

STUDENTS

Leading with balance

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While I was a full-time student, I had a part-time job. I always found it hard to balance my work and studies. This personal experience that I share with many others inspired my research study about University of Malta (UM) staff.

My work had three goals. Firstly, I wanted to explore the relationship between work-life balance (WLB), employee performance, and job satisfaction. Secondly, I examined whether WLB policies increase employee performance and job satisfaction. Thirdly, I wanted to know whether age, gender, or the employee's own culture positively impacted WLB and employee performance.

WLB is a concept built around striking an ideal balance between an individual's personal life, work, and home. Nowadays, this concept is a predominant matter for workers and organisations around the world. Several businesses want to offer a healthy lifestyle to their employees but expect high performance and satisfaction levels. These levels vary according to the WLB of every single worker.

To investigate this, I circulated a questionnaire amongst 257 support staff, of which 216 are administrative and clerical staff, 22 have managerial jobs, and 19 are industrial staff. The findings revealed that employee performance and job satisfaction are positively impacted by WLB. WLB is affected by age, gender, and the employee's

own culture — especially for employees that have children. Technology within the workspace also affects employee performance, and job satisfaction is influenced by the employee's well-being levels and family satisfaction. Essentially, this means the more fulfilling personal and family life is for an employee, the more satisfied the individual will be with their career. My findings showed that WLB policies at UM are satisfactory; however, employees still recommended customising WLB policies to individual needs. The participants also wanted technology that is adapted to their needs. Some participants commented that work and family are no longer separate, but instead they merge, since employees take their work culture home.

My research can help policymakers in Malta better understand employees' problems. The goal would be to introduce new WLB policies. Focusing on workers' lifestyles would be an easy way to develop a strategic WLB policy. The process isn't easy, but with the right implementation, workers' lives can be improved. **T**

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