



WORK-LIFE BALANCE OR WORK-LIFE INTEGRATION? CASE STUDY OF FURNITURE INDUSTRY EMPLOYEES IN CIREBON REGENCY, WEST JAVA, INDONESIA

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Abstract:

Work-life balance (WLB) and work-life integration (WLI) are important issues in the modern world of work, especially in the furniture industry, which has high production demands and limited work flexibility. This study explores how employees at Agung Jaya Putra Furniture, Cirebon Regency, West Java, balance or integrate work with their personal lives. This research uses a qualitative approach with in-depth interviews and observation methods to understand the factors influencing the election of intermediate employees at WLB And WLI. Research shows that most employees experience difficulties implementing WLB due to long working hours and high production pressure. As a result, many are simultaneously adopting the WLI approach as an adaptive solution to managing work and personal life. However, the WLI approach also has challenges, especially regarding blurring the boundaries between work and personal life, which can lead to burnout and stress. Some employees benefit from flexibility, while others complain about the lack of rest time and social life. This study confirms that there is no universal solution for all employees because individual factors and the work environment influence preferences for WLB or WLI. Academically, this research contributes to understanding work-life balance and integration in a high-demand industry. From a practical perspective, companies are advised to consider more flexible policies to improve workforce welfare. Further studies with a broader scope are needed to understand the dynamics of WLB and WLI in various industrial sectors.

Keywords: Work-life balance, work-life integration, furniture industry, employee welfare, work flexibility.

INTRODUCTION

Work-life balance (WLB) and work-life integration (WLI) are crucial issues in the modern world of work, especially in the furniture industry, which demands flexible working hours and high productivity (Amah & Ogah, 2021; Gao et al., 2025; Yi & Peng, 2023). This study focuses on Agung Jaya Putra Furniture employees in Cirebon Regency, West Java, to explore work-life balance and integration dynamics. Jamillah (2022) state that WLB influences employee engagement and performance. Meanwhile, Friedman (2023) highlights how changing work patterns influence how individuals manage their professional and personal lives. In addition, Yusuf et al. (2024) emphasize that the balance between work and personal life plays an important role in creating economic sustainability and workforce welfare.

The furniture industry has its challenges regarding work and personal life balance. High workloads and limited flexibility often make it difficult for employees to divide their time between professional responsibilities and personal life. Therefore, it is important to understand how the WLB and WLI concepts are applied in the context of this industry, especially at Agung Jaya Putra Furniture.

This research explores how employees balance or integrate work with their lives and the factors that influence that decision (Bhatti & Alnehabi, 2023; Chandel et al., 2023; Nunes & Rodrigues, 2024). The problem formulation in this research includes how employees choose between WLB and WLI, which factors influence it, and its impact on their well-being and productivity (Muhammad, 2023; Samtharam & Baskaran, 2023; Xu, 2019). This study aims to provide academic insights and practical recommendations for companies to create a work environment that supports work-life balance (Aruldoss et al., 2022; Rodríguez-Sánchez et al., 2020; Sánchez-Hernández et al., 2019).

The research results are hoped to be a reference for furniture industry furniture designers who want to design more flexible policies to improve workforce welfare (Yu et al., 2011). With research limitations that focus on Agung Jaya Putra Furniture employees, analysis can be carried out in a more focused manner to understand the implementation of WLB And WLI in this industry.

Work-life balance (WLB) and work-life integration (WLI) are important concepts in human resource management, especially in the furniture industry with high work demands (Jumani, 2022; Zimmerman, 2021). These two concepts are becoming increasingly relevant as work patterns change and professional demands increase. According to Christy & Indiyati (2022), the balance between work and personal life influences employee performance, especially in the context of work flexibility. On the other hand, Vaanmalar & Sooriapriya (2024) emphasize that WLB and WLI contribute to job satisfaction and employee productivity.

In the furniture industry, employees often face challenges managing work time and personal life (Červený et al., 2022; Mantryba & Niedbała, 2024; Tumusiime, 2022). Long working hours and pressure to meet production targets can cause an imbalance that impacts their well-being. Therefore, understanding how WLB and WLI are applied in this work environment is important to improve workforce welfare.

This study reviews various theories and previous research to understand the factors influencing work-life balance and integration. This research focuses on Agung Jaya Putra Furniture employees in Cirebon Regency, who act as study objects in analyzing the

dynamics between WLB and WLI. By comparing concepts and results of previous research, this study aims to build a systematic thinking framework so that research has a strong foundation in explaining the phenomenon under study.

It is hoped that the results of this study will provide academic insight and recommendations for the furniture industry in creating policies that support employee work and personal life balance. This research also aims to identify challenges and opportunities in implementing WLB and WLI to increase productivity and job satisfaction.

In the modern workplace, achieving a balance between work and personal life has become increasingly challenging, particularly in industries with high production demands, such as the furniture sector. The main issue addressed in this research is how employees at Agung Jaya Putra Furniture in Cirebon Regency manage work-life balance (WLB) or work-life integration (WLI) amidst the pressures of long working hours and tight production schedules. This study seeks to understand the factors influencing their choice between WLB and WLI, and the effects of these choices on their overall well-being and productivity.

Another crucial aspect of this research is the exploration of the adaptive mechanisms employees use when faced with the dilemma of balancing work and personal life. Given the unique challenges of the furniture industry, which often requires more flexibility but also increases the risk of burnout, understanding how employees navigate these conflicting demands is essential. This will contribute to the wider discourse on workforce welfare and how companies can support employees in a high-demand environment.

The urgency of this research stems from the increasing importance of employee welfare in industries like furniture manufacturing, where work pressures are often intense. As industries evolve, understanding the implications of work-life balance and integration becomes crucial for fostering a sustainable workforce. Companies must adapt to changing work expectations and create environments that support both productivity and the well-being of their employees. This research is particularly timely as it explores the impact of these work-life dynamics in a high-pressure industry, providing insights that could inform policies for workforce welfare improvement.

Research on work-life balance (WLB) and work-life integration (WLI) has shown varying impacts on employee satisfaction and performance across different industries. Christy and Indiyati (2022) highlight that WLB influences job performance and employee engagement, particularly in environments where work flexibility is a key factor. Similarly, Vaanmalar and Sooriapriya (2024) assert that WLB is a significant contributor to employee satisfaction and productivity, with a direct correlation to how effectively employees manage the boundaries between their work and personal lives.

Friedman (2023) discusses the changing dynamics of work patterns and how they influence work-life choices. His research suggests that many workers are opting for WLI as an adaptive strategy due to the blurring of boundaries between their professional and personal lives. This shift, while offering flexibility, also brings about the risk of stress and burnout, an aspect that is increasingly being studied in industries with high production demands.

Furthermore, Yusuf & Maryam (2024) examined the role of economic sustainability and workforce welfare in the context of WLB and WLI, emphasizing the importance of achieving a balance to ensure long-term productivity. These studies suggest that while work flexibility can improve job satisfaction, it also poses challenges, especially when boundaries between work and personal time are not clearly defined.

Although previous research on WLB and WLI has contributed significantly to understanding employee well-being, there remains a gap in knowledge regarding the specific dynamics in high-demand industries like furniture manufacturing. Most existing studies focus on broader industries or office-based jobs, leaving a need to explore the implications of these concepts in sectors that require high physical labor and production targets, where work flexibility is limited. This research aims to fill this gap by providing insights into how employees in the furniture industry navigate these challenges and the implications of WLB and WLI on their productivity and welfare.

The novelty of this research lies in its focus on a specific industry—furniture manufacturing—where the interplay of work pressures and personal life is particularly pronounced. This study extends the literature by examining how employees in a high-demand, low-flexibility sector like Agung Jaya Putra Furniture adapt to work-life challenges. The study explores not only the theoretical aspects of WLB and WLI but also the practical implications for policy-making in industries where traditional work-life balance solutions may not be as effective.

The primary objective of this research is to explore how employees at Agung Jaya Putra Furniture manage work-life balance and integration, and the factors influencing their choices. Specifically, the study aims to:

1. Identify the key factors that influence employees' decisions to adopt WLB or WLI.
2. Examine the impacts of these choices on employee well-being and productivity.
3. Provide practical recommendations for companies to create policies that support both work-life balance and integration, enhancing workforce welfare in the furniture industry.

The findings of this research are expected to benefit both academics and practitioners. From an academic standpoint, the research provides a deeper understanding of work-life dynamics in industries with high production demands, offering insights that can contribute to the development of future theories on WLB and WLI. Practically, the research offers valuable recommendations for furniture industry employers, helping them design more flexible and supportive work policies that improve employee welfare, reduce burnout, and enhance overall productivity.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach to understand the dynamics of work-life balance (WLB) and work-life integration (WLI) among Agung Jaya Putra Furniture employees in Cirebon Regency. This approach was chosen to explore employees' subjective experiences and gain contextual insight into the balance and integration between their work and personal lives. Data was collected through in-depth interviews and participant observation to understand the factors influencing WLB and WLI in industry furniture.

According to Arasma et al. (2024), quality of work-life has a close relationship with work-life balance, which can be mediated by work stress, satisfaction, and employee commitment. In line with these findings, this research explores how these factors play a role in work-life balance and integration dynamics at Agung Jaya Putra Furniture. Begum (2021) also emphasized that work factors influence employees' perceptions of work balance, so an in-depth analysis of their experiences is essential. The research sample was selected purposively, considering employee positions, responsibilities, and work experience variations.

The data analysis technique used is thematic analysis, which aims to identify the main patterns in employee experiences related to WLB and WLI. This systematic approach is expected to ensure the validity and reliability of the data and provide deeper insight into the implementation of work-life balance and integration in the furniture industry. Thus, this research can contribute both academically and practically to developing work policies that better support employee welfare in the furniture sector.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research reveals that Agung Jaya Putra Furniture employees face challenges in balancing their work and personal lives. Most respondents admitted that high workloads and tight production demands made implementing an ideal work-life balance (WLB) difficult. However, there is a tendency to prefer work-life integration (WLI) to adjust work to personal life.

From interviews, several employees felt that flexibility at work—such as taking work home or adjusting working hours to suit personal needs—helped them maintain balance. However, others said this integration causes fatigue because the boundaries between work and personal life become blurred. This is in line with the findings of Friedman (2023), which states that changes in work patterns can impact how individuals manage their life balance.

Thematic analysis shows that the main factors influencing employee decisions in choosing WLB or WLI include workload, time flexibility, and support from family and company. Employees who have families tend to find it more difficult to implement WLI because it requires clear boundaries between work and personal life. In contrast, those who are single or work in more flexible fields adapt more easily to work-life integration.

The academic implications of this research indicate that the furniture industry requires a more flexible policy approach to supporting workforce welfare. From a practical perspective, companies can consider implementing more adaptive work policies, such as flexible working hours or employee welfare programs, to improve work and personal life balance.

Overall, this research confirms that no one approach can be applied universally. Each employee has different preferences in managing work and personal life, depending on individual factors and the work environment. Therefore, companies need to understand the specific needs of their workforce to create more inclusive and effective policies.

CONCLUSION

This research highlights the dynamics of work-life balance (WLB) and work-life integration (WLI) in the furniture industry, focusing on Agung Jaya Putra Furniture employees in Cirebon Regency, West Java. The research results show that most employees face challenges balancing work and personal life due to high workloads and tight production demands. Under these conditions, most employees choose WLI as an adaptive solution to accommodate their work responsibilities and personal lives.

However, the WLI approach also has consequences, especially in terms of blurred working time boundaries and increased risk of burnout. Some employees stated that work flexibility gave them more control over their schedules, while others felt that this integration reduced their rest time and social interactions outside of work. These findings support research by Friedman (Friedman, 2023), which highlights how work patterns can influence the balance of professional and personal life.

From an academic perspective, this research highlights the importance of understanding the industry context in determining the best approach to employee well-being. Meanwhile, from a practical standpoint, companies need to consider more flexible policies, such as more adaptive working hours and employee welfare programs, to support the workforce's work and personal life balance.

This research has limitations in the scope of the study object, which only focuses on one company's furniture. Therefore, further studies are needed to explore the dynamics of WLB and WLI in various industrial sectors and gain a broader understanding. In addition, mixed methods research can provide a more comprehensive picture of the impact of work-life balance and integration on employee productivity and well-being.

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