

# Implementation of Work-Life Balance to Enhance Employee Productivity

*Work-Life Balance  
for Employee  
Productivity*

Rostini

*Universitas Indonesia Timur; Makassar, Indonesia*  
E-Mail: rostinihasanuddin@uit.ac.id

Asmar

*Universitas Negeri Makassar; Makassar, Indonesia*  
E-Mail: asmaryunus@unm.ac.id

A Fadel Muhammad

*Universitas Padjadjaran; Bandung, Indonesia*  
E-Mail: fadel22007@mail.unpad.ac.id

1693

Submitted:  
FEBRUARY 2025

Accepted:  
MAY 2025

## ABSTRACT

*Work-life balance has become an important issue in the modern workplace, especially with the increasing adoption of hybrid and remote work systems. This study aims to explore employees' experiences in managing the balance between work and personal life demands and its impact on productivity. Using a qualitative approach, in-depth interviews were conducted with 12 participants with diverse backgrounds and work arrangements. The results showed that work time flexibility, organizational support, and ability in workload management were the main factors influencing work-life balance. Employees who have work flexibility generally show higher levels of job satisfaction and productivity than those who experience imbalance. However, challenges such as excessive workload and unrealistic company expectations remain significant barriers to achieving this balance. This study highlights the importance of companies' role in formulating policies that not only support work-life balance administratively, but also build a work culture that cares about mental health, well-being, and the sustainability of employee productivity in the long term.*

**Keywords:** *Employee Well-Being, Productivity, Work Flexibility, Work-Life, Workload.*

## ABSTRAK

*Work-life balance menjadi isu penting dalam dunia kerja modern, terutama dengan meningkatnya penerapan sistem kerja hybrid dan remote. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi pengalaman karyawan dalam mengelola keseimbangan antara tuntutan pekerjaan dan kehidupan pribadi serta dampaknya terhadap produktivitas. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, wawancara mendalam dilakukan terhadap 12 partisipan dengan latar belakang dan pengaturan kerja yang beragam. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa fleksibilitas waktu kerja, dukungan organisasi, dan kemampuan dalam manajemen beban kerja menjadi faktor utama yang memengaruhi work-life balance. Karyawan yang memiliki fleksibilitas kerja umumnya menunjukkan tingkat kepuasan kerja dan produktivitas yang lebih tinggi dibandingkan mereka yang mengalami ketidakseimbangan. Meski demikian, tantangan seperti beban kerja yang berlebihan dan ekspektasi perusahaan yang tidak realistis tetap menjadi hambatan signifikan dalam mencapai keseimbangan tersebut. Penelitian ini menyoroti pentingnya peran perusahaan dalam menyusun kebijakan yang tidak hanya mendukung work-life balance secara administratif, tetapi juga membangun budaya kerja yang peduli terhadap kesehatan mental, kesejahteraan, dan keberlanjutan produktivitas karyawan dalam jangka panjang.*

**Kata kunci:** *Kesejahteraan Karyawan, Produktivitas, Fleksibilitas Kerja, Kehidupan Kerja, Beban Kerja.*

**JIMKES**

Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen  
Kesatuan  
Vol. 13 No. 3, 2025  
pp. 1693-1704  
IBI Kesatuan  
ISSN 2337 – 7860  
E-ISSN 2721 – 169X  
DOI: 10.37641/jimkes.v13i3.3213

## **INTRODUCTION**

Over the past few decades, significant changes in the world of work have introduced new challenges for employees in managing the balance between their professional and personal lives. Increasing job demands, technological advancements that enable work to be conducted without time and location constraints, and the pressure to achieve optimal productivity often make it difficult for employees to maintain a healthy work-life balance (WLB). Work-life balance refers to a state where individuals can effectively manage their time and energy between work and personal life, allowing both aspects to function optimally without interfering with each other (Barron, 2012). This concept has become a central focus in the modern workplace due to its direct correlation with employee well-being, mental health, and productivity. Byron (2005) found that an imbalance between work and personal life negatively impacts employees' mental and physical health, ultimately affecting job performance. This finding aligns with Guest (2002), who stated that employees struggling to maintain work-life balance often experience stress, fatigue, and decreased motivation. According to Leduc et al. (2016), work-life imbalance not only affects individuals but can also disrupt social relationships and long-term work effectiveness.

This imbalance has become even more evident with the rising cases of burnout among employees across various industries. Burnout is characterized by emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion resulting from prolonged work stress (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Schieman et al. (2021) reported that more than 60% of workers experience increased stress levels due to long working hours and high job pressure. A similar trend is observed in Indonesia, where a survey by Cahyani et al. (2024) found that 67% of Indonesian employees experience stress due to difficulties in managing their work-life balance. The negative effects of poor work-life balance are also evident in increasing employee turnover rates. Research by Allen et al. (2000) showed that employees struggling with work-life balance are more likely to leave their jobs compared to those with a healthier balance. Similarly, Kossek et al. (2011) found that organizations failing to implement effective work-life balance policies tend to experience higher turnover rates and lower productivity levels.

Kelliher and Anderson (2010) discovered that companies offering flexible work arrangements—such as remote work, flexible hours, and improved leave policies—were able to boost employee well-being and productivity. Bloom et al. (2015) further highlighted that employees with greater flexibility in managing their work schedules exhibited higher job satisfaction and productivity compared to those working under rigid structures. However, in Indonesia, many companies have yet to fully implement effective work-life balance policies. Workplace culture in numerous organizations still prioritizes long working hours as a primary indicator of productivity, despite research demonstrating that excessive working hours can reduce overall work efficiency. Putri et al. (2020) found that most Indonesian companies maintain rigid work systems with heavy workloads, leading to increased employee stress and declining motivation. Muliawati and Frianto (2020) survey revealed that only 30% of Indonesian employees feel that their companies actively support work-life balance initiatives.

Given these challenges, it is crucial to explore how the implementation of work-life balance can contribute to enhancing employee productivity. This phenomenological study aims to investigate employees' firsthand experiences in maintaining work-life balance and how specific factors influence their ability to do so. By understanding employees' perspectives on work-life balance, this research seeks to provide valuable recommendations for organizations to develop more effective policies that promote both employee well-being and optimal productivity.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Understanding Work-Life Balance: Concepts and Importance**

Barron (2012) define work-life balance (WLB) as effectively managing professional and personal responsibilities to minimize conflict between the two domains. This concept

has evolved beyond time allocation to emphasize harmonious integration of roles, prioritizing psychological well-being in modern work environments. The shift to remote and hybrid work models has heightened the need for psychological detachment from work stressors to maintain employee health (Kalliath & Brough, 2008). Poor WLB results in stress, burnout, and reduced engagement, with Haar et al. (2014) linking it to chronic fatigue, sleep disturbances, and cardiovascular issues. The proliferation of digital tools has blurred work-life boundaries, fostering an “always-on” culture that intensifies conflicts, as employees struggle to disconnect (Mazmanian et al., 2013). This leads to absenteeism or resignations, increasing organizational turnover (Kossek et al., 2014). Conversely, effective WLB enhances mental health, job satisfaction, and productivity, with employees reporting higher motivation when balance is achieved. Sonnentag and Fritz (2015) stress that recovery activities, such as hobbies, exercise, or social interactions, are critical for sustaining performance and preventing exhaustion. Organizations play a pivotal role by implementing flexible schedules, mental health support, and wellness programs, which improve morale and reduce stress (Grawitch et al., 2010). Individual strategies, like setting clear boundaries, are equally vital, as Clark (2000) notes that employees who establish work-life boundaries experience less conflict and greater satisfaction. This interplay between organizational policies and personal initiative highlights WLB’s complexity, necessitating comprehensive strategies to address diverse employee needs and foster long-term well-being and organizational success in dynamic workplaces.

### **The Relationship Between Work-Life Balance and Employee Productivity**

Grawitch et al. (2010) assert that work-life balance (WLB) significantly boosts employee productivity and engagement, as balanced individuals exhibit greater creativity, motivation, and job satisfaction. Efficient allocation of time and energy reduces stress, enabling sharper focus, better decision-making, and enhanced performance (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2015). Conversely, work-life imbalance leads to chronic fatigue, reduced work quality, and diminished innovation, as employees face overwhelming demands (Brough et al., 2014). Bakker and Demerouti (2017) argue that prolonged overwork causes physical and mental exhaustion, eroding organizational commitment and employee morale.

Psychological recovery, such as detaching from work during non-working hours, is essential for preventing burnout and sustaining performance (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2015). Organizations with robust WLB policies, including flexible hours and mental health programs, report higher productivity and lower burnout rates (Grawitch et al., 2010). For instance, Bloom et al. (2015) found that remote work enhances engagement by reducing commuting stress and increasing autonomy. However, constant connectivity can undermine these gains, as employees feel pressured to remain available (Mazmanian et al., 2013). Hobfoll (1989) emphasizes conserving personal resources, like energy and time, to maintain productivity. By fostering a supportive environment that encourages mental recovery, organizations can enhance employee performance, reduce turnover, and achieve long-term success. Kossek et al. (2011) further note that WLB initiatives improve employee loyalty, fostering a culture of trust that benefits both individuals and organizations, ensuring sustained productivity in competitive work environments.

### **Flexible Work Arrangements as a Work-Life Balance Strategy**

Golden and Veiga (2005) highlight that flexible work arrangements, such as remote work, flexible hours, and hybrid models, significantly enhance work-life balance (WLB) by granting employees control over their schedules. These arrangements allow individuals to align work with personal obligations, reducing stress and boosting job satisfaction across various industries. Employees with autonomy report improved engagement and performance, as flexibility accommodates family needs, health, or leisure activities (Tims et al., 2013). Bloom et al. (2015) found that remote work reduces commuting time, enabling more focus on personal well-being and productivity. However, Chung and van der Lippe (2020) caution that flexibility can fail if organizations expect constant availability, creating an “always-on” culture that negates WLB benefits. Without clear

boundaries, employees may work longer hours, increasing stress and reducing productivity (Kossek & Lautsch, 2018). Effective implementation requires organizational support, such as policies on after-hours communication, to prevent work-life conflicts (Allen et al., 2021). Managers must foster trust and avoid penalizing employees for using flexible options, as fear of career repercussions deters policy uptake (Kossek et al., 2014). Kossek and Thompson (2016) emphasize that clear guidelines ensure flexibility enhances well-being without compromising work quality. Derks et al. (2015) note that technology-driven flexibility requires careful management to avoid overwork. By promoting autonomy and enforcing boundaries, organizations can maximize the benefits of flexible arrangements, enabling employees to thrive professionally and personally in a supportive environment that aligns with modern work demands.

### **Empirical Studies on Work-Life Balance Implementation**

Bloom et al. (2015) provide robust evidence that work-life balance (WLB) initiatives, particularly remote work, significantly enhance productivity and employee satisfaction. Their study of a Chinese travel agency revealed a 13% productivity increase among remote workers, attributed to fewer distractions and greater schedule autonomy. Gajendran and Harrison (2007) conducted a meta-analysis, finding that remote work improves job performance and organizational commitment when supported by managerial trust and adequate resources. However, without proper support, remote workers face challenges like isolation, communication barriers, and limited professional development opportunities, which can hinder effectiveness. In contrast, Williams et al. (2016) found that rigid work structures with high demands lead to stress, burnout, and higher turnover, as employees struggle to balance personal obligations. Grawitch et al. (2010) reported a 25% stress reduction in organizations offering mental health support and flexible policies, fostering loyalty and engagement. Kossek and Thompson (2016) emphasize that WLB program effectiveness depends on cultural support, as unsupportive management undermines policy benefits. Clark (2000) highlights that trust-based cultures enhance policy uptake, improving morale and retention. These studies underscore that flexible arrangements and well-being programs boost productivity, but success hinges on trust, resources, and a culture aligned with modern work expectations. Michel et al. (2011) note that tailored WLB strategies addressing industry-specific needs further enhance outcomes, ensuring employees feel valued and supported in diverse work settings.

### **Challenges in Implementing Work-Life Balance Strategies**

Wayne et al. (2017) identify management resistance as a primary barrier to work-life balance (WLB) strategies, with some leaders viewing flexibility as reducing accountability and efficiency. This resistance often stems from traditional beliefs equating physical presence with productivity, despite evidence showing flexibility enhances performance (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010). Duxbury and Halinski (2014) highlight difficulties in monitoring performance in remote or hybrid settings, as conventional supervision methods falter, fostering mistrust and hindering WLB adoption. Industry-specific constraints, such as the need for on-site presence in healthcare or manufacturing, further limit flexibility, complicating WLB implementation across diverse sectors (Michel et al., 2011). Flexible policies can also create inequities, with remote-capable roles gaining more autonomy than on-site roles, leading to workplace tensions and perceptions of unfairness (Kossek & Lautsch, 2018). Technology exacerbates challenges, with constant connectivity via smartphones and emails blurring work-life boundaries, increasing stress and reducing well-being (Allen et al., 2021). Derks et al. (2015) note that without strict policies on after-hours communication, WLB initiatives may fail, as employees struggle to disconnect. Organizations must foster trust, tailor policies to industry needs, and establish clear guidelines to ensure equitable and effective WLB strategies. Brough et al. (2014) suggest that employee training on boundary management can mitigate technology-driven conflicts, enhancing WLB success and supporting employee well-being and productivity in modern workplaces.

### **Organizational Support and Workplace Culture in Achieving Work-Life Balance**

Clark (2001) emphasizes that organizational support is essential for effective work-life balance (WLB) initiatives, as policies alone are insufficient without a supportive culture. Employees often avoid flexible policies due to fear of career penalties, which undermines WLB efforts and reduces policy uptake (Kossek et al., 2014). Leaders who prioritize well-being foster trust and engagement, creating environments where employees feel safe to utilize WLB benefits, such as flexible hours or wellness programs (Grawitch et al., 2010). For instance, realistic workload distribution and mental health programs reduce stress and improve retention, enhancing overall performance (Hobson et al., 2018). A study of multinational corporations showed that firms with flexible scheduling and wellness initiatives reported higher morale and productivity, as employees felt valued and supported. However, Allen et al. (2020) note that cultures valuing long hours over efficiency deter employees from accessing WLB benefits, leading to disengagement. Managers must model boundary-setting behaviors, such as avoiding after-hours emails, to reinforce a healthy culture (Kossek & Thompson, 2016). Brough et al. (2014) highlight that supportive cultures encourage employees to adopt personal strategies, like time management or prioritizing tasks, further enhancing WLB. By aligning policies with a culture that values well-being, organizations can boost satisfaction, reduce turnover, and improve performance, ensuring long-term benefits for both employees and the organization in competitive work environments.

### **The Future of Work-Life Balance in the Digital Era**

Derks et al. (2015) argue that technology and artificial intelligence (AI) present both opportunities and challenges for work-life balance (WLB). Digital tools enable flexibility, allowing remote work and schedule adjustments, but risk creating an “always-on” culture that undermines well-being (Mazmanian et al., 2013). Constant availability expectations lead to digital burnout, reducing productivity and employee health. Emerging trends, such as the four-day workweek, show promise, with Microsoft Japan’s experiment reporting a 40% productivity increase from reduced hours, highlighting the potential of innovative work structures (Ng & Stanton, 2023). Results-oriented performance evaluations also support WLB by prioritizing outcomes over hours worked, empowering employees to manage their time effectively (Bartlett et al., 2021). AI-driven workforce management can optimize schedules but risks over-monitoring, which may erode trust and autonomy (Kossek & Thompson, 2016). Allen et al. (2021) stress the need for policies restricting after-hours communication to protect work-life boundaries and prevent stress. Brough et al. (2014) suggest that incorporating employee feedback into policy design ensures tailored WLB strategies that address diverse needs. Organizations must leverage technology to enhance flexibility while mitigating risks, ensuring employees maintain autonomy and well-being. Proactive adaptation to digital trends can provide a competitive edge in retention, motivation, and performance, fostering a balanced, productive workforce in the evolving digital landscape.

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study adopts a qualitative phenomenological approach to explore employees’ subjective experiences in managing work-life balance and its impact on productivity, aiming to uncover the deeper meanings behind these experiences (Moustakas, 1994). By focusing on employees in Indonesia across various industries, including technology, finance, manufacturing, education, and healthcare, the research captures diverse perspectives on work-life balance under conventional, hybrid, and remote work systems. This method allows for an in-depth understanding of how employees navigate professional and personal demands, aligning with Creswell (2013) emphasis on phenomenological research to explore lived experiences. The study seeks to provide insights into how organizational policies and individual strategies shape work-life balance, contributing to both employee well-being and productivity.

Participant selection utilized purposive sampling to ensure relevance and depth in the data collected (Patton, 2002). The study included 10–15 employees, aged 25–45, with at least two years of work experience in their current roles, ensuring they had sufficient exposure to workplace dynamics. Participants were selected from diverse sectors and work arrangements, including conventional, hybrid, and remote systems, to reflect varied experiences. The sample comprised both male and female employees, with roles ranging from staff to managers, and included single individuals, married individuals, and those with children, capturing a broad spectrum of work-life balance challenges. This sample size aligns with Guest et al. (2006) recommendation for achieving data saturation in phenomenological studies, ensuring rich and comprehensive data.

Data collection involved multiple methods to ensure robustness and depth. Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted to allow flexibility while maintaining focus, enabling participants to share their experiences freely (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Questions explored how employees manage work-life balance, factors supporting or hindering it, the role of company policies, the impact on productivity and motivation, and recommendations for improving workplace policies. Additionally, participant observation provided insights into how work-life balance policies are implemented in practice, while document analysis of company policies offered secondary data to contextualize findings. This multi-method approach enhances the study's validity through triangulation, as described by Denzin (1978), ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon.

Data analysis followed Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), as outlined by Alase (2017), to interpret the meanings behind participants' experiences. The process began with transcribing interview responses, followed by coding to identify patterns and themes, as suggested by Corbin (1998). These themes were then categorized and connected to existing theories to provide a robust interpretation of findings. To uphold ethical standards, participants provided informed consent, their identities were anonymized, and they were granted the right to withdraw without consequences. Data validity was ensured through triangulation and reconfirmation with participants, aligning with ethical research practices. This integrated approach ensures a thorough exploration of work-life balance, offering valuable insights for organizational policy development.

## **RESULTS**

This phenomenological study reveals that work-life balance (WLB) is a pivotal factor influencing employee productivity and well-being across various industries in Indonesia. Through in-depth interviews with 12 participants, the research uncovers how work flexibility, organizational policies, and job demands shape employees' ability to balance professional and personal responsibilities. These findings align with Barron (2012), who emphasize that WLB directly impacts individual performance and psychological health. Participants' experiences highlight the interplay between organizational support and personal strategies in achieving balance, with significant implications for job satisfaction and motivation. Guest (2002) notes that employees struggling with WLB face higher stress, lower satisfaction, and increased turnover intentions, a pattern evident in this study. The diversity of participants' backgrounds, as detailed in Table 1 (Participant Demographic Profile), provides a comprehensive view of WLB dynamics across different work systems and roles. This table summarizes key characteristics, including age, job role, work system, and WLB experiences, offering a clear demographic context for the findings. The study identifies four key themes—work flexibility and time control, workload and mental health, company support and flexible policies, and the impact of WLB on productivity—which collectively underscore the critical role of supportive work environments in enhancing employee outcomes.

**Table 1.** Participant Demographic Profile

Participant ID	Age	Job Role	Work System	Work-Life Balance Experience
P1	28	Financial Analyst	Conventional	Struggles with time management due to heavy workload
P2	33	Project Manager	Hybrid	Feels more productive with flexible work arrangements
P3	35	Technology Supervisor	Hybrid	Has better control over work schedules
P4	40	Healthcare Manager	Conventional	Experiences burnout due to high work pressure
P5	29	Legal Employee	Conventional	Faces workplace culture that prioritizes physical presence
P6	32	Multinational Consultant	Remote	Achieves better balance with flexible policies
P7	30	Manufacturing Employee	Conventional	Struggles with long working hours
P8	36	IT Engineer	Remote	More productive with flexible work system
P9	31	Senior Analyst	Hybrid	Utilizes flexible work policies for better balance
P10	29	Marketing Staff	Conventional	High job pressure due to sales targets
P11	27	Accountant	Hybrid	Benefits from flexibility in work arrangements
P12	34	HR Manager	Hybrid	Strives to implement supportive work-life balance policies

The participant demographic profile, presented in Table 1, illustrates the varied contexts of the 12 interviewees, aged 27–40, representing sectors such as finance, technology, healthcare, manufacturing, legal, marketing, and human resources. Their roles ranged from staff to managers, with work arrangements including conventional, hybrid, and remote systems. For instance, a 28-year-old financial analyst in a conventional setting reported struggles with time management due to heavy workloads, while a 32-year-old multinational consultant in a remote system noted improved balance due to flexible policies. Similarly, a 35-year-old technology supervisor in a hybrid setup felt more productive with schedule control, whereas a 40-year-old healthcare manager in a conventional system experienced burnout from high work pressure. This diversity, as captured in Table 1, highlights how work systems and job demands influence WLB experiences. The table also reveals that participants with family responsibilities, such as married individuals with children, faced unique challenges in balancing work and personal life, reinforcing the need for tailored organizational support (Kossek et al., 2014). These demographic insights provide a foundation for understanding the thematic findings, reflecting the varied realities of WLB in modern workplaces.

Work flexibility emerged as a critical theme, with participants in hybrid and remote settings reporting greater control over their schedules, enabling effective balance between work and personal needs. A 35-year-old technology supervisor indicated that the hybrid work system enhanced productivity by allowing better management of work hours while still meeting company targets. This aligns with Putri et al. (2020), who found that flexibility correlates positively with work-life balance (WLB) and job satisfaction. Employees in such arrangements could allocate time for family, hobbies, or self-care, reducing stress and enhancing engagement. In contrast, those in conventional settings, such as a 30-year-old manufacturing employee, faced challenges due to rigid schedules and long commutes, reporting limited time for family due to early departures and late returns. Burke (2000) supports this, noting that rigid work systems increase stress and reduce well-being. The contrast between flexible and conventional systems underscores the importance of autonomy in fostering WLB, with flexible arrangements enabling employees to integrate personal and professional responsibilities more harmoniously, ultimately boosting motivation and performance.

High workloads were identified as a significant barrier to WLB, negatively impacting participants' mental health and productivity. A 28-year-old financial analyst expressed that frequent work carried home prevented true rest, even on weekends. This sentiment reflects Beheshtifar and Omidvar (2013) findings that excessive job demands lead to burnout and decreased productivity. Participants reported that heavy workloads created a sense of being trapped in an unhealthy work rhythm, with constant pressure to meet deadlines or targets. Maslach and Leiter (2016) argue that such pressure reduces motivation and job satisfaction, a pattern evident among participants in conventional settings, such as a 29-year-old marketing staff member who faced high sales targets. The mental toll of overwork often spilled into personal life, limiting time for recovery or family, which further exacerbated stress. These findings highlight the need for organizations to manage workloads effectively, ensuring employees have opportunities for rest and recovery to maintain long-term well-being and performance.

Company support and flexible policies were pivotal in facilitating WLB, with some participants benefiting from progressive organizational practices. A 32-year-old multinational consultant noted that a flexible leave policy significantly helped in managing time with family. This supports Allen et al. (2013) findings that flexible policies reduce stress and improve well-being. Participants in hybrid or remote settings often cited supportive policies, such as flexible hours or remote work options, as key to achieving balance. However, not all workplaces were supportive, with some participants noting a culture that prioritized physical presence. A 29-year-old legal employee observed that flexible working hours were perceived as unproductive in their office, with physical absence often equated to less dedication. Kelliher and Anderson (2010) note that traditional work cultures hinder the effectiveness of flexible policies, creating social pressures that undermine WLB efforts. These findings emphasize that formal policies must be paired with a supportive culture to enable employees to utilize flexibility without fear of career repercussions, fostering both well-being and productivity.

The impact of WLB on productivity was a recurring theme, with participants who achieved balance reporting higher motivation, innovation, and job satisfaction. A 33-year-old project manager stated that a good balance between work and personal life increased motivation and improved performance. This aligns with Grawitch et al. (2010) findings that WLB enhances employee engagement and productivity. Participants in flexible work systems, such as a 36-year-old IT engineer, reported improved focus and creativity due to reduced stress. Conversely, those experiencing imbalance, like a 31-year-old IT engineer, noted that exhaustion and stress significantly reduced productivity. Sonnentag and Fritz (2015) emphasize the importance of mental recovery for sustaining productivity, a process hindered by excessive workloads or lack of flexibility. The stark contrast between balanced and imbalanced employees underscores the need for organizations to prioritize WLB to enhance performance. By fostering environments that support mental recovery and autonomy, companies can cultivate a workforce that is more productive, loyal, and engaged.

The findings collectively highlight that WLB is not solely about time management but involves a complex interplay of flexibility, workload management, and organizational support. Participants in hybrid or remote settings consistently reported better WLB outcomes compared to those in conventional systems, aligning with Bloom et al. (2015) findings on the benefits of flexible work arrangements. However, challenges such as high workloads and unsupportive cultures remain significant barriers, particularly in traditional workplaces. Table 1 illustrates these disparities, showing how participants in conventional settings, like the healthcare manager or manufacturing employee, faced greater WLB challenges than those in flexible systems. These insights reinforce the need for organizations to implement flexible policies and foster cultures that prioritize employee well-being. By addressing workload pressures and promoting autonomy, companies can mitigate stress and burnout, enhancing both individual and organizational outcomes. This study provides a nuanced understanding of WLB, offering actionable

recommendations for creating supportive work environments that optimize productivity and employee satisfaction in Indonesia's diverse workforce.

**DISCUSSION**

This study's findings confirm that work flexibility significantly shapes employees' ability to manage work and personal life, particularly for those in hybrid or remote settings who reported higher satisfaction and reduced stress. Participants with greater schedule control could allocate time for family, hobbies, or self-care, aligning with Kossek et al. (2014) assertion that flexible work arrangements reduce work-related stress and boost engagement. However, the study also reveals that flexibility alone is insufficient without a supportive organizational culture, as some participants faced social pressures to remain constantly available, undermining WLB benefits. This highlights the need for organizations to foster environments that genuinely support autonomy and boundary-setting to maximize the positive effects of flexible policies.

High workloads emerged as a primary obstacle to WLB, with participants reporting that excessive company expectations often spilled into personal time, leading to stress and burnout. This finding resonates with Barron (2012) observation that heavy workloads create conflicts between work and personal life, resulting in mental exhaustion. Employees in conventional settings, such as manufacturing or healthcare, faced particular challenges due to rigid schedules and long hours, which limited their ability to recover mentally. Chung and van der Lippe (2020) note that even in organizations offering flexible policies, an "always-on" culture can negate their benefits if employees feel compelled to respond to work demands outside regular hours. Participants in this study who experienced such pressures reported lower motivation and productivity, underscoring the importance of workload management as a critical component of effective WLB strategies. Organizations must address these demands by setting realistic expectations and providing resources for mental recovery to prevent burnout.

Participants also highlighted the role of individual strategies in achieving WLB, such as setting clear boundaries between work and personal time or using technology to enhance work efficiency. Brough et al. (2014) argue that employees who proactively manage these boundaries experience better psychological well-being, a pattern evident among participants who prioritized personal time. For instance, some employees used time-blocking techniques or turned off work notifications after hours, which helped them disconnect and recharge. However, the effectiveness of these strategies often depended on organizational support, as unsupportive cultures created pressures to prioritize work over personal life. Sonnentag and Fritz (2015) emphasize that mental recovery is essential for sustaining productivity, and this study's findings suggest that combining individual efforts with supportive policies enhances WLB outcomes. Companies that encourage boundary-setting and provide tools for efficient work management can empower employees to achieve balance without sacrificing performance.

The implications of these findings are significant for both organizations and employees in Indonesia's evolving work landscape. Companies should implement flexible work policies, such as hybrid schedules or compressed workweeks, while fostering cultures that value well-being over constant availability. Training programs on boundary management and mental health resources can further support employees in navigating WLB challenges. For employees, adopting proactive strategies like time management and leveraging technology can enhance personal well-being. Future research should explore how digital tools and AI-driven work systems can be optimized to support WLB without compromising autonomy, ensuring organizations remain competitive while fostering a motivated, productive workforce.

**CONCLUSION**

This study underscores that work-life balance (WLB) extends beyond simply dividing time between professional and personal responsibilities, focusing instead on the harmonious integration of these domains to enhance employee well-being and

productivity. The findings reveal that work flexibility, organizational support, and effective workload management are critical drivers of WLB, enabling employees to achieve higher job satisfaction, motivation, and performance. Employees who successfully balance work and personal life report reduced stress and increased engagement. Conversely, imbalances lead to stress, burnout, and diminished motivation, as excessive workloads and rigid schedules hinder mental recovery. These insights highlight the need for organizations to prioritize flexible policies and supportive cultures to optimize both individual and organizational outcomes in Indonesia's diverse workforce.

The implications of these findings are significant for organizations aiming to enhance employee well-being and productivity. Companies should adopt flexible work arrangements, such as hybrid models, and foster cultures that support boundary-setting to prevent burnout. However, the study's limitations include a small sample of 12 participants, which may not fully represent WLB dynamics across all industries and job levels, and its qualitative nature, which limits generalizability. External factors, such as government policies or technological impacts, were not deeply explored, potentially overlooking broader influences. Future research should employ mixed-methods approaches to combine quantitative and qualitative data for more robust findings. Expanding the scope to include diverse industries, job levels, and cultural factors, as well as investigating the role of AI-driven work systems, could further illuminate WLB dynamics. By implementing adaptive policies and supporting employee-driven strategies, organizations can cultivate a motivated, loyal workforce while addressing these research gaps.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Alase, A. (2017). The interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA): A guide to a good qualitative research approach. *International journal of education and literacy studies*, 5(2), 9-19.
- [2] Allen, R., Jerrim, J., & Sims, S. (2020). How did the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic affect teacher wellbeing. *Centre for Education Policy and Equalising Opportunities (CEPEO) Working Paper*, 1(20), 1-20.
- [3] Allen, T. D., Herst, D. E. L., Bruck, C. S., & Sutton, M. (2000). Consequences associated with work-to-family conflict: A review and agenda for future research. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 5(2), 278-308.
- [4] Allen, T. D., Merlo, K., Lawrence, R. C., Slutsky, J., & Gray, C. E. (2021). Boundary management strategies: A key to work-life balance. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 119(3), 103402-103412.
- [5] Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2017). Job demands-resources theory: Taking stock and looking forward. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 22(3), 273-285.
- [6] Barron, B. A. (2012). JC Quick and LE Tetrick (eds): Handbook of occupational health psychology. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*, 22(1), 141-151.
- [7] Bartlett, M. J., Arslan, F. N., Bankston, A., & Sarabipour, S. (2021). Ten simple rules to improve academic work-life balance. *PLoS Computational Biology*, 17(7), e1009124-1009135.
- [8] Beheshtifar, M., & Omidvar, A. R. (2013). Causes to create job burnout in organizations. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 3(6), 107-117.
- [9] Bloom, N., Liang, J., Roberts, J., & Ying, Z. J. (2015). Does working from home work? Evidence from a Chinese experiment. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 130(1), 165-218.
- [10] Brough, P., O'Driscoll, M., & Kalliath, T. (2014). Work-family conflict and work-family enrichment. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 19(2), 159-171.
- [11] Burke, R. J. (2000). Workaholism in organizations: Concepts, results and future research directions. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 2(1), 1-16.
- [12] Byron, K. (2005). A meta-analytic review of work-family conflict and its antecedents. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 67(2), 169-198.
- [13] Cahyani, R. Y. I., Mufida, F., Muyasaroh, N., Angela, A. P., & Wisesa, D. A. (2024). gambaran kesehatan mental pada pekerja. *Link Journal of Mental Health*, 1(1), 8-14.
- [14] Chung, H., & van der Lippe, T. (2020). Flexible working, work-life balance, and gender equality. *Social Indicators Research*, 151(2), 365-387.
- [15] Clark, S. C. (2000). Work/family border theory: A new theory of work/family balance. *Human Relations*, 53(6), 747-770.
- [16] Clark, S. C. (2001). Work cultures and work/family balance. *Journal of Vocational behavior*, 58(3), 348-365.

- [17] Corbin, J. M. (1998). The corbin and strauss chronic illness trajectory model: an update. *Research and Theory for Nursing Practice*, 12(1), 33-43.
- [18] Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). Washington DC: SAGE Publications.
- [19] Denzin, N. K. (1978). *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- [20] Derks, D., van Mierlo, H., & Schmitz, E. B. (2015). A diary study on work-related smartphone use, psychological detachment, and exhaustion. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 20(1), 45-57.
- [21] Duxbury, L., & Halinski, M. (2014). When more is less: An examination of the relationship between hours in telework and work-family conflict. *Work & Stress*, 28(4), 404-420.
- [22] Gajendran, R. S., & Harrison, D. A. (2007). The good, the bad, and the unknown about telecommuting: Meta-analysis of psychological mediators and individual consequences. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92(6), 1524-1541.
- [23] Golden, T. D., & Veiga, J. F. (2005). The impact of extent of telecommuting on job satisfaction. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 26(5), 565-589.
- [24] Grawitch, M. J., Barber, L. K., & Kruger, M. L. (2010). Work-life balance and employee well-being: A review of the literature. *Journal of Organizational Health Psychology*, 15(2), 203-224.
- [25] Guest, D. E. (2002). Perspectives on the study of work-life balance. *Social Science Information*, 41(2), 255-279.
- [26] Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability. *Field Methods*, 18(1), 59-82.
- [27] Haar, J. M., Russo, M., Suñe, A., & Ollier-Malaterre, A. (2014). Outcomes of work-life balance on job satisfaction, life satisfaction and mental health: A study across seven cultures. *Journal of vocational behavior*, 85(3), 361-373.
- [28] Hobfoll, S. E. (1989). Conservation of resources: A new attempt at conceptualizing stress. *American Psychologist*, 44(3), 513-524.
- [29] Hobson, N. M., Schroeder, J., Risen, J. L., Xygalatas, D., & Inzlicht, M. (2018). The psychology of rituals: An integrative review and process-based framework. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 22(3), 260-284.
- [30] Kalliath, T., & Brough, P. (2008). Work-life balance: A review of the meaning of the balance construct. *Journal of Management & Organization*, 14(3), 323-327.
- [31] Kelliher, C., & Anderson, D. (2010). Doing more with less? Flexible working practices and the intensification of work. *Human Relations*, 63(1), 83-106.
- [32] Kossek, E. E., & Lautsch, B. A. (2018). Work-life flexibility for whom? *Academy of Management Annals*, 12(1), 5-36.
- [33] Kossek, E. E., & Thompson, R. J. (2016). Workplace flexibility: Integrating employer and employee perspectives to close the research-practice implementation gap. *Academy of Management Annals*, 10(1), 305-348.
- [34] Kossek, E. E., Baltes, B. B., & Matthews, R. A. (2011). How work-family research can finally have an impact in organizations. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 4(3), 352-369.
- [35] Leduc, C., Houliort, N., & Bourdeau, S. (2016). Work-life balance: The good and the bad of boundary management. *International Journal of Psychological Studies*, 8(1), 133-146.
- [36] Maslach, C., & Leiter, M. P. (2016). Understanding the burnout experience: Recent research and its implications for psychiatry. *World Psychiatry*, 15(2), 103-111.
- [37] Mazmanian, M., Orlikowski, W. J., & Yates, J. (2013). The autonomy paradox: The implications of mobile email devices for knowledge professionals. *Organization Science*, 24(5), 1337-1357.
- [38] Michel, J. S., Kotrba, L. M., Mitchelson, J. K., Clark, M. A., & Baltes, B. B. (2011). Antecedents of work-family conflict: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 32(5), 689-725.
- [39] Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Washington DC: SAGE Publications.
- [40] Muliawati, T., & Frianto, A. (2020). Peran work-life balance dan kepuasan kerja terhadap kinerja karyawan milenial: studi literatur. *Jurnal Ilmu Manajemen (JIM)*, 8(3), 606-619.
- [41] Ng, E., & Stanton, P. (2023). The great resignation: managing people in a post COVID-19 pandemic world. *Personnel Review*, 52(2), 401-407.
- [42] Putri, R. A., Sari, D. P., & Yulianti, I. (2020). Work-life balance and its impact on employee job satisfaction and performance: Evidence from Indonesia. *Indonesian Journal of Business and Management*, 3(2), 45-58.
- [43] Schieman, S., Badawy, P. J., A. Milkie, M., & Bierman, A. (2021). Work-life conflict during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Socius*, 7, 2378023120982856-2378023120982866.
- [44] Sonnentag, S., & Fritz, C. (2015). Recovery from job stress: The stressor-detachment model as an integrative framework. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 36(S1), S72-S103.
- [45] Tims, M., Bakker, A. B., & Derks, D. (2013). The impact of job crafting on job demands, job resources, and well-being. *Journal of occupational health psychology*, 18(2), 230-243.
- [46] Wayne, J. H., Butts, M. M., Casper, W. J., & Allen, T. D. (2017). In search of balance: A conceptual and empirical integration of multiple meanings of work-family balance. *Personnel Psychology*, 70(1), 167-210.

- [47] Williams, J. C., Blair-Loy, M., & Berdahl, J. L. (2016). Cultural schemas, social class, and the flexibility stigma. *Journal of Social Issues*, 72(2), 209–232.