have all contributed to the rise in the discussion on work-life balance. Because of this, workers appreciate companies who regard their employees as more than just physical resources, but as members of a larger team. These companies are constantly implementing policies that help employees maintain a healthy work-life balance.

Work-life balance (WLB) was coined in the late 1970s as a way to define the harmony that exists between a person's professional and personal lives. The term "work-life balance" encompasses a wide range of ideas, including finding a healthy balance between work and other important aspects of one's life, such as family, recreation, and spiritual growth. Work-family balance, work-family conflict, and family-friendly policies are other expressions for work-life balance. It is described as "the amount to which an individual is equally engaged and

equally satisfied with his or her job and family role" in 2003 by Greenhaus, Collins, and Shaw.

It is defined as a realm in which money is exchanged for one's time and effort, self-employed or employed this domain takes time, energy, and involvement. The life domain, on the other hand, encompasses a person's family, friends, interests, religion, community, and so on, all of which a person is involved with outside of work. There's a lot of effort involved, but it's not as demanding as in the workplace. A person's social attachments and responsibilities make up the non-paid sector of life. Balance in the sense of work-life balance is a very subjective concept that refers to a fulfilling interaction between the two. The better a person's work-life balance, the happier and more productive he or she will be. Personal or work-related concerns have been purchased in the family/personal time domain (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000)

Since its discovery in the middle of the twentieth century, WLB has come a long way. Employees, particularly working women, were the first to complain about the difficulty they were having between home and work life. Increasing numbers of working women in the workforce necessitated the creation of policies to help them balance their work and family responsibilities. As the 21st century came to a conclusion, the issue was no longer just a problem for women, but also for men and working couples. Technology had resulted in an increase in expectations and interference for the workers. Their availability during family time led to tension and a fusion of two different realms of life. In addition to family, the employees place a high emphasis on other aspects of life, such as hobbies, friends, religion, and belonging to a larger community. This meant that the concept of a single family was no longer applicable, as different social groups had emerged that were highly valued by employees.

Work-life balance is a goal that many in the field of human resources development are constantly striving to achieve. Job satisfaction, family satisfaction, life satisfaction, productivity, organisational performance and psychological well-being have all been found to be linked to WLB in various research. WLB has been used as an independent variable and other variables as dependent variables by the researchers. Moderators' demographics have been investigated on occasion. Interest in the impact of technology on employees' work-life balance grew significantly in recent years. Much more has to be done in underdeveloped nations, where the majority of studies have been conducted.

Work-life balance initiatives that are well-executed in developing countries can have long-term benefits for employees.

Work-life balance/conflict studies, work-life balance/conflict repercussions, and individual and organisational strategies/policies for maintaining work-life balance are the three themes under which the literature review is divided. Employees in the twenty-first century who appear to be reachable even when not in the workplace are aware of the enormous growth in technological breakthroughs.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

The literature review is structured as per the following themes: work-life balance and conflict studies; the implications of work-life balance and conflict; individual strategies for maintaining work-life balance; and organizational strategies and policies for sustaining work-life balance. It is conventional knowledge because employees in the 21st century are contactable even when they are not physically present in the workplace because of the explosive growth in technology breakthroughs.

### **Work Life Conflict:**

Researchers around the turn of the twenty-first century have concentrated on conflict that arises in two domains: national and international. Today's workers must balance the responsibilities of both their personal lives (such as raising a family) and their professional lives, which often leads to tension between the two. A conflict between work and personal life is being studied as a form of work-life conflict. Greenhaus and Beutell distinguished three types of conflict: (i) conflict based on time; (ii) conflict based on strain; and (iii) conflict based on behaviour (1985). Study after study has found that there is a greater conflict between work and personal (family) time. Employee spill overs have been researched, and the results show that work is increasingly interfering with family life. Despite the fact that work-life balance is an issue that affects many industries, service sector personnel may be particularly vulnerable. Extended work hours and unrealistic deadlines are common in the service industry (Longenecker, Schaffer, & Scazzero, 1999; Moore, 2000; Niederman and Sumner, 2004; Longenecker et al., 1999).

Not only may the workplace be a cause of conflict, but personal obligations can also get in the way of one's job. People with low levels of commitment are more likely to quit an organisation, according to research by Lee and Maurer (1999), who found that having children and a working spouse exacerbates these kinds of relationships.

Work-life interference (WLI) and life-work interference (LWI) are two conflict directions that scholars have examined in their research (LWI).

### **Work Life Enrichment:**

For certain employees from specific cultures, the two areas do not appear to be in competition but rather supportive. It's common for families in collectivistic societies to rely on one other to reduce and manage household responsibilities. Work-life conflict and strain can be lessened by allowing employees more freedom to plan their work and personal lives. Several studies have explored this possibility. (Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux & Brinleya, 2005; Hill et al., 2007)

Researchers have come to realise that work-life enrichment can support and enrich one domain. The research that was conducted by Hill and colleagues in 2007 shows that flexibility may work in both ways, so showing the existence of a concurrent "family flexi-time."

Studies have found that both men and women play supportive roles when it comes to juggling work and family obligations (Baral, 2010).

### **Family and Work related Factors**

A person's work-life balance is influenced by a person's family and work-related factors. Work-life balance is affected by a range of family issues, including the number of dependents, spousal support, partners' work hours, and parenting duties. Work-life balance can be improved with the help of a supportive family environment. The term "work-family conflict" was coined by Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), who described it as "a sort of inter-role conflict in which the role pressure from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some sense."

Researchers studying work-life balance have also looked at the working environment. Variables that have a significant impact on the work-life balance of employees, such as work hours, role conflict, task freedom, and work schedule flexibility, have been linked to each other. This study focuses on the positive benefits that having a healthy work-family balance has on the performance of employees in the workplace (Rapoport et al., 2002)

### **Outcome of Work life balance**

Productivity, organisational commitment, organisational citizenship (OCz), and job satisfaction have been researched in relation to work-life balance and conflict. A large number of researchers have discovered a positive correlation between work-life balance and factors such as job satisfaction, OC, OCz, and productivity,

as well as a negative correlation between work-life balance and variables such as intention to leave or quit, stress, and overall health. Employees with higher levels of conflict in work-overload, family-to-work interference, and work-to-family interference, as discovered by Duxbury and Higgins (2001), had worse levels of organisational performance and lower levels of life satisfaction. These employees also had high levels of stress and burnout, as well as poor physical and mental health. Family and work-related factors influenced these interactions, though. More supportive family and workplace environments contribute to a better work-life balance, which in turn improves an individual's evaluation of organisational efficiency metrics.

### **Strategies of Individuals and Organisation Policies**

Researchers in the field of work-life balance/conflict are finding evidence of how individuals and organisations manage their personal and professional lives. The organisations' policies and initiatives on work-life balance go a long way in facilitating it. Negotiating with family members or colleagues is one of the individual tactics. Maintaining a healthy work-life balance is made easier with the support of friends and family members. Work has been recognised for a long time as being vital for both a person's physical and mental welfare (Waddell & Burton, 2006; Winefield et al., 2002).

Organizations are becoming more aware of the need of promoting policies that benefit the workforce. With ever-growing competition, staff are under increasing pressure to provide unmatched service 24x7. As a result, the personnel have been able to work longer hours thanks to new technologies. There is also an increase in the number of female employees in the workforce. The necessity to balance one's professional and personal responsibilities is one of the most significant issues faced on a worldwide scale nowadays (Fallon, 1997)

Employees are increasingly looking for companies that can help them achieve the right work-life balance. Flex-time, job sharing, telecommuting, shorter working week, and maternity benefits are just a few of the many innovative strategies/policies that have been adopted by organisations.

Inadequate separation of one's professional and personal lives has been linked to a number of unfavourable outcomes, such as high rates of burnout and low levels of overall life satisfaction (for example, Greenhaus, Collins, and Shaw (2003)).

Achieving a healthy work-life balance has long-term benefits for both workers and organisations. One of the policy issues that needs to be addressed is the degree to which companies provide work-life policies for their employees and

the extent to which those employees make use of those policies in order to better balance the demands of their work and nonwork lives, ultimately leading to increased person–environment (PE) fit. According to Oakman and Wells (2015), maintaining a healthy level of physical activity can lead to a longer working life.

### **Social Media and Work life balance**

Social Media has had a significant impact on the work-life balance in the early 21st century. Employee productivity has been boosted by technological advancements. It includes user-generated services (like blogs), social networking sites, online review and rating sites, virtual gaming worlds, video sharing sites, and online communities, all of which allow users to develop, design, publish, or modify material. Examples of user-generated services include blogs (Krishnamurthy and Dou, 2008)

#### **Advancements**

Organizational performance, for example, which puts pressure on companies to implement policies that improve the work lives of their employees. Employees today place a great priority on finding a work-life balance or resolving conflicts between the two. They look to their employers for rules and practises that help them maintain a healthy work-life balance.

### **CONCLUSION**

It is important to maintain a healthy work-life balance in today's technologically advanced environment where because of social media when employees are increasingly expecting their employers to embrace a customer-centric approach. Future concerns of work-life balance/conflict are likely to increase due to the diminishing borders between work and personal life (family). Employees' personal and professional lives are increasingly becoming intertwined as a result of advances in technology. A highly driven citizen may be a benefit to a organization, and organizations are beginning to realise this. Organizations are required by law to offer certain minimum benefits to their employees. It's past time for nations to get serious about maximising the value of their most important resource: their people.

### **Scope of Future research**

Work-life balance is a topic that researchers are still trying to get their heads around. The majority of research has been done in developed countries, particularly the United States, but there is still room to look into work-life balance in other countries. It is possible to conduct a more accurate study by narrowing the focus to a certain population, such as a particular region or gender.

**REFERENCE**

- Aryee, S., Luk, V., Leung, A., & Lo, S. (1999). Role stressors, interrole conflict and well-being: the moderating influence of spousal support and coping behaviors among employed parents in Hong Kong. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 54, 259-278.
- Baral, R., & Bhargava, S. (2010). Work-family enrichment as a mediator between organizational interventions for work-life balance and job outcomes. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 25(3), 274-300.
- Barnett, R. C. (1998). Toward a review and reconceptualization of the work/family literature. *Genetic, Social, and General Psychology Monographs*, 124(2), 125-182.
- Bhargava, S., & Baral, R. (2009). Antecedents and consequences of work-family enrichment among Indian managers. *Psychological Studies*, 54, 213-225.
- Bird, J. (2006). Work-life balance: Doing it right and avoiding the pitfalls. *Employment Relations Today*, 33(3), 21-30.
- Butler, A. B., Grzywacz, J. G., Bass, B. L., & Linney, K.D. (2005). Extending the demands control model: A daily diary study of job characteristics, work family conflict and work-family facilitation. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 78, 155-169.
- Carlson, D. S., & Frone, M. R. (2003). Relation of behavioral and psychological involvement to a new four-factor conceptualization of work-family interference. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 17(4), 515-535.
- Crouter, A. C. (1984). Spillover from family to work: The neglected side of the work-family interface. *Human Relations*, 37(6), 425-441.
- Dex, S., & Scheibl, F. (2001). Flexible and family-friendly working arrangement in UK-based SMEs: Business cases. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 39(3), 411-431. 45(2),399-409.
- Duxbury, L. E., & Higgins, C. A. (2001). Work-life balance in the new millennium: where are we?: where do we need to go?(IV. 4). Ottawa: Canadian Policy Research Network.
- Towers, I., Duxbury, L., Higgins, C., & Thomas, J. (2006). Time thieves and space invaders: Technology, work and the organization. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 19(5), 593-618.

- Duxbury, L. E., Higgins, C. A., & Mills, S. (1992). After- hours telecommuting and work-family conflict: A comparative analysis. *Information Systems Research*, 3(2), 173-190.
- Eagle, B. W., Miles, E. W., & Icenogle, M. L. (1997). Interrole conflicts and the permeability of work and family domains: are there gender differences? *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 50, 168-184.
- Eby, L. T., Casper, W. J., Lockwood, A., Bordeaux, C. & Brinleya, A. (2005). Work and family research in IO/OB: Content analysis and review of the literature (1980–2002). *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 66, 124–197.
- Edwards, J., & Rothbard, N. (2000). Mechanisms linking work and family: Clarifying the relationship between work and family constructs. *The Academy of Management Review*, 25(1), 178. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/259269>
- Fallon, B. J. (1997). The balance between paid work and home responsibilities: Personal problem or corporate concern?- *Australian Psychology*
- Forsyth, S., & Polzer-Debruyne, A. (2007). The organizational pay-offs for perceived work–life balance support. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, 45, 113.
- Frone, M. R., Russell, M., & Cooper, M.L. (1992). Prevalence of work-family conflict: Are work and family boundaries asymmetrically permeable? *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 13, 723-729.
- Frone, M. R., Yardley, J. K., & Markel, K. S. (1997). Developing and testing an integrative model of the work family interface. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 50, 145-167.
- Galinsky, E., & Johnson, A. (1998). *Reframing the Business Case for Work-life Initiatives*. New York: Families and Work Institute.
- Greenhaus, J. H., & Beutell, N. J. (1985). Sources of conflict between work and family roles. *Academy of Management Review*, 10(1), 76-88.
- Greenhaus, J. H., Parasuraman, S., Granrose, C. S., Rabinowitz, S., & Beutell, N. J. (1989). Sources of work family conflict among two career couples. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 34, 133-153.
- Greenhaus, J., Collins, K., & Shaw, J. (2003). The relation between work family balance and quality of life. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 63(3), 510-531. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/s0001-8791\(02\)00042-8](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/s0001-8791(02)00042-8)



- Grzywacz, J. G., Arcury, C. A., Marin, A., Carrillo, L., Burke, B., Coates, M. L., & Quandt, S. A. (2007). Work family conflict: experiences and health implications among im- migrant Latinos. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92(4), 1119-1130.
- Grzywacz, J. G., Almeida, D. M., & McDonald, D. A. (2002). Work-family spillover and daily reports of work and fam- ily stress in the adult labor force. *Family Relations*, 51(1), 28-36.
- Gutek, B. A., Searle, S., & Klepa, L. (1991). Rational versus gender role explanations for work family conflict. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 76(4), 560-568.
- Hammer, L. B., Allen, E., & Grigsby, T.D. (1997). Work family conflict in dual earner couples: within individu- al and crossover effects of work and family. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 50, 185-203.
- Higgins, C., Duxbury, L., & Lee, C. (1994). Impact of life cycle stage and gender on the ability to balance work and family responsibilities. *Family Relations*, 43, 144-150.
- Hill, E. J., Erickson, J. J., Holmes, E. K. & Ferris, M. (2010). Workplace flexibility, work hours, and work-life conflict: Finding an extra day or two. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 24, 349–358
- Lee, T. W., & Maurer, S. D. (1999). The effects of family structure on organizational commitment, intention to leave and voluntary turnover. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, 11, 493–513.
- Longenecker, C. O., Schaffer, C. J., & Scazzero, J. A. (1999). Causes and consequences of stress in the IT profession. *Information Systems Management*, 16(3)
- Loscocco, K. A. (1997). Work family linkages among self-employed women and men. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 50, 204-226.
- Hill, E. J., Hawkins, A. J., Ferris, M., & Weitzman, M. (2001). Finding an extra day a week: The positive influ- ence of perceived job flexibility on work and family life balance. *Family Relations*, 50(1), 49-65.
- Hsieh, Y., Pearson, T., Chang, H., & Uen, J. (2005). Spillover between work and personal life balance for lodging man- agers. *Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality and Tourism*, 3(2), 61-83.

- Kalliath, T., & Brough, P. (2008). Work-life balance: A re- view of the meaning of the balance construct. *Journal of Management & Organization*, 14(03), 323-327.
- Krishnamurthy, S. and Dou, W. (2008), “Advertising with user-generated content: a framework and research agenda”, *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, Vol. 8 No. 2, pp. 1-7.
- Martins, L. L., Eddleston, K. A., & Veiga, J. F. (2002). Moderators of the relationship between work-family con- flict and career satisfaction. *Academy of Management Journal*, 45(2), 399-409.
- Maxwell, G. A., & McDougall, M. (2004). Work-life bal- ance. *Public Management Review*, 6(3), 377-393.
- Middleton, C. A. (2008). 15 Do mobile technologies enable work–life balance? *Mobility and technology in the work- place*, 9, 209.
- Oakman, J., & Wells, Y. (2015). Working longer: What is the relationship between person–environment fit and retirement intentions? *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, 54(2), 207–229. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1744-7941.12075>
- Powell, G. N., & Greenhaus, J. H. (2006). Managing inci- dents of work– family conflict: A decision-making per- spective. *Human Relations*, 59(9), 1179-1212.
- Rajadhyaksha, U., & Ramadoss, K. (2010). Test of a caus- al model of work- family conflict in India. Retrieved from [www.workfamilyconflict.ca/cms/ documents /83/ India\\_2010.doc](http://www.workfamilyconflict.ca/cms/documents/83/India_2010.doc)
- Rajadhyaksha, U., & Velgach, S. (2009). Gender, gender role ideology and work-family conflict in India. *Academy of Management*, Chicago, IL, USA. Retrieved from [http:// www.workfamilyconflict.ca/cms/ documents/38/ GRI\\_ paper-AOM2009.pdf](http://www.workfamilyconflict.ca/cms/ documents/38/ GRI_ paper-AOM2009.pdf)
- Rapoport, R., Bailyn, L., Fletcher, J. and Pruitt, B. (2002), *Beyond Work- Family Balance in Advancing Gender Equity and Workplace Performance*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.
- Thomas, L. T., & Ganster, D. C. (1995). Impact of fami-ly-supportive work variables on work-family conflict and strain: A control perspective. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 80(1),6-15.

- Voydanoff, P. (2002). Linkages between the work-family interface and work, family, and individual outcomes an integrative model. *Journal of Family Issues*, 23(1), 138-164.
- Voydanoff, P. (2004). The effects of work demands and resources on work - to - family conflict and facilitation. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 66, 398-412.
- Waddell, G., & Burton, A. K. (2006). Is work good for your health and well-being? Retrieved from [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/214326/hwwb-is-work-good-for-you.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/214326/hwwb-is-work-good-for-you.pdf)
- Wesley, J. R., & Muthuswamy, P. R. (2005). Work-family conflict in India- An empirical study. *SCMS Journal of Indian Management*, October-December, 95-102. Guest,
- Williams, K. J., & Alliger, G. M. (1994). Role stressors, mood spillover, and perceptions of work family conflict in employed parents. *Academy of Management Journal*, 37(4), 837-868.