

A STUDY ON WORK–LIFE BALANCE: A MYTH IN TODAY’S CORPORATE WORLD

Dr. Moli Ghosh

*Assistant Professor, School of Management Studies,
Sathyabama institute of Science and Technology,
Chennai, moli.molisuresh.suresh@gmail.com
<https://doi.org/10.34293/blp.9789395659611.ch015>*

Abstract

Work–life balance (WLB) has become one of the most discussed topics in corporate management and human resource studies. In theory, it promises equilibrium between professional and personal life, but in practice, achieving it seems increasingly difficult in today’s competitive corporate world. This article explores the concept of work–life balance, reviews existing literature, and analyzes whether it has become a myth in the modern workplace.

Keywords: *Work–Life Balance, Corporate Culture, Employee Well-being, Job Stress*

Introduction

Work–life balance refers to the state of equilibrium where an individual can effectively manage the demands of both professional and personal life. In the past decade, organizations have introduced flexible work arrangements, remote work policies, and employee wellness programs to promote balance. However, the rise of digital connectivity, global competition, and performance pressure have blurred the boundaries between work and home life. Employees often find themselves “always on,” leading to stress, burnout, and reduced job satisfaction.

Literature Review

According to Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), work-life conflict was a type of inter-role conflict in which the demands of work and family realms are incompatible with each other. This research work backgrounded the fact that balance is based on the lack of such conflict.

Clark (2000) has come up with the Work/Family Border Theory, which implies that people can have the balance when they can negotiate and manage boundaries between work and family. But in the new digitalized business environment, such boundaries have become more permeable.

Guest (2002) hypothesized that the attainment of WLB is dependent on the job design, organizational culture, and personal coping mechanisms. However, as the workload increases and technological monitoring is implemented, even to support organizations find it difficult to balance in actual sense.

Fisher, Bulger, and Smith (2009) found out that flexible schedules and telecommuting may either be of help or disadvantage based on the intensity of work and expectations of

the managers. Most of the employees say that flexibility has only contributed to make work a part of their time.

According to the recent Studies (2020-2024), the culture of working-from-home (post-pandemic) has made it more difficult. Although remote work has made work more flexible in the beginning, it has also extended the working hours, which results in time poverty and virtual fatigue. Therefore, WLB is frequently a conceptual idea as opposed to an actual situation.

Objectives of the Study

To explore how much workers of the corporate world enjoy the actual work-life balance of the present computerized period.

To establish the reasons that lead to the perception of work-life balance as a myth in the current corporate setting.

Analysis and Discussion

The business world now is a 24/7 one. The culture of being available all the time has been brought by multinational teams, overlaps of time zones, and productivity tracking tools. Companies tend to associate extended working hours with dedication, and hustle culture is celebrated by employers.

Additionally, flexible but rather hybrid and remote work has worsened the encroachment of personal time by emails, calls, and messages outside the office. The levels of mental health problems including stress, burnouts, and emotional exhaustion have increased to a high level particularly among middle and senior-level executives.

The situation is also complicated by gender expectations. One example is the working mothers who are usually stressed twice hence, creating an effect of a double burden. Although wellness programs and time-off policies are provided by the organizations, the cultural norms and workload intensity do not allow using them fully.

Findings

Work-life balance is a far-fetched illusion in the minds of employees because of the constant demands at work.

Due to technological connectivity, the work and personal life are hard to distinguish.

The organizational norms and performance indicators put the productivity ahead of well being.

This has a negative impact on the emotional and psychological wellbeing, which implies a disconnect between policy and practice.

Conclusion

The concept of work-life balance is mostly a myth in the modern corporate environment, as opposed to being a reality. Even though there has been an expression of caring about the well-being of employees by organizations, the demands of competitiveness, performance measurement, and intrusion through digital have compromised the real balance. It is necessary to help companies get beyond rhetoric by transforming work models based on output rather than hours worked, promote the idea of disconnection and create an ethos of compassion and trust. Employees, in their turn, also have to learn how to draw boundaries and think about oneself. The myth about the balance between work and life can only become a viable reality through the joint organizational and personal efforts.

References

1. Clark, S. C. (2000). *Work/Family Border Theory: A New Theory of Work/Family Balance*. *Human Relations*, 53(6), 747–770.
2. Fisher, G. G., Bulger, C. A., & Smith, C. S. (2009). *Beyond Work and Family: A Measure of Work/Nonwork Interference and Enhancement*. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 14(4), 441–456.
3. Greenhaus, J. H., & Beutell, N. J. (1985). *Sources of Conflict Between Work and Family Roles*. *Academy of Management Review*, 10(1), 76–88.
4. Guest, D. E. (2002). *Perspectives on the Study of Work–Life Balance*. *Social Science Information*, 41(2), 255–279.
5. Recent corporate studies (2020–2024) on hybrid work and well-being reports by Deloitte, McKinsey, and Harvard Business Review.