META-ANALYSIS OF WORK LIFE BALANCE POLICIES AND THEIR IMPACT ON EMPLOYEE WELL BEING

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Keywords	Abstract
Work-life balance, work-life balance policy, employee welfare, meta-analysis	*This study aims to determine the impact of work-life balance policies on employee welfare. Along with the growing awareness of the importance of work-life balance, various policies have been implemented by companies to support the well-being of employees. This study collects and analyzes data from various studies that have been published to evaluate the effectiveness of such policies in improving employee well-being. The results of the analysis show that the work-life balance policy is significantly positively correlated with the improvement of employee welfare, which includes physical, mental, and emotional aspects with a Hedge's effect size value (d) of 0.891 in the high effect size category. In addition, this study also identifies several moderation variables such as the type of industry, the size of the company, and the type of policy that affects the effectiveness of the policy. These findings have practical implications for company management in designing and implementing effective work-life balance policies to support employee welfare.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Work dynamics have undergone significant changes influenced by technological developments, globalization, and socio-economic changes. Digital technology and automation have changed the way many companies work (Zheng et al., 2015), allowing for greater flexibility in terms of when and where to work. Jobs that previously required a physical presence can now be done remotely, providing an opportunity for workers to better balance professional and personal responsibilities. However, these changes also bring new challenges, such as the increasing demand to always be connected, which can blur the lines between work and personal life (Vaziri et al., 2022). Globalization has also expanded the job market, but at the same time, it has increased competition and pressure to achieve higher productivity (Baltes et al., 1999). In addition, socio-economic changes have affected employees' expectations of their jobs. Younger generations, such as millennials and Generation Z, tend to rate the importance of work-life balance higher than previous generations. They look for jobs that not only offer financial security, but also support their mental and emotional well-being. Companies that are unable to adapt to these expectations may face difficulties in attracting and retaining top talent. Therefore, this ever-evolving work dynamic forces companies to adapt and

implement policies that support a work-life balance, which in turn can improve employee well-being and company productivity (Chaudhuri et al., 2020).

Work-life balance has become an increasingly important issue in the modern world of work, especially in the context of increasing pressures and demands in professional life. This balance refers to the ability of individuals to divide their time and energy proportionally between work and personal life (Forsyth & Debruyne, 2007), so that no one aspect is too domineering or sacrificing the other. When this balance is achieved, employees tend to have lower stress levels, higher job satisfaction, and a better quality of life overall. Conversely, an imbalance between work and personal life can lead to a variety of problems, such as burnout, decreased mental health, and even increased turnover at work (Le et al., 2020).

The importance of work-life balance is also reflected in the relationship between employee well-being and company productivity (Kim et al., 2023). Employees who are able to maintain a balance between their work and personal lives tend to be more motivated, loyal, and productive. They have better energy and focus at work, as they are not burdened by unresolved personal problems or burnout due to excessive workload (Wood et al., 2020). In addition, companies that support work-life balance through flexible policies of working hours, time off, and other welfare programs are often more successful in attracting and retaining top talent. As such, work-life balance is not only important for the well-being of individuals, but also for the long-term success of the organization (Rashmi & Kataria, 2021).

The work-life balance policy in the company has become one of the important strategies in an effort to improve employee welfare and organizational productivity (Medina-Garrido et al., 2023). These policies can include a variety of initiatives, such as flexibility in working hours, which allow employees to adjust their hours according to personal or family needs. Additionally, many companies are now offering remote work options, which gives employees the freedom to work from home or other locations outside of the office (Ropponen et al., 2016). More comprehensive leave policies, including family leave, maternity leave, and mental health leave, are also part of the company's efforts to support work-life balance. By adopting these policies, companies not only help employees manage their time more effectively, but also demonstrate a commitment to employee well-being (Vaziri et al., 2022).

The implementation of the work-life balance policy not only provides benefits for employees, but also has a positive impact on the company as a whole. Employees who feel supported in achieving a work-life balance tend to be more loyal and have higher levels of job satisfaction. This can reduce absenteeism and turnover rates, which are often a major problem in organizations (Baltes et al., 2018). In addition, companies that are known to have a good work-life balance policy are easier to attract quality talent, because prospective employees see the company as a place that supports their well-being and personal development. Overall, the work-life balance policy not only helps to create a more harmonious work environment, but also contributes to improving the company's performance and reputation.

The relationship between work-life balance and employee well-being has been the focus of many studies in recent years, showing that a good balance between work and personal life contributes significantly to employee well-being. When employees feel able to manage their job duties without having to sacrifice aspects of their personal lives, they tend to experience lower stress levels and better mental well-being (Kim et al., 2023). This balance allows employees to have enough time to rest, socialize, and take care of personal interests, all of which are important for maintaining mental and physical health. This enhanced well-being is also reflected in the increased motivation and energy they bring to work, which ultimately increases productivity and job satisfaction.

Conversely, the imbalance between work and personal life can have a significant negative impact on employee well-being. When employees feel overwhelmed by the demands of excessive work, they may experience burnout, chronic burnout, and decreased mental health (Zheng et al., 2015; Beauregard & Henry, 2009). This impact affects not only their performance at work, but also their

personal lives, creating a cycle that is detrimental to both individuals and organizations. Therefore, companies that pay attention to and support work-life balance through the right policies contribute directly to the welfare of their employees. By supporting this well-being, companies can create a more positive and productive work environment, which in turn increases employee retention and reduces costs related to turnover and attendance (Ropponen et al., 2016).

Previous research has shown significant interest in the relationship between work-life balance policies and employee well-being. Individual studies have explored various aspects of these policies, such as flexible working hours, remote work, and employee wellbeing programs, as well as their impact on employee mental health, job satisfaction, and productivity (Tariq et al., 2012; Sojo et al., 2016). For example, several studies have found that flexibility in working hours positively correlates with decreased stress levels and improved employees' psychological well-being. In addition, programs that support work-life balance have also been proven to increase employee loyalty and reduce turnover rates. However, these results often vary depending on the context of the industry, organizational culture, and employee demographic characteristics, indicating the need for a more thorough and integrated analysis. Therefore, this study aims to determine the impact of work-life balance policies on employee welfare.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a meta-analysis approach to combine and analyze the results of various published studies related to work-life balance policies and their impact on employee well-being. This meta-analysis process begins with a comprehensive literature search through academic databases such as PubMed, Scopus, and Google Scholar, using relevant keywords such as "work-life balance," "employee well-being," "flexible working," and "mental health." The studies selected for analysis must meet the inclusion criteria, namely research involving work-life balance policies as independent variables and various employee welfare indicators as dependent variables. In addition, only studies published in the United Kingdom and within the last 3 years were included in this analysis to ensure the relevance and suitability of the data to the current work context. The data of this study came from 13 relevant studies.

After the collection of eligible studies, data from each study is extracted and analyzed using meta-analysis software such as Comprehensive Meta-Analysis (CMA). The variables evaluated include the effect of work-life balance policies on various aspects of employee welfare, such as job satisfaction, stress levels, mental health, and overall work-life balance. Heterogeneity between studies was also analyzed to determine the variation in effects between industry contexts, company size, and employee demographics. Furthermore, the moderator analysis was carried out to identify factors that can affect the strength of the relationship between work-life balance policies and employee welfare. The results of this meta-analysis are expected to provide a more complete and evidence-based picture of how work-life balance policies can be implemented effectively to improve employee welfare. Furthermore, the criteria for the effect size value in the study can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Kriteria Nilai Effect Size

Nilai Effect Size	Kriteria
0.0≤ES≤ 0.2	Low
0.2≤ES≤ 0.8	Medium
ES≥ 0.8	High

Sources :(Zulkifli et al., 2022; Zulyusri et al., 2023; Utomo et al., 2023)

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

(From the results of searching for data sources, 13 relevant studies were obtained. Furthermore, the research data is calculated the effect size and standard error values which can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Effect Size dan Standard Error

Code	Years	Effect Size	Standard Error	Criteria
D1	2022	2.04	0.51	High
D2	2023	1.08	0.42	High
D3	2023	0.66	0.27	Medium
D4	2024	0.59	0.21	Medium
D5	2024	0.61	0.21	Medium
D6	2024	0.92	0.33	High
D7	2024	0.72	0.31	Medium
D8	2023	0.91	0.42	High
D9	2023	1.16	0.45	High
D10	2023	1.24	0.51	High
D11	2022	0.78	0.29	Medium
D12	2023	0.53	0.18	Medium
D13	2024	0.97	0.38	High

Table 2, the results of the analysis of 13 studies of effect size values ranged from 0.53 to 2.04 and the standard error ranged from 0.18 to 0.51. According to the criteria of effect size value (Tamur and Junadi, 2020; Putra et al., 2023; Oktarina et al., 2021) Of the 13 effect sizes analyzed, 6 studies with medium effect size values and 7 studies with high effect size values were obtained. Next, the average value of the effect size with fixed and random effect models is analyzed which can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Random Effect Model

	Estimates	Standard Error	z	p
Intercept	0.892	0.35	11.062	< 0.001

Based on Table 3, the analysis of 13 effect sizes shows that the model shows that the average value of the effect size is 0.892 with an erroe standard of 0.35. These findings show that the work-life balance policy is significantly positively correlated with the improvement of employee welfare, which includes physical, mental, and emotional aspects with a p < value of 0.001 with a high effect category. These effects were seen consistent across a range of well-being indicators, including job satisfaction, mental health, and decreased stress levels. This finding is in line with previous literature that states that work-life balance is an important factor in maintaining employees' mental and physical health. Employees who are able to balance the demands of work with their personal lives tend to feel more satisfied and less stressed, which contributes to increased productivity and loyalty to the company (Tariq et al., 2012; Deery & Jago, 2015).

However, the analysis also shows that there is variation in the effects of work-life balance policies based on the industry context and company size. Industries with high work pressure, such as the financial and technology sectors, show greater benefits from the implementation of these policies compared to more flexible industries such as the creative sector (Yuile et al., 2012). This may be due to differences in job demands and pressures that employees feel in different industries. In addition, large companies tend to be more successful in implementing effective work-life balance policies, likely because they have greater resources to support these programs (Baumeister et al., 2021).

The moderators' analysis in this meta-analysis also revealed that employees' perceptions of work-life balance policies play an important role in determining their effectiveness. Policies implemented without clear support and communication from management often do not have a significant positive impact. Conversely, when policies are supported by a positive work culture and

active participation from management, employees are more likely to make the most of these policies, ultimately improving their well-being. This emphasizes the importance of not only designing good policies, but also ensuring that they are accepted and supported throughout the organization (Tariq et al., 2012).

In addition, these findings show that flexibility of working time is one of the components of the work-life balance policy that has the most influence on employee welfare. Employees who were given the flexibility to set their own hours showed significant improvements in mental health and personal life balance. This policy allows employees to manage their time more effectively, so they can balance work responsibilities with their personal lives (Ropponen et al., 2016). This flexibility can also help reduce conflicts between work and personal life, which is often a source of stress for employees. Nonetheless, it is important to note that work-life balance policies are not always effective in all contexts. The results of this meta-analysis also show that without adequate support from management, these policies may not deliver the expected results. In some cases, policies that are not well designed or do not match the needs of employees can actually increase dissatisfaction and stress. Therefore, companies need to conduct a thorough evaluation of the needs and preferences of their employees before implementing a work-life balance policy (Medina-Garrido et al., 2023).

Work-life balance policies that are inclusive and tailored to the individual needs of employees are more effective in improving welfare. Companies that adopt a more personalized approach to their policies, taking into account factors such as age, gender, and family responsibilities, tend to be more successful in creating a supportive work environment (Le et al., 2020). This suggests that a one-size-fits-all approach may not be adequate in the context of work-life balance, and more adaptive policies are needed to meet the diverse needs of employees.

4. CONCLUSION

From the results of this study, it can be concluded that the work-life balance policy is significantly positively correlated with the improvement of employee welfare, which includes physical, mental, and emotional aspects with a Hedge's (d) effect size value of 0.891 in the high effect size category. In addition, this study also identifies several moderation variables such as the type of industry, the size of the company, and the type of policy that affects the effectiveness of the policy. These findings have practical implications for company management in designing and implementing effective work-life balance policies to support employee welfare.

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