

UNLOCKING THE POTENTIALS OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE IN  
GOVERNMENT PARASTATALS IN NIGERIA

Maxwell Nwinye

Department on Management,

Faculty of Management Sciences University of Port Harcourt

ABSTRACT	KEY WORDS
One of the greatest benefits of a work-life balance is to make employees happy and remain with the organization. Robust work-life balance helps workers to have enjoyable life both inside and outside of work. Availability of wore-life balance boost job satisfaction, employee performance, and minimizes turnover intention among employees. When government parastatals have a good work-life balance policy, retention and productivity may certainly rise. This study concentrated on the potentials of work-life balance affecting employees in government parastatals in Nigeria. However, the neglect of organization’s work-life balance among the employees may create negative consequences towards the employees which directly hinders organizational performance. Furthermore, government parastatals should encourage a robust supervisor support behaviour and work-life balance that may increase job satisfaction, productivity, and reduce burnout among employees.	Work-life balance, supervisor support, autonomy, job satisfaction

Introduction

Organizations that employees often complain of stress, tiredness, and lack of personal time for the family are always having the challenge of workers dissatisfaction, low performance, and persistent turnover intention. Most employees observed that some health issues affecting them are connected with their work. Kelliher et al. (2019) contended that employees tiredness, depression, anxiety, and stress increase when the organization has no work-life balance. Thus, work-life balance entails the ability of workers to accomplish their work and family commitments as well as other non-work responsibilities and activities (Putra & Pratama, 2020). In complimenting this assumption, Panda (2019) stated that work-life balance is concerned with the ability to meet multiple roles in employee’s life both within the working life and outside working life. Work-life balance occurs when an employee is able to satisfy the work and family level commitments in an optimal and compromising manner. Availability of work-life balance also enhances the productivity, job satisfaction, and performance of employees. The balance between work and other life provinces symbolize that some employees may sacrifice an aspect of their work-life to allow more time for other areas of life. Moreover, employees could be more attached to the organization as they benefit from autonomy or freedom of works and family. Salary earners regard work-life balance policies as organizational care and positively influence employees’

psychological attachment to their organizations (Döckel, 2003). In government parastatals in Nigeria, such as Nigeria Immigration Service, Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), and Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC).

Kimathi (2020) pronounced that if employees feel that they have a good job with healthy balance between personal life and work, they are likely to be satisfied with their jobs and remain with the organization. This noble virtue enables government parastatals like Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation to retain highly skilled and experienced employees, which could benefit the organization as whole. By promoting work-life balance among their workers, government parastatals could enhance their reputation, sustainability, and attract top talent. Mwathi and Nzulwa (2019) specified that potential employees tend to regard or give their loyalty to organizations that offer an equilibrium between work and personal life. Putra and Pratama (2020) narrated when employees allocate their time and energy effectively between work and non-work activities, they are less likely to experience exhaustion, stress, and other adverse effects on their well-being, leading to increased job satisfaction, motivation, and engagement among employees. Ordinarily, employees express happiness as their work give them the opportunity to enjoy their personal lives. Retaining high performing employees is the cornerstone of the organization to achieve its goals and adopting suitable human resource management initiatives like work-life balance, also decrease employee turnover and low productivity ((Sawaneh & Kamara, 2019).

## Literature Review

Silaban and Margaretha (2021) described work-life balance as the capability to simultaneously accomplish work obligations and personal life responsibilities without forgoing any of them. Work-life balance has been referred to as establishing a balance between individual professional and personal interests such as family, church activities, community involvement, and hobbies (Prakash, 2018). Similarly, Kalliath and Brough (2008) affirmed that work-life balance connotes the employee perception that work and non-work activities are compatible which promote growth in accordance with an individual's current life priorities. Cousins and Robey (2015) emphasized that work-life balance is a desired psychological state in which the conflicts between non-work activities and work activities are resolved or avoided. In view of different opinions on work-life balance, Bharathi and Mala (2016) clarified work-life balance as the ability to experience a sense of control, to stay productive, and competitive at work while maintaining a happy, healthy home, life with sufficient leisure. Indeed work-life balance signifies the ability of the worker to meet the work responsibilities, family obligations, and societal responsibilities satisfactorily. Work-life balance focuses the notion of balance between work and individual life. It is also an employee's mental state in which they perceive a satisfactory balance between their work and personal life.

The expectations that employees are to be constantly available at duty post created the need for organizations to promote work-life balance. Correspondingly, Schöneck (2018) declared that to reduce employee turnover, organizations are to focus on reducing work pressure, role conflict, while promoting flexible scheduling, ensuring safety, clarifying tasks, work-life balance, and implementing quality improvement initiatives. Jayasingam et al. (2023) maintained that is not easy to find a distinct definition that best describes work-life balance since it is subjective and closely related to work-family balance, work-life conflict, work family conflict, and work-family enrichment. Individuals have different roles which may be work or private roles to perform. Work-life balance is not only reducing

work hours but to prevent work and personal life from conflicting each other. Msuya and Kumar (2022) commented that flexible working hours and supervisor support behaviour promotes work-life balance in the organization. For example, if employees in Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) have control over their work hours, such workers are likely to be happy or satisfied and in turn exhibit more job performance. Apparently, if immigration staff or related organizations enjoys supervisor support, he may feel sense of recognition thereby transfers his job joy into high productivity and profitability (Wong et al., 2020). However, Bhat et al. (2023) insisted that work load may prevent employees from having work-life balance, hence the excess work may not allow the workers to have enough rest which result in stress, health problem, and absenteeism.

Improved work-life balance could have effect on an employee's ability to focus and concentrate at work, whether at home or at the office, and the positive impact result in better service, productivity, and organizational performance (Alex and Kaur, 2023). Although, Burnout due to a lack of work-life balance harms productivity by causing tiredness, a loss of focus, and concentration (Opatrná & Prochazka, 2023). Absence of work-life balance in government parastatals could also results in an increase in employee sick days which further lowering productivity (Vokić et al., 2021). Implementing a work-life balance program that includes things like sleep and physical activity helps employees learn to confront stress by encouraging them to take their time for themselves and find the things that bring them comfort and happiness outside of work through family or personal goals. Todd and Binns (2013) illustrated that when employees feel they have a life outside their workplace, it is much easier to feel motivated while on the job. Having a good work-life balance provides the mental space to think outside of work, which could be translated into healthier habits that may help to meet an individual's professional goals (Opatrná & Prochazka, 2023). Furthermore, when government parastatals like Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) take steps to ensure their employees are happy and healthy both inside and outside of work, this satisfaction tends to lead to improved performance, retention at work, motivation, as well as more job satisfaction. Workers who have a robust work-life balance are more productive and take less time off from work (Talukder et al., 2018). Employees are praiseful and peaceful when their job does not make them feel annoyed or exhausted.

## Conclusion

This study is conducted to gain deeper understanding about the phenomenon of work-life balance and how it influences the behaviour of employees in government parastatals in Nigeria. The study reveals that if government parastatals like Nigeria Immigration Service and Niger Delta Development Commission implement work-life balance, the employees are likely to have job satisfaction, employee engagement, employee health safety, retention, and organizational commitment. Therefore, government parastatals should prioritize flexible working policies to promote work-life balance and employee performance. Government parastatals should encourage a robust supervisor support behaviour that may increase job satisfaction, productivity, and reduce burnout among employees.

## References

1. Alex, O. J. & Kaur, J. (2023). A study on the work life balance of the employees. *Shanlax International Journal of Management*, 11(1), 61–65.
2. Cousins, K., & Robey, D. (2015). Managing work-life boundaries with mobile technologies: An interpretive study of mobile work practices. *Information Technology and People*, 28(1), 34–71.

3. Bharathi, S.V., & Mala, E. P. (2016). A study on the determinants of work–life balance of women employees in information technology companies in India. *Global Business Review*, 17(3), 665–683.
4. Döckel, A. (2003). The effect of retention factors on organizational commitment: An investigation of high technology employee. University of Pretoria.
5. Jayasingam, S., Lee, S. T., & Mohd Zain, K. N. (2023). Demystifying the life domain in work-life balance: A Malaysian perspective. *Current Psychology* (New Brunswick, N.J.). 42(1), 1–12.
6. Kalliath, T., & Brough, P. (2008). Work–life balance: A review of the meaning of the balance construct. *Journal of Management and Organization*, 14(3), 323–327.
7. Kelliher, C., Richardson, J., & Boiarintseva, G. (2019). All of work? All of life? Reconceptualizing work-life balance for the 21st century. *Human resource management journal*, 29(2), 97–112.
8. Msuya, M. S. & Kumar, A. B. (2022). The role of supervisor work-life support on the correlation between work autonomy, workload, and performance. Perspective from Tanzania banking employees. *Future Business Journal*, 8(1), 1–16.
9. Kimathi, F. K. (2020). Effect of work-life balance on employee performance in public universities in Kenya (Unpublished master’s thesis). Chuka University.
10. Mwathi, L. N., & Nzulwa, J. (2019). Determinants of work-life balance in public universities in Kenya: A case of Moi University. *The Strategic Journal of Business & Change Management*, 6(2), 1829-1842.
11. Opatrná, Z., & Prochazka, J. (2023). Work-life balance policies and organizational financial performance: A scoping review. *Employee Relations*, 45(7), 103–120.
12. Panda, A. (2019). Impact of work-life balance on employee retention: The mediation and moderation effect of employee commitment, psychological empowerment, and organizational citizenship behaviour (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). National Institute of Technology.
13. Prakash, V. (2018). Work-life balance: Perceptions of the non-work domain. *IIM Kozhikode Society & Management Review*. 7(2), 97–108.
14. Putra, K. C., & Pratama, T. A. (2020). The impact of flexible working hours, remote working, and work-life balance to employee satisfaction in the banking industry during Covid-19 pandemic period. *Journal of Business and Management Review*, 1(5), 1–9.
15. Sawaneh, I. A., & Kamara, F. K. (2019). An effective employee retention policy as a way to boost organizational performance. *Journal of Human Resource Management*, 7(2), 41-48.
16. Schöneck, N. M. (2018). Europeans work and life out of balance? An empirical test of assumptions from the acceleration debate. *Time & society*, 27(1), 3–39.
17. Silaban, H., & Margaretha, M. (2021). The impact work-life balance toward job satisfaction and employee retention: Study of millennial employees in Bandung City, Indonesia. *International Journal of Innovation and Economic Development*, 7(3), 18–26.
18. Todd, P., & Binns, J. (2013). Work-life balance: Is it now a problem for management? *Gender, Work, and Organization*. 20(3), 219–231.
19. Vokić, N. P., Bilušić, M. R., & Perić, I. (2021). Work-study-life balance – the concept, its dyads, socio-demographic, predictors, and emotional consequences. *Zagreb International Review of Economics & Business*. 24(1), 77–94.

20. Wong, K., Chan, A. H. S., & Teh, P. L. (2020). How is work–life balance arrangement associated with organisational performance? A meta-analysis. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. 17(12), 4446-.