Work-Life Balance of Employees Working in Birendranagar Municipality, Surkhet

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of working hours, workplace culture, leader and coworker support, and remuneration and rewards on the work-life balance of employees in Birendranagar Municipality, Surkhet. Using an explanatory research design and quantitative approach, data was gathered via a survey questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale. The study included a purposive sample of 180 employees. Results indicate that while working hours and workplace culture did not significantly influence work-life balance, leader and coworker support (LCS) and remuneration and rewards (RNR) emerged as critical determinants. LCS showed a strong positive correlation with work-life balance, underscoring the importance of supportive leadership. Similarly, fair remuneration and rewards positively impacted work-life balance, emphasizing the significance of equitable compensation practices. Recommendations include enhancing leader and coworker support systems and improving remuneration and reward structures to promote employee well-being and organizational effectiveness. Fostering a positive workplace culture that supports flexibility and mutual respect is also advised to enhance the overall work-life balance among employees.

1. INTRODUCTION

Work-life balance (WLC) is increasingly crucial in organizational psychology and human resource management, impacting employee well-being and organizational effectiveness (Pangemanan et al., 2017; Kelly et al., 2020). Globalization, technological advances, and evolving socio-cultural norms complicate WLC by blurring work-life boundaries and intensifying job demands (Nurhasanah & Febriani, 2023). Key components include time management, boundary setting, flexible work arrangements, and supportive work environments (Ninaus et al., 2021). Achieving healthy WLC benefits individuals with enhanced job satisfaction and mental health, while organizations see reduced turnover and increased productivity (Sturges & Guest, 2004; Marzuki et al., 2022). Challenges like overwork and rigid work structures persist, especially in non-Western and governmental contexts, necessitating tailored strategies (Agnieszka & Nikola, 2023; Hirschi et al., 2022; Shakya et al., 2021).

Effective policies and support services are essential for promoting well-being and productivity (Basnet et al., 2023).

Effective work-life balance strategies, influenced by factors such as job demands, workplace culture, and management support, include flexible working arrangements, regular breaks, and clear boundaries between work and personal time. Providing employee support programs, promoting a healthy work culture, managing workloads, offering paid time off, and career development opportunities are essential components (Vyas & Shrivastava, 2017). Factors like personal responsibilities, organizational policies such as leave entitlements and assistance programs, manageable workloads, clear role expectations, reduced commute times, socioeconomic factors, and individual time management skills all play crucial roles in achieving work-life balance (Pratiwi & Wahyuningsih, 2023; Bhandari, 2022). Encouraging open communication and implementing wellness programs further contribute to a balanced and productive workplace. By addressing these factors and adopting supportive strategies, employers can enhance both productivity and employee satisfaction.

On the other hand, empirical studies in the field of work-life balance remain limited. To contribute to this gap, this research focused on employees within Birendranagar Municipality, Surkhet. The study aimed to discern specific challenges unique to this context, employing quantitative surveys to examine the dynamics of work-life balance comprehensively. The investigation centered specifically on identifying factors influencing work-life balance among employees in Birendranagar Municipality, Surkhet. Moreover, the prime objective of this study is to assess the impact of various factors, including working hours, workplace culture, support from leaders and coworkers, and remuneration and rewards on the work-life balance of employees in Birendranagar Municipality, Surkhet. The achievement of this goal hinges significantly on addressing the following inquiries:

- How do working hours influence the work-life balance of employees in Birendranagar Municipality, Surkhet?
- What role does workplace culture play in shaping the work-life balance of employees in Birendranagar Municipality, Surkhet?
- How does support from leaders and coworkers affect the work-life balance of employees in Birendranagar Municipality, Surkhet?
- In what ways do remuneration and rewards impact the work-life balance of employees in Birendranagar Municipality, Surkhet?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Work-life balance (WLB) is essential for harmonizing professional responsibilities with personal well-being, involving effective time management, clear boundaries, flexible work arrangements, and prioritization of health (Aoerora & Marpaung, 2020; Bell et al., 2012). It enables individuals to integrate work obligations with personal pursuits, benefiting both individuals and organizations by fostering satisfaction and reducing conflict (Ahmad et al., 2011; Khateeb, 2021). Factors influencing WLB include workload, organizational culture, technology use, supportive relationships, and personal values, addressed through supportive policies and initiatives that promote well-being across both realms.

Besides that, Gupta et al. (2024) conducted a study on remote work among IT professionals, revealing gender disparities in working hours and reduced sleep during remote work, underscoring significant impacts on work patterns and well-being. Basuni and Sopiah (2023) synthesized research findings on work-life balance and burnout, emphasizing their correlation with job satisfaction, stress, and organizational commitment. Agnieszka and Nikola (2023) highlighted workplace conflicts, bullying,

and burnout as obstacles to work-life balance among Polish employees, recommending additional days off and flexible hours to improve conditions. Kardas (2023) explored job crafting's role in enhancing work-life balance and job satisfaction among younger employees, advocating for organizational support in modifying work tasks and schedules.

Furthermore, Parray et al. (2023) found work-life balance to mediate the relationship between psychological capital and employee attitudes, suggesting implications for healthcare organizational practices. Basnet et al. (2023) identified personal and organizational factors influencing work-life balance in commercial banks, proposing interventions to mitigate extended working hours and improve employee well-being. These studies collectively underscore the multifaceted impacts and strategies for promoting work-life balance across diverse organizational contexts and demographic groups. Despite extensive research gaps, particularly in cross-cultural variability and the need for longitudinal studies, this study examines the impact of working hours, working culture, leadership and coworker support, and remuneration on work-life balance among employees at Birendranagar Municipality, Surkhet.

2.1 Conceptual Framework of the Study

Based on prior research by Gupta et al. (2024), Basuni & Sopiah (2023), and Basnet et al. (2023), this study investigates the influence of working hours, working culture, leader and coworker support, and remuneration and rewards as independent variables on the work-life balance of employees at Birendranagar Municipality. Accordingly, the researcher has developed a conceptual framework depicted in the given figure.
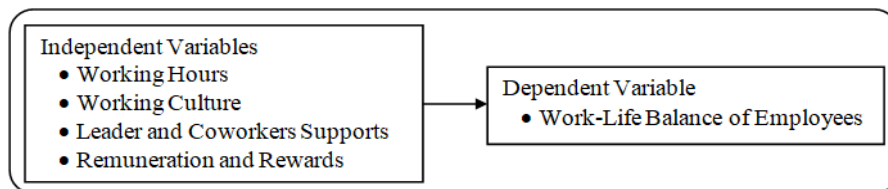

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

2.2 Working Hours and Work-life Balance

Working hours refer to the designated periods employees are expected to be at work, encompassing standard hours and overtime. They crucially impact employee compensation, workload, and work-life balance, with flexible arrangements enhancing both employee performance and organizational productivity (Houston & Hakim, 2005; Roehling et al., 2001). Flexible working hours help to increase the work-life balance of the employees (Barck-Holst et al., 2022; Shagvaliyeva & Yazdanifard, 2014). Therefore, working hours ensure employees' work-life balance in an organization.

2.3 Working Culture and Work-Life Balance

Working culture refers to the collective values, behaviors, and practices within a workplace (Acharya & Padmavathy, 2018). It influences how employees interact, collaborate, and manage their tasks, crucially affecting their work-life balance. A positive culture fosters flexibility and support, enabling employees to balance work and personal responsibilities effectively. In contrast, a negative culture, with long hours and inadequate support, can lead to increased stress and hinder work-life balance (Elliott, 2003). Moreover, an appropriate working culture supports the establishment of a work-life balance for

the employees (Jessica et al., 2023; Yu et al., 2022). The results of the previous studies also pointed to the positive impact of working culture on the work-life balance of employees.

2.4 Leader and Coworker Supports and Work-Life Balance

Leader and coworker support encompasses the assistance, guidance, encouragement, and resources provided by supervisors and colleagues within a work environment. Leader support involves actions by managers or supervisors to aid employee success through feedback, mentorship, training, and necessary resources (Haar et al., 2014). Coworker support involves mutual assistance, collaboration, knowledge sharing, emotional support, and teamwork among colleagues (Hossen et al., 2018). Both forms of support are crucial for fostering work-life balance and enhancing organizational productivity (Shouman et al., 2022; Mahmudah et al., 2022). It reflects the significant influence of leaders and coworkers on the work-life balance of employees.

2.5 Remuneration and Rewards and Work-Life Balance

Generally, remuneration and rewards refer to the compensation and incentives provided to employees for their work and performance. Remuneration includes salary, bonuses, benefits, and other monetary compensation (Vejandla, 2018). Rewards consist of non-monetary incentives like praise, awards, promotions, and career development opportunities (Pathak, 2018). These elements are vital for motivating employees and enhancing their satisfaction, thereby supporting work-life balance in the workplace (Sulistiana & Darma, 2023; Arianti et al., 2022). Thus, remuneration and rewards influence the work-life balance of the employees working in any organization.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study utilized an explanatory research design employing a quantitative approach and a purposive sampling technique to investigate the factors influencing work-life balance among employees in Birendranagar Municipality. Data collection was conducted through a survey questionnaire administered with a five-point Likert scale. The target population included all employees of Birendranagar Municipality, with a sample size of 180 employees selected as respondents for the study. Furthermore, the primary data source, gathered from April 10-20, 2024, played a pivotal role in this research. Descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage were employed to analyze demographic responses, while correlation and regression analyses were utilized to explore variables identified in the conceptual framework. To ensure data quality, various measures of reliability and validity were applied, including Cronbach's Alpha, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, and tests for normality distribution. Cronbach's Alpha values exceeding 0.70 indicated the constructs were reliably measured. Significant results ($p < 0.05$) in Bartlett's Test of Sphericity affirmed the appropriateness of factor analysis, underscoring robust relationships among variables examined in this study.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

Usually, descriptive statistics serve as a foundational step in research, providing fundamental tools and insights essential for further analysis, interpretation, and inference. In this study, these statistics encompassed demographic variables such as age, gender, education, and work experience. The subsequent tables presented the demographic characteristics of the respondents as follows:

Table 1

Demographic Information of the Respondents

Categories	Frequency	Percent	Categories	Frequency	Percent
Age			**Education**		
Up to 25 years	31	17.2	Primary	11	6.1
25-35 years	41	22.8	Secondary	41	22.8
35-45 years	79	43.9	Bachelor	79	43.9
45 and above years	29	16.1	Master and above	49	27.2
Gender			**Experience**		
Female	72	40.0	Less than 5 Years	30	16.7
Male	108	60.0	6-10 Years	91	50.6
			11-15 Years	36	20.0
			More than 16 Years	23	12.8

Notes: Total Sample Size = 180

Table 1 displays the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The age distribution reveals that a majority of the participants, specifically 43.9 percent, fall within the 35-45 years category, while the youngest group, those up to 25 years, constitutes 17.2 percent. Participants aged between 25-35 years represent 22.8 percent, and those aged 45 and above comprise 16.1 percent of the sample. Gender distribution indicates a higher proportion of male respondents at 60 percent, compared to 40 percent of female respondents. Educational attainment is varied, with the largest group holding a Bachelor's degree (43.9 percent), followed by those with a Master's degree or higher (27.2 percent). Respondents with secondary education account for 22.8 percent, and those with primary education make up 6.1 percent. Regarding professional experience, half of the respondents (50.6 percent) have between 6 to 10 years of experience, 20 percent have 11 to 15 years, 16.7 percent have less than 5 years, and 12.8 percent have more than 16 years of experience. The total sample size for this study is 180 participants. The findings indicate that most respondents are in the mid-career age range, predominantly male, and hold a Bachelor's degree. A significant portion of the participants have several years of professional experience. This profile indicates a relatively experienced and educated group likely to offer informed perspectives. The diversity in age groups and educational backgrounds contributes to a well-rounded and robust set of insights for the study.

4.2 Inferential Statistics

In line with the research methodology, inferential statistics were employed to investigate the relationships and effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable. Correlation and regression analyses served as the principal methodological tools for this study. The findings from the regression analysis delineate the impact of independent variables—namely, working hours, working culture, leader and coworker support, and remuneration and rewards—on the dependent variable, which is the work-life balance of employees within the context of Birendranagar Municipality, Surkhet.

Table 2

Correlation Analysis

Variables	WH	WC	LCS	RNR	WLB
Working Hours (WH)	1				
Working Culture (WC)	.990**	1			
Leader and Coworkers Supports (LCS)	.959**	.955**	1		
Remuneration and Rewards (RNR)	.979**	.980**	.971**	1	
Work-Life Balance (WLB)	.967**	.968**	.968**	.979**	1

**. Pearson Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 presents the correlation analysis among five crucial workplace variables: Working Hours (WH), Working Culture (WC), Leader and Coworker Support (LCS), Remuneration and Rewards (RNR), and Work-Life Balance (WLB). The analysis reveals statistically significant positive correlations at the 0.01 level for all variable pairs, as denoted by the Pearson correlation coefficients. Working Hours is highly correlated with Working Culture (.990), Leader and Coworker Support (.959), Remuneration and Rewards (.979), and Work-Life Balance (.967). Working Culture shows similarly high correlations with Leader and Coworker Support (.955), Remuneration and Rewards (.980), and Work-Life Balance (.968). Leader and Coworker Support also demonstrate significant correlations with Remuneration and Rewards (.971) and Work-Life Balance (.968). These findings indicate a robust interrelationship among these workplace variables, suggesting that improvements in one area are likely to be associated with enhancements in others, thereby fostering a more supportive and balanced work environment.

Table 3

Analysis of Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.983[a]	.965	.965	.17816

a. Predictors: (Constant), RNR, LCS, WH, WC

Table 3 presents the model summary, showing a strong correlation (R = .983) between the dependent variable and the predictors (RNR, LCS, WH, WC). The R Square value of .965 indicates that 96.5% of the variability in the dependent variable is explained by the model. The Adjusted R Square, also .965, confirms the model's robustness. The standard error of the estimate is .17816, demonstrating the model's accuracy in predicting the dependent variable.

Table 4

Analysis of Co-variance (ANOVA)

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P
1	Regression	155.437	4	38.859	1224.265	0.000
	Residual	5.555	175	.032		
	Total	160.992	179			

a. Dependent Variable: WLB

b. Predictors: (Constant), RNR, LCS, WH, WC

Table 4 shows the ANOVA results where the regression model explains a significant amount of variance in the dependent variable, Work-Life Balance (WLB), as indicated by the sum of squares for regression (155.437) compared to the residual sum of squares (5.555). With 4 degrees of freedom (df) for regression and 175 for residuals, the mean square for regression is 38.859, while the mean square for residuals is .032. The model achieves a very high F-value of 1224.265, demonstrating that the predictors (RNR, LCS, WH, and WC) significantly contribute to explaining the variance in WLB.

Table 5

Analysis of Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Unstandardized Coefficients		
		Beta	Std. Errors	Beta	t	p
1	(Constant)	-.020	.060		-.330	.742
	WH	.062	.108	.062	.577	.564
	WC	.125	.115	.120	1.086	.279
	LCS	.288	.061	.284	4.746	.000
	RNR	.562	.095	.526	5.894	.000

a. Dependent Variable: WLB

Table 5 displays the regression coefficients analysis for the model predicting Work-Life Balance (WLB). The constant term is not statistically significant (Beta = -.020, t = -.330, p = .742), indicating no substantial baseline effect. Among the variables, Working Hours (WH) and Working Culture (WC) exhibit non-significant associations with WLB (WH: Beta = .062, t = .577, p = .564; WC: Beta = .125, t = 1.086, p = .279). In contrast, Leader and Coworker Support (LCS) and Remuneration and Rewards (RNR) emerge as significant predictors. Specifically, LCS displays a Beta coefficient of .288 (t = 4.746, p < .001), and RNR shows a Beta coefficient of .562 (t = 5.894, p < .001), both indicating strong positive correlations with WLB. These findings suggest that, although WH and WC do not significantly influence WLB, LCS and RNR are critical determinants in enhancing work-life balance.

5. DISCUSSION

The previous studies emphasize the profound influence of working hours on various facets of employee well-being, including compensation, workload management, and overall work-life balance, suggesting that adaptable scheduling can bolster both individual performance and organizational efficiency (Houston & Hakim, 2005; Roehling et al., 2001). Additionally, research underscores the pivotal role of fostering positive working cultures that prioritize flexibility and supportive environments, thereby facilitating effective work-life balance. In contrast, workplaces characterized by prolonged hours and inadequate support mechanisms tend to exacerbate stress and undermine employees' ability to achieve work-life balance (Acharya & Padmavathy, 2018; Elliott, 2003). In addition, leader and coworker support emerge as critical determinants in shaping workplace dynamics, with supportive actions from supervisors and colleagues playing indispensable roles in enhancing work-life balance and organizational productivity (Haar et al., 2014; Hossen et al., 2018).

Furthermore, adequate remuneration and rewards are essential motivators that significantly contribute to employee satisfaction and, consequently, to establishing a harmonious work-life balance within the organizational context (Vejandla, 2018; Pathak, 2018). However, the findings from the current study indicate that while traditional factors such as working hours and organizational culture may not exert significant influence on work-life balance outcomes, effective leader and coworker support systems, combined with robust remuneration and reward structures, emerge as pivotal factors in fostering a conducive and balanced work environment (Haar et al., 2014; Sulistiana & Darma, 2023). In summary, research highlights the importance of flexible working arrangements and positive organizational cultures in enhancing employee satisfaction and work-life balance. Supportive leadership and coworker relationships, along with fair remuneration and rewards, are crucial for fostering a productive and harmonious workplace environment. These factors significantly contribute to mitigating stress and

promoting overall well-being among employees. All the independent variables are more crucial for establishing work-life balance among employees.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This study was conducted to examine the impact of various factors—including working hours, workplace culture, leader and coworker support, and remuneration and rewards—on the work-life balance of employees in Birendranagar Municipality, Surkhet. The results indicate that while working hours (WH) and workplace culture (WC) did not significantly influence work-life balance, leader and coworker support (LCS) and remuneration and rewards (RNR) emerged as critical determinants. LCS demonstrated a strong positive correlation with work-life balance, suggesting the pivotal role of supportive leadership in fostering a balanced work environment. Similarly, fair remuneration and rewards were found to positively impact work-life balance, highlighting the importance of adequate compensation practices. Based on these findings, organizations are recommended to prioritize enhancing leader and coworker support systems and improving remuneration and reward structures to promote employee well-being and enhance organizational effectiveness. Moreover, fostering a positive workplace culture that supports flexibility and mutual respect can further contribute to improving overall work-life balance among employees.

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