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The Work-Life-Flow of Spanish and Portuguese Employees: Preferences, Sleep, Recovery, and Influencing Factors

Dr. Rita Berger | University of Barcelona

Co-Authors: Czakert, J.P., Pais, L., Scheibein, F., Wells, J., dos Santos, N.

1. Relevance and Research goals

Why the work was worth doing



Relevance: The project Work-Life-Flow (WLF)



WORK-LIFE-FLOW



Excellence based profiling to identify and apply tools and tra for a better and sustainable Work-Life-Flow



<https://www.work-life-flow.eu/>

Dr. Rita Berger | University of Barcelona:

Relevance: The project Work-Life-Flow (WLF)



 Erasmus+ Project WORK-LIFE-FLOW
361 followers
2mo • 

 A glimpse into WLF Study results:

Between 28-33% of the WLF study participants indicated that they work overtime "very often" or "almost always". A recent ILO report states that 35.4% of the world's workers work more than 48 hours per week.

Unsurprisingly, the conversation about the 4-day week is all over the world. New insights from the UK pilot programme:

...  Erasmus+ Project WORK-LIFE-FLOW
361 followers
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The most common New Year's resolutions typically involve ways to improve personal well-being and happiness. Achieving a better work-life flow is a popular one. Fostering a better work-life flow is a two-way street concerning both organizations and individuals.

Here are three tips that might help you:

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/erasmus-project-work-life-flow>

Relevance: The flexibilization of work & Work-Life-Flow



Increased **remote work** and new **(inter-)national regulations**; partially due to COVID-19.



The emerging integration of the work and nonwork area means **increasingly blurred boundaries** between both areas.



This calls for a **more holistic view on employee wellbeing** across the entire work-life system, including work, nonwork, recovery and sleep.

All pictures are generated by OpenAI's DALL-E: OpenAI. (n.d.). DALL-E 2. Retrieved from <https://openai.com/product/dall-e-2/>

Research Goals

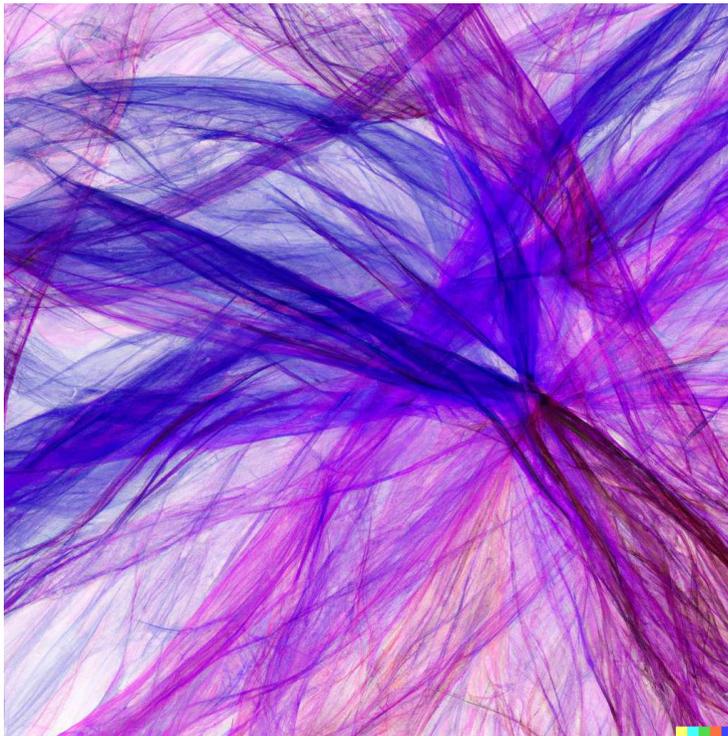
- To obtain knowledge about the relationship between various personal and work-related demands/resources and psychophysiological recovery in Spain and Portugal
- To cross-culturally compare the results
- To feed a modular training solution (WLF-Solution) that enables individuals and organizations to foster a healthy Work-Life-Flow

2. Theoretical Background

The Concept of Work-Life-Flow



The Concept of Work-Life-Flow (WLF)



“An abstract blue-purple drawing of flow”

DALL-E 2. Retrieved from <https://openai.com/product/dall-e-2/>

- A re-conceptualization effort of the rather traditional concept of work-life balance
- WLF integrates the elements of flow, boundary, and resource-demands based theories
- Does not neglect potential incompatibility issues but also focuses on enriching resource-based processes (Positive Psychology)

“Work-life balance sets the bar too low” – Adam Grant

“The best moments usually occur when a person’s body or mind is stretched to its limits in a voluntary effort to accomplish something difficult and worthwhile.”

– Mihály Csíkszentmihályi

Boundary Theory (Ashforth et al., 2000)

MESIAN HUTH, GOOGLE, PEOPLE ANALYST | DECEMBER 14, 2016



Segmentors vs Integrators: Google's work-life-balance research



“Segmentors vs Integrators”

Google. Retrieved from

<https://rework.withgoogle.com/blog/googles-work-life-balance-segmentors-v-integrators/>

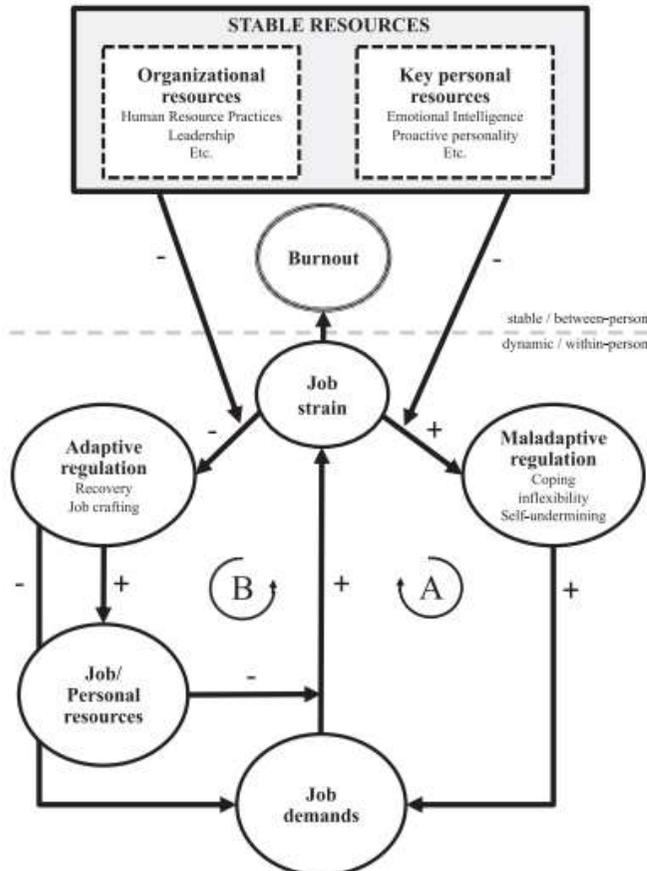
- People vary in preferences for segmenting or integrating aspects of work and home (Segmentors versus. Integrators)
- Yet, less is known about how distributed this variation actually is, or if a majority of people prefer rather segmentation or integration in general

“Work-life balance sets the bar too low” – Adam Grant

“The best moments usually occur when a person’s body or mind is stretched to its limits in a voluntary effort to accomplish something difficult and worthwhile.”

– Mihály Csíkszentmihályi

Job Demands-Resources Theory (Bakker & de Vries, 2021)



- Most established occupational stress and well-being theory
- Integrates the interaction of stable and dynamic, contextual and personal resources
- Suitable to explain how factors at contextual (organizational, group) and personal level might influence the Work-Life-Flow of individuals

Bakker, A. B., & de Vries, J. D. (2021). Job demands–resources theory and self-regulation: new explanations and remedies for job burnout. *Anxiety, Stress, & Coping*, 34(1), 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10615806.2020.1797695>

3. Methodology



C



Methodology

- Cross-sectional online survey named “Study on Work-Life-Flow”
- Sample: Workers from Portugal (n = 590) and Spain (n = 1536) in 2022
- Approval by Institutional Review Board (IRB00003099)
- Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership Project "Excellence based profiling to identify and apply tools and trainings for a better and sustainable Work-Life-Flow" (Project Number: 2020-1-ES01-KA203-083282)

4. Results



Results

The big majority of our two samples preferred to separate work from nonwork and vice versa

Segmentors (Spain = 61.9%; Portugal = 63.8%) vs. *integrators* (Spain = 9%; Portugal = 8.1%)

Sleep, exhaustion, recovery, burnout:

Influencing factors at organizational level: Positive Work-Life-Flow friendly culture, Transformational leadership

Influencing factors at individual level: Emotion regulation, Optimism

No big cross-cultural differences

Variable	1. Culture	2. TFL	3. ER	4. Optimism	5. Sleep Quality	6. Psyc. Det.	7. Exhaustion	8. Recovery	9. Feelings of burnout
1		.47**	.22**	.27**	.21**	.20**	-.16**	.19**	-.31**
2	.46**		.25**	.31**	.24**	.19**	-.26**	.20**	-.35**
3	.13**	.14**		.48**	.42**	.29**	-.25**	.44**	-.26**
4	.23**	.14**	.44**		.32**	.27**	-.28**	.38**	-.24**
5	.20**	.15**	.24**	.24**		.26**	-.36**	.31**	-.34**
6	.13**	.14**	.29**	.30**	.23**		-.25**	.26**	-.32**
7	-.13**	-.19**	-.24**	-.21**	-.24**	-.26**		-.26**	.67**
8	.22**	.29**	.32**	.38**	.32**	.24**	-.32**		-.24**
9	-.23**	-.28**	-.31**	-.23**	-.29**	-.36**	.54**	-.36**	

Note. Values above the diagonal for Portuguese sample, below the diagonal for Spanish sample; TFL = Transformational leadership; ER = Emotion regulation; Psyc. Det. = Psychological Detachment

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretical implications

- The concept of Work-Life-Flow is more dynamic and overcomes the predominantly stress-oriented views on work-life balance
- It seems therefore useful for detecting influencing factors that vary differently over time (stable vs. more dynamic factors)
- Moreover, it facilitates a more resource-oriented perspective that is necessary with regard to capacity building and training

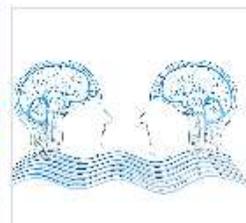
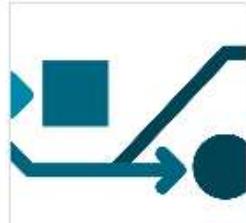
Practical implications

- Emotions seem to play an important role in the dynamics of Work-Life-Flow
- Recovery-facilitating cultures and recovery-supportive leadership is needed at organizational level
- Emotion regulation and learned optimism are individual skills that can be trained

Try it out: The Work-Life-Flow (WLF) – Training Tool

Work Life Flow Training Platform

Available courses

 <p>Course Emotion Regulation</p>	 <p>Course Work Life Flow Policy Literacy</p>	 <p>Course Physical health</p>	 <p>Course Creating a healthy ergonomic workspace</p>	 <p>Course Communication and Empathy</p>
 <p>Course Principles of health and safety at work</p>	 <p>Course Self - Reflection and Self - Awareness</p>	 <p>Course Crafting</p>	 <p>Course WLF - Friendly supervision</p>	 <p>Course Change, flexibility and adaptability</p>

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