



The Indian Journal for Research in Law and Management

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Editor-in-Chief – Dr. Muktai Deb Chavan; Publisher – Alden Vas; ISSN: 2583-9896

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Balancing work and life - A study of its impact on employee well-being

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CERTIFICATE

i, **k. sonudeep rathod**, hereby declare that the paper titled “**BALANCING WORK AND LIFE - A STUDY OF ITS IMPACT ON EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING** ” which i am submitting is entirely my own creation. all ideas and extracts borrowed from external sources have been fully acknowledged and credited. i highlight that this effort is clear of any unethical practices or instances of plagiarism. i maintained the values of academic integrity and honesty throughout its preparation

THANK YOU !!!

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

These days, managing job and personal life sits at the heart of how companies treat workers, handle staffing, and meet legal standards - people now face growing pressure trying to keep up with career tasks while handling home duties. Because tech moves fast, we are always reachable, and jobs feel more pressured, the line between working hours and free time has faded, which feeds tension and makes it harder to truly disconnect after work ends. When the pandemic hit, staying home for work became common, mixing office routines into living spaces, pushing balance concerns even deeper into conversations about health on the job and long-term company success.

Most studies find people feel more satisfied at work when they can manage both job and personal life well. Instead of burning out, these individuals tend to stay mentally healthier and enjoy daily living more. On the flip side, too many hours on the clock or relentless pressure often leads to tension and emotional strain. Being always reachable through devices adds weight to that burden, sometimes dragging physical condition down. When staff believe their company respects time away from desks, loyalty grows quietly but steadily. They invest more attention into tasks without loudly announcing dedication. Staying with the organization feels natural under such conditions, not forced. Performance rises not because someone demanded it, but because energy flows differently.

Even though plenty has been written already, some areas still lack coverage. ¹While certain industries get a lot of study, those in lower-income nations especially people doing unstable or off the books jobs get overlooked more often than not. Legal rules like limits on hours, support during maternity, and newer ideas about digital boundaries rarely connect clearly with how companies actually handle work-life balance. Pulling together recent findings, this paper lines up evidence on well-being at work alongside existing laws and policies, aiming to show what matters most for workers, bosses, and rule-makers - focusing closely on conditions in India.

This study aims first at exploring how work life balance and employee well-being are understood. Following that, it looks into real-world data connecting WLB with various sides of well-being. Instead of stopping there, it digs into how laws and workplace systems influence those balances. Beyond just observation, it pulls insights together to shape practical guidance for policies. Next comes the structure:

Chapter 2 builds a base idea of WLB.

Chapter 3 spells out what counts as employee well-being.

Chapter 4 gathers past research in one place.

Chapter 5 turns toward rules and official guidelines around these issues. Later,

Chapter 6 reveals why this inquiry took shape and how methods were chosen.

Chapter 7 unpacks what emerged through investigation. When clarity forms,

Chapter 8 puts forward outcomes along with suggested steps.

Chapter 9 wraps up by drawing things together.

Chapter 2: Conceptual Framework of Work–Life Balance

Some see work-life balance as how well job duties fit with the rest of life, based on what matters most at any given time. Back then, researchers talked more about juggling jobs and family tasks, particularly looking after children. Lately, though, attention has shifted toward a wider view - time spent relaxing, helping out locally, learning new things, or doing anything outside work that adds value to daily living.

Some ways of thinking about work-life balance look at friction between duties, yet also notice benefits flowing from one area to another. People juggle different positions - worker, mother, partner, helper - and when those expectations clash, stress appears in several forms: too little time, emotional pressure, or clashing behaviours. Yet just as often, strengths built in one part boost results elsewhere - a good mood at home lifts office effort, skill from a job sharpens family

¹ Nur Izzati Mohamad Hariri et al., Effect of Work-Life Balance on Employees 'Well-Being, 12 Open J. Soc. Sci. 705 (2024)

decisions. Another view called Conservation of Resources focuses on what people keep or lose: things like free hours, strength through tough days, help from others. Balance feels better when wins - say control over tasks, room to shift schedules, kind managers - add up more than drains such as nonstop meetings, screen overload, or silent weekends.²

Some days, structure matters most - policies like flex hours, remote setups, shorter weeks, time off, child care help, and counseling shape how work-life balance works. Not far behind come quiet habits - unwritten rules about who stays late or answers emails at midnight. When managers nod approval, people tend to actually use what's offered. Fear hides in the background though; some skip benefits just because they worry it looks bad.³ What shows up on paper often misses real experience - the sense of having choices, clear lines between job tasks and personal moments, backing from coworkers, leaders, even relatives. This study sees balance not as one thing, but layers stacked: plans exist only when people feel free to live them

Chapter 3: Employee Well-being – Concepts and Dimensions

Well-being at work covers how people feel inside, their bodies, and who they connect with. Happier minds usually mean feeling good each day, liking your life, not struggling with sadness or constant worry. Energy and rest matter for the body, also staying clear of sickness tied to pressure. Good talks, trust, and support around coworkers or friends shape social health. Studies often watch things like enjoying tasks, being involved in work, or running out of emotional strength when looking at balance between job and life.

Research keeps finding strong links between work-life balance and how people feel overall.

People saying they have good balance at work tend to feel mentally healthier, more satisfied with life, less burned out, less stressed - these patterns appear across different study types. When folks worked from home during the crisis, those feeling balanced reported being happier, under less pressure, getting more done, staying focused easier. On the flip side, struggling to separate job demands from personal time often meant ongoing tension, exhaustion, trouble sleeping, physical discomfort tied to mental strain - all of which hurt both worker wellness and workplace results.

² Elohi Bahiroh & Sri Ndaru Arthawati, The Impact of Work-Life Balance on Employee Performance and Retention: A Meta-Analytic Analysis of Empirical Studies, Int'l J. Humanities, Soc. Sci. & Bus., Vol. 3, No. 3 (2024)

³ Shely Dinar Thamara & M. Isa Anshori, Implementation of Work Life Balance and Its Impact on Employee Retention in Systematic Literature Review, 3 Formosa J. Applied Sci. 4889 (2024).

Feeling good at work ties directly to how companies function. Research shows people who feel better do their jobs more effectively,⁴ come up with fresh ideas, help others without being asked - while missing fewer days and staying longer with their employer. When workers thrive, businesses gain too; it turns personal wellness into a quiet driver of steady results and edge over rivals. So this study looks at well-being through several lenses: mental state, bodily health, and job conditions - all woven together

Chapter 4: Literature Review on Work–Life Balance and Employee Well-being

Much research looks into how work-life balance connects to worker well-being, drawing from different methods, industries, because of varied country settings. One 2024 analysis, reviewing papers found in Scopus about work-life balance effects, pulled together findings showing better balance clearly lifts general well-being, yet also improves mood at work, output levels, emotional stability - whereas weak balance ties tightly to pressure, exhaustion, physical decline. Other summaries back these points, along with real-world data sets, especially within areas like medical services, tech jobs, government roles.

One reason people feel mentally drained. Long workweeks often drain joy from jobs, mainly due to rising pressure. Not every finding leans on struggle though - some show that managing personal time acts like a shield, softening harsh impacts of tough roles. When folks name feeling stretched thin, it's usually stress shaping how they see balance and contentment. Remote tasks might pile up, yet those drawing firm lines tend to stay calmer inside. Burnout doesn't sneak up equally on everyone; space between duties helps block emotional wear. Anxiety and low moods appear less often where **daily rhythms respect rest just as much as output**.

When lockdowns hit, scientists started digging into how people balance jobs and life at home. One look at 48 papers from early 2020 to 2022 showed patterns in what helped or hurt that balance. Instead of listing causes and effects plainly, researchers sorted them by whether they drained energy or added strength. Long hours, poor setups, tech fatigue, feeling cut off from coworkers, plus extra chores pulled workers under - making mental health dip along with equilibrium. On the flip side, encouragement from managers, help from loved ones, freedom in how tasks were done, and inner resilience gave people breathing room - even when work moved behind closed doors. Balance held better where these supports existed.

⁴ Work-Life Balance and Mental Health: Reduce Stress, AMFM Healthcare (May 2, 2022), <https://amfmtreatment.com/work-life-balance-and-mental-health/>.

One key area of research ties work-life balance to how companies perform, especially in keeping staff, boosting output, and building dedication. Backed by a wide look at studies published in 2025 in the Journal of Economics, Management and Trade, efforts like adjustable hours, working from home, or health support tend to strengthen workers' plans to stay and their sense of connection. In line with this, real-world data and large-scale analyses show firms supporting these measures often notice better results, more involvement, longer stays - all helping them stand out when hiring or holding talent. Still, **careful assessments warn effects on staying power aren't fixed; things like office culture, paths to grow, and stable jobs matter just as much.**⁵

Even with plenty of existing work, key holes remain. Because most studies capture just one moment in time, figuring out cause and effect becomes tough; following people across years would help much more. Focus tends to cluster in specific places and industries, leaving behind those in poorer nations, casual jobs, or short-term digital platforms. Rules that shape daily life - like limits on hours, support after childbirth, or new boundaries for being offline - rarely get full attention, even though they set the stage for workplace efforts. Without them, company programs float unmoored. Seeing law alongside cultural differences could ground future findings where it matters.

Chapter 5: Legal and Policy Framework on Work–Life Balance (Global and Indian Context)

Rules and laws shape how people experience their jobs, setting expectations that affect personal and professional harmony. Not long ago, the ILO stepped in globally, laying down agreements about limits on hours, weekly downtime, and care for new mothers - underlining these as key to well-being. Across continents, in places like Europe, worry grows around being glued to devices, especially when work follows people home through screens. This tension sparked talk of legally protecting time off, giving workers space to switch off without fear. When messages never stop, balance fades; so lawmakers urged action, asking the Commission to draft firm rules on disconnection rights. What happens online after hours matters less than what rests unseen - tired minds, strained homes, weakened health from never logging out.

India has various laws shaping how people balance work with life outside jobs, especially around schedules and caring for children. Not long ago, rules about safety at workplaces got combined into one big set called the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020. That

⁵ Melika Shirmohammadi et al., Antecedents and Outcomes of Work-Life Balance While Working from Home: A Review of the Research Conducted During the COVID-19 Pandemic, 21 Hum. Res. Dev. Rev. 473

update pulled together older regulations while changing some parts, setting clear lines on daily shifts, days off each week, plus vacation time in many job areas. Government notes issued lately stress a cap: nobody ought to go beyond eight hours per day or forty-eight weekly when counting regular duties. If extra hours happen, they must stay within legal boundaries - this limit shows effort to shield workers from burnout. Such basic safeguards matter because they give space for individuals to handle private matters alongside raising families.

One law tied to work-life balance is the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 - updated over time. Women's jobs near birth get protection through it. Instead of working, they may take leave when having a child. Employers cannot hire them at specific times close to or following childbirth. Because of changes made later, those who qualify now receive twenty-six weeks 'paid time off for their first two babies. After that, the break shrinks to twelve weeks. Adoptive mothers and those using surrogacy gain similar rights too. Big workplaces must offer day care spaces on site. New moms coming back to jobs can pause duties for breastfeeding. Health during motherhood connects clearly here with raising kids and holding down a job. This framework follows what India promised under Article 42: fair treatment at work plus help during pregnancy.⁶

Still, rules on paper differ from what happens daily. Across industries, proof shows laws limiting work hours and guaranteeing leave often fail in practice, particularly where jobs lack structure or oversight. Yet even as support for new mothers improves, benefits for fathers and parents overall stay patchy and thin, feeding old ideas about who cares for children - which can block women's growth at work and balance in life. Within such conditions, company actions stepping past minimum legal demands - like equal leave regardless of gender, adjustable schedules, clear boundaries on messages after work - quietly shape real change when it comes to balancing job and personal life.

Chapter 6: Research Objectives, Questions, and Methodology

Looking closely at existing materials forms the core of this research, drawing from written works across different fields. From management ideas to psychological insights, plus legal views, it brings together varied angles on how work and personal life connect. One goal stands out - making sense of what work-life balance really means, alongside what well-being involves for workers. Evidence gathered from past studies helps show patterns in how balancing roles affects health and

⁶ Press Information Bureau, Govt. of India, Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSH) Code, 2020 – Factsheet (Nov. 21, 2025), <https://www.pib.gov.in/FactsheetDetails.aspx?Id=150475>.

satisfaction. Legal rules and government plans get examined too, especially those found in India's context. Findings come together in ways that may help offices adjust practices, also guiding those who shape policies⁷.

What questions shape this investigation? These steer the work

1. What does today's research say about balancing job and personal life? Still, scholars often explore what leads up to it. Yet, effects on well-being show up clearly across studies.

Meanwhile, factors like workload pop up again and again. Instead of just listing causes, some papers trace real-life impacts. Then there are results tied to mental health. Even so, definitions keep shifting over time.

2. How might balance between work and life affect an individual's mind, body, or feelings about their job? What role could it play in shaping daily energy, mood, or long-term health on the job? Might peace outside the office reshape how someone handles stress at their desk?

3. How do legal and policy frameworks, both international and Indian, shape the environment for WLB?

4. For those shaping workplaces, one takeaway stands clear: balance affects daily life. Shifting routines slightly might ease strain. Workers often feel better when schedules bend a little. Rules set at higher levels can either help or block these changes. Small adjustments ripple outward. How people manage time ties closely to health. Leaders decide which paths get support. Flexibility sometimes means fewer headaches. Pressure builds when options shrink. Who holds power to change patterns? Not every solution fits all. Real shifts start where policy meets practice.

Looking at recent findings means using trusted journals and summaries found through Scopus, PubMed, or big publishing sites, mostly pulling from the past ten years while giving weight to studies after the pandemic. Instead of just listing ideas, it lines up around phrases like "work-life balance," "employee well-being," "job satisfaction," "burnout," "employee retention," "remote work," and "right to disconnect." Information about laws comes from India's legal framework, state papers, expert analysis, as well as rules written by the European Union on digital boundaries at work. One downside? It leans entirely on existing reports and material available in English, so quieter voices - especially those outside formal jobs or regional settings - might get missed.

⁷ Melika Shirmohammadi et al., Antecedents and Outcomes of Work-Life Balance While Working from Home: A Review of the Research Conducted During the COVID-19 Pandemic, 21 Hum. Res. Dev. Rev. 473

Chapter 7: Analysis and Discussion

Looking at past research, it becomes evident how work-life balance shapes employee wellness. When people can set firm limits on work hours, have understanding bosses, or access flexible schedules, they feel more in charge - this cuts down inner clashes between job and personal life, easing tension along the way. Take those who worked remotely during lockdowns - one pattern stood out: freedom paired with managerial backing lifted balance while draining pressure, despite heavier duties both at office and home. On the flip side, situations that drain energy - like endless meetings, digital overload, back-to-back tasks, or feeling cut off from coworkers - chip away at equilibrium, often leading to emotional exhaustion and weaker psychological states.

Not everyone feels work-life balance the same way. For women - mothers in particular - and people juggling care duties, job demands can clash sharply with personal life, heightening their need for real support at work. **Research shows these groups gain much from adaptable schedules and workplaces that understand their needs, yet using those options sometimes brings sideways glances, labeled as less dedicated. Where you work shapes things too: office-based professionals who control their time often manage better compared to hourly staff on fixed shifts with little say. One single fix never fits every situation; solutions must reflect who actually does the jobs and what limits they face.**

Start with trust - how leaders act shapes whether work-life balance efforts actually help people. When bosses support flexibility by stepping back when needed, staff feel permission to follow suit. Picture a team where logging off at dusk isn't questioned; that ease comes from repeated signals, not policy alone. Without those cues? People hesitate, even if remote days or wellness plans exist on paper. Nights filled with emails creep in when staying late becomes the quiet standard. But in places where limits are normal, like no messages past seven, energy lasts longer. Shared say in timetables also helps crews stay sharp when pressure builds. Proof shows structure plus respect keeps strain from spilling into personal time.

Rules create a base line people can count on, still they mark just the first step. Even when laws cap work days and demand breaks - like those in India's labor acts or Europe's time directives - harsh conditions slip through without strict follow-through. India's maternity safeguards show clear support for mothers on the job, even so fatherhood leave lags behind while informal jobs often ignore hour limits altogether. Talk in the EU about switching off digitally hints at fresh legal reactions to endless online reach, however actual written protections stay rare for now. What holds

true is balance between life and work grows best where solid laws meet workplaces that act ahead of pressure and value real rhythm in daily effort.

Chapter 8: Findings, Practical Implications, and Recommendations

One thing stands out clearly here. Evidence keeps showing how good balance between job and personal life lifts mental health, cuts down on stress and exhaustion, while also lifting daily living standards. Not just that - being able to manage work alongside private matters links closely to greater job contentment, stronger loyalty to employers, better output, and staying longer in roles, seen widely from offices in Europe to factories in Asia. What often drives this connection? It comes down to how people hold onto their strength, hours, and help from others at work. Jobs designed to save effort and rebuild connections tend to boost wellness; ones demanding constant give without return wear people thin. Laws matter too - rules around shift lengths or leave after childbirth create starting points for fairer routines, yet real progress needs company habits shifting as much as policies changing.

Clear signs point one way for bosses. Workplaces ought to build wide-ranging plans for balance between job and personal life - think adjustable hours, chances to work from home when possible, fair amounts of tasks, plus aid for emotional struggles sitting close at hand. Teaching those in charge matters a lot; they must honor limits, skip pinging staff outside clocked time unless vital, give quiet approval when team members take up these perks. Checking in often on how folks feel about their rhythm and health by polls or open channels spots weak zones early, shapes smarter fixes down the line. Where jobs demand heavy lifting yet offer little say, companies might test reshaping shifts, steady timetables, benefits that hug family needs - all while staying inside real-world limits.

When it comes to those who shape rules - particularly in India - the results highlight how crucial it is to actually apply current laws on work hours and maternity leave. At the same time, updating policies might help tackle modern issues like constant online availability and shared care duties beyond gender lines. In Europe, discussions about switching off digitally after work have led to practical ways of limiting late messages and preserving personal downtime. Some governments may encourage companies to support balance between job and life by offering guidance, awards, or including related measures in reports tied to ethics, society, and sustainability efforts. Workers themselves can benefit from setting clear limits, organising their schedules wisely, and using existing rights or workplace tools designed to protect health and peace of mind.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

Life outside the office matters just as much as what happens during work hours, shaping how people feel both mentally and physically. Studies show time after time that when jobs respect personal boundaries, workers stay healthier, sharper, quieter inside. Trouble begins when the scales tip - too much duty leads to exhaustion, sleepless nights, even illness. Companies gain too, not only individuals; teams stick around longer, care more, do better when balance is real, not just promised. What looks like comfort turns out to be strength: workplaces thrive by valuing rest as much as output. This isn't extra - it's essential, woven into fair conditions and lasting success.

Looking closer shows work-life balance depends on laws, company rules, social habits, yet personal situations too. Rules about hours at work or leave after childbirth set basic levels in places like India, though these only matter when enforced alongside workplace actions. New talks around a right to switch off devices show how regulations try catching up with online work styles. Still, effects differ by gender, job type, contract kind - pointing toward solutions that fit particular settings while including everyone. Long-term studies could help next phases of inquiry, along with sharper focus on varied economies, unofficial jobs, blending law reviews with actual data on daily life quality.

Beyond just theory, real results point one way - when people can manage both job demands and personal needs, stress drops. Not only that, stability grows inside companies too. Because life does not stop at the office door, workplaces bending with modern shifts tend to keep their teams healthier. Without room to breathe, performance falters. So balancing time fairly isn't extra - it sticks at the core. Through waves of new tools and changing habits, this much stays clear: fairness in workload shapes stronger groups.