



## Analysing Work-Life Balance in Hospitality Industry: Mandapa Employees’ Perspective in Bali, Indonesia

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### Abstract

This dissertation focuses on exploring work-life balance in the hospitality industry in Bali, Indonesia from the employees' perspective. The study aims to investigate the definition and elements of work-life balance and its potential implementation in the industry. The research employs a primary qualitative research approach where five actively employed hospitality workers, aged between 23 and 36, with diverse marital status, hierarchy, and departments were interviewed. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data, which was compared with previous literature on work-life balance. The findings indicate that work-life balance is present for four participants and missing for one. Moreover, the study highlights that hierarchy and marital status impact employees' work-life balance, while culture strongly influences female employees. Additionally, long hours, overtime, and inconsistent schedules were identified as negative consequences of working in the hospitality industry. However, due to the limited sample size and broad demographic range, no definitive conclusions can be drawn. Therefore, this report offers a general discussion on work-life balance in the hospitality industry rather than a specific demographic.

**Keywords:** work-life balance, work-family conflict, WLB in hospitality industry, working culture in hospitality industry, shift pattern in hospitality industry

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, globalization has led to significant changes in the working patterns and demands of employees. The push for higher productivity in employment has resulted in the adoption of misleading practices, such as overworking and overtime, in many industries (Darcy et al., 2012). These practices have caused many employees to gravitate towards companies that adopt work-life balance practices, which refer to efficiently managing work and non-work-related responsibilities (Naithani, 2010; Khanna, 2014).

Unfortunately, these misleading practices have also led to high employee turnover rates, which have forced employers to reassess their strategies and focus on employee satisfaction. This has become a crucial element for both employees and employers, especially in industries like hospitality that involve 24-hour operations and can be considered challenging (Cleveland et al., 2007). Given the importance of work-life balance in the hospitality industry, it is essential to study this topic more closely. Hospitality

employees are often required to work long hours, including weekends and holidays, which can negatively impact their work-life balance (Fernandes & Awamleh, 2019). Moreover, hospitality employees may also face additional stressors such as dealing with difficult customers, handling time-sensitive tasks, and working in a fast-paced and demanding environment (Zopiatis et al., 2014). In conclusion, work-life balance is a crucial element for both employees and employers in the hospitality industry. As the industry continues to evolve, it is essential for hospitality employers to prioritize this aspect and take steps to implement work-life balance practices. By doing so, they can attract and retain top talent, increase productivity, and improve overall business performance. Over the past decade, the leisure industry has grown significantly, resulting in a considerable impact on the hospitality industry (Torkildsen, 2005). Today's consumers are more discerning than ever before and expect high-quality services and facilities for the money they spend (Torkildsen, 2005). As a result, the hospitality industry is faced with an unstable working schedule, long working hours, shifting duties, and an expectation for excellent service interactions (Wong & Ko, 2009; Cugini, Carù, & Zerbini, 2007; Tsai, 2009). Emotion is also a critical component of the hospitality industry, and employees are expected to display positive emotions and suppress negative emotions, particularly when dealing with customers (Hochschild, 2006; Tsai, 2009). This expectation is not easy to meet, especially as it contributes to an already stressful working environment. Moreover, these demands can lead to inner conflicts that can have a profound effect on employees' psychological health, which can ultimately increase their stress levels.

Therefore, it is essential to understand the challenges of work-life balance in the hospitality industry to ensure the well-being of employees and improve job satisfaction. In particular, employers must develop and implement work-life balance policies and practices to promote job satisfaction and employee retention. Studies have shown that work-life balance is a critical factor in employee retention, job satisfaction, and overall productivity (Bryson & Forth, 2015; Tsaur, Lin, & Lin, 2012). By providing employees with the necessary tools and support to balance work and personal responsibilities, employers can improve their job satisfaction and overall well-being, resulting in increased productivity and employee retention.

In conclusion, the hospitality industry faces significant challenges in meeting the demands of consumers while maintaining a healthy work-life balance for employees. Employers must recognize the importance of work-life balance and develop strategies that prioritize employee well-being and job satisfaction.

<b>Elements</b>	<b>Literatures</b>
Long working hours culture	Guest (2002), MacInnes (2006), De Cieri et al. (2005), White et al. (2003), Deery (2009)
Unstable working hours; overworked; customer interaction	Larsen (1994)
Demographic changes; woman	Doherty (2004)
Emotional exhaustion	Karatepe and Uludag (2007)
Job burnout; exhaustion	Deery (2008)
Stress, fatigue and time crunch	Duxbury (2004)
Unsocial situation	Pocock et al (2007)

The preceding section emphasizes the importance of understanding the concept of work-life balance in the context of the hospitality industry. It notes that the concept of work-life balance can have different meanings and interpretations, and that employment law can also vary by country. Therefore, it is crucial to pay attention to these differences and ensure that the concept of work-life balance is adequately understood in the context of each specific situation.

	<i>Working hours per employees per week in related sectors</i>				
Most visited tourists destination (countries)	Wholesale, retail trade, vehicle repairing, household goods sectors	<b>Hotels and restaurant sector</b>	Financial Intermediation sectors	Public administration, social security sector	Health and social works
Spain	37.4	<b>40.4</b>	35.4	32.9	32.9
France	38.1	<b>41.0</b>	38.3	37.8	-
Italy	41.4	<b>42.2</b>	37.6	35.1	35.5
Australia	32.2	<b>31.7</b>	36.3	34.7	30.2
China	52.9	<b>55.5</b>	43.9	39.1	43.4
Turkey	57.9	<b>63.5</b>	45.0	44.7	44.3

The data presented indicates the top tourist-receiving countries globally and highlights that workers in the hospitality industry, specifically in hotels and restaurants, tend to work longer hours compared to other sectors. Interestingly, the data also suggests that most Western countries, such as Spain, France, Italy, and Australia, follow the International Labour Organization's (ILO) standard working hours of 48 hours per week. However, a different situation can be observed in China and Turkey, where employees work more than the standard hours. The findings suggest that the problem of overtime work is more prevalent in Asia compared to Western countries.

Indonesian Employment Law No. 13 article 77 states that all industry workers in Indonesia can work for a maximum of 40 hours per week, which can be achieved by working 7 hours per day for 6 days or 8 hours per day for 5 days. However, the law also acknowledges that this policy may not be appropriate for certain industries, such as the hospitality industry, due to the nature of their operations. The law also stipulates that overtime work should not exceed 3 hours per day or 15-18 hours per week and must be compensated with overtime pay. Despite these regulations, the implementation of shift work in Indonesia's hospitality industry is still considered weak, and long working hours and overtime have become ingrained in the industry's culture across nations, as noted by Deery and Jago (2008).

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

The focus of this study is to examine employees' perceptions of work-life balance (WLB) in the hospitality industry in Bali, and to identify the relevant factors of WLB from the employees' viewpoint. As such, a qualitative approach is considered the most suitable for this research. Qualitative research is distinguished by its purpose, which is to comprehend specific aspects of social contexts. In this case, the study seeks to gain insight into employment strategies that can attract and retain employees by taking into account society's expectations for working in the hospitality industry. The aim is to reduce individual stress and conflicts while increasing job satisfaction. Unlike quantitative research, qualitative research analyzes words and interprets participants' responses. Data for this study was collected through online interviews with participants who had at least one year of work experience in the hospitality industry. This approach ensures that

participants are familiar with the industry's working environment, and their insights will be valuable for the study.

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Researchers have explored the work-life balance issue from various perspectives, including gender (Lyness and Kropf, 2005; Roberts 2007), job position (Alexandrov, Babakus and Yavas 2007), and employer practices (Iverson and Zatzick, 2007). In this study, demographic data of participants such as gender, position, and work experience, as well as gender and department, will be presented in a table to provide a comprehensive understanding of the participants' background and insights.

Code	Gender	Age	Marital Status	Position	Department	Working Experience (years)
P1	Male	31	Married with 2 children	Manager	Purchasing	8
P2	Female	26	Married with 1 child	Staff	Food & Beverage	5
P3	Female	23	Single	Staff	Front Office	1
P4	Male	23	Single	Manager	Beverages	5
P5	Female	36	Single	Director	Rooms	14

Despite the use of snowball sampling, the demographic of the participants in this study is varied in terms of gender, age, marital status, hierarchy, and departments in the hospitality industry. This diversity is important for studying work-life balance because it allows for a range of perspectives to be captured. The participants also have a wide range of work experience, from 1 to 14 years, which represents their knowledge about the industry, their expectations, and their experiences working in it. This diversity and range of experience will enable the researcher to gather a broad range of information. Since this study is using snowball sampling, the demographic shown in the table is broad and diverse, and the data collected is rich compared to collecting data by selecting people who are convenient for the researcher in their field.

Participants	Stressor Factors	Solutions
P2	Guest complaints; excessive workload	Relax and 'let-it-be'
P3	Guest complaints; excessive workload; inconsistent schedule	Reminding self that shift almost over
P4	Excessive workload	Alcohol

The research findings identified common stress factors experienced by employees in the hospitality industry, which have been previously acknowledged in literature. These stressors include an irregular work schedule (Wan and Chan, 2013), excessive workload in a limited time frame (Galinsky, Kim, and Bond, 2001), guest complaints (Altintas, 2018), and are considered as the main sources of stress for employees in the industry. These stressors may escalate to job burnout (Brotheridge and Grandey, 2002) and depression (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993). These findings are consistent with previous research, which highlights the importance of addressing these factors to improve the well-being of employees in the hospitality industry.

The issue of working schedule inconsistency is a common phenomenon in the hospitality industry, which can lead to emotional exhaustion and fatigue for employees. According to the findings of Zhao and Ghiselli (2016), the hospitality employees' working schedule is unpredictable, which means that employees may experience overtime or sudden work notices due to the sudden demand by managers. In this study, inconsistency is defined as overtime, jumping shift, and short-notice calls, and all employees reported receiving such practices, which is considered normal in the industry. However, the definition of inconsistency itself is varied, and the inconsistency often leads to emotional exhaustion and fatigue, as similarly observed in Deery and Jago's (2008) research. The researchers believe that operational employees in the hospitality industry are more vulnerable to exhaustion at work due to their high level of engagement with customers.

In addition to the understaffed situation, which is the outcome of inefficient scheduling, the operational situation is also controlled by customers, making it difficult for employees to anticipate and plan their work schedules. Consequently, the inconsistency in working schedules often accumulates, leading to stress and demotivation among employees. The findings suggest that the inconsistency in working schedules can have a significant impact on employees' well-being and job satisfaction, which ultimately affects their overall performance and retention rate.

Moreover, the correlation between question 9 ('Does your working schedule always consistent?') and question 7 ('What are the positive and negative aspects of your shift pattern?') indicates that participants feel exhausted due to the regular overtime and inconsistent schedule treatment from the employer. Therefore, it is crucial for employers to develop efficient scheduling practices and provide clear communication with employees regarding their working schedules. By doing so, employers can help mitigate the negative impact of inconsistency on employees' well-being and job satisfaction, which can lead to a more positive and productive work environment in the hospitality industry.

Overall, the issue of working schedule inconsistency is a significant factor that contributes to stress and emotional exhaustion for hospitality employees. It is essential for employers to address this issue by implementing efficient scheduling practices and clear communication, which can help reduce the negative impact on employees' well-being and ultimately lead to a more positive work environment.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, this study found that the work-life balance concept in the hospitality industry is similar to previous literature. This study identified that employees often experienced mislead practices such as overtime, long-hours, and inconsistent schedules. Despite these issues, employees prioritized their careers and tended to accept the nature of the industry. However, family support was identified as highly important to replace employees' roles at home. The study also found that the inconsistent schedule, emotional exhaustion, and heavy workload were common in the industry. Although employees tended to accept these practices, they hoped that employers would adopt efficient scheduling to reduce the negative impact. The study concluded that employing knowledgeable employers who support work-life balance would eventually reduce the mislead practice, increase employees' satisfaction and retention rates. It is worth noting that the study had a small number of participants and a broad range of demographics, making it difficult to draw definitive conclusions for any particular group. Therefore, the report provides a general discussion on work-life balance in the hospitality industry rather than specific demographics in the industry.

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