

ENHANCING HUMAN RESOURCES PERFORMANCE THROUGH WORK–LIFE BALANCE MANAGEMENT: A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE BASED ON INTERNATIONAL REPORTS

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Abstract: *In the context of globalization, digital transformation, and evolving labor market dynamics, work–life balance has emerged as a strategic priority for organizations aiming to enhance human resources performance and ensure sustainable development. This paper aims to examine the role of work–life balance management in improving employee productivity, well-being, and organizational efficiency. The study adopts a qualitative and exploratory research approach, based on a comprehensive review of recent scientific literature and international reports. The analysis relies on data provided by reputable institutions, including Eurofound, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Economic Forum (WEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), the European Commission, and the Global Work–Life Balance Index (Remote, 2023). The findings indicate that the implementation of effective work–life balance policies—such as flexible work arrangements, remote work, parental leave, and employee well-being initiatives—contributes significantly to increased job satisfaction, productivity, and organizational resilience. Furthermore, these practices support sustainable human resource management and foster innovation in the modern workplace. By synthesizing global trends and policy frameworks, this paper provides valuable insights for organizations, policymakers, and researchers. The study contributes to the theoretical and methodological foundation of doctoral research focused on enhancing human resources performance through the effective management of work–life balance, offering directions for future empirical investigations.*

Key words: *work–life balance; human resources performance; employee well-being; organizational performance; sustainable human resource management; future of work.*

JEL: M12; M54; J24; J28; O15.

Introduction

In the context of globalization, digital transformation, and continuous changes in labor market dynamics, human resources have become a key determinant of organizational competitiveness and sustainable development. In this framework, work–life balance (WLB) has gained increasing importance as a strategic factor influencing employee well-being, productivity, and overall organizational performance. The growing complexity of professional roles, combined with the blurring boundaries between work and personal life, has intensified the need for effective work–life balance management both at organizational and policy levels.

The relevance of the topic is further reinforced by recent global trends, including the expansion of remote and hybrid work models, accelerated by digitalization and the COVID-19 pandemic. These transformations have significantly altered traditional working patterns, increasing both flexibility and work-related pressures. According to the International Labour Organization, excessive working hours and insufficient rest negatively affect employee health, productivity, and performance (ILO, 2022). Similarly, the World Health Organization highlights that long working hours are associated with increased health risks, including stress, burnout, and cardiovascular diseases (WHO, 2021). These findings emphasize the critical role of work–life balance in ensuring a sustainable and healthy workforce.

The motivation for choosing this research topic derives from the growing need to identify effective mechanisms for enhancing human resources performance in modern organizations. In the context of increasing competition and workforce expectations, organizations are required to implement innovative human resource management practices that support both employee well-being and organizational efficiency. International reports underline that work–life balance is a key component of overall life satisfaction and labor productivity (OECD, 2024), while flexible working arrangements contribute significantly to employee engagement and organizational resilience (Eurofound, 2023).

The main aim of this paper is to analyze the role of work–life balance management in enhancing human resources performance by examining global trends, policy frameworks, and best practices. In order to achieve this aim, the study addresses the following research objectives: (1) to define the conceptual framework of work–life balance and its relationship with human resources performance; (2) to analyze international reports and indices related to work–life balance; and (3) to identify the implications of work–life balance policies for organizational performance and sustainability.

From a methodological perspective, the research is based on a qualitative and exploratory approach, relying on the analysis and synthesis of secondary data. The study uses a systematic review of scientific literature and international reports published by reputable organizations such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Eurofound, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Economic Forum (WEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the European Commission. This approach allows for the identification of key trends, patterns, and relationships between work–life balance and human resources performance at a global level.

Regarding the stage of research, the topic of work–life balance has been extensively explored in the academic literature, with numerous studies highlighting its impact on job satisfaction, employee well-being, and organizational outcomes. For instance, research conducted by Haar et al. (2014) demonstrates that work–life balance is positively associated with job satisfaction, life satisfaction, and mental health. Similarly, Kossek and Lee (2017) emphasize the role of work–life balance in promoting sustainable workforce development and organizational performance. More recent studies also highlight the importance of flexible work arrangements and digital work environments in shaping employee experiences and productivity (WEF, 2023).

In this context, the present paper contributes to the existing body of knowledge by providing a comprehensive synthesis of global perspectives on work–life balance and its implications for human resources performance. Furthermore, it establishes a theoretical and methodological foundation for future empirical research, particularly in the context of emerging labor market trends and evolving organizational practices.

Basic content

Conceptual Framework of Work–Life Balance and Human Resources Performance

Work–life balance (WLB) has evolved into a central concept within contemporary human resource management, reflecting the ability of individuals to effectively manage professional responsibilities alongside personal and family life. In modern organizations, WLB is no longer perceived merely as a social benefit, but as a strategic instrument for enhancing employee performance and organizational sustainability.

From a theoretical perspective, work–life balance is closely associated with role theory and the concept of work–family conflict, which suggests that incompatible demands between work and personal roles can negatively affect employee well-being and performance (Allen et al., 2000). Conversely, the achievement of balance between these domains contributes to improved psychological well-being, increased job satisfaction, and higher levels of organizational commitment. Empirical studies confirm that employees who experience a satisfactory level of work–life balance demonstrate significantly better outcomes in terms of performance and well-being. Haar et al. (2014) highlight that work–life balance is positively correlated with job satisfaction, life satisfaction, and

mental health across different cultural contexts. Moreover, Greenhaus and Allen (2011) emphasize that achieving balance between professional and personal roles leads to enhanced individual and organizational outcomes.

In addition to role theory, recent research emphasizes the relevance of the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model, which explains how job demands (e.g., workload, time pressure) and job resources (e.g., flexibility, autonomy, organizational support) interact to influence employee performance and well-being. Within this framework, work–life balance practices are considered critical organizational resources that mitigate stress and prevent burnout, while simultaneously enhancing motivation and engagement. According to Bakker and Demerouti (2007), the balance between job demands and organizational resources plays a critical role in preventing burnout and sustaining employee engagement and performance.

Moreover, the increasing integration of digital technologies into the workplace has led to the emergence of the concept of “always-on culture”, where employees remain permanently connected to work-related tasks. While digitalization offers flexibility, it also creates challenges for maintaining clear boundaries between work and personal life, reinforcing the importance of structured work–life balance policies (WEF, 2023).

In this context, work–life balance represents a key component of sustainable human resource management, contributing to long-term organizational success by improving employee engagement, reducing turnover, and fostering a supportive organizational culture. This perspective is also supported by Kramar (2014), who argues that sustainable human resource management emphasizes the long-term well-being of employees as a prerequisite for organizational sustainability and competitiveness.

Global Trends in Work–Life Balance: Evidence from International Reports

International organizations have increasingly recognized work–life balance as a critical factor influencing both individual well-being and macroeconomic performance. Global reports and indices provide comprehensive insights into the dynamics of work–life balance and its implications for human resources performance.

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, work–life balance is a core dimension of overall well-being, emphasizing the importance of balancing working time with personal life in order to increase productivity and life satisfaction (OECD, 2024). Similarly, Eurofound highlights that flexible working arrangements, such as telework and flexible schedules, contribute significantly to employee engagement and organizational resilience (Eurofound, 2023). This general perspective can be further substantiated through comparative cross-country evidence, which highlights significant differences in work–life balance outcomes.

Recent global evidence also indicates a growing polarization in work–life balance outcomes across countries and sectors. High-income economies tend to offer more flexible work arrangements and stronger institutional support, while employees in emerging economies often face longer working hours and limited access to work–life balance policies (OECD, 2024).

Furthermore, the post-pandemic period has revealed a paradox: although remote work increased flexibility, it also intensified work-related stress for many employees due to the lack of clear boundaries and increased workload (Eurofound, 2023). This dual effect highlights the need for organizations to move beyond flexibility alone and adopt integrated well-being strategies.

The International Labour Organization stresses that excessive working hours and inadequate rest periods negatively affect employee health and productivity, underlining the need for policies that ensure decent work conditions (ILO, 2022). In the same vein, the World Health Organization demonstrates that long working hours are associated with increased risks of burnout and serious health conditions, reinforcing the importance of work–life balance policies (WHO, 2021).

Furthermore, the World Economic Forum emphasizes that the future of work is increasingly shaped by digitalization, automation, and flexible employment models, which require organizations to adopt

innovative and employee-centered human resource practices (WEF, 2023). At the European level, the Work–Life Balance Directive (EU) 2019/1158 promotes gender equality and supports the implementation of family-friendly policies, including parental leave and flexible work arrangements (European Commission, 2019).

To synthesize these perspectives, Table 1 presents a comparative analysis of major international organizations and their contributions to the development of work–life balance frameworks. The table includes key institutions such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Eurofound (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Economic Forum (WEF), the European Commission, the World Health Organization (WHO), and Remote.

The purpose of this table is to consolidate global perspectives on work–life balance and to highlight its implications for human resources performance. The analysis demonstrates that the implementation of policies such as flexible working arrangements, remote work, parental leave, and employee well-being initiatives contributes significantly to increased productivity, job satisfaction, and organizational resilience. Therefore, work–life balance is not only a social objective but also a strategic driver of organizational performance and sustainability.

Table 1. Global Perspectives on Work–Life Balance and Human Resources Performance

Organization	Abbreviation	Report/Index	Key Focus	Implications for HR Performance
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	OECD	How’s Life? 2024; Better Life Index	Work–life balance and well-being	Increased productivity and life satisfaction
European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions	Eurofound	Living and Working in Europe 2023; EWCS	Working conditions and flexibility	Higher employee engagement and resilience
International Labour Organization	ILO	Working Time and Work–Life Balance Around the World	Decent work and working time	Improved health and workforce efficiency
World Economic Forum	WEF	Future of Jobs Report 2023	Digitalization and future skills	Innovation and adaptability
European Commission	European Commission	Directive (EU) 2019/1158	Work–life balance policies	Inclusive and sustainable HR practices
World Health Organization	WHO	Long Working Hours and Health	Occupational health	Reduced stress and burnout
Remote (Company)	Remote	Global Work–Life Balance Index 2023	Global benchmarking	Improved retention and performance

Source: Developed by the author based on OECD (2024), Eurofound (2023), ILO (2022), WEF (2023), European Commission (2019), WHO (2021), and Remote (2023).

A closer examination of the data presented in Table 1 reveals a convergence of perspectives across international organizations, despite differences in their institutional focus. While economic institutions such as OECD emphasize productivity and well-being, organizations like ILO and WHO focus primarily on health and labor conditions. This convergence suggests that work–life balance should be approached as a multidimensional construct, integrating economic, social, and health-related dimensions. Consequently, effective work–life balance management requires coordinated

efforts at both organizational and policy levels, ensuring alignment between productivity objectives and employee well-being.

Impact of Work–Life Balance on Human Resources Performance

The relationship between work–life balance and human resources performance has been widely examined in recent academic literature. Research findings consistently indicate that organizations implementing effective work–life balance policies achieve higher levels of employee performance, engagement, and retention. Previous meta-analytical research also demonstrates a strong positive relationship between employee engagement, job satisfaction, and organizational performance outcomes (Harter et al., 2002).

Flexible work arrangements, including remote work and hybrid models, have become essential tools for enhancing organizational performance. These practices allow employees to better manage their professional and personal responsibilities, leading to improved productivity and job satisfaction. Wang et al. (2021) demonstrate that remote work, when properly managed, can positively influence both employee performance and well-being. However, recent studies also highlight that flexible work arrangements may generate unintended consequences if not properly managed. Excessive flexibility can lead to blurred boundaries between professional and personal life, increased workload, and higher levels of stress, particularly in remote work settings (Eurofound, 2023). Similar findings were reported by Ipsen et al. (2021), who identified both increased flexibility and higher psychological strain as major consequences of working from home during the post-pandemic period. This suggests that the effectiveness of work–life balance policies depends not only on their implementation, but also on the organizational context and managerial practices.

An important emerging trend in the literature is the recognition of work–life balance as a determinant of **organizational resilience**. Organizations that actively support employee well-being are better equipped to respond to external shocks, such as economic crises or labor market disruptions.

Based on recent international evidence, work–life balance is increasingly recognized as a key determinant of both individual well-being and labor market performance. OECD data indicate that employees working excessive hours report significantly lower levels of life satisfaction and productivity, while countries with more balanced working time arrangements tend to achieve better overall socio-economic outcomes (OECD, 2024). Similarly, Eurofound findings show that access to flexible work arrangements and supportive working conditions is positively associated with higher employee engagement, reduced stress levels, and improved job quality (Eurofound, 2023). For example, OECD data reveal that countries such as Germany and the Netherlands, characterized by shorter average working hours, report higher levels of work–life balance and employee well-being compared to countries with longer working hours, such as Mexico or South Korea (OECD, 2024). Beyond these cross-country differences, work–life balance also has broader implications at the macroeconomic level.

From a macroeconomic perspective, work–life balance is increasingly associated with labor market sustainability and long-term productivity growth. Countries characterized by stronger work–life balance outcomes tend to report higher levels of overall well-being and more stable workforce participation (OECD, 2024). This reinforces the idea that work–life balance is not only an organizational concern but also a broader economic priority.

Additionally, work–life balance plays a crucial role in **talent attraction and retention**, particularly among younger generations (e.g., Millennials and Generation Z), who place greater emphasis on flexibility, autonomy, and quality of life. As a result, organizations that fail to integrate work–life balance into their human resource strategies risk losing competitiveness in the global talent market. This trend is further amplified by the changing expectations of the modern workforce, where employees increasingly value meaningful work, flexibility, and psychological well-being over traditional financial incentives. As a result, work–life balance has become a key element of employer branding and organizational attractiveness in competitive labor markets.

In addition, work–life balance contributes to reducing absenteeism, turnover, and burnout, which are critical factors affecting organizational efficiency. Kossek and Lee (2017) argue that integrating work–life balance into human resource management strategies supports sustainable workforce development and long-term organizational success.

Therefore, work–life balance should be considered a strategic investment in human capital rather than a cost. Organizations that prioritize employee well-being and flexibility are better positioned to adapt to changing labor market conditions, attract talent, and maintain competitive advantage in the global economy.

In this context, the relationship between work–life balance and performance should be understood as a dynamic and multidimensional process, influenced by both individual and organizational factors. The relationships between work–life balance and human resources performance are further illustrated in Figure 1.

The model highlights the key organizational and structural factors influencing work–life balance, including flexible work arrangements, workload, organizational support, and digitalization. These factors interact in a cumulative manner, contributing to employee well-being and job satisfaction, which ultimately translate into enhanced human resources performance and improved organizational outcomes.

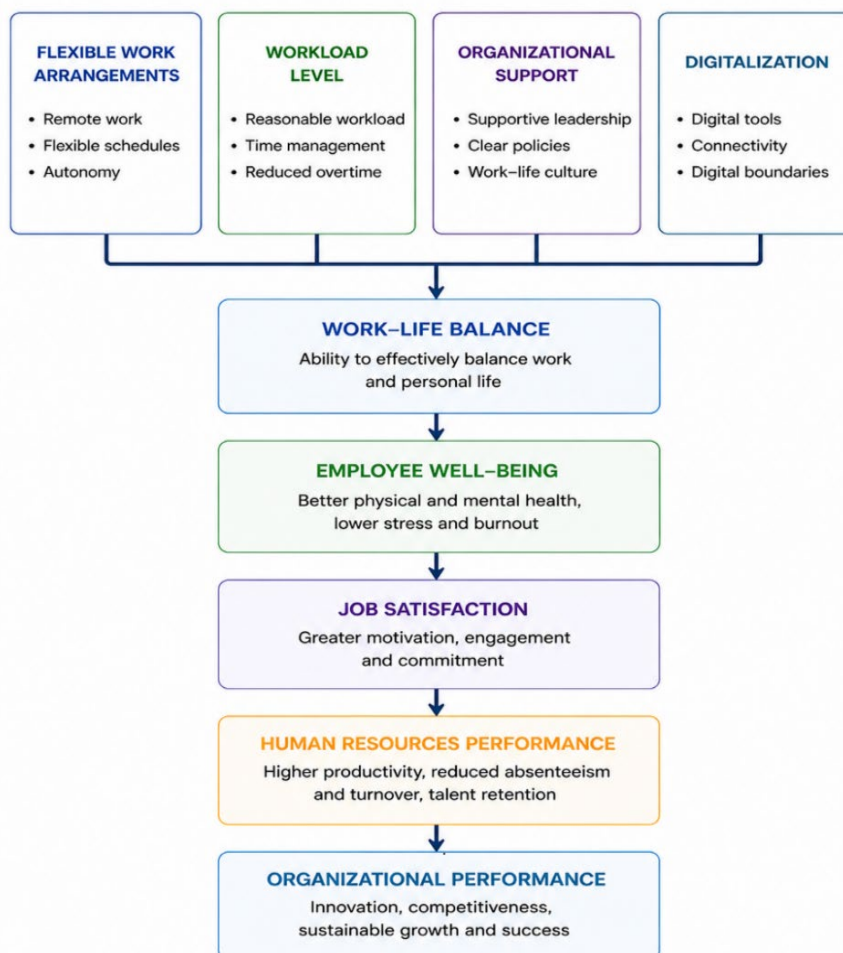


Figure 1. Key Factors Influencing Work–Life Balance and Human Resources Performance

Source: Developed by the author based on OECD (2024), ILO (2022), and WEF (2023).

Conclusions

The present study has highlighted the growing importance of work–life balance as a strategic determinant of human resources performance in the context of contemporary labor market transformations. Based on the analysis of international reports and recent academic literature, the findings confirm that effective work–life balance management contributes significantly to enhancing employee well-being, job satisfaction, productivity, and organizational performance.

The research has demonstrated that work–life balance is a multidimensional construct influenced by organizational, individual, and contextual factors. Flexible work arrangements, supportive organizational practices, and the integration of digital technologies play a crucial role in shaping employee experiences and performance outcomes. At the same time, the study emphasizes that work–life balance should not be approached solely as a social benefit, but rather as a strategic investment in human capital and organizational sustainability.

At a broader level, the analysis of international data provided by institutions such as OECD and Eurofound has shown that work–life balance is also closely linked to macroeconomic outcomes, including labor market stability, workforce participation, and long-term productivity growth. These findings reinforce the relevance of work–life balance not only at the organizational level but also within the framework of public policies and socio-economic development.

However, the study also highlights that the implementation of work–life balance policies is not without challenges. In particular, the expansion of remote and hybrid work models has revealed potential limitations, such as blurred boundaries between work and personal life, increased workload, and the risk of work intensification. These aspects underline the importance of adopting a balanced and context-specific approach to work–life balance management, supported by clear organizational policies and effective managerial practices.

Despite its contributions, this research is subject to several limitations. First, the study is based exclusively on secondary data and does not include empirical evidence at the organizational or national level. Second, the analysis focuses primarily on global trends, without addressing in detail the specific characteristics of individual countries or sectors. Third, the rapid evolution of work patterns and technological developments may limit the long-term applicability of some findings.

In this context, future research directions should focus on empirical investigations at the organizational level, particularly in emerging economies, in order to better understand the specific determinants and outcomes of work–life balance. Further studies could also explore the role of leadership, organizational culture, and digital transformation in shaping work–life balance practices. In addition, comparative analyses across industries and countries would provide valuable insights into the contextual factors influencing the effectiveness of work–life balance policies.

In conclusion, the study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by providing a comprehensive synthesis of global perspectives on work–life balance and its impact on human resources performance. It also offers a conceptual and methodological foundation for future research, highlighting the need for integrated and adaptive approaches to managing the relationship between work and personal life in an increasingly complex and dynamic work environment.

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