



PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES, MANUAL WORKERS, AND INFORMAL WORKERS IN ACHIEVING WORK LIFE BALANCE

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Abstract

This article develops a conceptual discussion of social class and access to work life balance across professional employees, manual workers, and informal workers. It argues that the capacity to manage boundaries between work and personal life is strongly shaped by structural position in the labour system, rather than by individual choices alone. Professional employees are described as having relatively greater access to formal entitlements such as paid leave, flexible arrangements, and welfare programmes, even while facing high performance pressures. Manual workers are portrayed as constrained by rigid schedules, dependence on overtime income, and limited voice in workplace decisions. Informal workers experience blurred boundaries between work and home, enduring income insecurity and absence of formal protection. The paper highlights how gender, unpaid domestic labour, and cultural ideals of a balanced life intersect with class based differences. By linking social class, employment relations, and everyday experiences of time and rest, the article offers a conceptual frame for understanding inequalities in work life balance and for guiding future empirical research and policy design aimed at more equitable working conditions.

Keywords: social Class, Work Life Balance, Professional Employees, Manual Workers, Informal Workers, Labour Relations, Time Allocation.

Introduction

Changes in the world of work in this century are marked by accelerating technology, organizational flexibility, and ever increasing productivity demands. On one hand, these developments open new employment opportunities, remote work models, and more varied time-management arrangements. On the other hand, the boundaries between workspace and personal life become blurred, so experiences of fatigue, boredom, and the loss of time for family appear more frequently. Across many layers of society, the term work-life balance has increasingly been used to describe efforts to maintain physical, psychological, and social well-being amid work pressures (Sarker et al., 2021). Working conditions, work experience, and organizational support can influence how individuals perform their roles both as workers and as family members (Arifin & Putra, 2020; Hariani et al., 2021). However, behind the use of this seemingly universal term lie very sharp differences in experiences among social class groups. Professional workers, factory laborers, and informal workers all struggle with working hours and the demands of earning a living, yet their positions within the social structure and employment arrangements make their ability to manage the rhythm of daily life very different (Anttila et al., 2021).

The image of professional workers is often associated with comfortable offices, advanced digital devices, and company policies that provide flexibility in adjusting working hours (Mustosmäki, 2018). This group usually holds jobs that require specialized expertise, access to higher education, and relatively open career opportunities. Although they face pressure from targets and competition, there are also facilities such as leave, insurance, and opportunities for remote work that can be used to manage life balance. In many organizations, the development of individual competencies and work experience is also considered an important part of improving performance and the professional quality of workers (Sinambela et al., 2020). On the other hand, workers in factories, warehouses, or labor-intensive service sectors often deal with long working hours, shift schedules, and limited room to negotiate with supervisors. Meanwhile, informal workers engaged in small service sectors, street trading, or domestic work frequently have to bear income uncertainty and the absence of formal labor protection. These three groups live within the same society, yet the gap between them in accessing work-life balance is clearly felt.

The balance between work and personal life is often understood as a person's ability to fulfill work demands without sacrificing family needs, health, and self-development (Warren, 2015). In modern management discourse, this balance is promoted as an ideal goal that can be achieved through time management, priority setting, and supportive organizational policies. However, such an understanding tends to rely on the assumption that every worker has relatively comparable control over working hours and workloads. In reality, social class structures sharply shape how much flexibility someone has to refuse overtime, take leave, or move work into the home environment. Diverse work environments require different support strategies so that workers are able to carry out their responsibilities in a balanced manner (Hariyani et al., 2021). Professional workers who possess educational capital and bargaining positions may find it easier to negotiate, whereas laborers and informal workers are often trapped in economic dependency that makes refusing additional working hours feel risky.

Social class includes dimensions of resource ownership, position within the organization of production, and social recognition (Nam, 2014). Professional workers who occupy upper middle social layers generally have higher incomes, access to healthcare facilities, and opportunities to build savings. Many laborers and informal workers are situated in the lower-middle or lower layers, with fragile incomes and limited labor protection. These differences affect not only the quality of consumption but also the ability to allocate time for family, community, and energy-recovery activities. Sustainable public policies need to consider the balance between economic, social, and broader societal welfare aspects (Mardikaningsih & Hariyani, 2021). For professional workers, the concept of leisure time may mean opportunities to exercise, attend courses, or spend time with family. Meanwhile, for laborers and informal workers, leisure time is often consumed by additional work, long commutes, or unfinished domestic tasks.

The everyday experiences of workers from various social classes illustrate that work-life balance is not merely a matter of individual choice, but is closely related to the regularity of working hours, the intensity of physical and mental demands, and income certainty (Tiwari, 2020). Professional workers may experience high psychological pressure due to targets and competition, yet they often have access to counseling services, leave, or employee welfare programs. Laborers may face physical exhaustion and rigid

work schedules that make it difficult for them to arrange family activities, children's education, or social engagements. Informal workers encounter a more fluid yet fragile situation, where the boundary between work and home nearly disappears because income-generating activities take place in the same space as family life. The existence of social organizations and community participation also often plays a role in strengthening solidarity and social support amid the dynamics of working life (Rojak et al., 2021). In situations such as these, the discourse of work-life balance that circulates in general discussions often does not fully reach the realities of the lower social strata.

Problems begin to appear when work-life balance is communicated as a personal responsibility without addressing the differences in social class that influence workers' actual capacity to manage their time and energy (Todd & Binns, 2013). Narratives of self-development that emphasize the importance of time management, discipline, and healthy lifestyles may feel unfamiliar to laborers and informal workers whose working hours are determined by others or by the scarcity of job opportunities. While professional workers are encouraged to establish boundaries between work and home, many laborers do not have the right to refuse overtime or additional working hours. In professional practice, ethical values and integrity are also considered important in maintaining balance between the interests of individuals, organizations, and society (Saktiawan et al., 2021). Informal workers may have to remain constantly on standby waiting for customers, making it difficult to apply clear limits on working hours. When these structural dimensions are ignored, the term work-life balance risks becoming a discourse that is closer to the experiences of the upper-middle class.

Another issue relates to the design of organizational and state policies that often center on formally employed, salaried workers, while millions of workers exist within non-standard employment relationships. Policies regarding leave, flexible working hours (Rubery et al., 2016), and employee welfare programs are generally designed for professionals and office workers. Laborers in labor-intensive sectors often occupy weak bargaining positions when requesting more family-friendly work arrangements. Informal workers are frequently not covered at all by protections concerning working hours, leave, or social security, even though their working hours may exceed those of formal workers. Institutional support such as cooperatives and community-based financing is also considered capable of helping strengthen

the economic resilience of small-scale worker groups (Wiyandarini et al., 2021). This inequality widens the gap in the real ability to achieve work-life balance among different social class groups. At the level of discourse, all workers are encouraged to maintain balance, yet at the structural level, the facilities and flexibility required to achieve it are distributed very unequally.

The importance of this study lies in the need to clarify who actually has a realistic opportunity to achieve such balance. By examining theoretical ideas about social class, employment relations, and worker welfare, this study seeks to demonstrate that the ability to regulate time between work and personal life cannot be separated from one's position within the structure of production. A focused conceptual study is expected to highlight that the discourse of work-life balance needs to be read critically so that it does not obscure the structural inequalities experienced by laborers and informal workers, while also providing a foundation for efforts to formulate policies that are more sensitive to class differences. In addition, the development of individual capacity through education, training, and the strengthening of competencies can also be part of efforts to improve the quality of working life across various sectors (Pramudya & Mardikaningsih, 2021).

The purpose of writing this article is to present a systematic conceptual description of the relationship between social class and access to work-life balance, focusing on comparisons between the experiences of professional workers, laborers, and informal workers. Specifically, this paper aims to identify structural dimensions that influence each group's ability to regulate working hours, allocate time for family, and maintain physical and psychological health. From a theoretical perspective, this study is expected to enrich discussions of social class in labor studies by incorporating the dimension of work-life balance as an important indicator of welfare. From a practical perspective, this discussion is expected to provide a framework of thinking for policymakers, labor unions, and civil society organizations in designing initiatives that are more sensitive to differences in class positions within the world of work.

Method

This study is structured using a qualitative literature study approach that focuses on developing conceptual ideas about the relationship between social class and work-life balance. Bryman (2016) emphasizes that social research

requires clarity of design, including when the primary sources consist of written works. Within this framework, the search for reading materials was conducted through the selection of texts discussing social class, labor relations, and the theme of work–life balance, which were then mapped according to their theoretical proximity. Gomm (2008) views social research methodology as a critical effort to understand how concepts are constructed and used. This perspective encourages the author not only to cite sources but also to examine conceptually the assumptions found in writings on work–life balance that often originate from the experiences of middle-class workers.

Baronov (2015) emphasizes that the conceptual foundation in social research greatly determines the direction of interpretation of social phenomena. Referring to this idea, this article constructs a theoretical framework that integrates an understanding of class as a position within the structure of production with the concept of work–life balance as a normative aspiration regarding quality of life. The reading sources are treated as materials for formulating categories and relationships between concepts, rather than as data for statistical calculation. Bryman’s (2016) suggestion regarding the importance of consistency in analytical logic is applied by arranging the discussion flow from the formulation of social class, the description of the characteristics of professional workers, laborers, and informal workers, to the discussion of disparities in access to work–life balance. In line with Gomm’s (2008) encouragement to remain critical, this article also reexamines the latent assumptions within the discourse of work–life balance that tend to generalize the experiences of particular classes. The approach recommended by Baronov (2015) helps ensure that the entire discussion remains grounded in the objective of building conceptual understanding, rather than merely compiling a summary.

Result and Discussion

Work Life Balance is a condition of balance achieved by individuals in managing the demands of work and personal life so that both can run harmoniously without causing prolonged conflict (Bhende et al., 2020). This concept emphasizes the ability of individuals to fulfill professional responsibilities while maintaining the quality of personal life, including family relationships, physical and mental health, social activities, and recreational needs. Work Life Balance is not only related to the

quantitative division of time, but also concerns the quality of psychological involvement, role satisfaction, and the ability of individuals to maintain energy and emotional well-being across various life domains. The balance between family life and work is often seen as an important factor that can influence an individual's emotional condition and the quality of relationships in daily life (Safira et al., 2021).

According to Sheldon et al. (2010), the measurement indicators can be seen from the level of time balance between work and personal life, the ability of individuals to reduce work-family role conflict, and the level of satisfaction with both work life and personal life. In addition, other indicators include controlled levels of work stress, flexibility in work time arrangements, organizational support for employees' personal needs, and the ability of individuals to maintain physical health, emotional stability, and positive social relationships. Work Life Balance is also reflected through work productivity that remains optimal without sacrificing personal well-being, the emergence of comfort in carrying out various life roles, and the sustainability of work performance in the long term. Efforts to maintain a balance between work and personal life can increase job satisfaction and help workers perform their roles more stably in the long term (Arifin et al., 2021).

Social class is a concept in social science that describes the grouping of individuals or community groups based on their relative position within the social and economic structure (Sørensen, 2019). This grouping is generally determined by a combination of factors such as income level, education, type of occupation, ownership of economic resources, and social status recognized within society. Social class does not only reflect an individual's economic capacity, but also represents lifestyle patterns, access to opportunities, social networks, and the level of influence within the social environment. From a sociological perspective, social class shapes consumption preferences, value orientations, opportunities for social mobility, and the ways individuals participate in economic and educational activities. Differences in social position often create unequal life experiences for individuals in managing their work life as well as their social life (Mardikaningsih, 2021).

According to Rubin et al. (2014), indicators for measuring social class can be observed through household income level, job stability and the type of profession undertaken, as well as the level of education attained by individuals or families. In addition, ownership of economic assets such as

houses, vehicles, or investments is also an important indicator in determining social class position. Other factors reflecting social class include consumption patterns, access to quality education and healthcare services, residential environment, and the level of participation in social and cultural activities. Social class can also be identified through perceptions of social status in society, the level of intergenerational social mobility, and the ability of individuals to obtain broader economic and social opportunities. Differences in the resources owned by individuals can influence their opportunities to improve quality of life and obtain better economic prospects (Gani et al., 2021).

Social class in modern society can be understood through an individual's position within the occupational structure that reflects the distribution of economic power, the level of job security, and access to social resources (Giddens, 2018). Professional workers generally occupy the middle to upper-middle class because they possess higher education, specific expertise, stable income, and broader career mobility opportunities, enabling them to obtain social recognition and access to quality services. In contrast, laborers belong to the working class characterized by dependence on wages, limited control over the work process, and vulnerability to economic changes and industrial policies. Meanwhile, informal workers occupy a more vulnerable position in the social structure because they work without formal labor protection, have unstable incomes, and have limited access to social security and welfare. These differences indicate that occupational structure has a significant influence on quality of life and the way individuals carry out their economic activities (Darmawan et al., 2020). The differences in the locations of these three groups within the social structure create variations in lifestyle, educational opportunities for families, levels of economic security, and the ability to participate in social and economic decision-making in society.

Social class can be understood as the grouping of positions of individuals and groups within the organization of production based on ownership of resources, type of work, and level of influence over economic decisions (Mello & Paula, 2019). Within this framework, professional workers, laborers, and informal workers occupy different locations within the social structure. Professional workers tend to have high educational capital and are in employment relationships that provide fixed salaries, social protection, and

career opportunities. Laborers occupy a structurally weaker position, with limited participation in determining work policies. Informal workers are often on the margins of the formal system, relying on fluctuating market demand. These positional differences create significant variations in the ability to control working hours, plan for the future, and maintain balance between work and personal life. The pattern of employment relations and the management system implemented can also influence how individuals perform their work roles and adapt to job demands (Darmawan, 2013).

Work-life balance for professional workers is often associated with policies such as flexible working hours, remote work arrangements, and relatively easy access to leave (Nadrag & Bala, 2014). In many organizations, professional workers are viewed as assets whose well-being must be maintained so that productivity and creativity remain preserved. They are more likely to receive offers for part-time work, flexible start times, or opportunities to adjust workloads in coordination with supervisors. This condition provides space for organizing life outside work, such as family roles, community activities, and self-development. Although the pressure of targets and routine meetings can be demanding, mechanisms exist that allow negotiation. From a class perspective, this shows that structural position carries certain rights and flexibility that are not evenly possessed by other groups of workers. Employment relationships supported by teamwork and strong social networks often help workers cope with work pressure in a more positive way (Putra et al., 2021).

Laborers in industrial and labor-intensive service sectors face very different situations. Their working hours are usually strictly regulated by company schedules, with shift and overtime systems arranged according to production needs. The space to independently arrange working schedules is extremely limited. Refusal to accept overtime may be perceived as a lack of loyalty and may even threaten job continuity. Relatively low wages make many laborers rely on overtime to ensure sufficient monthly income. This creates a cycle that makes work-life balance a concept that is difficult to achieve. Time for family, rest, or social involvement decreases, while physically demanding work increases fatigue. Their social class is reflected in a strong dependence on management decisions and limited access to protective mechanisms that would allow more humane work arrangements (Gray & Kish-Gephart, 2013). Interpersonal abilities and work experience

are also often important factors that help workers survive daily work pressures (Darmawan & Mardikaningsih, 2021).

Informal workers are in a situation that combines apparent freedom with high vulnerability (Kossek & Lautsch, 2017). They seem to have flexibility in determining working hours because they are not bound by office schedules. Street vendors, daily laborers, motorcycle taxi drivers, or domestic workers, for example, may choose when to start working. However, income uncertainty and the absence of social security push them to continue working as long as possible in order to secure income for that day. Under such conditions, the boundary between working hours and personal time becomes blurred. Home and workplace often merge, so the presence of family mixes with income-generating activities. Work-life balance for this group is not about setting boundaries, but rather about surviving in situations where work penetrates almost every productive hour of the day. Social phenomena such as community participation and the dynamics of social relationships also often influence how individuals carry out their economic roles in everyday life (Rojak et al., 2021).

The concept of work-life balance often starts from the assumption that individuals can consciously make rational choices regarding time allocation (Kring et al., 2010). However, these choices are always framed by class structures that determine the availability of alternatives. Professional workers who have savings and job security may be willing to refuse excessive workloads. Meanwhile, laborers and informal workers who live on daily or monthly income without reserves find it difficult to take the risk of reducing working hours. This difference shows that the ability to manage balance is not merely the result of personal capacity, but rather a structural privilege related to class position. Encouraging all workers to manage work-life balance without distinguishing class may overlook the real inequalities in opportunities and bargaining power.

In professional environments, workplaces usually provide various programs that claim to support work-life balance, such as fitness facilities, counseling services, or employee family activities (Kossek & Lautsch, 2017). Such programs are often presented as a form of organizational concern for employee well-being. However, the availability of programs does not always mean that all professional workers can freely utilize them. Position within the career hierarchy, work culture, and leadership style also

determine whether workers feel confident taking leave or reducing working hours without worrying about being perceived as less dedicated. Nevertheless, compared with laborers and informal workers, this group remains closer to real opportunities to pursue balance because there are formal mechanisms they can refer to.

In the world of laborers, support for work–life balance largely depends on collective strength through unions or worker associations (Rani, 2013). Without collective mechanisms, individual demands for more humane working hour arrangements tend to be easily ignored, especially in companies that prioritize production volume. Reducing working hours or rearranging schedules may be seen as disrupting operational efficiency. This shows that the working-class position, which is weak in the control of capital and decision-making, places them in high dependence on company policies. Even when the state sets limits on working hours, implementation in practice can fall far from expectations if supervision is weak. Under such conditions, work–life balance becomes an aspiration that often collides with the company’s need to reduce costs and pursue targets.

For informal workers, the absence of formal employment relationships often makes it difficult for state policies to reach them (Warren, 2015). Regulations regarding working hours, leave, or minimum wages are not easily applied in fluid employment relations based on verbal agreements. Domestic workers who live with their employers, for example, may experience almost unlimited working hours. Small traders who depend on market crowds must adjust their opening hours to the rhythm of the marketplace. Under such conditions, advocating work–life balance without addressing market structures and social protection will only burden individuals with responsibilities for which they lack resources. Their social class is placed at the lowest position within the hierarchy of protection, even though they contribute significantly to the continuity of life in both urban and rural areas.

The gender dimension enriches the discussion of social class and work–life balance. Professional women workers often face dual expectations, namely achieving success in the workplace while continuing to manage household responsibilities (Damaske, 2011). They may have access to flexibility policies, but significant domestic responsibilities often lead them to use that flexibility to add more hours of household work rather than purely for personal recovery. For female laborers, the double burden appears in long industrial

working hours followed by unpaid domestic work. Female informal workers, such as small traders or domestic workers, face overlapping paid work and reproductive work at home. Social class and gender combine to create a situation in which work–life balance becomes a highly complex issue.

Work–life balance is also related to mental and physical health. Professional workers who are trapped in long working hours and high mental demands face risks of psychological exhaustion, sleep disturbances, and feelings of alienation from family (Pichler & Pichler, 2009). However, they tend to have access to adequate healthcare services. Laborers and informal workers face a combination of physical fatigue and economic pressure that can trigger prolonged stress, while access to professional healthcare services is often limited. These differences show that social class influences not only exposure to imbalance but also the capacity for recovery. Ideally, work–life balance includes a balance between workload and recovery. When access to recovery is unequal, class inequality becomes increasingly reinforced.

At the symbolic level, work–life balance is often depicted through the image of someone who can enjoy time with family, exercise, and pursue hobbies while still maintaining a career (Tiwari, 2020). Such an image generally reflects the lifestyle of the urban middle class. Laborers and informal workers rarely appear in this ideal representation. Their absence in public discourse reinforces the impression that they are outside the scope of balance aspirations. In fact, what the middle class calls quality time may appear for lower groups only momentarily between working hours and long commutes. Conceptual studies need to critically examine the idealization of work–life balance that ignores the diverse realities of social class.

Class differences are also visible in the ability to plan for the future. Professional workers with stable incomes and savings can design career strategies, rest periods, and even early retirement in order to maintain quality of life. Many laborers and informal workers live within income patterns that are spent entirely on daily necessities, leaving very little space to plan long-term work breaks. In such situations, work–life balance is more likely to be perceived as a luxury rather than a right (Lewis & Beauregard, 2018). This experience shows that social class influences the temporal dimension of life, including how far individuals can project themselves into the future and regulate the rhythm of work throughout the life cycle.

From the perspective of social justice, access to work–life balance should be viewed as part of the right to decent work (Bednarowicz, 2020). Decent work is not merely about adequate wages, but also about conditions that allow workers to maintain social relationships, fulfill family responsibilities, and preserve their health. Social class determines how close workers are to these decent working conditions. Professional workers are more likely to experience them, while laborers and informal workers often experience only a small portion of them. Therefore, discussing work–life balance without addressing class inequality means ignoring a very important dimension of justice. Literature studies on this theme can help rearticulate work–life balance as an issue of redistributing opportunities, rather than merely individual management.

Media and popular culture play a role in shaping society's perceptions of work and life. Television series, films, and advertisements often highlight the lifestyle of professional workers struggling to find balance between office and home. Laborers and informal workers more often appear as background figures rather than as main characters with complex work–life balance dilemmas. This representational inequality can influence policy, because policymakers themselves live in a symbolic world filled with middle-class imagery (Carnes, 2013). Without critical reflection, worker welfare policies tend to target profiles of formal employees with office working hours, while other groups remain beyond reach. Here, conceptual studies play a role in revealing the imaginary boundaries formed by such cultural representations.

In management discourse, there is a tendency to link work–life balance with employee productivity and loyalty (Oludayo et al., 2018; Nwagbara, 2020). Companies are encouraged to provide supporting facilities so that workers remain motivated. This approach, although useful, often focuses on the relationship between companies and professional workers whose performance is easy to measure. Laborers on production lines and informal workers who operate as suppliers or external partners are sometimes not included in the calculation of work–life balance programs. In fact, their quality of life also affects the sustainability of the entire production chain. Expanding the scope of managerial thinking to include all links in the chain of work becomes important so that the discourse on work–life balance does not further reinforce class divisions. In addition, organizations also need to consider business sustainability strategies that are capable of balancing

productivity demands with the well-being of the people involved in them (Mardikaningsih & Darmawan, 2021)

Differences in social class also influence the social support networks available to workers (French et al., 2018). Professional workers often have access to professional networks, hobby communities, and support services that can help them cope with work pressure. These networks help maintain balance through the exchange of information, emotional support, and alternative job opportunities. Many laborers and informal workers rely on family and neighborhood networks, which, although warm, are often also in fragile economic conditions. Such support is important but has limitations, so the collective capacity to protect work-life balance is relatively small. This difference in network capacity represents another dimension of class inequality.

Within the framework of family life, social class determines parenting patterns and the division of domestic labor that influence work-life balance (Warren, 2015). Professional workers are more likely to afford domestic assistance services or childcare, allowing part of the domestic burden to be delegated. Laborers and informal workers tend to carry out household tasks themselves outside their paid working hours. As a result, their total working hours, when combining paid and unpaid work, can far exceed those of professional workers. This difference is rarely reflected in general discussions because domestic work is often not formally counted. Conceptual studies on class and work-life balance need to position domestic work as an integral part of the total workload.

Perceptions of time may differ across social classes. Professional workers view time as a resource that can be managed, scheduled, and optimized (Shahbazi et al., 2019). Laborers often experience time as something controlled by others, determined by bells, machines, or supervisors. Informal workers view time as a continuous negotiation between earning a living and managing household responsibilities. These differences in how time is understood influence how each group constructs expectations regarding work-life balance. The concept of balance that relies on structured schedules may be relevant for professional workers but less suitable for informal workers who live in conditions of uncertainty. Therefore, the concept of work-life balance itself needs to be adapted in order to capture experiences across different social classes.

Overall, this discussion shows that social class is a key factor in understanding disparities in access to work–life balance. Professional workers are closer to the ideal model often portrayed in public discourse. Laborers and informal workers face structural barriers that make such balance difficult to achieve in practice. These differences are not merely variations in lifestyle but are related to structures of power and the distribution of resources in society. Literature studies that highlight the relationship between class and work–life balance help shift the focus from individual solutions to questions about how work structures can be organized to support human life more fairly.

Conclusion

Work life balance is not a condition that can be achieved equally by all workers; rather, it is strongly influenced by their social class position within the labor structure. Professional workers, equipped with educational capital and access to institutional policies, have greater opportunities to regulate their working hours, utilize leave, and maintain space for personal life. In contrast, laborers and informal workers often face significant constraints, including rigid or excessively long working hours, limited social protection, and strong dependence on daily income. This disparity indicates that a class-neutral discourse on work life balance risks obscuring underlying structural inequalities. Therefore, understanding work life balance should be situated within a social class framework, allowing worker welfare agendas to be formulated with greater sensitivity to diverse experiences and bargaining power.

The implications of this study highlight the importance of incorporating a social class perspective into the design of labor policies and organizational programs related to work life balance. Policymakers and business actors need to recognize that flexibility programs and well being initiatives designed for professional workers do not automatically address the needs of laborers and informal workers. A more comprehensive conception of decent work is required one that ensures limits on working hours, social protection, and access to health services for all workers. For future research, empirical studies that test this conceptual framework across different sectors and regions will help enrich understanding of the varied real-life experiences of workers. Education and public discourse on work life balance should also

move beyond emphasizing individual time-management strategies and instead highlight issues of structural justice within the world of work.

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