



School of Social Sciences

Master of Business Administration (MBA)

Postgraduate Dissertation

Exploring the Professional Journey of Parents in Greece:
Challenges and Opportunities

Eirini Poumpouridou

Supervisor: Dimitrios Manolopoulos

Patras, Greece, June 2026

© Hellenic Open University, 2017

The content of this thesis/dissertation along with its results is owned by the Hellenic Open University and his/her author, where each of them has the sole and exclusive right to use, reproduce, and publish it (totally or partially) for educational or research purposes, with the obligation to make reference to the thesis's title, the author's name and to the Hellenic Open University where the thesis / dissertation was written.



Exploring the Professional Journey of Parents in Greece: Challenges and Opportunities

Eirini Poumpouridou

Supervising Committee

Supervisor:

Dimitrios Manolopoulos
Hellenic Open University

Co-Supervisor:

Georgios Spais
Hellenic Open University

Patras, Greece, June 2026

To Fanis and Theodoros

Abstract

Work-Life Balance (WLB) has become one of the most important challenges facing modern employees, particularly in Greece, where working hours remain high and opportunities for flexibility are relatively limited. This dissertation examines how employees in Greece perceive the balance between their professional and personal responsibilities, as well as the factors that influence their everyday experiences.

The research was based on a structured questionnaire completed by 108 employees from different age groups, professional sectors and educational backgrounds. The aim of the study was to capture participants' perceptions and experiences regarding Work-Life Balance, organisational support, burnout, digital disconnection and the challenges faced by working parents.

The findings indicate that many employees experience difficulties in effectively balancing their professional and personal obligations. Increased work demands, difficulties disconnecting from work after working hours, feelings of exhaustion and limited flexibility emerged as common experiences among participants. At the same time, the results suggest that the presence of a supportive work environment and greater flexibility are associated with more positive perceptions of quality of life and everyday balance.

Particular attention was given to parenthood and the experiences of working parents in Greece. The findings revealed that balancing professional and family responsibilities creates additional demands for employees, while a significant proportion of participants reported that working conditions influence decisions related to having children and family planning. In the discussion, these findings are also considered in relation to the literature on work-family enrichment, which suggests that parenthood may involve not only challenges but also opportunities for personal and professional development.

Overall, the study highlights the need for policies and practices that strengthen employee support, promote greater flexibility and facilitate the integration of professional and family life. Understanding the factors that influence Work-Life Balance can contribute to the

development of more effective organisational practices and public policies, generating positive outcomes for employees as well as society as a whole.

Keywords

Work-Life Balance, Working Parents, Organisational Support, Burnout, Digital Disconnection, Greece.

Περίληψη

Η Ισορροπία Επαγγελματικής και Προσωπικής Ζωής (Work-Life Balance) αποτελεί ένα ιδιαίτερα σε χώρες όπως η Ελλάδα, όπου οι ώρες εργασίας παραμένουν υψηλές και οι δυνατότητες ευελιξίας περιορισμένες. Η παρούσα διπλωματική εργασία εξετάζει τον τρόπο με τον οποίο οι εργαζόμενοι στην Ελλάδα αντιλαμβάνονται την ισορροπία μεταξύ επαγγελματικών και προσωπικών υποχρεώσεων, καθώς και τους παράγοντες που επηρεάζουν τις καθημερινές τους εμπειρίες.

Η έρευνα βασίστηκε σε δομημένο ερωτηματολόγιο, το οποίο συμπληρώθηκε από 108 εργαζομένους διαφορετικών ηλικιακών ομάδων, επαγγελματικών κλάδων και εκπαιδευτικών επιπέδων. Στόχος της έρευνας ήταν η αποτύπωση των αντιλήψεων και εμπειριών των συμμετεχόντων σχετικά με την Ισορροπία Επαγγελματικής και Προσωπικής Ζωής, την οργανωσιακή υποστήριξη, την επαγγελματική εξουθένωση, την ψηφιακή αποσύνδεση και τις προκλήσεις που αντιμετωπίζουν οι εργαζόμενοι γονείς.

Τα αποτελέσματα δείχνουν ότι πολλοί εργαζόμενοι αντιμετωπίζουν δυσκολίες στην αποτελεσματική διαχείριση των επαγγελματικών και προσωπικών τους υποχρεώσεων. Οι αυξημένες απαιτήσεις της εργασίας, η δυσκολία αποσύνδεσης μετά το πέρας του ωραρίου, τα αισθήματα κόπωσης και η περιορισμένη ευελιξία αναδείχθηκαν ως συχνές εμπειρίες των συμμετεχόντων. Παράλληλα, τα ευρήματα υποδηλώνουν ότι η ύπαρξη υποστηρικτικού εργασιακού περιβάλλοντος και η δυνατότητα μεγαλύτερης ευελιξίας συνδέονται με θετικότερες αντιλήψεις σχετικά με την ποιότητα ζωής και την καθημερινή ισορροπία.

Ιδιαίτερη έμφαση δόθηκε στη γονεϊκότητα και στις εμπειρίες των εργαζομένων γονέων στην Ελλάδα. Τα αποτελέσματα ανέδειξαν ότι η συνύπαρξη επαγγελματικών και οικογενειακών υποχρεώσεων δημιουργεί πρόσθετες απαιτήσεις, ενώ σημαντικό ποσοστό των συμμετεχόντων δήλωσε ότι οι εργασιακές συνθήκες επηρεάζουν αποφάσεις που σχετίζονται με την απόκτηση παιδιών ή τον οικογενειακό προγραμματισμό. Στη συζήτηση, τα ευρήματα αυτά εξετάζονται και σε σχέση με τη βιβλιογραφία για τον εμπλουτισμό εργασίας-οικογένειας, σύμφωνα με την οποία η γονεϊκότητα μπορεί να

συνδέεται όχι μόνο με προκλήσεις αλλά και με ευκαιρίες προσωπικής και επαγγελματικής ανάπτυξης.

Συνολικά, η έρευνα αναδεικνύει την ανάγκη για πολιτικές και πρακτικές που ενισχύουν την υποστήριξη των εργαζομένων, προωθούν μεγαλύτερη ευελιξία και διευκολύνουν τη συνύπαρξη επαγγελματικής και οικογενειακής ζωής. Η κατανόηση των παραγόντων που επηρεάζουν την Ισορροπία Επαγγελματικής και Προσωπικής Ζωής μπορεί να συμβάλει στη διαμόρφωση αποτελεσματικότερων οργανωσιακών πρακτικών και δημόσιων πολιτικών, με θετικά οφέλη τόσο για τους εργαζομένους όσο και για την κοινωνία συνολικά.

Λέξεις – Κλειδιά

Ισορροπία Επαγγελματικής-Προσωπικής Ζωής, Εργαζόμενοι Γονείς, Οργανωσιακή Υποστήριξη, Επαγγελματική Εξουθένωση, Ψηφιακή Αποσύνδεση, Ελλάδα

Table of Contents

Abstract	v
Περίληψη	vii
Table of Contents	ix
List of Figures	xi
List of Tables.....	xii
1. Introduction.....	1
1.1 Introduction to the Topic	1
1.2 Purpose of the Research	3
1.3 Research Questions.....	5
1.4 Methodological Approach.....	5
1.5 Structure of the Dissertation	6
2. Theoretical Framework	7
2.1 The concept of Work-Life Balance	7
2.2 Modern Working Conditions.....	8
2.2.1 Technological Change and Globalization	8
2.2.2 The Impact of COVID-19 on Working Life	10
2.2.3 Teleworking and Flexible Work Arrangements.....	11
2.2.4 Technostress and Digital Disconnection	12
2.2.5 Burnout in Modern Working Environments	13
2.3 Generations in the Workplace	14
2.3.1 Changing Attitudes Toward Work Across Generations	14
2.3.2 Contemporary Work Values and Employee Expectations	15
2.3.3 Generational Differences and Contemporary Organizations	16
2.4 Organisational and Individual Determinants of Work-Life Balance	17
2.5 Working Conditions in Greece	19
2.5.1 Employment Conditions in Greece	19
2.5.2 Parenthood and Demographic Challenges	21
2.5.3 Childcare and Family Responsibilities	22
2.5.4 Gender Roles and Shared Parenting Responsibilities	23
2.5.5 Work-Life Balance Challenges in Greece	24
3. Research Methodology	25
3.1 Research Approach	25
3.2 Research Design and Operationalization of Variables.....	26
3.3 Sampling Procedure and Sample Characteristics.....	28
3.4 Questionnaire Design	29
3.5 Data Collection Process.....	31
3.6 Data Coding and Analysis	32
3.7 Reliability and Validity Considerations.....	33
3.8 Ethical Considerations	34
3.9 Research Limitations	34
4. Results	36
4.1 Demographic Profile of Participants	36
4.2 Impact of Working Hours, Flexibility and Workload on Daily Life	39

4.3 Digital Disconnection and the Interaction Between Work and Personal Life	41
4.4 Perceived Ability to Balance Professional and Personal Responsibilities	42
4.5 Personal and Professional Implications of Combining Work and Family Responsibilities.....	44
4.6 Influence of Working Conditions on Family Planning Decisions.....	44
4.7 Organisational Support and Employee Well-Being.....	46
4.8 Employees' Preferred Changes to Current Working Arrangements.....	47
4.9 Correlation Analysis	48
5. Discussion	51
5.1 Impact of Working Hours, Flexibility and Workload on Daily Life	51
5.2 Digital Disconnection and Work-Life Integration.....	55
5.3 Work-Life Balance and Work-Family Conflict	58
5.4 Personal and Professional Implications of Combining Work and Family Responsibilities.....	63
5.5 Influence of Working Conditions on Family Planning Decisions.....	68
5.6 Organisational Support and Employee Well-Being.....	72
6. Conclusions.....	76
6.1 Main Findings	76
6.2 Contributions of the Study	79
6.3 Practical Implications	81
6.4 Multi-Level Recommendations	84
6.4.1 Individual Level.....	85
6.4.2 Family Level	86
6.4.3 Education and Lifelong Learning	86
6.4.4 Public Policy Level	87
6.4.5 Organisational Level.....	87
6.5 Limitations.....	88
6.6 Future Research	90
Bibliography.....	93
Appendix A: "Research Questionnaire"	98

List of Figures

Figure 1. Technological Change and Globalization as Drivers of Contemporary Work-Life Balance Challenges

Figure 2. The Impact of COVID-19 on Work-Life Balance and Contemporary Working Practices.

Figure 3. Organisational and Individual Determinants of Work-Life Balance.

Figure 4. Working Hours in Greece Compared with the OECD Average (2024).

Figure 5. Age Distribution of Participants

Figure 6. Gender Distribution of Participants

Figure 7. Education Level of Participants

Figure 8. Mean Work-Life Balance Dimension Scores by Age Group

Figure 9. Working Conditions and Flexibility Reported by Participants

Figure 10. Progression from After-Hours Communication to Difficulties Disconnecting from Work

Figure 11. Distribution of Always-On Work Behaviours

Figure 12. Perceived Work-Life Balance and Work–Family Interaction

Figure 13. Work-related influences on parenthood decisions and the Greek fertility gap

Figure 14. Personal and Emotional Implications of Work–Family Responsibilities

Figure 15. Perceived Organisational Support and well-being Initiatives

Figure 16. Employees' Preferred Changes to Current Working Arrangements

Figure 17. Comparison Between Current and Preferred Work Models

Figure 18. Heatmap of Pearson Correlations among the Main Study Variables

Figure 19. Conceptual Interpretation of the Relationship Between Working Conditions and Work–Life Balance

Figure 20. Conceptual Interpretation of Digital Disconnection and Employee Exhaustion

Figure 21. Reported Work-Life Balance Despite High Levels of Employee Exhaustion

Figure 22. The Work–Life Balance Paradox: Perceived Balance versus Personal Cost

Figure 23. Dual Perspective on Combining Work and Family Responsibilities

Figure 24. Conceptual Framework Linking Working Conditions and Family Planning Decisions

Figure 25. Multi-Level Framework for Improving Work-Life Balance

List of Tables

Table 1. Major Theoretical Contributions to Work-Life Balance Research

Table 2. Generational Differences in Work-Life Balance Priorities.

Table 3. Summary of the Main Constructs and Questionnaire Dimensions

Table 4. Pearson Correlation Matrix of the Principal Variables

Table 5. Summary of Main Findings in Relation to the Research Questions

Table 6. Main Contributions of the Present Study

Table 7. Practical Implications of the Present Study

Table 8. Summary of the Multi-Level Recommendations

Table 9. Summary of the Study Limitations and Future Research Directions

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction to the Topic

Work-Life Balance (WLB) is commonly defined as the extent to which individuals are able to effectively manage and balance the demands of their professional and personal lives (Greenhaus, Collins, & Shaw, 2003). Over the past few decades, Work-Life Balance has attracted increasing attention in academic research, organisational practice, and public policy as the relationship between work and personal life has become progressively more complex. Research has consistently associated poor Work-Life Balance with lower employee well-being, reduced job satisfaction, increased work-family conflict, and negative outcomes for both individuals and organisations (Greenhaus et al., 2003).

Although concerns regarding the relationship between work and family life are not new, interest in Work-Life Balance has grown substantially over the last four decades. Since the 1980s, researchers have examined the conflict that arises when individuals attempt to fulfil competing demands originating from their work and family roles. One of the most influential theoretical frameworks was proposed by Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), who introduced the concept of work-family conflict and demonstrated how incompatible role pressures can negatively affect both professional and personal life. While these challenges have existed for many years, contemporary working conditions have intensified their frequency and complexity.

From the early 2000s, and particularly throughout the 2010s, the widespread adoption of smartphones, laptops, high-speed internet, cloud technologies and digital communication platforms fundamentally changed the way employees perform their work. Technological advances enabled employees to remain connected to work regardless of time or location, making remote access to organisational systems increasingly common. While these developments significantly increased flexibility and facilitated new forms of work organisation, they also blurred the traditional boundaries between work and private life. Consequently, many employees became exposed to an "always-on" work culture characterised by constant connectivity and expectations of permanent availability, making psychological detachment from work and recovery during non-working hours increasingly difficult (Tarafdar et al., 2007; Maslach & Leiter, 2016).

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated these developments even further by transforming teleworking and hybrid working arrangements from relatively limited practices into mainstream forms of employment for millions of workers worldwide. Although remote work offered greater flexibility, reduced commuting time and increased autonomy for many employees, it also created new challenges regarding the separation of professional and personal responsibilities, particularly for working parents and employees sharing caregiving responsibilities (Eurofound, 2020). At the same time, changing social values and workforce expectations have increased the importance of issues such as mental health, flexibility, employee well-being and quality of life. In particular, younger generations increasingly expect professional success to coexist with personal well-being rather than come at its expense (Twenge, 2023).

The Greek context provides a particularly relevant setting for examining Work-Life Balance. According to OECD data, employees in Greece work approximately 2,109 hours per year, making Greece one of the countries with the highest annual working hours among OECD members (OECD, 2024). In parallel, flexible working arrangements and teleworking remain less widespread than in many other European countries, while employees continue to experience challenges related to economic uncertainty, job insecurity and the reconciliation of work and family responsibilities (Lyberaki & Tinios, 2012; OECD, 2024). These characteristics make Greece an especially interesting case for investigating the factors that influence employees' Work-Life Balance.

Beyond labour market conditions, Greece is also facing significant demographic challenges that have intensified discussions regarding the relationship between work and family life. Recent data indicate that the country's total fertility rate remains at approximately 1.27 children per woman, considerably below the population replacement level of 2.1 children per woman. At the same time, participation of children under the age of three in formal childcare services remains below the European average, limiting the ability of many parents, particularly women, to combine employment and family responsibilities effectively (OECD, 2024). These demographic trends have reinforced both public and academic interest in understanding how working conditions, organisational support and family policies influence decisions related to parenthood and family life. OECD evidence further suggests that accessible childcare services and family-friendly labour market policies play an important

role in enabling individuals to reconcile work and family responsibilities while supporting fertility in the long term.

Within this context, Work-Life Balance cannot be regarded solely as an individual responsibility. Organisations, employers and policymakers all contribute to creating working environments that enable employees to successfully combine their professional and personal responsibilities. Consequently, policies promoting flexible working arrangements, organisational support, employee well-being, digital disconnection and family-friendly practices have become increasingly important for developing healthier, more sustainable and more productive workplaces.

For these reasons, the study of Work-Life Balance is particularly relevant for understanding the challenges faced by contemporary employees in Greece. Examining the factors that shape employees' experiences, particularly those of working parents, can contribute to a better understanding of the relationship between work, family life and well-being, while also providing useful evidence for organisations and policymakers seeking to develop more effective workplace practices and family-supportive policies.

1.2 Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this research is to investigate Work-Life Balance (WLB) among employees in Greece and to examine the factors that influence the balance between professional and personal life. Particular emphasis is placed on the experiences and challenges faced by working parents as they attempt to combine their professional and family responsibilities.

More specifically, the study examines how factors such as working hours, flexibility, teleworking, workload, organisational support and continuous digital connectivity influence employees' everyday lives. Furthermore, it explores issues related to burnout, work-related stress, quality of life, the interaction between work and personal life, as well as the influence of working conditions on family planning decisions.

Investigating these issues has become increasingly important as changes in the contemporary working environment have substantially transformed the way employees organise their professional and personal lives. The growing use of digital technologies, the

expansion of teleworking and flexible working arrangements, together with increasing expectations of constant availability, have created new challenges for maintaining a healthy balance between work and personal life. At the same time, burnout, mental health and employee well-being have become important concerns for both organisations and policymakers (Eurofound, 2020; OECD, 2024).

The Greek context makes the present research particularly relevant. Long working hours, the relatively limited adoption of flexible working arrangements across several sectors, the rising cost of living and the difficulties associated with balancing professional and family responsibilities create a demanding environment for employees. At the same time, Greece continues to lag behind the European Union average regarding participation in formal early childhood education and care services, with only 28.8% of children under the age of three enrolled in formal childcare, compared with 39.3% across the European Union (European Commission, 2025).

In addition, Greece is facing significant demographic challenges. According to the Hellenic Statistical Authority, the number of births declined by 6.1% in 2023 compared with the previous year (ELSTAT, 2024). Furthermore, OECD data indicate that the country's fertility rate stands at approximately 1.32 children per woman, well below the population replacement level of 2.1 children per woman, while the average age of women at first childbirth increased from 24.7 years in 1990 to approximately 31 years in 2023 (OECD, 2024; ELSTAT, 2024). These developments highlight the importance of understanding how working conditions influence individuals' ability to combine their professional careers with family life.

This research therefore seeks to contribute to a better understanding of how employees in Greece perceive and experience Work-Life Balance, while placing particular emphasis on the experiences of working parents. By examining employees' perceptions and experiences, the study aims to provide empirical evidence that may contribute both to future academic research and to the development of organisational practices and public policies that better support the reconciliation of professional and personal life.

1.3 Research Questions

Based on the purpose of the study and the survey-based methodological approach, the research was guided by the following questions:

1. How do employees perceive the impact of working hours, flexibility and workload on their daily lives?
2. How do employees experience digital disconnection and the interaction between work and personal life?
3. How do working parents in Greece perceive their ability to balance professional and personal responsibilities?
4. How do working parents perceive the personal and professional implications of combining work and family responsibilities?
5. How do employees perceive the influence of working conditions on family planning decisions?

1.4 Methodological Approach

This study adopts a quantitative research approach in order to examine employees' perceptions and experiences regarding Work-Life Balance in Greece. Data were collected through a structured electronic questionnaire, which was distributed online to employees from different sectors, age groups and employment types.

The questionnaire included questions related to working conditions, organisational support, digital disconnection, burnout, family responsibilities and broader Work-Life Balance experiences. Participation was voluntary and anonymous, allowing respondents to share their views freely.

A convenience sampling method was used, resulting in a final sample of 108 participants. The quantitative approach was considered appropriate for capturing a broad overview of employees' experiences and identifying common patterns across different demographic and employment groups.

A detailed description of the research design, questionnaire development, sampling procedure, ethical considerations and data analysis methods is provided in Chapter 3.

1.5 Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation consists of six chapters.

Chapter 1 introduces the research topic, presents the purpose of the study, the research questions and the overall methodological approach.

Chapter 2 reviews the relevant literature on Work-Life Balance, organisational support, burnout, digital disconnection, working parents and family–work interactions. It also presents the theoretical background supporting the research.

Chapter 3 describes the research methodology, including the research design, sampling procedure, questionnaire development, data collection process and methods of data analysis.

Chapter 4 presents the empirical findings of the study and analyses employees' perceptions regarding Work-Life Balance, working conditions, organisational support, digital disconnection, burnout and issues related to parenthood and family planning.

Chapter 5 discusses the findings in relation to the research questions and the existing literature. Particular attention is given to the experiences of working parents and the implications of the findings for employees, organisations and public policy.

Chapter 6 summarises the main conclusions of the study, presents practical recommendations, discusses the limitations of the research and proposes directions for future research.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 The concept of Work-Life Balance

Work-Life Balance has been defined as the extent to which individuals are able to effectively balance the demands of their professional and personal lives (Greenhaus, Collins & Shaw, 2003). Contemporary literature further recognises that Work-Life Balance is a highly individualised concept, as employees experience and evaluate balance differently depending on their personal circumstances, responsibilities and life priorities (Clark, 2000; Allen et al., 2013). Consequently, the concept has attracted increasing academic attention over the past decades as researchers have sought to better understand how individuals manage multiple life roles and responsibilities.

Initially, the literature focused primarily on the absence of conflict between work and family roles. Early studies approached Work-Life Balance primarily through the concept of work-family conflict, describing the tensions that arise when the demands of work and family roles become incompatible (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Later research expanded this perspective and argued that work and personal life should not be viewed solely as competing domains, but also as areas that can positively influence one another (Clark, 2000).

The growing importance of Work-Life Balance is closely connected to broader social, economic and technological changes. Globalization, increased competition, technological connectivity and changing workforce expectations have transformed the way people experience work and personal life. Research suggests that employees increasingly value flexibility, autonomy, well-being and meaningful work alongside financial security, reflecting changing expectations regarding the relationship between work and personal life (Allen et al., 2013; Beauregard et al., 2019).

Contemporary approaches view Work-Life Balance as a multidimensional concept that encompasses employees' perceptions of balance, satisfaction and well-being across different life domains. Although work and family remain distinct areas of life, research suggests that the experiences, emotions and pressures generated in one domain frequently influence the other, creating both challenges and opportunities for individuals (Clark, 2000; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Consequently, understanding Work-Life Balance requires examining not only individual perceptions but also the organisational, technological and social conditions

that shape employees' everyday experiences. These broader determinants are discussed in the following sections.

Table 1. Major Theoretical Contributions to Work-Life Balance Research.

Author(s)	Main theoretical contribution
Greenhaus & Beutell (1985)	Work-family conflict
Clark (2000)	Border Theory
Greenhaus, Collins & Shaw (2003)	Definition of Work-Life Balance
Greenhaus & Powell (2006)	Work-family enrichment
Allen et al. (2013)	Individual perceptions of Work-Life Balance
Beauregard et al. (2019)	Contemporary organisational perspective

Source: Author's synthesis based on Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), Clark (2000), Greenhaus, Collins and Shaw (2003), Greenhaus and Powell (2006), Allen et al. (2013), and Beauregard et al. (2019).

2.2 Modern Working Conditions

2.2.1 Technological Change and Globalization

Modern working conditions have been strongly shaped by technological development and globalization. Long before the COVID-19 pandemic, the spread of digital technologies had already made work less dependent on a fixed physical location, while communication became faster, more constant and increasingly integrated into everyday working life.

Technology has allowed organizations to operate across countries and time zones, supporting international collaboration and the expansion of global markets. At the same time, it has increased the speed at which employees are expected to respond to information, tasks and communication. As a result, the boundaries between working time and personal time have become less clear, particularly in jobs where employees remain connected through emails, mobile phones and digital platforms outside formal working hours (Tarafdar et al., 2007; Ragu-Nathan et al., 2008).

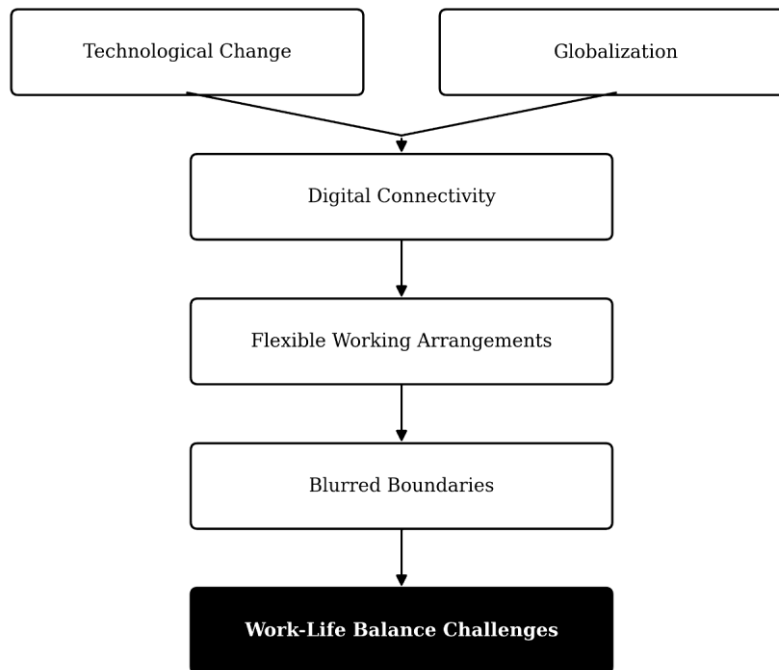
Globalization has also contributed to changes in employment relationships. International competition, outsourcing, flexible contracts and organisational restructuring have created a labour market in which stability is often reduced and employees are expected to adapt continuously to new technologies, new roles and changing organisational needs. Kalleberg (2009) describes this development as part of the rise of more insecure and less predictable forms of employment, while Weil (2014) argues that modern organizations increasingly rely

on fragmented employment structures, which can weaken the traditional relationship between employer and employee.

These developments are important for Work-Life Balance because they affect both the amount of work employees perform and the way they experience work in their everyday lives. Digital tools can offer flexibility and autonomy, allowing employees to work from different locations and manage tasks more efficiently. However, the same tools can also increase pressure, create information overload and reinforce expectations of constant availability. OECD research on the future of work similarly highlights that digitalization and automation are transforming labour markets, creating new opportunities but also new risks related to skills, inequality and job insecurity (OECD, 2019).

Therefore, technological change and globalization should not be viewed only as factors of economic growth or business efficiency. They also influence employees' ability to separate work from personal life, recover during non-working time and maintain a sustainable balance between professional and personal responsibilities. This connection is central to the present study, as it helps explain why issues such as digital disconnection, flexibility and workload have become important dimensions of Work-Life Balance in contemporary employment.

Figure 1. Technological Change and Globalization as Drivers of Contemporary Work-Life Balance Challenges.



Source: Author's synthesis based on Tarafdar et al. (2007), Ragu-Nathan et al. (2008), Kalleberg (2009), Weil (2014), and OECD (2019).

2.2.2 The Impact of COVID-19 on Working Life

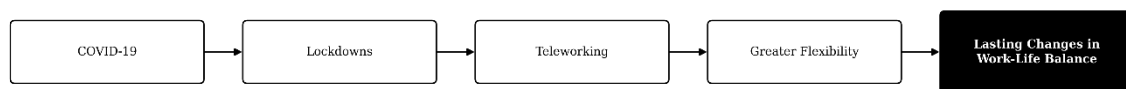
The COVID-19 pandemic represented one of the most significant disruptions to working life in recent decades. Beyond its direct health consequences, the pandemic affected labour markets, family life and employees' psychological well-being across the world. Governments introduced lockdowns, social distancing measures and restrictions that forced organizations to rapidly adopt new ways of working, often with little preparation.

Research conducted by Eurofound (2020) found that many European employees experienced increased levels of stress, anxiety and uncertainty during the pandemic. Younger workers, women and individuals in more vulnerable employment situations appeared to be particularly affected. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2022) similarly reported a substantial increase in anxiety and depression globally following the pandemic, highlighting the broader psychological impact of prolonged uncertainty and social isolation.

One of the most significant workplace changes was the rapid expansion of teleworking. Before the pandemic, remote work was relatively limited in many European countries. However, the COVID-19 crisis accelerated its adoption and transformed it into a normal working arrangement for millions of employees. According to Eurofound and the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2020), many organizations implemented remote working practices within weeks, fundamentally changing traditional assumptions regarding where and how work should be performed.

At the same time, the pandemic altered employees' expectations regarding flexibility and quality of life. Many workers began reassessing the relationship between work and personal life, placing greater emphasis on mental well-being, autonomy and work-life balance. As a result, many of the changes introduced during the pandemic continue to influence workplace practices today (Eurofound, 2020; OECD, 2024).

Figure 2. The Impact of COVID-19 on Work-Life Balance and Contemporary Working Practices.



Source: Author's synthesis based on Eurofound (2020), ILO (2020), and WHO (2022).

2.2.3 Teleworking and Flexible Work Arrangements

Teleworking and flexible work arrangements have become central features of contemporary employment. Advances in digital technology have enabled employees to perform work tasks from locations outside the traditional office environment, while flexible work arrangements have provided greater autonomy regarding working schedules and locations.

Teleworking is frequently associated with greater flexibility, increased autonomy and reduced commuting time, contributing to higher job satisfaction and more positive perceptions of Work-Life Balance (Beauregard et al., 2019). According to Randstad Greece (2023), 68% of Greek employees reported that teleworking contributed positively to their daily lives, while 72% stated that it reduced stress associated with daily commuting.

However, teleworking does not automatically improve Work-Life Balance. Research indicates that its effects depend on employees' personal circumstances, family

responsibilities and living conditions. The absence of clear physical boundaries between work and home may increase the likelihood of longer working hours and make it more difficult for employees to disengage from work-related responsibilities (Eurofound & ILO, 2020).

Studies have also highlighted important gender differences in teleworking experiences. Rodríguez-Modroño (2021) found that home-based teleworkers generally report greater autonomy and better work quality than highly mobile teleworkers.

Nevertheless, women frequently experience higher levels of stress as they simultaneously manage professional responsibilities, household tasks and caregiving roles. These findings suggest that teleworking should not be regarded as either a universal solution or an inherent problem. Its effectiveness depends largely on organisational practices, individual circumstances and the broader support structures available to employees.

2.2.4 Technostress and Digital Disconnection

The growing reliance on digital technologies has created new opportunities for communication, collaboration and productivity, but has also introduced new forms of workplace stress, widely discussed in the literature under the concept of technostress (Tarafdar et al., 2007).

Modern employees often remain connected through emails, messaging applications, collaboration platforms and mobile devices long after the formal working day has ended. While these technologies facilitate flexibility and efficiency, they may also generate information overload, constant interruptions and expectations of continuous availability.

Research by Ragu-Nathan et al. (2008) found that technostress is associated with lower job satisfaction, reduced organisational commitment and increased psychological strain. Similarly, Ayyagari et al. (2011) argued that excessive technological demands may negatively affect employees' well-being by increasing workload perceptions and reducing opportunities for recovery.

As a response to these challenges, increasing attention has been given to the concept of digital disconnection. Digital disconnection refers to employees' ability to disengage from work-related communication and responsibilities during non-working hours. Several European countries have introduced policies supporting the "right to disconnect", recognizing the importance of protecting employees from the negative consequences of permanent connectivity (Eurofound, 2021).

The ability to establish clear boundaries between work and personal life has therefore become an increasingly important aspect of Work-Life Balance in the digital era.

2.2.5 Burnout in Modern Working Environments

Burnout, defined by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2019) as an occupational phenomenon resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed, has received considerable attention in the literature as one of the principal consequences of prolonged work-related strain. According to the WHO, burnout is characterized by feelings of energy depletion, increased mental distance from work and reduced professional effectiveness.

Research has identified several organisational and workplace factors associated with burnout, including excessive workload, lack of control, insufficient rewards, breakdown of workplace relationships and perceptions of unfair treatment (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). These factors often accumulate gradually, creating conditions in which employees experience both physical and emotional exhaustion.

Burnout is closely linked to Work-Life Balance, as its effects frequently extend beyond the workplace. Employees experiencing burnout often report reduced energy, lower motivation and difficulties participating in family life, social activities and personal interests. Khammissa et al. (2022) found that chronic exhaustion is associated with lower overall well-being and difficulties maintaining healthy interpersonal relationships.

Contemporary working conditions may further increase the risk of burnout. Increased workloads, constant connectivity, rapid organisational change and difficulties disconnecting

from work create additional pressures that can accumulate over time. As a result, burnout has become one of the most widely discussed outcomes associated with poor Work-Life Balance in the literature and an important concern for both organizations and policymakers.

Consequently, the literature increasingly emphasizes the importance of organisational practices that support employee well-being, reduce excessive work demands and promote healthier boundaries between professional and personal life.

2.3 Generations in the Workplace

2.3.1 Changing Attitudes Toward Work Across Generations

Generational theory suggests that individuals who grow up during similar social, economic and technological conditions often develop comparable values, attitudes and expectations regarding work and life (Twenge, 2023). As a result, different generations may evaluate professional success, job security and Work-Life Balance differently.

Baby Boomers (1946–1964):

Research associates Baby Boomers with stronger preferences for job security, organisational loyalty and long-term employment relationships (Deal & Levenson, 2016). This generation entered the labour market during a period characterized by relatively stable employment opportunities and economic growth. Consequently, professional success was often linked to career progression, employment stability and long-term commitment to a single employer.

Generation X (1965–1980):

Generation X experienced important economic and social changes, including increasing workforce participation among women, economic restructuring and changing family dynamics. Researchers argue that these developments contributed to greater awareness of balancing professional and personal responsibilities (Twenge, 2023). As a result, issues related to Work-Life Balance became increasingly relevant for this generation.

Millennials (1981–1996):

Millennials entered the workforce during a period characterized by globalization, technological development and expanding educational opportunities. Studies suggest that

Millennials place greater emphasis on flexibility, meaningful work, career development and personal fulfillment compared to previous generations (Deal & Levenson, 2016). Work is often viewed as an important component of life rather than the sole source of personal identity.

Generation Z (1997 onwards):

Generation Z has grown up in a fully digital environment and has been exposed to rapid technological change, economic uncertainty and increasing awareness of mental health issues. Research indicates that this generation places particular emphasis on flexibility, well-being, inclusion and Work-Life Balance when evaluating employment opportunities (Twenge, 2023; Westover, 2023).

Although differences exist across generations, researchers emphasize that generational characteristics should be viewed as broad trends rather than fixed characteristics applying equally to all individuals (Deal & Levenson, 2016).

Table 2. Generational Differences in Work-Life Balance Priorities.

Generation	Birth Years	Key Characteristic	WLB Priority
Baby Boomers	1946–1964	Career-oriented; valued job security and organisational loyalty	Low
Generation X	1965–1980	Greater awareness of balancing professional and personal responsibilities	Moderate
Millennials	1981–1996	Emphasis on flexibility, meaningful work and personal fulfilment	High
Generation Z	1997 onwards	Strong emphasis on flexibility, well-being and mental health	Very High

Source: Author's synthesis based on Twenge (2023), Deal and Levenson (2016), and Westover (2023).

2.3.2 Contemporary Work Values and Employee Expectations

Recent research suggests that flexibility and employee well-being have become increasingly important factors influencing employment decisions, particularly among younger generations. As digital technologies have expanded opportunities for remote and hybrid work, employees increasingly expect greater autonomy regarding where, when and how work is performed.

Flexibility:

According to the Randstad Workmonitor (2024), Work-Life Balance is among the most important factors affecting employment decisions globally. Similarly, Eurofound (2023)

reports that employees increasingly value flexible working arrangements, particularly following the widespread adoption of remote and hybrid work during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Flexible working arrangements have been associated with improved job satisfaction, greater autonomy and more positive perceptions of Work-Life Balance (Beauregard et al., 2019). However, research also suggests that flexibility is most effective when accompanied by clear boundaries between professional and personal life.

Well-being and Mental Health:

Mental health and employee well-being have become central concerns in contemporary workplaces. Younger generations appear more willing to openly discuss stress, burnout and psychological well-being and are more likely to expect employers to provide support mechanisms and well-being initiatives (Westover, 2023).

Research conducted by Eurofound (2023) highlights that employees increasingly evaluate employers based not only on compensation and career opportunities but also on organisational culture, flexibility and support for well-being. These developments demonstrate the growing importance of Work-Life Balance as a key component of employee satisfaction and organisational attractiveness.

Work-Life Balance Expectations:

Studies consistently show that younger generations are more likely to evaluate work through the lens of quality of life, flexibility and personal fulfillment (Twenge, 2023; Deal & Levenson, 2016). Consequently, issues such as workload, working hours, organisational support and digital disconnection play an increasingly important role in shaping employees' perceptions of Work-Life Balance.

2.3.3 Generational Differences and Contemporary Organizations

The coexistence of multiple generations within the same workplace presents both opportunities and challenges for organizations. Employees from different age groups may hold different expectations regarding communication, career development, flexibility and Work-Life Balance.

Organisational Challenges:

Managing a multigenerational workforce requires organizations to recognize that employees may not share identical priorities or expectations. While some employees may prioritize stability and traditional career progression, others may place greater emphasis on flexibility, autonomy and personal well-being (Westover, 2023).

Organisational Support and Employee Well-Being:

Research suggests that supportive organisational practices contribute positively to employee satisfaction, engagement and retention across all generations (Allen et al., 2013; Beauregard et al., 2019). Flexible work arrangements, supportive leadership and employee well-being initiatives have been associated with more positive Work-Life Balance outcomes.

Implications for Contemporary Organizations:

Organizations are increasingly required to address challenges related to burnout, digital disconnection and employee mental health. Contemporary employees expect employers not only to provide competitive compensation but also to support their overall well-being and ability to balance professional and personal responsibilities (Cooper & Leiter, 2017).

For this reason, many organizations are moving away from standardized management approaches and adopting more flexible policies that accommodate different life stages and personal circumstances. Understanding generational differences therefore contributes to the development of more effective organisational practices that support employee well-being, engagement and sustainable performance (Allen et al., 2013; Beauregard et al., 2019).

2.4 Organisational and Individual Determinants of Work-Life Balance

Research has consistently demonstrated that Work-Life Balance is influenced by both organisational and individual factors rather than by employees' personal efforts alone. Contemporary approaches suggest that employees' ability to balance professional and personal responsibilities depends on the interaction between workplace practices, managerial support, family circumstances and individual characteristics (Clark, 2000; Allen et al., 2013).

One of the earliest and most influential organisational perspectives was introduced by Robert Eisenberger et al. (1986), who proposed the concept of Perceived Organisational Support (POS). According to this perspective, employees who perceive that their organisation values their contributions and cares about their well-being are more likely to demonstrate stronger organisational commitment, higher job satisfaction and greater engagement. These findings suggest that organisational support contributes not only to

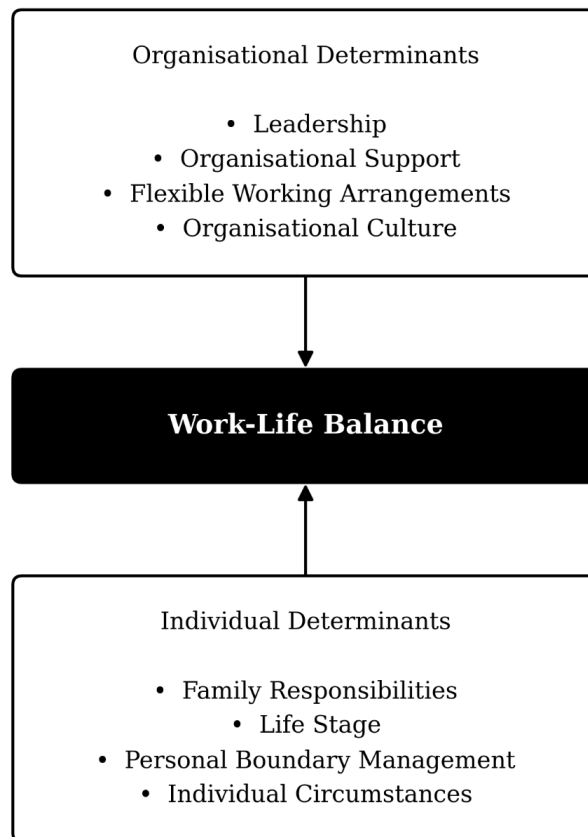
employee performance but also to employees' ability to manage competing work and personal responsibilities.

The relationship between work and family has also been examined extensively through the literature on work-family conflict. Ellen Ernst Kossek and Cynthia Ozeki (1998) found that higher levels of work-family conflict are consistently associated with lower job satisfaction, increased stress and reduced overall well-being. Their findings highlight the importance of organisational policies that recognise employees' family responsibilities and support the reconciliation of professional and personal roles.

A complementary perspective is provided by Sue Campbell Clark (2000) through Border Theory, which explains Work-Life Balance as the result of continuous interaction between the work and family domains. According to this theory, individuals regularly negotiate the boundaries between these two domains, while organisational expectations, managerial practices and technological connectivity influence how easily these boundaries can be maintained. When work and personal boundaries become increasingly blurred, employees may experience greater work-family conflict and reduced opportunities for psychological recovery.

Contemporary research therefore suggests that Work-Life Balance is shaped by the interaction between organisational and individual determinants. Organisational factors such as leadership, flexibility, supportive organisational culture and employee support practices interact with individual characteristics, including family responsibilities, life stage and personal boundary-management strategies, to influence employees' overall experience of balancing professional and personal life (Allen et al., 2013; Beauregard et al., 2019). This multidimensional perspective provides the theoretical foundation for the empirical investigation presented in the following chapters.

Figure 3. Organisational and Individual Determinants of Work-Life Balance.



Source: Author's synthesis based on Eisenberger et al. (1986), Clark (2000), Allen et al. (2013), and Beauregard et al. (2019).

2.5 Working Conditions in Greece

The Greek case presents particular interest for the study of Work-Life Balance because it combines long working hours, limited workplace flexibility, demographic decline and persistent inequalities in the distribution of family responsibilities. These factors do not operate independently. Instead, they interact and shape the everyday experiences of employees, particularly those with family responsibilities.

2.5.1 Employment Conditions in Greece

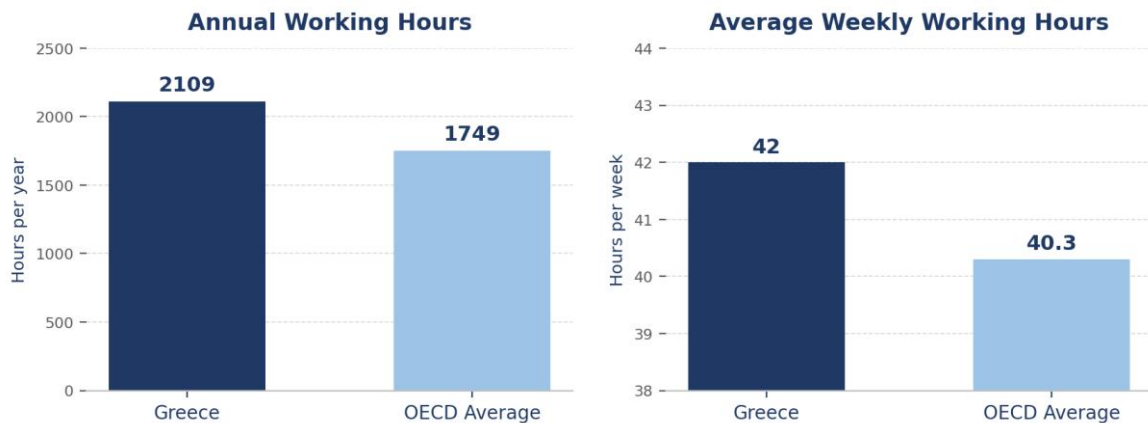
Working hours remain one of the most distinctive characteristics of the Greek labour market. According to Eurostat (2025), employees in Greece worked an average of 39.6 hours per week, compared with the European Union average of 35.9 hours. Greece consistently ranks among the countries with the longest working hours in Europe.

At the same time, the adoption of flexible working arrangements remains relatively limited. Although teleworking expanded significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic across Europe, its use in Greece remains lower than in many Northern and Western European countries. Eurostat data show that approximately 8.9% of employees in the European Union usually worked from home in 2024, while the percentage remains substantially lower in Greece (Eurostat, 2024).

The difference is important because research consistently identifies flexibility as one of the strongest predictors of employee well-being and Work-Life Balance (Allen et al., 2013; Eurofound, 2020). Employees who have greater control over when and where they work report higher job satisfaction, lower stress levels and better integration of work and family responsibilities.

While the previous figures refer to comparisons with the European Union average (Eurostat, 2025), Figure 2 presents Greece's annual and weekly working hours in comparison with the OECD average (OECD, 2024).

Figure 4. Working Hours in Greece Compared with the OECD Average (2024).



Source: Author's synthesis based on OECD (2024).

The Greek labour market has also attracted attention due to recent legislative developments. In 2024, Greece introduced the possibility of a six-day working week in specific sectors facing labour shortages, a policy that generated extensive debate because it contrasts with broader European discussions regarding reduced working hours and four-day workweek experiments (The Guardian, 2024).

Taken together, the available evidence indicates that Greek employees operate within a labour market characterised by comparatively long working hours and lower levels of workplace flexibility than those observed in many other European countries.

2.5.2 Parenthood and Demographic Challenges

The relationship between Work-Life Balance and family planning becomes particularly important when examined alongside Greece's demographic trends.

According to ELSTAT (2024), the number of births in Greece declined by 6.1% in 2023 compared with the previous year, reaching 71,455 births. During the same period, deaths reached 128,101, resulting in a significant natural population decrease.

The fertility rate in Greece stood at approximately 1.32 children per woman in 2023, substantially below the replacement level of 2.1 children per woman required for long-term

population stability (World Bank, 2023). Similar trends are observed across Europe, where the average fertility rate was estimated at 1.34 children per woman in 2024 (Eurostat, 2025).

Parenthood is also increasingly postponed. Data from ELSTAT and Eurostat indicate that the average age of women at first childbirth increased from approximately 24.7 years in 1990 to around 31 years in 2023. This reflects a broader European trend toward delayed family formation.

Research suggests that demographic decline cannot be explained solely by changing personal preferences. According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA, 2025), many individuals report having fewer children than they would ideally prefer. Economic uncertainty, housing costs, childcare availability, job insecurity and difficulties combining work and family life are among the most frequently reported barriers.

These findings indicate that family planning decisions are increasingly linked to broader employment and living conditions. Consequently, Work-Life Balance is relevant not only to employee well-being but also to understanding broader demographic developments.

2.5.3 Childcare and Family Responsibilities

Childcare availability represents one of the most important institutional factors affecting Work-Life Balance.

According to the European Commission (2025), only 28.8% of children under the age of three in Greece participate in formal childcare services, compared with an EU average of 39.3%. Greece therefore remains below the European average in access to early childhood education and care services.

Limited childcare availability increases reliance on informal support networks. Research conducted by OECD and Eurofound suggests that Southern European countries, including Greece, rely significantly more on grandparents and extended family members for childcare compared with Northern European countries, where formal childcare systems play a more prominent role.

The importance of informal family support is further reflected in the structure of the Greek educational system when considering the structure of the Greek educational system. Standard school schedules often end significantly earlier than typical full-time working hours, creating a daily gap that families must cover through grandparents, private childcare services, after-school activities or other informal arrangements.

This issue is directly connected to Work-Life Balance because the availability of childcare has been repeatedly associated with higher female labour force participation, lower work-family conflict and greater ability to combine employment and parenthood (European Commission, 2025; OECD, 2024).

2.5.4 Gender Roles and Shared Parenting Responsibilities

Research suggests that gender roles continue to influence the distribution of family responsibilities in Greece, although important changes have taken place during recent decades. Increased female participation in higher education and the labour market, combined with changing social norms, has contributed to a more active involvement of fathers in childcare and family life than in previous generations.

Despite these developments, research suggests that family responsibilities remain unevenly distributed. According to data from the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE, 2023), women in Greece continue to spend more time on childcare and unpaid domestic work than men. Approximately 37% of women with children under the age of twelve report spending more than five hours per day on childcare, compared with approximately 15% of men.

At the same time, fathers are increasingly involved in childcare compared with previous generations. Legislative changes such as the introduction of paid paternity leave and broader European efforts to encourage shared parental responsibilities reflect this shift toward greater paternal participation in family life (European Commission, 2023).

These developments are particularly important because modern households increasingly depend on two working parents. In contrast to previous generations, where one parent often remained outside the labour market, contemporary families are more likely to combine dual employment with childcare responsibilities. As a result, both parents are increasingly required to balance professional and family commitments simultaneously.

Another factor frequently discussed in demographic research is the postponement of parenthood. As the average age at first childbirth continues to increase, grandparents are often older than in previous generations and may not always be available to provide the same level of childcare support. Although family networks remain an important source of support in Greece, demographic ageing may gradually reduce the availability of informal childcare in some households (OECD, 2024; European Commission, 2024).

These findings suggest that Work-Life Balance challenges are no longer exclusively associated with mothers. Instead, they increasingly affect both parents, although the available evidence indicates that women continue to carry a larger share of unpaid care responsibilities. Consequently, the available evidence suggests that Work-Life Balance is increasingly recognised as a family and societal issue rather than solely an individual challenge.

2.5.5 Work-Life Balance Challenges in Greece

Based on the evidence presented above, several interconnected challenges appear to shape Work-Life Balance in Greece.

First, Greek employees work longer hours than the European average while having comparatively lower access to flexible working arrangements. This combination limits employees' ability to adapt their professional obligations to their personal and family responsibilities and may increase work-family conflict.

Second, demographic indicators reveal a continuing decline in birth rates, delayed parenthood and fertility levels below replacement rate. These trends suggest that family

planning decisions are increasingly influenced by broader economic, social and employment conditions rather than solely by personal preferences.

Third, access to formal childcare services remains below the European average, increasing reliance on informal family support networks. While grandparents continue to play an important role in supporting Greek families, demographic ageing and changing family structures may gradually reduce the availability of this form of support in the future.

Fourth, although fathers appear to be more actively involved in childcare and family life than previous generations, research indicates that family responsibilities remain unevenly distributed between men and women. As a result, women continue to undertake a larger share of unpaid care and household responsibilities alongside their participation in paid employment.

Taken together, the evidence presented in this chapter suggests that Work-Life Balance in Greece is influenced by a combination of workplace conditions, demographic trends, childcare availability and family responsibilities. Rather than being understood solely as an individual responsibility or a matter of personal time management, Work-Life Balance is shaped by broader organisational, social and institutional factors that influence employees' ability to combine work, family life and personal well-being.

Overall, the evidence suggests that Work-Life Balance extends beyond the individual employee and has broader implications for organisations, families and society. Understanding these challenges provides an important context for interpreting the findings of the present research.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Approach

The present study adopted a quantitative research approach in order to investigate Work-Life Balance among employees in Greece and to examine the factors that influence the relationship between professional and personal life. Quantitative research was considered

appropriate because the study aimed to collect structured data from a relatively large number of participants and to identify patterns, perceptions and trends related to contemporary working conditions, organisational support, digital disconnection, parenthood and family responsibilities (Bryman, 2016).

The choice of a quantitative methodology was directly linked to the research questions of the study. More specifically, the research sought to examine how employees perceive their ability to balance professional and personal responsibilities, how working conditions affect their daily lives, how they experience digital disconnection, and whether working conditions influence decisions related to family planning and parenthood. These issues can be effectively explored through standardized questions and the collection of comparable responses across different demographic and professional groups.

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire consisting primarily of closed-ended questions and Likert-scale items. This approach allowed the systematic recording of participants' perceptions, attitudes and experiences while facilitating the statistical analysis and comparison of responses. Quantitative questionnaires are widely used in social and organisational research because they provide a reliable method for capturing perceptions and attitudes across diverse populations (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019).

The study follows a cross-sectional research design, as data were collected at a single point in time rather than across multiple periods. Consequently, the findings provide a snapshot of employees' experiences and perceptions regarding Work-Life Balance within the contemporary Greek working environment. The focus of the study is primarily descriptive and exploratory, aiming to identify key trends and relationships rather than establish causal relationships between variables.

Overall, the quantitative approach was considered suitable for achieving the objectives of the study, as it enabled the systematic investigation of Work-Life Balance and its associated factors within the Greek context while providing a suitable basis for the statistical analysis and interpretation of the findings presented in the following chapters.

3.2 Research Design and Operationalization of Variables

The research was designed to investigate employees' perceptions and experiences regarding Work-Life Balance and its associated factors within the Greek working environment. Based

on the research objectives and the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, a number of key concepts were identified and translated into measurable variables through questionnaire items.

The process of operationalization refers to the transformation of theoretical concepts into observable and measurable indicators (Bryman, 2016). In the present study, the main constructs examined were Work-Life Balance, Organisational Support, Digital Disconnection, Burnout and Fatigue, and Family Planning Decisions.

Work-Life Balance:

Work-Life Balance was examined through questions related to employees' perceived ability to balance professional and personal responsibilities, the adequacy of time available for family and personal life, and the extent to which work interferes with activities outside the workplace. These indicators were selected because previous research has consistently identified perceived balance and work-family conflict as central dimensions of Work-Life Balance (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Clark, 2000).

Organisational Support:

Organisational Support was assessed through questions examining participants' perceptions of managerial understanding, communication, employee support practices and organisational initiatives related to employee well-being. The construct was based on the concept of Perceived Organisational Support, which refers to the extent to which employees believe that their organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986).

Digital Disconnection:

Digital Disconnection was measured through questions related to after-hours communication, work-related emails and messages, perceived pressure to remain available outside working hours and the ability to mentally disconnect from work. The construct reflects concerns identified in the literature regarding constant connectivity and technostress in contemporary workplaces (Tarafdar et al., 2007; Ragu-Nathan et al., 2008).

Burnout and Fatigue:

Burnout-related symptoms and work-related fatigue were explored through questions examining feelings of exhaustion, reduced energy and the impact of work demands on participants' daily lives. These indicators were selected based on the literature describing burnout as a consequence of prolonged exposure to work-related stress and excessive job demands (Maslach & Leiter, 2016; WHO, 2019).

Family Planning and Parenthood:

Family Planning and Parenthood were examined through questions investigating whether working conditions influenced decisions related to having children, as well as through questions exploring perceived work-family challenges among participants with children.

Table 3. Summary of the Main Constructs and Questionnaire Dimensions

Construct	Questionnaire Dimensions
Work-Life Balance	Balance, family time, work-family conflict
Organisational Support	Managerial support, communication, well-being initiatives
Digital Disconnection	After-hours emails, availability, inability to disconnect
Burnout-related Symptoms and Fatigue	Exhaustion, tiredness, reduced energy
Family Planning and Parenthood	Decisions about parenthood; perceived work-family challenges among parents

Source: Author's synthesis based on the literature review and questionnaire design.

3.3 Sampling Procedure and Sample Characteristics

The target population of this study consisted of employees working in Greece, regardless of sector, occupation or employment status. The research aimed to capture a broad range of perceptions and experiences related to Work-Life Balance, organisational support, digital disconnection and parenthood within the contemporary Greek working environment.

A convenience sampling method was employed for the purposes of the study. Convenience sampling is frequently used in social science research when access to a complete sampling frame is not available and when the primary objective is to obtain exploratory insights into a particular phenomenon (Bryman, 2016). Although this method does not allow for full statistical representativeness, it is considered appropriate for exploratory studies focusing on attitudes, perceptions and lived experiences.

The final sample consisted of 108 participants. Respondents were recruited through personal and professional networks, social media platforms and electronic communication channels. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary and anonymous, and no financial or other incentives were offered for participation.

The sample included employees from different age groups, educational backgrounds and professional sectors. Information regarding gender, age, marital status, educational level, parenthood status, employment type and sector of employment was collected in order to facilitate the interpretation of the findings and allow comparisons between demographic groups where appropriate.

The majority of participants were women, while the age group of 35–44 years was more strongly represented. A significant proportion of respondents were employed full-time and possessed higher levels of education. A detailed presentation of the demographic characteristics of the sample is provided in Chapter 4.

As with all convenience samples, certain limitations should be acknowledged. Individuals who choose to participate in online surveys may differ from the general population in terms of educational background, digital literacy, access to technology or interest in the research topic. Consequently, some demographic groups may be overrepresented or underrepresented within the sample.

Although the sample cannot be considered statistically representative of the Greek workforce, the findings provide useful exploratory insights into employees' experiences and perceptions regarding Work-Life Balance. Consequently, the results should be interpreted as indicative rather than fully generalizable to the entire working population of Greece.

3.4 Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire was developed based on the research objectives of the study and the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 2. More specifically, questionnaire items were designed to investigate employees' perceptions and experiences regarding Work-Life Balance, organisational support, digital disconnection, burnout, family responsibilities and family planning decisions.

The design of the questionnaire was informed by concepts and themes identified in the relevant literature on Work-Life Balance, work-family conflict, perceived organisational support, burnout and technostress (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Clark, 2000; Tarafdar et al., 2007; Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Rather than adopting a single existing scale, the questionnaire combined items addressing multiple dimensions relevant to the objectives of the study. The questionnaire items were developed by the researcher based on the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 and adapted to address the specific research objectives of the present study.

The questionnaire consisted primarily of closed-ended questions, allowing the collection of standardized and comparable responses across participants. Several questions employed a five-point Likert scale (Likert, 1932), enabling respondents to indicate the degree to which they agreed with a statement or experienced a particular situation. The use of five-point Likert scales is common in social science research because it facilitates the measurement of attitudes, perceptions and subjective experiences.

The questionnaire was structured into seven sections:

1. Demographic Characteristics

This section collected information regarding gender, age, marital status, educational level, parenthood status, employment type and sector of employment.

2. Working Conditions and Flexibility

Questions examined working hours, work schedules, flexibility arrangements and perceptions regarding workload and work demands.

3. Digital Disconnection

This section explored after-hours communication, work-related availability and participants' ability to disconnect from work outside normal working hours.

4. Organisational Support

Questions focused on managerial support, organisational initiatives related to employee well-being and participants' perceptions of organisational concern for employee welfare.

5. Work-Life Balance and Family Responsibilities

This section examined perceived balance between professional and personal life, time available for family activities, feelings of fatigue and the challenges associated with combining work and family responsibilities.

6. Family Planning and Social Perceptions

Questions explored whether working conditions influenced decisions related to having children, family planning and broader perceptions regarding work-life balance in contemporary society.

7. Suggested Improvements

Participants were asked about changes they believed could improve Work-Life Balance for employees.

Before its distribution, the questionnaire was reviewed by the academic supervisor to assess the relevance, clarity and sequencing of the questions. Minor revisions were made following this review. The final version was then created using Google Forms and distributed electronically through a web link shared via email, social media and personal and professional networks. Participation was voluntary and anonymous, and no personally identifiable information was collected.

The questionnaire was designed to be clear, concise and accessible to participants with different educational and professional backgrounds. Particular attention was given to the wording and sequencing of questions in order to facilitate completion and minimize response bias.

3.5 Data Collection Process

The questionnaire was administered electronically through Google Forms during the first quarter of 2026. The survey link was distributed through personal and professional networks, social media platforms and electronic communication channels in order to reach employees from different age groups, occupational sectors and employment backgrounds.

Participation in the study was entirely voluntary. Prior to completing the questionnaire, participants were informed about the purpose of the research, the academic nature of the study and the anonymous treatment of their responses. No financial compensation or other incentives were offered for participation.

No personally identifiable information, such as names, telephone numbers, email addresses or employer details, was collected. Participants were able to complete the questionnaire anonymously and discontinue participation at any stage prior to submission.

The data collection process resulted in a final sample of 108 completed responses. Following the closure of the survey period, responses were exported from Google Forms and prepared

for analysis. The dataset was subsequently coded and imported into IBM SPSS Statistics for statistical analysis.

3.6 Data Coding and Analysis

The collected data were exported from Google Forms and transferred to Microsoft Excel for processing and analysis. Prior to analysis, responses were reviewed, organised and coded in a structured format to facilitate statistical processing and interpretation.

The analysis was primarily based on descriptive statistical techniques. Frequencies, percentages, tables and graphical representations were used to summarise and present participants' responses. Descriptive statistics were considered appropriate given the exploratory nature of the study and the objective of identifying general patterns, perceptions and trends related to Work-Life Balance among employees in Greece.

In addition to descriptive statistics, basic cross-tabulations and descriptive comparisons were used to explore response patterns across demographic groups, including gender, age group, parenthood status and employment characteristics, where relevant to the research objectives. These comparisons were intended solely to provide descriptive insights into the distribution of responses across different groups. No inferential statistical tests (e.g., independent-samples t-tests, ANOVA or chi-square tests) were performed to determine whether observed differences between groups were statistically significant.

Furthermore, Pearson correlation analysis was performed to examine the relationships among the principal Work-Life Balance variables included in the questionnaire. The analysis explored the strength and direction of associations between key constructs such as perceived Work-Life Balance, organisational support, burnout and work-family conflict. Given the exploratory and cross-sectional nature of the study, the purpose of the correlation analysis was to identify statistically significant associations rather than establish causal relationships.

Microsoft Excel was used for data organisation and the preparation of descriptive tables and charts, while IBM SPSS Statistics was used to perform the statistical analyses, including descriptive statistics, cross-tabulations and Pearson correlation analysis. The results are presented in Chapter 4 through a combination of tables, charts and narrative interpretation in order to facilitate comparison with the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 2.

3.7 Reliability and Validity Considerations

Reliability and validity are important considerations in survey-based research, as they contribute to the credibility and consistency of the findings (Bryman, 2016).

In the present study, particular attention was given to content validity during the questionnaire design process. The questionnaire was developed based on the research objectives and the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 2. The selection of questionnaire items was informed by the literature on Work-Life Balance, work-family conflict, organisational support, burnout and digital disconnection (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Clark, 2000; Tarafdar et al., 2007; Maslach & Leiter, 2016). This approach helped ensure that the questions were relevant to the concepts under investigation and aligned with the research questions of the study.

Content validity was further supported through a review of the questionnaire by the academic supervisor prior to its final administration. Minor revisions were made following this review.

Construct validity was supported through the operationalization process described in Section 3.2. Theoretical concepts identified in the literature were translated into measurable questionnaire items, allowing abstract concepts such as Work-Life Balance, Organisational Support and Digital Disconnection to be examined through observable indicators.

To enhance response reliability, the questionnaire consisted primarily of structured closed-ended questions and standardized response scales. Consistent wording and question sequencing were used throughout the questionnaire in order to reduce ambiguity and facilitate participant understanding. Particular attention was given to ensuring that the questions could be understood by individuals with different educational and professional backgrounds.

Since the questionnaire combined items developed specifically for the purposes of this study rather than standardized multi-item measurement scales, no internal consistency analysis (e.g., Cronbach's alpha) was performed. Despite these measures, certain limitations regarding reliability and validity should be acknowledged. The study relied on self-reported perceptions and experiences, which may be influenced by subjective interpretation, memory bias or social desirability bias. Furthermore, because the questionnaire was specifically designed for the purposes of this study and did not exclusively adopt previously validated

measurement scales, the findings should be interpreted within the context of these methodological limitations.

Nevertheless, the questionnaire was designed to provide a structured and systematic assessment of the issues examined in the study and to provide useful exploratory evidence regarding Work-Life Balance among employees in Greece.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were taken into account throughout all stages of the research process. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and respondents were informed about the purpose of the research before completing the questionnaire.

Participants were informed that the study was being conducted for academic purposes and that their responses would be used exclusively within the context of this dissertation. No financial incentives or other forms of compensation were provided for participation.

The questionnaire was completed anonymously. No personally identifiable information, such as names, telephone numbers, email addresses or employer details, was collected. As a result, individual participants could not be identified from the data collected.

All responses were treated confidentially and were used solely for research and analysis purposes. The collection, storage and processing of data were conducted in accordance with the principles of confidentiality, anonymity and data protection as outlined in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) of the European Union.

The study was designed to minimize any potential risk or discomfort to participants by ensuring voluntary participation, anonymity and confidentiality throughout the research process.

3.9 Research Limitations

Despite the value of the findings, several limitations should be considered when interpreting the results of this study.

First, the research relied on convenience sampling. Participants were recruited through personal and professional networks, social media platforms and electronic communication channels. Although this approach facilitated data collection and provided access to a diverse group of respondents, it does not allow the findings to be considered statistically

representative of the entire Greek workforce. Consequently, the results should be interpreted as indicative rather than fully generalizable.

Second, the study was based entirely on self-reported data. Participants were asked to describe their own perceptions, experiences and attitudes regarding Work-Life Balance, organisational support, digital disconnection and family responsibilities. As with all self-report research, responses may be influenced by subjective interpretation, memory bias or social desirability bias.

Third, the study adopted a cross-sectional design, capturing participants' views at a single point in time. Working conditions, organisational practices and social attitudes continue to evolve, particularly following the widespread adoption of flexible working arrangements and digital technologies. Therefore, the findings reflect the circumstances that existed during the period of data collection and may differ in future contexts.

Finally, the study employed a quantitative research approach. While quantitative methods are effective for identifying patterns and trends across a larger number of participants, they cannot fully capture the complexity of individual experiences. Issues such as family responsibilities, work-related stress, parenthood decisions and personal perceptions of balance may be influenced by factors that cannot be explored in depth through closed-ended survey questions alone. Future research could complement these findings through qualitative methods, such as interviews or focus groups, in order to gain a deeper understanding of employees' experiences and decision-making processes.

Despite these limitations, the study provides exploratory insights into Work-Life Balance within the contemporary Greek working environment and contributes to the existing literature on the relationship between working conditions, family responsibilities and employee well-being.

4. Results

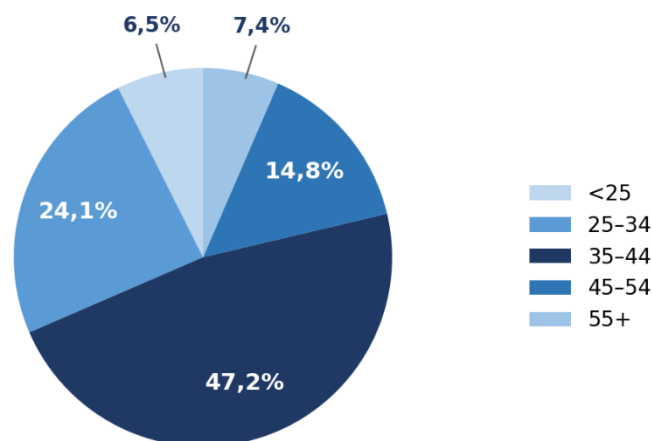
4.1 Demographic Profile of Participants

A total of 108 employees participated in the study. The sample included individuals from different age groups, educational backgrounds, employment sectors and family situations.

The largest proportion of respondents (47.2%) belonged to the 35–44 age group, followed by the 25–34 age group (24.1%) and the 45–54 age group (14.8%). Participants under the age of 25 represented 7.4% of the sample, while those aged 55 and above represented 6.5%.

Figure 5. Age Distribution of Participants

Age

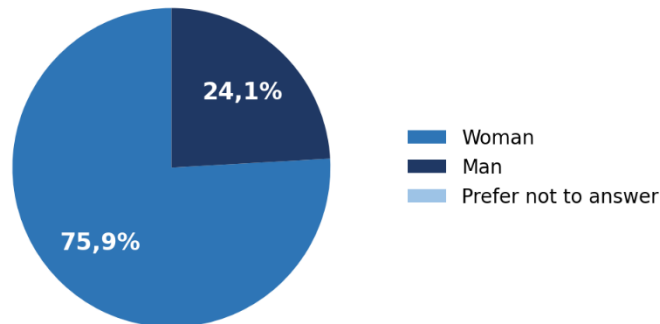


Source: Author's analysis based on survey data (N = 108).

Women represented 75.9% of respondents and men 24.1%. The gender distribution reflects the composition of the convenience sample used in this study.

Figure 6. Gender Distribution of Participants

Gender



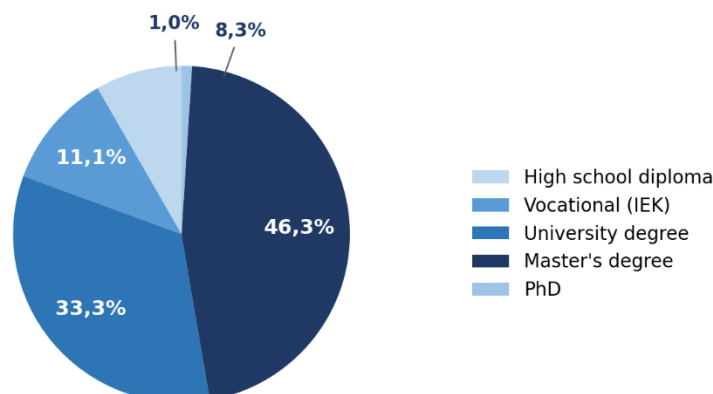
Source: Author's analysis based on survey data (N = 108).

Slightly more than half of the participants (54.6%) reported having children, while 45.4% reported not having children.

In terms of educational attainment, the sample was highly educated. Overall, 79.6% of respondents held tertiary education qualifications, including 46.3% with a Master's degree and 33.3% with a university or technological education degree. An additional 11.1% were vocational education graduates, while 0.9% held a doctoral degree.

Figure 7. Education Level of Participants

Education level



Source: Author's analysis based on survey data (N = 108).

Regarding annual income, 43.5% of participants reported earnings between €10,000 and €20,000, while 22.2% reported earnings between €20,001 and €30,000. Participants earning

more than €30,000 annually represented 13.9% of the sample. A small proportion of respondents (6.5%) preferred not to disclose their income.

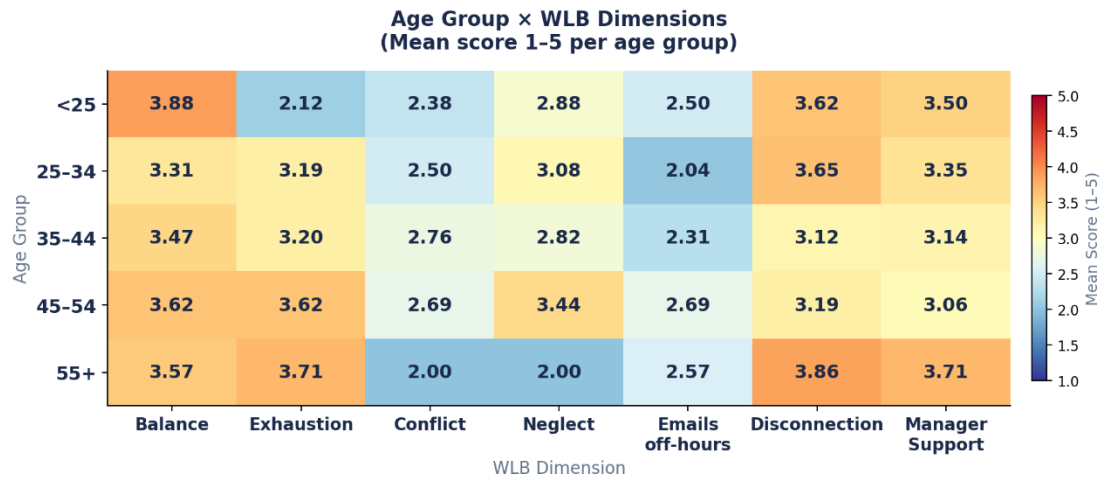
Most respondents (81.5%) were employed full-time, while smaller proportions reported part-time, freelance or other forms of employment. Regarding employment sector, 76.9% worked in the private sector and 23.1% in the public sector.

In terms of organisational characteristics, 40.7% of respondents worked in large organizations employing more than 250 people, while 43.5% worked in small and medium-sized enterprises. Furthermore, 79.6% reported working for Greek-owned organizations and 20.4% for subsidiaries of multinational companies.

Finally, 27.8% of respondents had worked in their current organization for more than ten years, while 21.3% had less than one year of tenure. The sample also represented a variety of economic sectors, with retail trade and technology among the most frequently reported sectors of employment.

Overall, the sample consisted predominantly of highly educated female employees aged between 35 and 44 years, most of whom worked full-time in the private sector. These characteristics should be considered when interpreting the findings presented in the following sections.

Figure 8. Mean Work-Life Balance Dimension Scores by Age Group



Source: Author's analysis based on survey data (N = 108).

Figure 8 presents the mean Work-Life Balance scores across age groups for the main dimensions examined in the questionnaire.

4.2 Impact of Working Hours, Flexibility and Workload on Daily Life

Research Question 1:

How do employees perceive the impact of working hours, flexibility and workload on their daily lives?

The findings indicate that 73.1% of participants work exclusively Monday to Friday, while 26.9% work schedules that include shifts or weekend work. Regarding work arrangements, 56.5% reported working exclusively on-site, 34.3% under a hybrid model and 9.3% fully remotely. Among hybrid workers, 48.6% worked remotely three or more days per week, 32.4% worked remotely two days per week and 18.9% worked remotely one day per week.

Among participants who expressed a desire for a different work arrangement (39.8%), 67.4% preferred a hybrid model and 32.6% preferred fully remote work. No respondents indicated a preference for increased office presence.

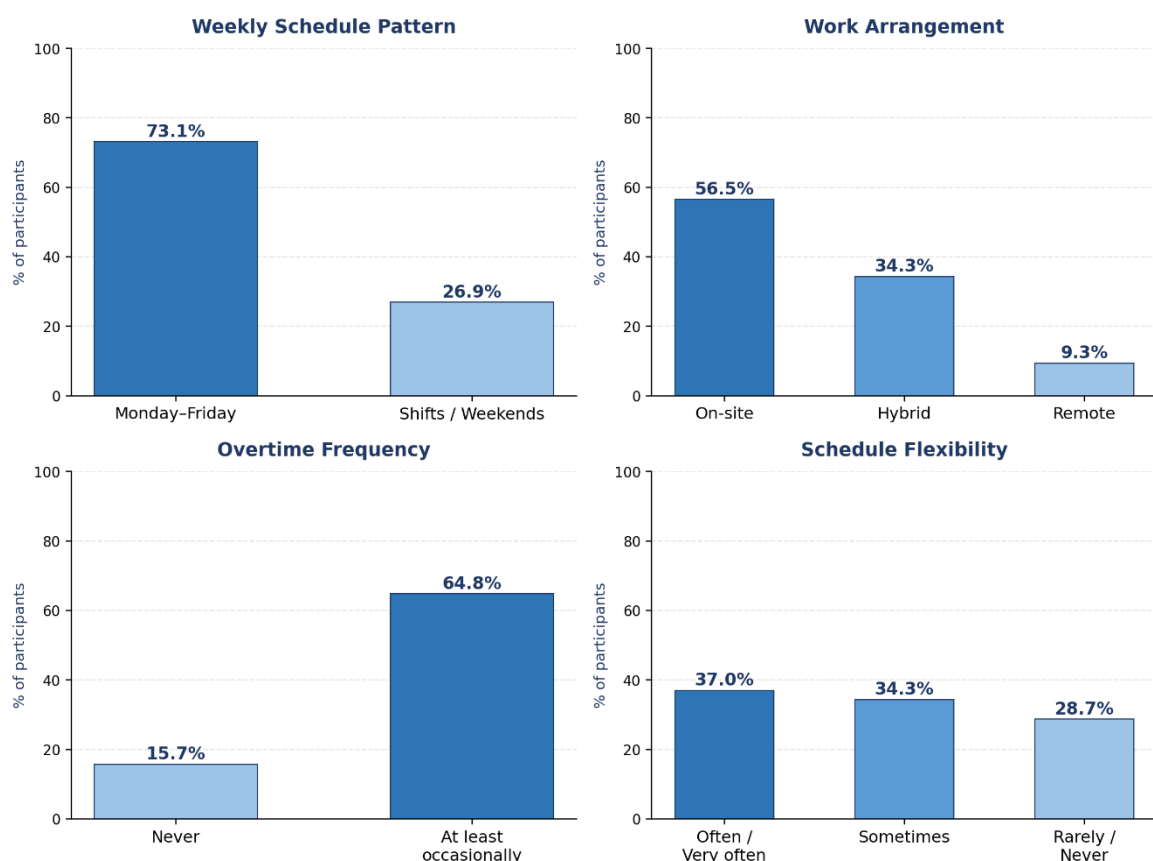
Regarding working hours, 64.8% reported working beyond standard working hours at least occasionally, while only 15.7% stated that they never work overtime. In addition, 39.8%

reported never working on weekends, whereas 15.7% reported working weekends often or very often.

Schedule flexibility appeared limited for a substantial proportion of participants. Only 37% reported being able to adjust their schedule often or very often, while 28.7% reported rarely or never having such flexibility. At the same time, 68.5% reported being able to take breaks often or very often during the working day.

Overall, the results indicate that traditional working arrangements were more frequently reported than hybrid or fully remote arrangements, while a considerable proportion of participants expressed a preference for greater flexibility.

Figure 9. Working Conditions and Flexibility Reported by Participants



Source: Author's analysis based on survey data (N = 108).

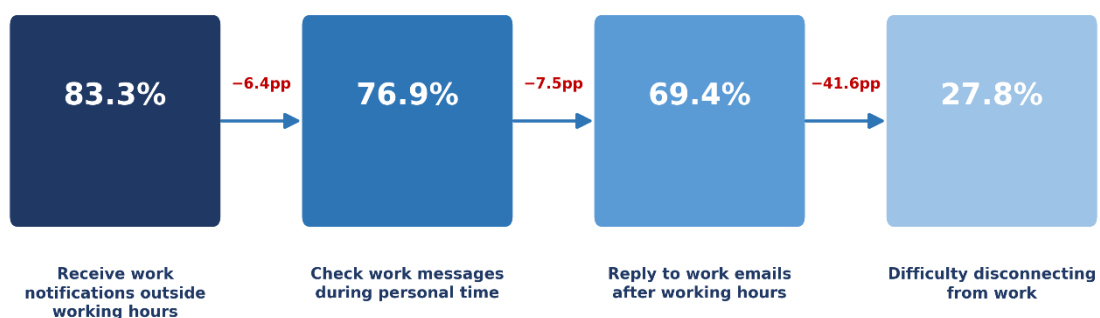
4.3 Digital Disconnection and the Interaction Between Work and Personal Life

Research Question 2:

How do employees experience digital disconnection and the interaction between work and personal life?

The findings indicate that 69.4% of respondents reply to work-related emails outside working hours, while 30.6% report never doing so. In addition, a substantial proportion of participants reported checking work-related messages during their personal time.

Figure 10. Progression from After-Hours Communication to Difficulties Disconnecting from Work



Source: Author's analysis based on survey data (N = 108).

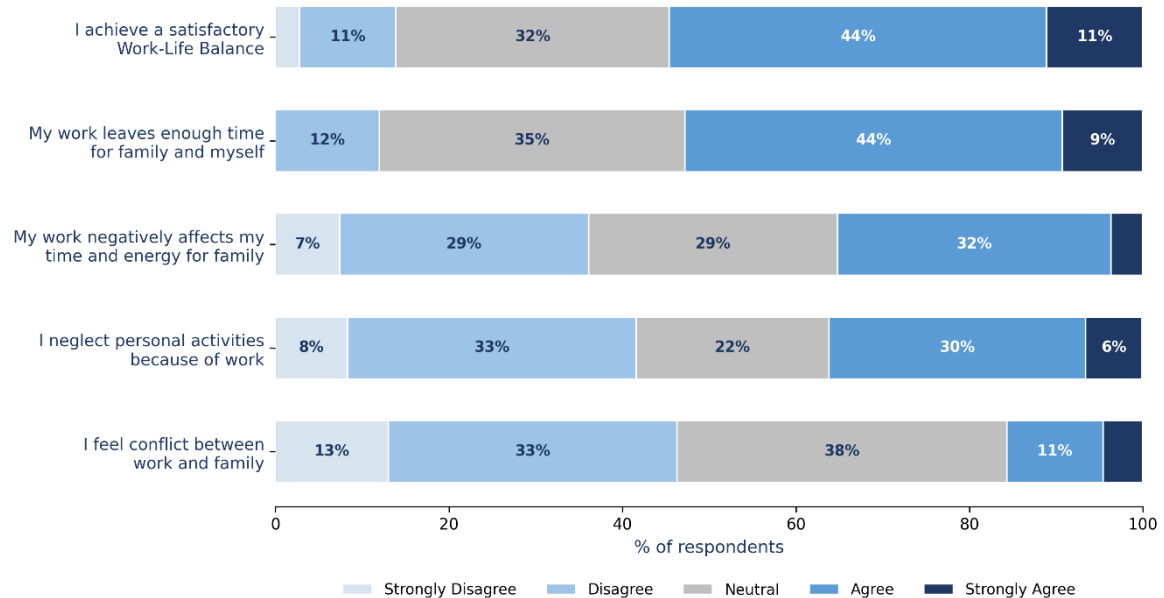
Figure 10 presents the relationship between after-hours communication and difficulties disconnecting from work. Participants who frequently checked work messages during their free time were also more likely to respond to work-related emails outside working hours.

The findings also reveal a relationship between work notifications and after-hours communication. Participants who reported frequently receiving work-related notifications were more likely to check messages and respond to emails during their personal time.

Regarding vacations and periods of leave, 28.7% reported never feeling pressure to remain available for work, while 25.9% reported rarely experiencing such pressure. However,

45.4% reported experiencing at least some degree of pressure to remain available while on leave.

Figure 11. Distribution of Always-On Work Behaviours



Source: Author's analysis based on survey data (N = 108).

Figure 11 presents the distribution of responses across several behaviours associated with the always-on work culture, including work-related notifications, checking messages during personal time, after-hours email communication, work beyond contracted hours, weekend work, perceived pressure to remain available during leave, difficulties disconnecting from work and end-of-day exhaustion.

Overall, the findings indicate that a substantial proportion of participants remained connected to work outside standard working hours, suggesting that digital disconnection remains a significant challenge for many employees.

4.4 Perceived Ability to Balance Professional and Personal Responsibilities

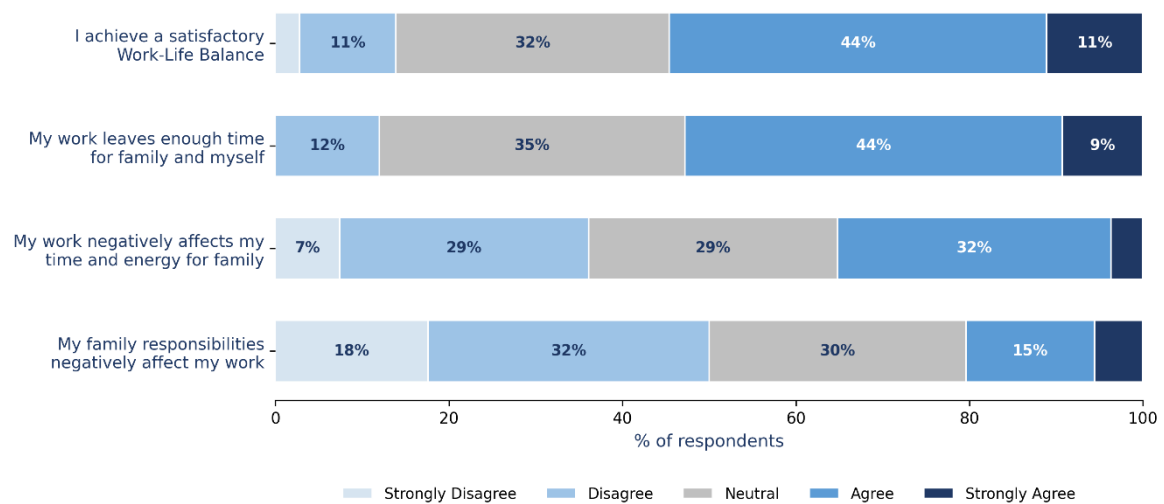
Research Question 3:

How do working parents in Greece perceive their ability to balance professional and personal responsibilities?

Participants expressed differing perceptions regarding their ability to balance work and personal life. Overall, 54.6% stated that they are able to balance their professional and personal responsibilities, while 52.8% reported that work leaves sufficient time for family and personal activities.

At the same time, 35.2% reported that work negatively affects the time and energy available for family life. In contrast, 50% disagreed with the statement that family responsibilities negatively affect their work.

Figure 12. Perceived Work-Life Balance and Work–Family Interaction



Source: Author's analysis based on survey data (N = 108).

Figure 12 presents responses related to perceived work-life balance and the interaction between professional and family responsibilities.

Overall, the findings indicate that many participants perceive themselves as maintaining a satisfactory level of balance, although a substantial proportion also report difficulties associated with combining professional and personal responsibilities.

4.5 Personal and Professional Implications of Combining Work and Family Responsibilities

Research Question 4:

How do working parents describe the personal and professional implications of combining work and family responsibilities?

The results indicate that 73.1% of participants experience some level of exhaustion at the end of the working day.

In addition, 54.6% reported feeling guilty when work affects time spent with family members. Furthermore, 36.1% stated that they neglect personal activities because of work-related demands, while 42.6% reported that work reduces the time available for exercise, relaxation or other personal activities

Participants also reported varying levels of work-family conflict. Although 84.3% did not report intense levels of conflict, several indicators suggest that work-related demands influence family time, personal activities and overall well-being.

Overall, the findings indicate that combining professional and family responsibilities is associated with varying levels of exhaustion, reduced personal time and emotional pressures.

4.6 Influence of Working Conditions on Family Planning Decisions

Research Question 5:

How do employees perceive the influence of working conditions on family planning decisions?

One of the most notable findings of the study concerns the relationship between working conditions and family planning decisions.

Overall, 37% of participants reported that work-related factors had influenced their decisions regarding whether or when to have children. In contrast, 63% reported that work had not influenced such decisions.

Figure 13. Work-related influences on parenthood decisions and the Greek fertility gap



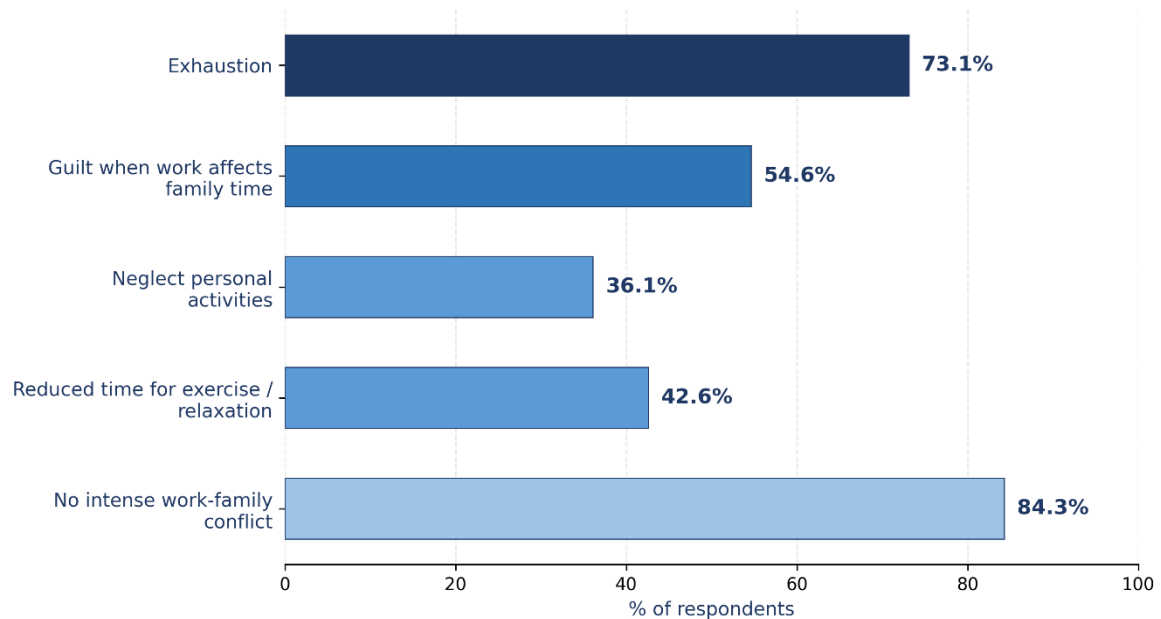
Source: Author's analysis based on survey data (N = 108), OECD (2024), and Eurostat (2024).

Figure 13 presents responses related to the influence of working conditions on parenthood decisions.

Additional findings presented in Figure 14 allow comparisons between parents and non-parents regarding work-family conflict, personal sacrifices and perceptions associated with balancing work and family responsibilities.

Overall, the findings indicate that for a substantial proportion of respondents, working conditions are perceived as a factor influencing decisions related to parenthood.

Figure 14. Personal and Emotional Implications of Work–Family Responsibilities



Source: Author's analysis based on survey data (N = 108).

4.7 Organisational Support and Employee Well-Being

The findings reveal limited availability of formal well-being initiatives within participating organizations. Overall, 63% of respondents reported that their company does not offer any well-being programs, while 74.1% reported never using such programs.

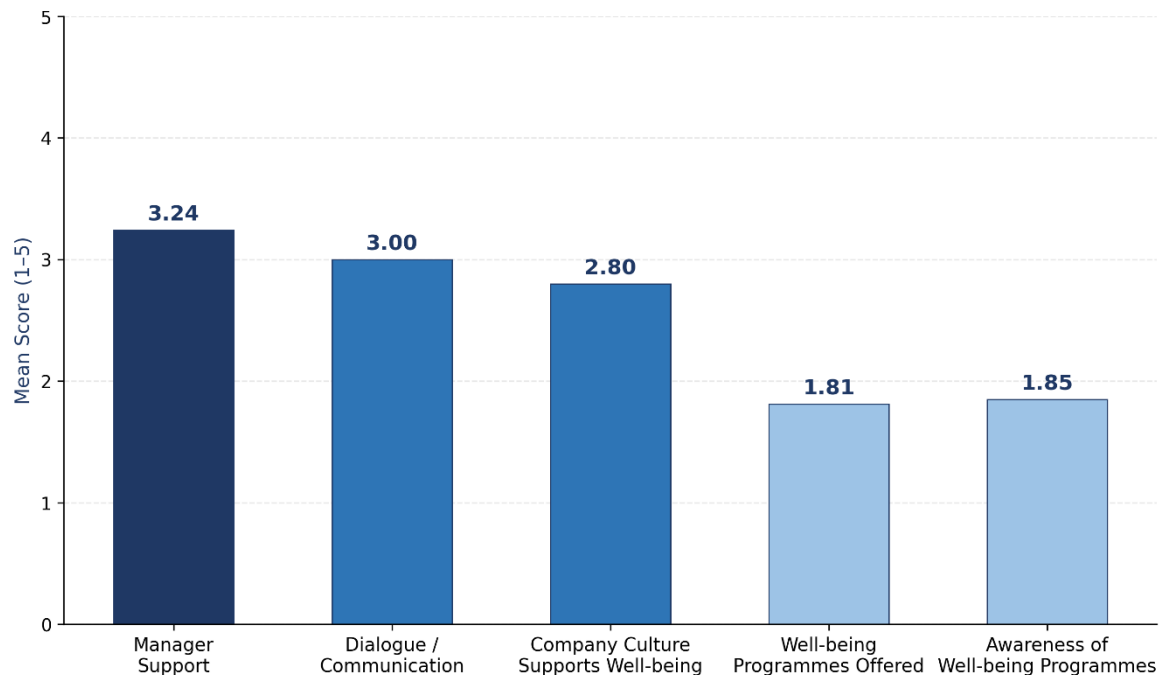
Regarding support from immediate supervisors, 46.3% reported receiving considerable support, while 13% reported receiving no support at all.

When asked about organisational dialogue concerning work-life balance, 37% reported little or no discussion of such issues within their organization.

Participants also reported varying perceptions regarding organisational culture and employee well-being initiatives.

Overall, the findings suggest substantial variation in the degree of organisational support experienced by participants.

Figure 15. Perceived Organisational Support and well-being Initiatives



Source: Author's analysis based on survey data (N = 108).

Figure 15 presents participants' perceptions of organisational support and the availability of well-being initiatives within their organisations. Overall, respondents reported relatively positive perceptions of managerial support and communication, whereas substantially lower mean scores were observed for the availability and awareness of formal well-being programmes.

4.8 Employees' Preferred Changes to Current Working Arrangements

The final section of the questionnaire explored participants' preferred changes to their current working arrangements.

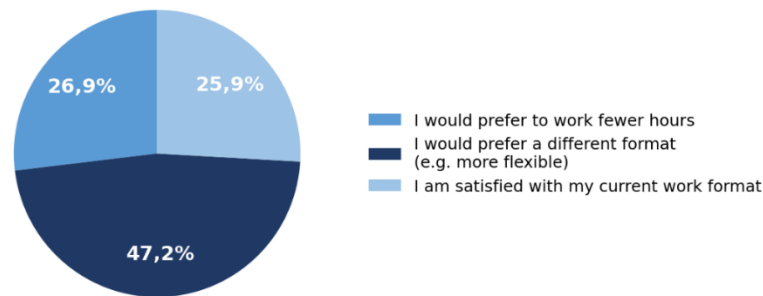
Overall, 47.2% reported a preference for greater flexibility, 26.9% preferred reduced working hours and 25.9% reported satisfaction with their current situation.

Figure 17 presents employees' preferred changes to current working arrangements, while Figure 18 compares current and preferred work models.

The findings indicate that flexibility represents the most frequently requested change among participants.

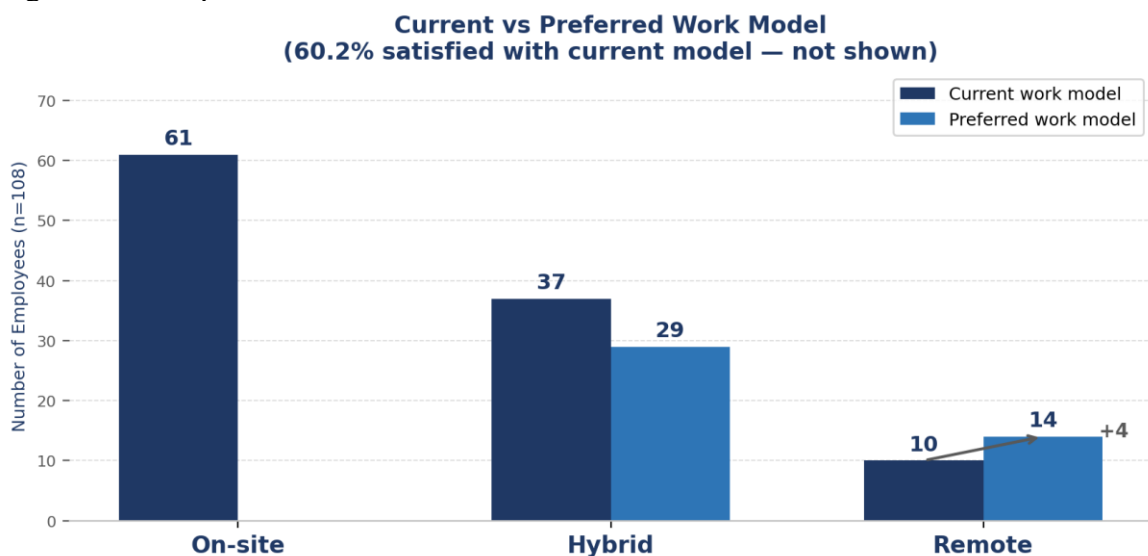
Figure 16. Employees' Preferred Changes to Current Working Arrangements

Which of the following best reflects your wish regarding your work?



Source: Author's analysis based on survey data (N = 108).

Figure 17. Comparison Between Current and Preferred Work Models



Source: Author's analysis based on survey data (N = 108).

4.9 Correlation Analysis

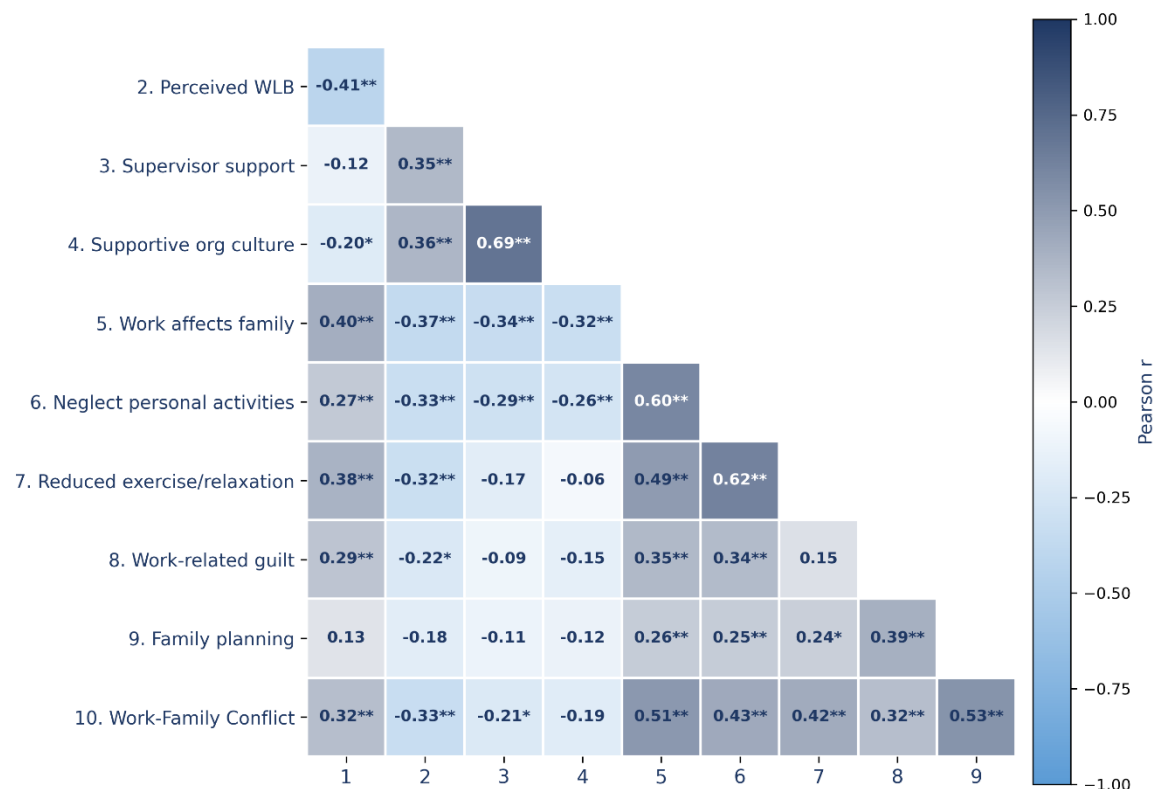
To further explore the relationships among the principal dimensions examined in the study, a Pearson correlation analysis was conducted using the main Likert-scale variables included in the questionnaire. The purpose of this analysis was to examine the strength and direction of the associations among the principal variables included in the study, including perceived Work-Life Balance, mental exhaustion, organisational support, work-family conflict and

family planning. Given the exploratory and cross-sectional nature of the study, the analysis was intended to identify statistically significant associations rather than establish causal relationships.

Table 4. Pearson Correlation Matrix of the Principal Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Mental exhaustion	—									
2. Perceived Work-Life Balance	-0.41**	—								
3. Supervisor support	-0.12	0.35**	—							
4. Supportive organisational culture	-0.20*	0.36**	0.69**	—						
5. Work negatively affects family life	0.40**	-0.37**	-0.34**	-0.32**	—					
6. Neglect personal activities	0.27**	-0.33**	-0.29**	-0.26**	0.60**	—				
7. Reduced time for exercise or relaxation	0.38**	-0.32**	-0.17	-0.06	0.49**	0.62**	—			
8. Work-related guilt	0.29**	-0.22*	-0.09	-0.15	0.35**	0.34**	0.15	—		
9. Family planning	0.13	-0.18	-0.11	-0.12	0.26**	0.25**	0.24*	0.39**	—	
10. Work-Family Conflict	0.32**	-0.33**	-0.21*	-0.19	0.51**	0.43**	0.42**	0.32**	0.53**	—

Figure 18. Heatmap of Pearson Correlations among the Main Study Variables



Source: Author's analysis based on survey data (N = 108).

Figure 18 provides a heatmap visualization of the correlation matrix, facilitating the identification of the strongest positive and negative associations among the main study variables.

The correlation analysis revealed several statistically significant relationships among the main study variables. Perceived Work-Life Balance was moderately and negatively associated with mental exhaustion ($r = -.41$, $p < .01$), indicating that employees who reported greater balance between work and personal life tended to experience lower levels of exhaustion.

Organisational support variables were also positively related. Supervisor support showed a strong positive correlation with perceptions of a supportive organisational culture ($r = .69$, $p < .01$), suggesting that employees who perceive supportive managers also tend to perceive their organisation as promoting employee well-being.

Work–family conflict was positively associated with the perception that work negatively affects family life ($r = .51$, $p < .01$), neglect of personal activities ($r = .43$, $p < .01$), reduced time for exercise or relaxation ($r = .42$, $p < .01$) and family planning decisions ($r = .53$, $p < .01$). Furthermore, neglecting personal activities was strongly associated with reduced time for exercise or relaxation ($r = .62$, $p < .01$), indicating that increased work demands affect multiple aspects of employees' personal well-being.

Overall, the correlation analysis complements the descriptive findings presented in the previous sections by demonstrating statistically significant associations among several of the principal study variables. These findings provide additional empirical support for the patterns discussed in the following Discussion chapter.

5. Discussion

5.1 Impact of Working Hours, Flexibility and Workload on Daily Life

The first research question examined how employees perceive the impact of working hours, flexibility and workload on their daily lives.

The findings of the present study indicate that most participants continue to work within relatively traditional work arrangements. Specifically, 56.5% reported working exclusively on-site, while only 9.3% worked fully remotely. In addition, 64.8% reported working beyond standard working hours at least occasionally, whereas only 37% reported having a high degree of schedule flexibility.

These findings are consistent with broader labour market trends in Greece. According to Eurostat (2025), Greece records the highest average weekly working hours in the European Union (39.8 hours compared to an EU average of 36.1 hours). Furthermore, 12.4% of Greek employees work more than 49 hours per week, while 20.9% reported working more than 45 hours weekly during the second quarter of 2025, the highest percentage among EU member states. The consistency between the findings of the present study and wider labour market statistics suggests that the experiences reported by participants reflect broader characteristics of the Greek working environment rather than isolated experiences within the sample.

This observation is particularly important given the use of convenience sampling in the present study. Although the sample cannot be considered fully representative of the entire Greek workforce, the similarity between the survey findings and national labour market indicators increases confidence that the patterns identified are not unique to the respondents surveyed.

The limited adoption of remote work observed in the present study is also consistent with available European evidence. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, only 5.3% of employees in Greece worked remotely, one of the lowest rates in the European Union (Eurofound, 2024).

Although the pandemic significantly accelerated the adoption of teleworking, research indicates that Greece continues to lag behind several Western European countries in the implementation of flexible working arrangements. This finding may be related both to the structure of the Greek economy and to the significant presence of sectors in which physical presence remains essential, such as retail, services and customer-facing occupations. It may also reflect the persistence of more traditional organisational cultures that continue to emphasise physical presence as an indicator of productivity and employee commitment.

A particularly interesting finding concerns employees' preferences regarding future working arrangements. Among participants who expressed a desire to change their current work model, 67.4% preferred a hybrid arrangement, while only 32.6% preferred fully remote work. This finding is consistent with recent evidence from Gallup (2024), Eurofound (2024) and Microsoft's Work Trend Index (2024), which suggests that employees increasingly favour hybrid models over either fully remote or fully office-based work.

Rather than seeking complete separation from the workplace, employees appear to value a combination of flexibility and social interaction. Hybrid work allows employees to benefit from greater control over their time while maintaining opportunities for collaboration, informal learning, mentoring, social connection and participation in organisational life. This may explain why none of the respondents expressed a preference for greater office presence, while at the same time the majority did not favour fully remote work. Employees appear to seek flexibility without completely abandoning the social and collaborative dimensions of work.

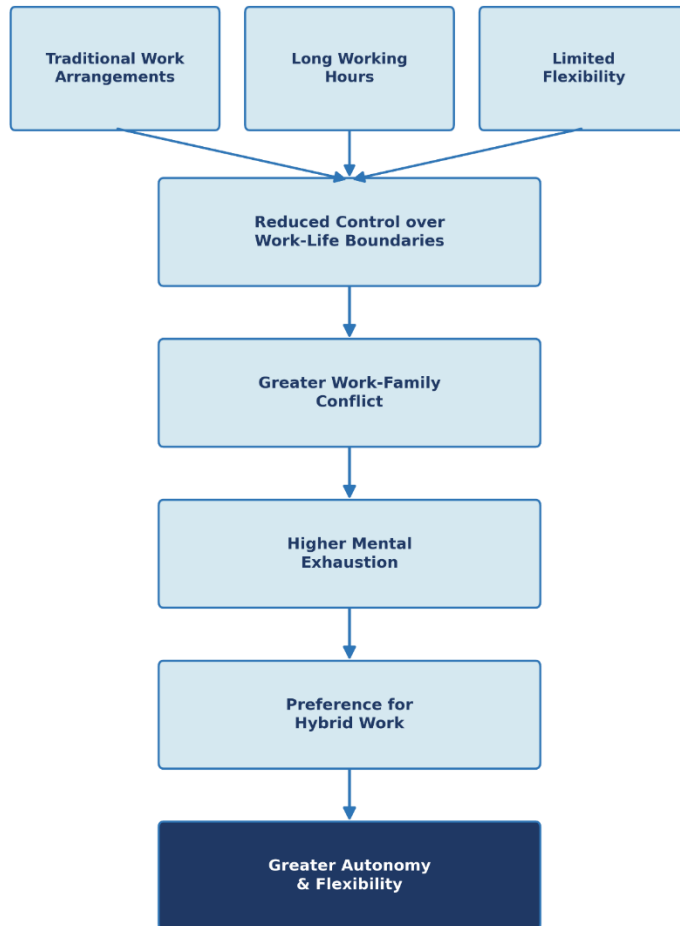
These findings can also be interpreted through Clark's (2000) Border Theory. According to this perspective, Work-Life Balance is influenced not only by the number of hours worked but also by the degree of control individuals have over the boundaries between their professional and personal lives. The ability to adjust working hours or work location enables employees to organise professional and family responsibilities more effectively, protect personal time and reduce potential conflicts between work and family roles.

The findings therefore support the argument that control over work arrangements may be as important as the absolute number of hours worked when employees evaluate their Work-

Life Balance. Employees who are able to establish clearer boundaries between work and personal life and who have greater autonomy in organising their schedules may experience lower levels of work-family conflict, even when workload remains relatively high.

This interpretation is further supported by the correlation analysis presented in Chapter 4, which identified statistically significant associations between schedule flexibility, Work-Life Balance and employee exhaustion. These relationships reinforce the descriptive findings by showing that employees reporting greater flexibility also tended to report a more positive Work-Life Balance, whereas higher workload and longer working hours were associated with greater exhaustion.

Figure 19. Conceptual Interpretation of the Relationship Between Working Conditions and Work-Life Balance



Source: Author's synthesis based on the findings of the present study and Clark's (2000) Border Theory.

Overall, the findings suggest that Greek employees continue to operate within a working environment characterised by relatively long working hours, limited flexibility and the predominance of traditional work arrangements. At the same time, the strong preference for hybrid work indicates that flexibility is increasingly perceived not as an additional benefit but as a fundamental condition for achieving a satisfactory Work-Life Balance. Consequently, the first research question can be answered positively, as participants clearly perceive working hours, workload and flexibility as important factors influencing their daily lives and their ability to balance professional and personal responsibilities.

5.2 Digital Disconnection and Work-Life Integration

The second research question examined how employees experience digital disconnection and the interaction between work and personal life.

The findings of the present study suggest that complete disconnection from work after the end of the working day remains difficult for a substantial proportion of employees. While 27.8% of participants reported being able to disconnect completely from work-related responsibilities, an equal proportion reported that they disconnect only a little or not at all. In addition, a considerable number of respondents indicated that they continue to monitor or respond to work-related communications outside normal working hours.

These findings are consistent with broader European trends. According to Eurofound (2024), a substantial proportion of European employees report performing work-related tasks or being contacted outside normal working hours, while the widespread use of digital communication technologies has significantly increased expectations regarding employee availability. Similar concerns have also been highlighted by the European Working Conditions Survey, which found that employees who remain connected to work outside normal working hours report lower levels of well-being and greater difficulties achieving Work-Life Balance.

The findings of the present study therefore do not appear to represent an exclusively Greek phenomenon. Rather, they reflect a broader transformation of work observed across Europe and internationally, where technological developments have made communication possible at any time and from any location. However, the results suggest that the ability to disconnect remains a significant challenge for many Greek employees despite the relatively limited adoption of remote work arrangements compared to several Western European countries.

This finding is particularly interesting because difficulties disconnecting from work were observed despite the fact that the majority of participants worked primarily on-site rather than remotely. Prior research has frequently associated blurred work-life boundaries with teleworking and hybrid work arrangements. However, the present findings suggest that the issue may extend beyond work location itself. Continuous availability may increasingly

represent an organisational and cultural expectation rather than a simple consequence of working from home.

The findings can also be linked to the concept of technostress introduced by Tarafdar et al. (2007). Technostress refers to the psychological strain created by the constant use of digital technologies and the expectation of immediate responsiveness. The ability to receive emails, messages and notifications at any time can gradually transform technological convenience into a perceived obligation to remain available, even outside contractual working hours.

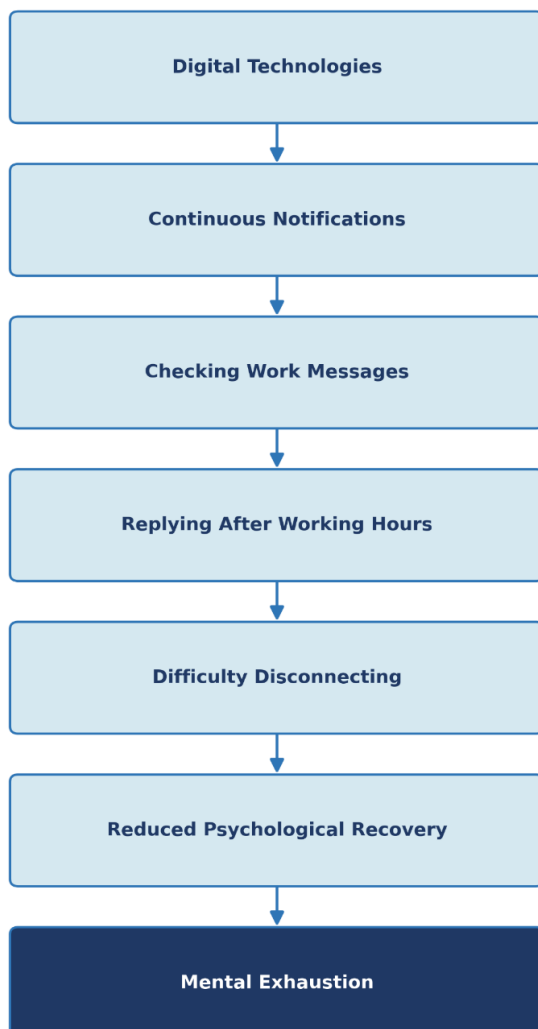
Several international studies support this interpretation. Eurofound (2024) found that employees who frequently engage in work-related communication during their leisure time report higher levels of stress and lower levels of psychological recovery. Similarly, Gallup (2024) reported that approximately half of employees worldwide experience frequent work-related stress during a typical working day. These findings are broadly consistent with the results of the present study, where 73.1% of participants reported experiencing some degree of exhaustion at the end of the workday.

At the same time, caution is required when interpreting these findings. Although difficulties disconnecting from work appear to be associated with exhaustion and reduced well-being, the present study does not allow causal relationships to be established. For example, it is possible that employees occupying positions with greater responsibility experience higher levels of after-hours engagement than employees in less demanding roles. However, job responsibility levels were not directly measured in the questionnaire and therefore no conclusions can be drawn regarding the specific factors driving these behaviours.

The findings nevertheless support the broader argument presented by Clark's (2000) Border Theory, discussed in Chapter 2, which suggests that Work-Life Balance is influenced not only by the amount of time spent working but also by the ability to establish and maintain boundaries between professional and personal roles. The results indicate that many employees continue to face challenges in maintaining these boundaries, even when they are physically absent from the workplace.

Although the descriptive findings suggest that difficulties disconnecting from work coexist with higher levels of exhaustion, the present study did not directly examine this relationship through correlation analysis. Therefore, no statistical or causal conclusions can be drawn regarding the association between these variables.

Figure 20. Conceptual Interpretation of Digital Disconnection and Employee Exhaustion



Source: Author's synthesis based on the findings of the present study, Clark's (2000) Border Theory, and Tarafdar et al. (2007).

Overall, the findings suggest that digital disconnection has emerged as an important dimension of contemporary Work-Life Balance. The challenge appears to be less about technology itself and more about the expectations and behaviours that technology enables. Consequently, the second research question can be answered positively, as participants

reported significant difficulties in fully disconnecting from work and maintaining clear boundaries between their professional and personal lives.

5.3 Work-Life Balance and Work-Family Conflict

The third research question examined how employees perceive their ability to balance professional and personal responsibilities and how work demands influence family and personal life.

The findings of the present study reveal a complex picture regarding Work-Life Balance. On the one hand, 54.6% of participants reported that they are generally able to maintain a balance between their professional and personal lives, while 52.8% stated that their work leaves them sufficient time for family and personal activities. At first glance, these findings could suggest that a considerable proportion of employees have achieved a satisfactory level of Work-Life Balance.

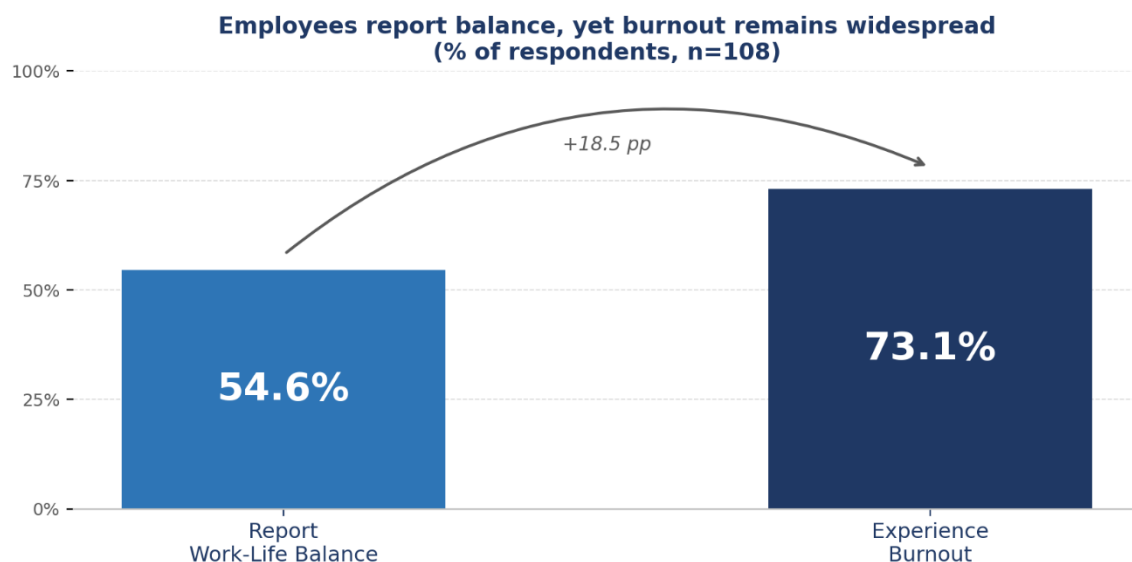
However, a closer examination of the data reveals a more nuanced reality. While many participants perceived themselves as maintaining a satisfactory Work-Life Balance, 35.2% reported that work negatively affects the time and energy they can devote to their family, 36.1% stated that they neglect personal activities because of work obligations, and 42.6% reported having limited time for exercise, rest or well-being related activities. In addition, 54.6% reported feeling guilty when work interferes with family time, while 73.1% experienced some level of exhaustion at the end of the working day. These findings suggest that perceived balance does not necessarily imply the absence of conflict, pressure or personal sacrifices.

This apparent contradiction can be interpreted through the Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989). According to this theory, individuals possess limited personal resources, including time, energy, emotional capacity and social support. When demands increase in one domain of life, individuals often maintain their performance by reallocating or sacrificing resources from other domains. In practice, employees may continue to meet professional and family responsibilities, but at the expense of personal time, leisure activities, rest or self-care. From this perspective, the findings suggest that many participants

achieve a functional form of balance, although this balance may be maintained through the gradual depletion of personal resources.

The paradox emerging from the present findings is illustrated in Figure 21. Although more than half of the participants perceived themselves as maintaining Work-Life Balance, a substantially larger proportion reported experiencing exhaustion at the end of the working day. This comparison suggests that Work-Life Balance may coexist with considerable personal costs, indicating that perceived balance does not necessarily imply the absence of strain or resource depletion.

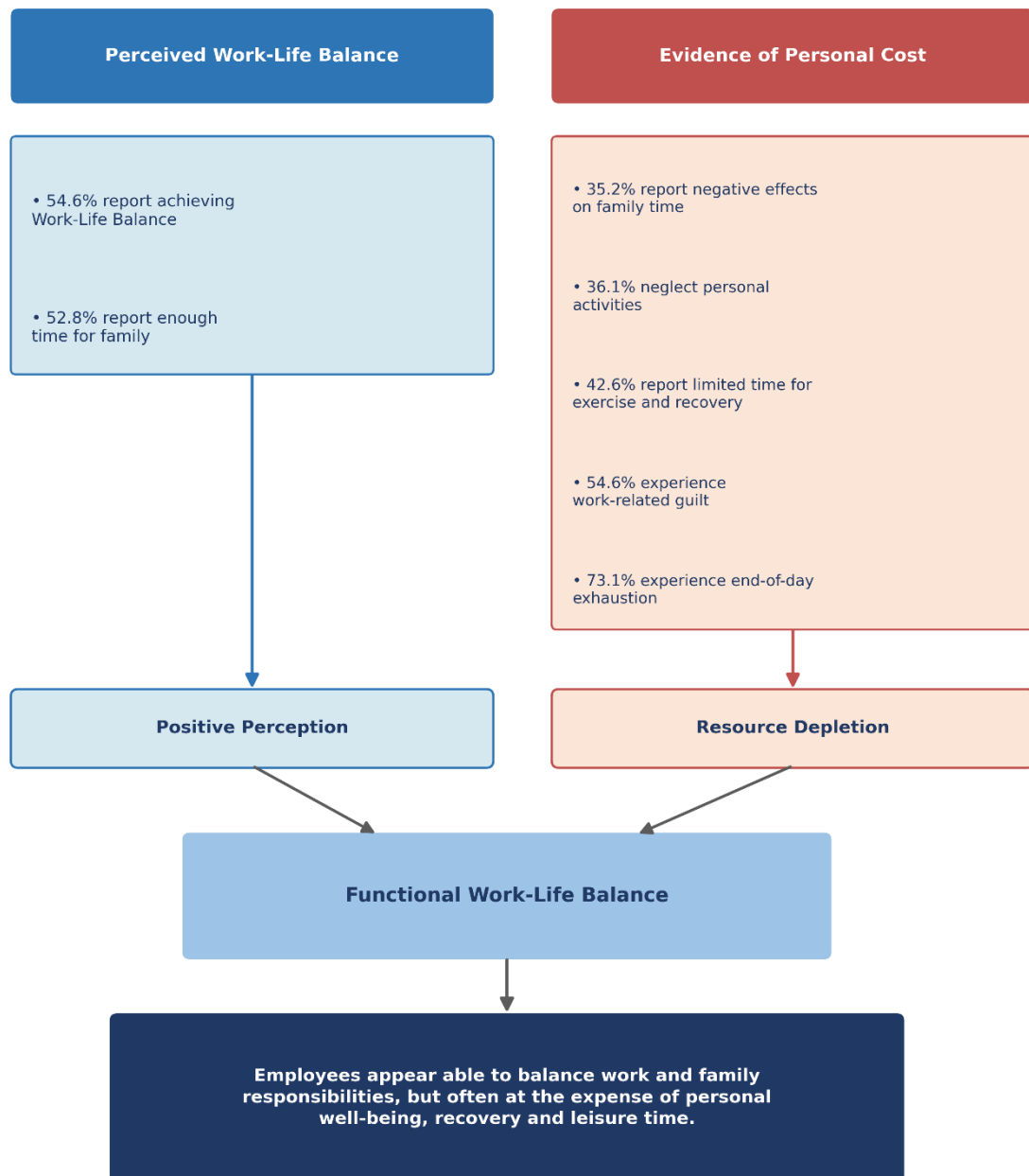
Figure 21. Reported Work-Life Balance Despite High Levels of Employee Exhaustion



Source: Author's analysis based on survey data (N = 108).

Figure 21 illustrates one of the most notable findings of the present study: although more than half of the participants perceived themselves as achieving Work-Life Balance, a considerably larger proportion experienced mental exhaustion at the end of the working day.

Figure 22. The Work–Life Balance Paradox: Perceived Balance versus Personal Cost



Source: Author's synthesis based on the findings of the present study and Hobfoll's (1989) Conservation of Resources Theory.

Figure 22 summarises the paradox identified in the present study. Although many participants perceived themselves as achieving Work-Life Balance, the findings simultaneously indicate substantial personal costs, suggesting that this balance is often maintained through continuous personal compromises.

The present findings are consistent with international evidence. Research by Gallup (2024) has shown that many employees report being able to fulfil their work and family obligations while simultaneously experiencing elevated levels of stress and fatigue. Similarly, Eurofound (2024) reports that lack of time for recovery, personal well-being and non-work activities remains one of the most common challenges faced by European employees. The coexistence of perceived balance and indicators of strain observed in the present study appears to reflect a similar pattern.

The findings can also be interpreted through the Work-Family Conflict Theory developed by Greenhaus and Beutell (1985). According to this framework, work and family roles compete for the same limited resources, particularly time, energy and psychological availability. As demands increase in one role, participation in the other role becomes more difficult. The results of the present study support this interpretation, as many participants reported that despite perceiving themselves as balanced, they often sacrifice personal activities, rest or family time in order to meet competing professional and family demands.

Furthermore, Greenhaus, Collins and Shaw (2003) argue that higher levels of work-family conflict are associated with lower satisfaction with family life and overall well-being. Although the present study did not directly measure family satisfaction or psychological well-being, the high levels of exhaustion, guilt and reduced personal time identified in the findings are broadly consistent with the consequences described in the literature.

A particularly interesting finding concerns the asymmetrical nature of the relationship between work and family responsibilities. While many participants reported that work affects their family and personal life, 50% disagreed with the statement that family responsibilities negatively affect their work performance. This suggests that interference may occur more frequently from work to family than from family to work. Similar findings have been reported by Eurofound (2024), which consistently shows that European employees are more likely to report work-to-family conflict than family-to-work conflict.

The present findings therefore appear to align with a broader European pattern rather than representing a unique characteristic of the sample. This interpretation may also be supported

by the broader characteristics of the Greek labour market. Greece continues to record some of the highest average working hours in the European Union, while levels of flexibility remain lower than in many Western European countries. Under such conditions, work may occupy a particularly dominant position within daily life, increasing the likelihood that professional demands spill over into family responsibilities and personal time.

The Greek context may further intensify these pressures. Lyberaki and Tinios (2012) highlight the longstanding incompatibility between school schedules, childcare arrangements and working hours in Greece. In addition, Eurostat and OECD data indicate that childcare coverage for young children remains below the European average. As a result, many working parents continue to rely heavily on informal support networks. Research from SHARE and Eurofound suggests that grandparents play a particularly important role in childcare provision in Southern European countries, including Greece, often compensating for limitations in formal childcare services. Nevertheless, demographic ageing and delayed parenthood may gradually reduce the availability of this traditional support mechanism in the future.

It is also important to note that 54.6% of participants in the present study were parents. This means that a substantial proportion of the findings reflect the experiences of individuals who actively combine employment with childcare and family responsibilities. However, although the questionnaire collected information regarding parental status, no statistical tests were conducted to compare parents and non-parents. Consequently, the study cannot determine whether the two groups experience significantly different levels of Work-Life Balance or Work-Family Conflict.

The correlation analysis presented in Chapter 4 further supports these findings. In particular, Work-Family Conflict was moderately and positively associated with the perception that work negatively affects family life ($r = .51, p < .01$), neglect of personal activities ($r = .43, p < .01$), reduced time for exercise or relaxation ($r = .42, p < .01$) and work-related guilt ($r = .32, p < .01$). Conversely, perceived Work-Life Balance was negatively associated with Work-Family Conflict ($r = -.33, p < .01$), suggesting that employees experiencing greater conflict between work and family roles also reported lower levels of overall Work-Life Balance.

Overall, the findings suggest that many employees perceive themselves as capable of balancing professional and personal responsibilities. At the same time, the evidence indicates that this balance is often accompanied by reduced personal time, limited opportunities for recovery, feelings of guilt and elevated levels of exhaustion. Therefore, the answer to the third research question is that employees generally perceive themselves as able to manage both professional and family responsibilities, but this balance frequently appears to be achieved through personal compromises and the continuous management of competing demands rather than through the complete absence of conflict.

5.4 Personal and Professional Implications of Combining Work and Family Responsibilities

The fourth research question examined the personal and professional implications associated with combining work and family responsibilities.

The findings of the present study indicate that managing multiple roles is accompanied by substantial demands for a considerable proportion of participants. Specifically, 73.1% reported experiencing some level of exhaustion at the end of the working day, 54.6% stated that they feel guilty when work affects the time they spend with their family, while 36.1% and 42.6% respectively reported limiting personal activities and reducing the time available for exercise, rest and other well-being-related activities.

It is noteworthy that parents represented 54.6% of the sample, whereas 73.1% of participants reported experiencing some degree of exhaustion. This observation suggests that work-related fatigue may not be limited exclusively to working parents but may affect broader groups of employees. Although the present study did not include statistical tests comparing parents and non-parents, the findings indicate that the pressures associated with contemporary working life extend beyond family status alone and affect a significant proportion of the workforce.

The findings are consistent with broader European and international evidence. According to Eurofound (2024), physical and emotional exhaustion remains one of the most common

challenges faced by employees across Europe. Similarly, Gallup (2024) reports that a substantial proportion of employees worldwide experience high levels of stress and fatigue on a regular basis. The results of the present study therefore appear to reflect a wider international pattern rather than an exclusively Greek phenomenon.

The correlation analysis presented in Chapter 4 is broadly consistent with these findings. Mental exhaustion was negatively associated with perceived Work-Life Balance ($r = -.41$, $p < .01$) and positively associated with Work-Family Conflict ($r = .32$, $p < .01$), suggesting that employees experiencing greater conflict also tended to report higher levels of exhaustion

These findings can be interpreted through Hobfoll's (1989) Conservation of Resources Theory. According to this framework, individuals possess limited resources such as time, energy, psychological resilience and social support. When demands arising from work and family increase simultaneously, these resources are consumed more rapidly, increasing the likelihood of fatigue, stress and reduced opportunities for recovery. From this perspective, the reduction of personal activities and well-being-related practices reported by participants appears consistent with the assumptions of the theory.

The findings may also be interpreted through Goode's (1960) Role Strain Theory. According to this perspective, the simultaneous management of multiple social roles increases the likelihood of pressure and conflict between competing responsibilities. Employees who are also parents, partners and family members are often required to satisfy demands originating from several domains of life, all competing for the same limited resources. This framework provides a useful explanation for the elevated levels of exhaustion and personal sacrifices identified in the present study.

The following discussion moves beyond the empirical findings of the present study and draws on theoretical perspectives from the literature regarding the potential positive implications of parenthood. These perspectives should therefore be understood as conceptual interpretations rather than empirical findings derived from the present dataset.

However, the international literature does not view parenthood and multiple roles exclusively as sources of burden. Greenhaus and Powell (2006), through their Work-Family Enrichment framework, argue that experiences, skills and resources acquired in one domain of life can be transferred and utilised in another. According to their model, family experiences may contribute to the development of competencies such as communication, empathy, conflict resolution, time management and prioritisation, which can subsequently enhance professional performance.

A similar perspective is offered by Barnett and Hyde (2001) through Expansionist Theory. The authors argue that occupying multiple roles does not necessarily result in conflict and strain. Under certain conditions, multiple roles may function as sources of personal growth, resilience and psychological development.

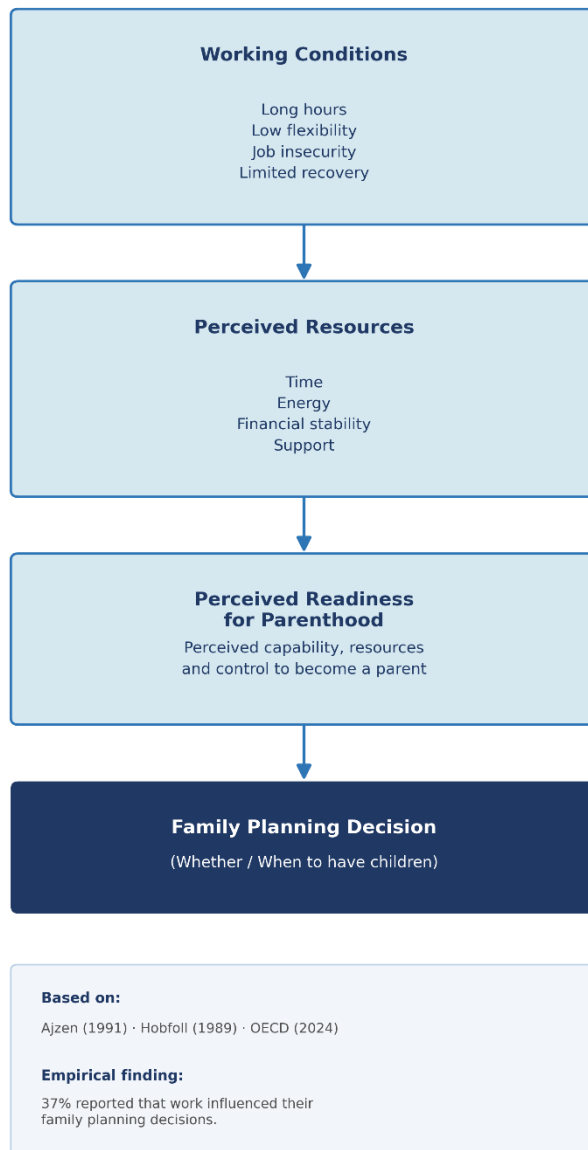
This perspective is also supported by leadership research. Goleman (1998) argues that emotional intelligence, empathy, self-regulation and relationship management are among the most important characteristics of effective leaders. Many of these competencies are continuously developed through parenthood, as parents are required to manage conflicts, practise active listening, support the development of others and make decisions under conditions of uncertainty. Likewise, elements of Transformational Leadership (Burns, 1978; Bass & Riggio, 2006) and Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1977) can often be observed within the parenting role, as raising children requires guidance, support, motivation and a long-term commitment to the growth and development of another individual.

The present study did not directly measure leadership skills, emotional intelligence or professional effectiveness. Therefore, it is not possible to empirically verify whether participants developed such competencies through parenthood. Nevertheless, the existing literature provides a broader perspective on the relationship between work and family, suggesting that family life may function not only as a source of demands but also as a context in which valuable personal and professional capabilities are developed.

Figure 24 summarises the dual perspective emerging from the present discussion. While the empirical findings demonstrate that combining work and family responsibilities is associated with substantial personal demands, the literature also suggests that these

experiences may contribute to the development of valuable personal and professional competencies. Importantly, the opportunities presented on the right side of the figure were not measured in the present study but are derived from the theoretical literature discussed in this section

Figure 23. Dual Perspective on Combining Work and Family Responsibilities



Source: Author's synthesis based on the findings of the present study, Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour, Hobfoll's (1989) Conservation of Resources Theory, and OECD (2024).

Overall, the findings indicate that combining work and family responsibilities is associated with increased demands, fatigue and reduced personal resources for many employees. At the same time, the work of Greenhaus and Powell (2006), Barnett and Hyde (2001) and Goleman (1998) suggests that managing multiple roles may also contribute to the development of valuable skills and experiences. Therefore, the answer to the fourth research question is that the personal and professional implications of combining work and family

responsibilities include both significant challenges and potential opportunities for personal and professional growth.

5.5 Influence of Working Conditions on Family Planning Decisions

The fifth research question examined how employees perceive the influence of working conditions on family planning decisions.

One of the most important findings of the present study is that 37% of participants reported that working conditions influenced their decisions regarding whether or when to have children. The questionnaire did not examine whether this influence was positive or negative. Therefore, it cannot be concluded whether work acted as an encouraging or discouraging factor. However, the finding shows that for more than one in three respondents, work is not only related to everyday life but also enters into major personal and family-related decisions.

This finding becomes more meaningful when connected to the profile of the sample. In the present study, 54.6% of respondents were already parents, while 45.4% did not have children. Therefore, the reported influence of work on family planning may concern different situations: people without children considering whether or when to become parents, parents considering whether to have another child, or individuals reflecting retrospectively on how work affected previous family decisions. The study cannot distinguish between these cases, but it shows that work is perceived as relevant to family planning across a mixed sample of parents and non-parents.

The finding also needs to be understood within the broader demographic context of Greece. According to ELSTAT, live births in Greece declined by 4.2% in 2024 compared with 2023. At the European level, Eurostat reports that in 2024 the EU total fertility rate was 1.34 live births per woman, while Greece belonged to the group of countries with both a lower-than-average fertility rate and a higher-than-average age at first birth. Eurostat also reports that the average age of women at the birth of their first child in the EU was 29.9 years in 2024, while Greece was above the EU average. These figures show that Greece combines low

fertility with delayed parenthood, a pattern also observed in several Southern European countries.

This demographic trend is not exclusively Greek. The OECD reports that fertility across OECD countries has fallen substantially over recent decades, from 3.3 children per woman in 1960 to 1.5 in 2022. The OECD also links fertility decisions to wider economic and social conditions, including labour market insecurity, housing affordability, childcare availability, gender equality and the ability to reconcile work and family life. In this sense, the decision to have children is not shaped by one single factor, but by the combined effect of income, stability, time, care infrastructure and perceived capacity to manage multiple roles.

The present study's finding is therefore consistent with the broader direction of international research, even though it cannot be directly compared with large-scale surveys because of differences in sample size and methodology. The value of the 37% finding is not that it proves causality, but that it shows that work is perceived by respondents as part of the decision-making environment around parenthood. This is important because it connects Work-Life Balance not only with daily well-being, but also with longer-term family and demographic choices.

This point is also connected to the findings discussed in previous sections. In the present study, many participants reported exhaustion, limited personal time and difficulties maintaining boundaries between work and personal life. At the same time, 50% disagreed that family responsibilities negatively affect their work. This creates an interesting asymmetry: work appears to enter family and personal decisions more clearly than family appears to disrupt work. One possible interpretation, consistent with the literature discussed above, is that planning, employees may evaluate whether their work situation leaves enough time, energy and stability for parenthood. Once family responsibilities exist, however, many employees may try to prevent them from affecting work, possibly by absorbing the pressure personally. This interpretation remains cautious, as the present study did not test this relationship statistically.

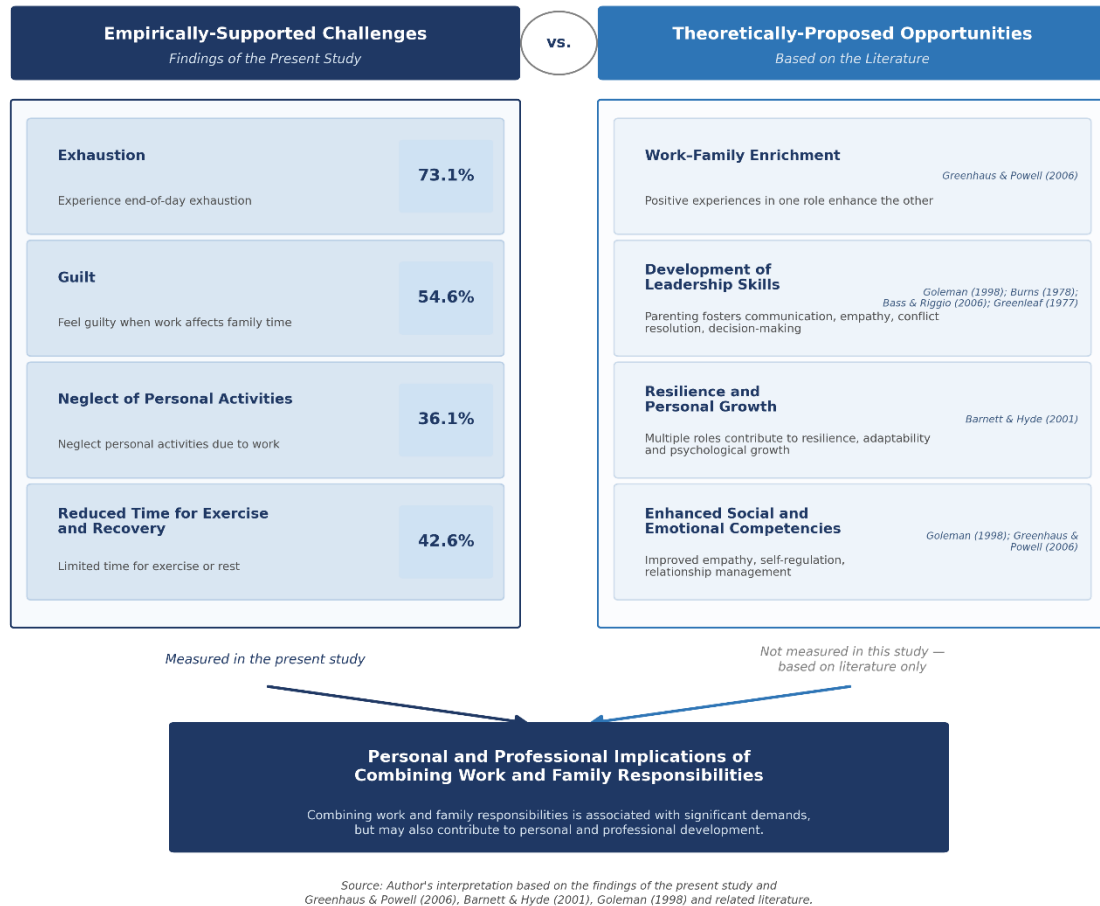
The role of perception is central here. Two employees may have similar working hours, similar income and similar responsibilities, but evaluate the possibility of parenthood

differently. Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour helps explain this point, as it argues that decisions are influenced not only by objective conditions, but also by attitudes, perceived social expectations and perceived behavioural control. In the context of family planning, this means that what matters is not only whether someone has a job, but whether they feel they have enough time, energy, support and control to take on the role of parent.

The findings can also be interpreted through Work-Family Conflict Theory (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). This theory has already been used in previous sections, but here it is applied at a different level. The issue is not only whether existing work and family roles conflict in everyday life, but whether anticipated conflict may influence decisions about whether or when to become a parent. If work already consumes substantial time and energy, the idea of adding further family responsibilities may be perceived as difficult or risky.

Similarly, Hobfoll's (1989) Conservation of Resources Theory provides a useful interpretation. Parenthood requires time, energy, emotional availability, financial stability and social support. When employees perceive these resources as already limited by work demands, they may view parenthood as an additional demand on already stretched resources. This does not mean that work alone determines family planning decisions, but it helps explain why working conditions may become part of the decision-making process.

Figure 24. Conceptual Framework Linking Working Conditions and Family Planning Decisions



Source: Author's synthesis based on the findings of the present study and the literature (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Goleman, 1998; Burns, 1978; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Greenleaf, 1977).

Overall, the answer to the fifth research question is that working conditions appear to influence family planning decisions for a significant proportion of employees. The present study cannot determine whether this influence was positive or negative, nor can it claim that work is the main cause of low fertility in Greece. However, the findings are consistent with wider European and OECD evidence showing that fertility decisions are shaped by the interaction of employment conditions, economic security, childcare, flexibility and perceived ability to combine work and family life. Therefore, Work-Life Balance should not be understood only as a daily organisational issue, but also as a factor connected to broader family and demographic decisions.

5.6 Organisational Support and Employee Well-Being

The findings of the present study suggest that organisational support plays an important role in employees' experience of Work-Life Balance and overall well-being. Although this section does not correspond directly to one of the five research questions, it helps interpret several of the patterns identified in the previous sections, including exhaustion, limited flexibility, difficulty disconnecting from work and the perceived lack of support in balancing professional and personal responsibilities.

One of the most notable findings of the present study is that 63% of respondents reported that their organisation does not offer any formal well-being or employee support programme. This finding is particularly important when compared with international data. According to the Aon Global well-being Survey, 87% of organisations globally report having at least one well-being initiative, while 83% report having a formal Well-being strategy. Similarly, the CIPD Health and well-being at Work report shows that the proportion of UK organisations with a stand-alone well-being strategy increased from 44% in 2020 to 57% in 2025. Compared with these figures, the present study suggests either lower availability or lower visibility of formal well-being initiatives among the organisations represented in the Greek sample.

The Greek context appears closer to the findings of the present study than to the more developed international well-being landscape. Evidence presented at the Employee Mental Health and well-being Conference in Greece indicates that only 32% of employees know where to get support in their organisation when their mental well-being is affected, while only 23% believe that their organisation supports their mental health and well-being. This suggests that, in Greece, the issue is not limited to whether formal programmes exist, but also concerns whether employees recognise them as accessible, trustworthy and meaningful forms of support.

Compared with countries such as the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and the Nordic countries, Greece appears to lag behind not only in the availability of structured organisational well-being initiatives but also in employees' perceptions of their accessibility and effectiveness. In these countries, well-being policies have gradually evolved from optional employee benefits into strategic organisational practices linked to employee

retention, productivity and sustainable performance. By contrast, the available evidence suggests that many Greek organisations are still in a transitional stage, where well-being initiatives are either absent, fragmented or insufficiently embedded within organisational culture.

The present study also shows that programme availability does not necessarily lead to programme use. Although 37% of respondents reported that their organisation offers some form of well-being or employee support programme, 74.1% of the total sample stated that they had never used such a programme. This means that only 25.9% of respondents had used a well-being or support programme at least once. Therefore, even when some form of support is available, a substantial proportion of employees do not appear to make use of it.

This finding is consistent with international evidence on Employee Assistance Programs and workplace well-being initiatives. Research on EAP utilisation shows that usage rates often remain low, commonly around 5% to 15% of eligible employees, despite the availability of such programmes. For example, Csiernik's study of EAP utilisation across Canadian organisations found an average utilisation rate of 9.2%. More recent research also highlights that low utilisation is often linked to stigma, lack of awareness, concerns about confidentiality and limited trust in the organisation. Therefore, the findings of the present study are not unusual; rather, they reflect a wider gap between programme availability and actual employee use.

This gap can be interpreted through Perceived Organisational Support Theory (Eisenberger et al., 1986). According to this theory, employees form beliefs about whether their organisation values their contribution and genuinely cares about their well-being. Support is therefore not experienced only through the existence of policies or benefits, but through the way employees perceive the organisation's intentions, trustworthiness and everyday behaviour. From this perspective, a well-being programme that exists formally but is not trusted, understood or used cannot be considered fully effective organisational support.

This interpretation is further supported by the meta-analysis of Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002), which found that higher perceived organisational support is associated with greater job satisfaction, stronger organisational commitment, better performance and lower turnover intentions. According to Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002), perceived organisational support is associated with organisational effectiveness, retention and engagement.

The role of the direct manager is particularly important in this context. In the present study, 46.3% of respondents reported receiving a high level of support from their immediate supervisor. This finding suggests that employees may experience support more directly through everyday interactions with their manager than through formal organisational programmes. This is especially relevant in contexts where formal well-being structures are limited or poorly communicated.

The importance of managerial support is also supported by the literature. Allen et al. (2013) found that supervisor support is one of the strongest predictors of employees' Work-Life Balance experiences. Similarly, Gallup's research consistently shows that managers play a central role in shaping employee engagement and well-being. A manager who respects boundaries, does not normalise after-hours communication, facilitates leave, supports flexibility and demonstrates trust can influence employees' daily experience of Work-Life Balance more directly than a formal policy that is not actively supported in practice.

The findings can also be connected to the burnout literature. Maslach and Leiter (2016) argue that burnout is not simply the result of individual weakness or lack of resilience, but is strongly shaped by structural features of the work environment, such as excessive workload, low autonomy, lack of recognition, unfairness and value conflict. This is relevant to the present study, where 73.1% of respondents reported some level of exhaustion at the end of the working day, 64.8% reported working beyond standard working hours at least occasionally, and several participants reported difficulty disconnecting from work. These findings suggest that well-being initiatives alone are unlikely to be sufficient if the underlying working conditions that generate exhaustion remain unchanged.

Flexibility is also central to this discussion. Only 37% of respondents reported a high degree of schedule flexibility, while among those who wanted to change their working arrangement, 67.4% preferred hybrid work. This indicates that employees are not simply asking for additional benefits or symbolic well-being initiatives. They are asking for greater control over how work is organised. International research by Eurofound and Gallup similarly links flexibility, autonomy and supportive management with improved well-being, stronger engagement and more sustainable Work-Life Balance.

The correlation analysis further supports these findings. Supervisor support and supportive organisational culture were both positively associated with perceived Work-Life Balance (r

= .35 and $r = .36$, respectively), while both were negatively associated with employees' perceptions that work negatively affects family life ($r = -.34$ and $r = -.32$, respectively). In addition, the strong positive correlation between supervisor support and supportive organisational culture ($r = .69$, $p < .01$) suggests that employees who perceive supportive managers also tend to perceive their organisations as more supportive overall.

Overall, the findings suggest that organisational support should be understood as a combination of formal policies, actual use, managerial behaviour and organisational culture. The existence of well-being programmes is important, but it is not sufficient. Programmes become meaningful only when employees know how to access them, trust their confidentiality and feel safe using them without stigma, guilt or fear of negative career consequences. In the Greek context, where available evidence suggests low perceived organisational support for mental health and well-being, this issue becomes even more important.

Taken together, these findings indicate that improving employee well-being requires more than isolated initiatives. Organisational support should be viewed as a multidimensional concept influenced by the availability of formal well-being programmes, employees' awareness of these initiatives, their willingness to use them, the quality of managerial support and the broader organisational culture.

Therefore, the key implication of this section is that organisations should not only invest in well-being initiatives, but also build a workplace culture in which support is visible, normalised and actively encouraged by managers. Without such a culture, well-being programmes risk remaining formal benefits with limited practical impact on employees' everyday experience of Work-Life Balance.

Consequently, sustainable Work-Life Balance depends not only on individual coping strategies but also on organisational environments that actively enable employees to balance professional and personal responsibilities.

6. Conclusions

6.1 Main Findings

The present study set out to explore how employees in Greece perceive Work-Life Balance and, more specifically, how working parents experience the challenges and opportunities associated with combining professional and family responsibilities. Through the analysis of responses from 108 employees, the study examined the role of working hours, flexibility, digital disconnection, organisational support and family planning decisions in shaping everyday work-life experiences.

The findings indicate that all five research questions were answered and collectively provide a broader understanding of Work-Life Balance within the Greek context.

Table 5. Summary of Main Findings in Relation to the Research Questions

Research Question	Key Finding
How do employees perceive the impact of working conditions on their daily lives?	Long working hours, limited flexibility and high workload are key factors affecting daily life, consistent with Greek and European labour market data (OECD, 2024; Eurostat, 2024).
How do employees experience digital disconnection and continuous availability?	A considerable proportion of employees monitor or respond to work communication outside working hours. This behaviour has become normalised, even though high levels of exhaustion are reported.
How do employees perceive their ability to maintain a satisfactory Work-Life Balance?	More than half consider themselves capable of maintaining balance; however, high levels of exhaustion, guilt and reduced personal time indicate a “functional balance” paradox.
What are the personal and professional implications of combining work and family responsibilities?	Combining work and family life is associated with increased pressure and reduced resources, but literature suggests potential personal and professional growth (e.g., empathy, emotional intelligence, adaptability). These relationships were not directly measured in this study.
How do employees perceive the influence of working conditions on family planning decisions?	37% of participants reported that working conditions influenced their decisions related to parenthood and family planning, consistent with demographic trends in Greece and Europe (ELSTAT, 2024; Eurostat, 2024).

Source: Author's synthesis based on the findings of the present study.

First, participants clearly perceived long working hours, limited flexibility and high workload as important factors affecting their daily lives. The findings support previous European evidence showing that the Greek labour market continues to be characterised by longer working hours and lower levels of flexibility than many other European countries.

Second, the study found that digital disconnection has become an important component of contemporary Work-Life Balance. A considerable proportion of employees continued to monitor or respond to work-related communication outside normal working hours, suggesting that technological connectivity has increasingly blurred the boundaries between work and personal life. However, one of the most interesting findings was that many participants did not necessarily perceive these behaviours as problematic, despite simultaneously reporting high levels of exhaustion. This suggests that continuous availability may have gradually become normalised within everyday working life.

Third, although more than half of the participants considered themselves capable of maintaining a satisfactory Work-Life Balance, the results simultaneously revealed high levels of exhaustion, feelings of guilt and reductions in personal time. This apparent contradiction suggests that Work-Life Balance should not be understood simply as the absence of conflict. Rather, many employees appear to maintain a functional balance by continuously adapting their expectations and making personal sacrifices in order to satisfy competing professional and family demands.

Fourth, the findings suggest that combining work and family responsibilities is associated not only with increased pressure and reduced personal resources but also with opportunities for personal development. Although these outcomes were not directly measured, they highlight an important perspective for understanding parenthood within the broader Work-Life Balance context.

Finally, more than one-third of participants reported that their working conditions had influenced decisions related to parenthood and family planning. Although the study cannot establish causal relationships, this finding is consistent with broader demographic trends observed in Greece and across Europe, where employment conditions, economic security, flexibility and work-family reconciliation increasingly influence fertility decisions.

Taken together, these findings lead to a broader conclusion. The evidence suggests that Work-Life Balance should not be viewed as a fixed condition achieved solely through organisational policies or solely through individual effort. Instead, it emerges as a dynamic process shaped by the continuous interaction between personal attitudes, individual coping strategies, family responsibilities, organisational practices and the wider social and cultural context in which employees live and work. Consequently, sustainable Work-Life Balance depends on the interaction between individual efforts and organisational support. While employees contribute through self-awareness, boundary management and personal prioritisation, organisations influence these efforts through managerial behaviour, organisational culture, flexibility and everyday working practices.

Overall, the findings indicate that Work-Life Balance should be understood not as an individual responsibility nor exclusively as an organisational obligation, but as a dynamic and shared process through which employees and organisations jointly shape long-term well-being and quality of working life. This perspective represents the central conclusion of

the present study and provides the foundation for the practical implications and recommendations presented in the following sections.

6.2 Contributions of the Study

The present study contributes to the growing body of literature on Work-Life Balance by extending current knowledge at both the theoretical and empirical levels. Although numerous international studies have examined issues such as working hours, burnout, organisational support, digitalisation and parenthood separately, relatively limited research has explored these dimensions simultaneously within the Greek labour market.

By integrating these factors into a single analytical framework, the present study provides a more comprehensive understanding of employees' everyday experiences and the complex nature of Work-Life Balance in Greece.

The first contribution of the study lies in its holistic approach to Work-Life Balance. Rather than examining individual factors in isolation, the research considers Work-Life Balance as a multidimensional phenomenon shaped by the interaction of working hours, workload, flexibility, digital disconnection, organisational support, family responsibilities and family planning decisions. This integrated perspective reflects the complexity of employees' everyday experiences and provides a broader understanding of the mechanisms influencing Work-Life Balance.

A second contribution concerns the relationship between employees' subjective perceptions and the objective indicators of work-related strain. One of the most interesting findings of the study is that employees' perceptions of maintaining a satisfactory Work-Life Balance do not always correspond to the actual conditions they experience. Although many participants reported that they were generally able to balance their professional and personal lives, they simultaneously reported high levels of exhaustion, after-hours communication, feelings of guilt and reductions in personal time.

This finding suggests that employees may gradually adapt to demanding working conditions by redefining their expectations and normalising these behaviours. Consequently, Work-

Life Balance appears to be influenced not only by objective working conditions but also by the way employees perceive, interpret and manage those conditions.

The study also contributes to the literature on working parenthood by adopting a balanced perspective that extends beyond the traditional focus on Work-Family Conflict. The findings suggest that parenthood should be considered not only as a source of additional demands but also as a context that may support personal and professional development.

Furthermore, the study provides recent empirical evidence from the Greek context during a period characterised by significant labour market transformation, increasing digitalisation, changing working arrangements and ongoing demographic challenges. By capturing the perceptions of employees from different age groups, educational backgrounds, occupational sectors and family situations, the study offers an updated picture of how Work-Life Balance is currently experienced in Greece and provides a useful basis for future comparative research.

Finally, the study contributes to organisational practice by demonstrating that improving Work-Life Balance requires more than the implementation of isolated well-being initiatives or employee benefits. The findings indicate that organisational support is experienced primarily through everyday managerial behaviour, organisational culture, flexibility and psychological safety. Consequently, the effectiveness of formal well-being policies depends not only on their existence but also on employees' willingness and confidence to use them within a supportive organisational environment. This distinction between the formal availability of organisational practices and employees' actual experience of support represents an important practical contribution of the present research.

Table 6. Main Contributions of the Present Study

Type of Contribution	Description
Theoretical	Integrates working hours, flexibility, digital disconnection, organisational support and parenthood into a single, multidimensional framework for studying Work-Life Balance, rather than examining these factors in isolation.
Empirical	Identifies a gap between perceived Work-Life Balance and indicators of work-related strain: employees report satisfactory balance while simultaneously showing high exhaustion, guilt and reduced personal time. Provides recent, Greek-context evidence across diverse demographic and occupational groups.
Practical	Distinguishes between the formal availability of organisational well-being initiatives and employees' actual experience of support, showing that effectiveness depends on managerial behaviour, culture and psychological safety — not on policy existence alone.

Source: Author's synthesis based on the findings of the present study and the reviewed literature.

Overall, the study suggests that Work-Life Balance should be understood not as a fixed outcome or as the exclusive responsibility of either employees or organisations, but as a dynamic process emerging from the continuous interaction between individual attitudes, personal coping strategies, organisational practices and the broader social and cultural context. By adopting this perspective, the present study provides a useful foundation for future academic research, organisational decision-making and public policy development.

6.3 Practical Implications

The findings of the present study have important practical implications for organisations, managers, employees and policy makers. Improving Work-Life Balance requires a comprehensive approach that extends beyond the implementation of isolated well-being initiatives and addresses the broader organisational environment in which employees work.

At the organisational level, the findings indicate that Work-Life Balance cannot be improved solely through the introduction of formal well-being programmes or employee benefits. Instead, organisations are encouraged to foster a workplace culture characterised by flexibility, trust, psychological safety and respect for employees' personal boundaries. The results of the present study suggest that employees' everyday experiences are shaped

not only by formal organisational policies but also by the way these policies are implemented in daily practice.

Particular attention should be given to the role of line managers. The findings of the present study indicate that employees experience organisational support primarily through their daily interactions with their immediate supervisors. Consequently, managers play a critical role in shaping employees' perceptions of organisational support, Work-Life Balance and overall well-being. Respecting personal boundaries, encouraging flexibility, facilitating leave and promoting open communication appear to influence employees' everyday experiences more directly than formal organisational policies that are not actively supported in practice.

The findings also suggest that building a Work-Life Balance culture begins long before the implementation of well-being initiatives. Organisations should place greater emphasis on the selection, development and evaluation of managerial staff, considering not only technical expertise and professional experience but also behavioural competencies such as emotional intelligence, empathy, active listening, effective communication, trust-building and people-oriented leadership. Developing these competencies through recruitment, leadership development programmes and performance evaluation may contribute substantially to creating organisational environments that genuinely support employees' well-being.

The present study further demonstrates that the existence of well-being programmes alone is insufficient. Organisations should also invest in creating a culture in which employees feel comfortable using the available support without concerns regarding stigma, confidentiality or potential negative career consequences. In this respect, the effectiveness of organisational support depends not only on the availability of programmes but also on employees' willingness to use them and on the level of trust they have in the organisation.

The findings also underline the importance of flexible working arrangements. Participants expressed a clear preference for greater flexibility, particularly hybrid forms of work, suggesting that flexibility is increasingly perceived as a fundamental component of a healthy working environment rather than an optional employee benefit. Organisations that

successfully integrate flexibility into their everyday practices may strengthen employee well-being, organisational commitment and long-term retention.

At the same time, the findings indicate that Work-Life Balance should not be viewed exclusively as an organisational responsibility. Although organisations create the conditions within which employees operate, achieving a sustainable balance also depends on individuals' ability to establish personal boundaries, prioritise competing demands, manage their time effectively and recognise the importance of recovery and psychological well-being. The interaction between organisational conditions and individual coping strategies appears to be fundamental for achieving sustainable Work-Life Balance.

Finally, the findings have broader implications for public policy. The observed relationship between working conditions and family planning decisions suggests that Work-Life Balance extends beyond organisational performance and is closely linked to demographic sustainability, labour market participation and broader social well-being. Consequently, policies that promote flexible working arrangements, support working parents and encourage healthier organisational cultures may contribute not only to improving employees' quality of life but also to addressing wider social and demographic challenges currently facing Greece.

Table 7. Practical Implications of the Present Study

Level	Key Implication
Organisational	A culture of flexibility, trust and psychological safety is required, extending beyond isolated well-being programmes.
Managerial	Line managers shape perceived organisational support through everyday behaviour (Allen et al., 2013).
Individual	Boundary-setting, prioritisation and recovery are complementary to, not a substitute for, organisational conditions.
Public Policy	Flexible-work and family-friendly policies are linked to broader demographic sustainability in Greece.

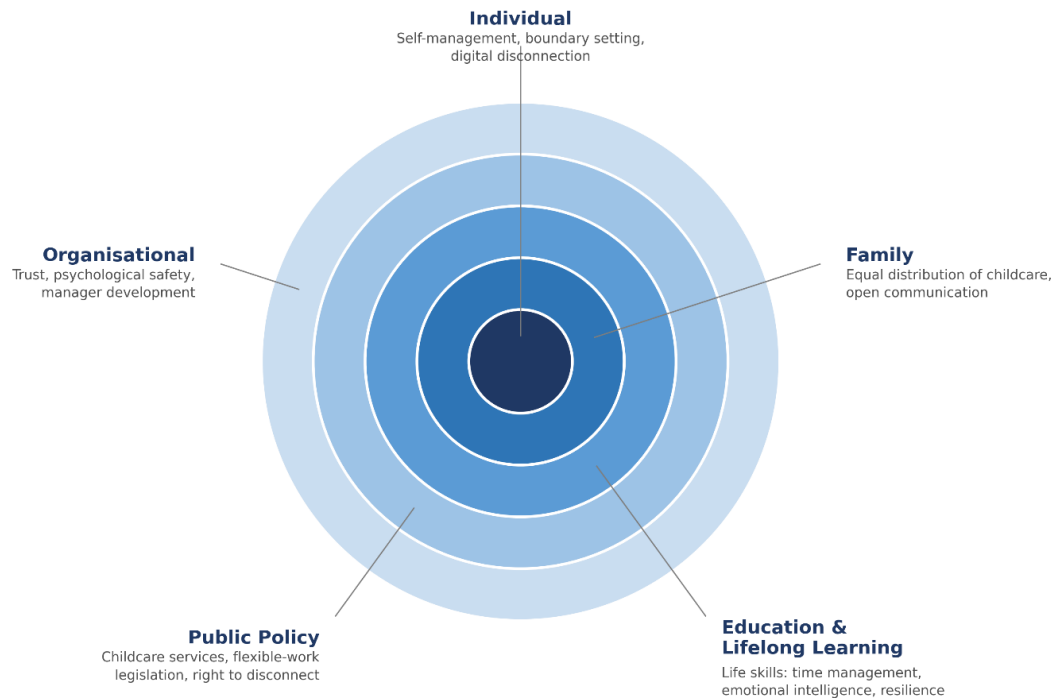
Source: Author's synthesis based on the findings of the present study and the reviewed literature.

Overall, the practical implications of the present study suggest that sustainable improvements in Work-Life Balance require coordinated action at multiple levels. Organisational policies, managerial behaviour, leadership development, employee self-management and supportive public policies should be viewed as complementary rather than independent elements of the same system. Only through this integrated approach can organisations create working environments that support both employee well-being and long-term organisational effectiveness.

6.4 Multi-Level Recommendations

The findings of the present study suggest that Work-Life Balance cannot be improved through a single intervention or through the efforts of only one actor. Instead, it is a multidimensional issue shaped by the interaction between individuals, families, education, public policy and organisations. For this reason, the following recommendations are organised across different levels of society.

Figure 25. Multi-Level Framework for Improving Work-Life Balance



Source: Author's synthesis based on the findings of the present study

Figure 25 illustrates the multi-level framework used to organise the recommendations presented in this section. The model emphasises that improving Work-Life Balance requires coordinated action across multiple levels of society rather than isolated interventions.

6.4.1 Individual Level

Although organisations and institutions significantly shape working conditions, employees also play an important role in the way Work-Life Balance is perceived and managed. The findings of the present study showed that several participants continue to respond to work-related communication outside working hours, while also reporting exhaustion and reduced personal time. This suggests that employees may gradually adapt to demanding work patterns without always recognising their long-term impact on well-being.

Therefore, individuals should be encouraged to develop self-management skills such as time management, prioritisation, boundary setting, digital disconnection, stress management and early recognition of burnout symptoms. Strengthening these skills can support personal resilience and help employees manage competing professional and personal responsibilities more consciously.

6.4.2 Family Level

Family life can function both as a source of support and as a source of additional demands, particularly for working parents. The findings of the present study suggest that combining professional and family responsibilities often creates emotional pressure, guilt and personal sacrifices.

At the family level, more equal distribution of household and childcare responsibilities, open communication between family members and active involvement of both parents in childcare can reduce the pressure experienced by working parents. In addition, parenting support services, counselling programmes and parent education initiatives could help families manage the demands of work and family life more effectively.

6.4.3 Education and Lifelong Learning

The findings support the importance of developing Work-Life Balance-related competencies before individuals enter the labour market and throughout adult life.

Educational systems could place greater emphasis on life skills such as time management, stress management, emotional intelligence, communication, conflict resolution, cooperation, resilience and mental well-being. These skills can prepare future employees to manage the demands of modern working life more effectively.

At the same time, lifelong learning programmes for employees, parents and managers could support the continuous development of these competencies. Work-Life Balance should therefore be understood not only as a workplace issue but also as a set of life skills that can be developed across different stages of life.

6.4.4 Public Policy Level

Public policy plays an important role in shaping the conditions under which individuals and organisations attempt to achieve Work-Life Balance. While organisations can take important initiatives, many employers are more likely to adopt systematic practices when these are supported by clear legal frameworks, public incentives or national strategies.

The findings of the present study suggest that Work-Life Balance is connected not only to employee well-being but also to broader demographic and social challenges, including family planning decisions, fertility trends and labour market sustainability. Therefore, public policies that support working parents, strengthen childcare services, promote flexible working arrangements where feasible and ensure the practical implementation of the right to digital disconnection could contribute to improving employees' quality of life.

In addition, national awareness campaigns on burnout prevention, mental health, stress management and the value of rest could help challenge cultural assumptions that associate long working hours with productivity or professional commitment. Public policy can therefore contribute not only by regulating employment conditions but also by shaping wider social attitudes toward work, family and well-being.

6.4.5 Organisational Level

Organisations remain one of the most important levels at which Work-Life Balance is experienced in practice. Even when public policies exist, their effectiveness depends heavily on how they are implemented within everyday organisational life.

The findings of the present study indicate that employees experience organisational support largely through their daily relationship with their immediate supervisor and not only through formal HR policies. Therefore, organisations should invest not only in Work-Life Balance policies but also in building a culture of trust, psychological safety and respect for personal boundaries.

Particular emphasis should be placed on the selection, development and evaluation of managers. Beyond technical knowledge and professional experience, organisations should assess behavioural competencies such as emotional intelligence, active listening, empathy,

communication skills and supportive leadership. These qualities can influence how employees experience support, flexibility and fairness in their daily work.

Organisations should also integrate employee well-being, retention, engagement, leadership quality and psychological safety into managerial evaluation systems. In this way, supporting employees becomes part of organisational strategy rather than an optional personal characteristic of individual managers.

Finally, the findings suggest that organisations should ensure that well-being programmes are not only formally available but also visible, trusted and actively encouraged. Without a supportive culture, such programmes risk remaining symbolic benefits with limited impact on employees' everyday Work-Life Balance.

Table 8. Summary of the Multi-Level Recommendations

Level	Key Recommendation
Individual	Develop self-management skills: time management, boundary setting, digital disconnection, stress management.
Family	Promote equal distribution of childcare, open communication, and access to parenting support services.
Education & Lifelong Learning	Integrate life skills (time management, emotional intelligence, resilience) into education and continuous learning programmes.
Public Policy	Strengthen childcare services, flexible-work legislation and the practical right to digital disconnection.
Organisational	Build a culture of trust and psychological safety; evaluate managers on supportive leadership competencies.

Source: Author's synthesis based on the findings of the present study.

6.5 Limitations

As with most survey-based studies, the present research is subject to certain methodological limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. These limitations, however, do not diminish the overall contribution of the study. Rather, they define the

context within which the findings should be understood and indicate opportunities for future research.

First, the study was based on a convenience sample of 108 employees. Although the research was not designed to produce statistically representative estimates for the entire Greek workforce, the sample included participants from different age groups, educational backgrounds and professional sectors, allowing the identification of common patterns across diverse employee groups. Furthermore, several of the findings were consistent with previous Greek, European and international studies, strengthening confidence in the overall conclusions of the research.

Second, the study relied on self-reported data. Consequently, the findings reflect employees' personal perceptions and experiences, which may be influenced by subjective judgement or socially desirable responses. Nevertheless, because Work-Life Balance is inherently a perceptual and experience-based concept, employees' subjective evaluations represent an important and appropriate source of evidence for understanding the phenomenon.

Another limitation concerns the cross-sectional nature of the research. Data were collected at a single point in time and therefore do not allow conclusions regarding causal relationships or changes in employees' perceptions over time. Instead, the study provides a snapshot of how employees experienced Work-Life Balance within the specific organisational and social context in which the research was conducted.

In addition, the study adopted an exclusively quantitative approach. While the questionnaire enabled the identification of broader trends and relationships, qualitative methods such as semi-structured interviews or focus groups could provide a deeper understanding of employees' experiences, motivations and coping strategies.

Finally, the research combined descriptive statistics with correlational analysis. Although this approach was appropriate for addressing the research questions and achieving the objectives of the study, more advanced inferential techniques, such as regression analysis and group comparisons, could be employed in future research to further explore relationships among the variables investigated.

Despite these limitations, the present study offers valuable evidence regarding employees' perceptions of Work-Life Balance within the Greek context. By integrating issues of organisational support, digital disconnection, parenthood, burnout and family planning within a single analytical framework, the study contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that shape employees' experiences and highlights several areas that warrant further investigation.

6.6 Future Research

The limitations of the present study also create several opportunities for future research. First, future studies could employ larger and more representative samples covering different geographical regions of Greece and a wider range of occupational sectors. Such studies would enhance the generalisability of the findings and allow comparisons across different groups of employees.

Second, future research could adopt mixed-methods approaches by combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews or focus groups. Such an approach would provide a deeper understanding of employees' experiences and the mechanisms through which work and family responsibilities influence everyday life.

Particular attention could also be given to comparisons between different categories of employees, including parents and non-parents, mothers and fathers, different generations, single-parent families, employees caring for elderly relatives, and workers from different professional sectors. Examining these differences could contribute to the development of more targeted organisational and public policy interventions.

Longitudinal research would also provide valuable insights by examining how employees' perceptions of Work-Life Balance evolve over time and throughout different life stages, such as becoming a parent, changing jobs or progressing into managerial positions.

Another promising direction would be the evaluation of specific organisational interventions, including flexible working arrangements, right-to-disconnect policies,

leadership development programmes and employee well-being initiatives. Assessing their long-term impact would contribute to a better understanding of which practices are most effective in improving both employee well-being and organisational performance.

Future research could also explore the growing influence of Artificial Intelligence and digital technologies on Work-Life Balance. As automation, hybrid working models and digital collaboration continue to reshape modern workplaces, understanding their long-term implications for employees' well-being, autonomy and work-family interaction will become increasingly important.

Finally, comparative studies between Greece and other European countries would offer valuable insights into how institutional, cultural and organisational differences shape employees' perceptions of Work-Life Balance. Such research could contribute to the identification of best practices and support the development of more effective policies adapted to the Greek context.

The present study demonstrates that Work-Life Balance is a multidimensional phenomenon that extends beyond individual employees and organisations. As working environments continue to evolve through technological advancement, demographic change and new forms of employment, further research will be essential for understanding how individuals, organisations and societies can work together to create healthier, more sustainable and more balanced working lives. The present study contributes to this discussion by providing evidence from the Greek context and by identifying areas for future research on the relationship between work, family and individual well-being.

Table 9. Summary of the Study Limitations and Future Research Directions

Limitation	Future Research Direction
Convenience sample (N = 108)	Larger, representative samples across regions and sectors
Self-reported data	Mixed-methods designs (interviews, focus groups)
Cross-sectional design	Longitudinal research across different life stages
Quantitative-only approach	Qualitative exploration of coping mechanisms and motivations
Descriptive and correlational analysis only	Regression and group comparisons (e.g., parents vs. non-parents, generations, sectors)
Use of non-validated measures	Future studies could employ validated Work-Life Balance, burnout and organisational support scales together with reliability testing.

Source: Author's synthesis based on the limitations and future research directions of the present study.

Bibliography

- Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50(2), 179–211. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978\(91\)90020-T](https://doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978(91)90020-T)
- Allen, T. D., Johnson, R. C., Kiburz, K. M., & Shockley, K. M. (2013). Work-family conflict and flexible work arrangements: Deconstructing flexibility. *Personnel Psychology*, 66(2), 345–376. <https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12012>
- Aon plc. (2024). *Global wellbeing survey 2024*. <https://www.aon.com>
- Ayyagari, R., Grover, V., & Purvis, R. (2011). Technostress: Technological antecedents and implications. *MIS Quarterly*, 35(4), 831–858. <https://doi.org/10.2307/41409963>
- Barnett, R. C., & Hyde, J. S. (2001). Women, men, work, and family: An expansionist theory. *American Psychologist*, 56(10), 781–796. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.56.10.781>
- Bass, B. M., & Riggio, R. E. (2006). *Transformational leadership* (2nd ed.). Psychology Press. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781410617095>
- Beauregard, T. A., Basile, K. A., & Canonico, E. (2019). *Telework and organisational psychology*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Bryman, A. (2016). *Social research methods* (5th ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. Harper & Row.
- CIPD. (2025). *Health and wellbeing at work 2025*. Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. <https://www.cipd.org>
- Clark, S. C. (2000). Work/family border theory: A new theory of work/family balance. *Human Relations*, 53(6), 747–770. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726700536001>
- Cooper, C. L., & Leiter, M. P. (2017). *The Routledge companion to well-being at work*. Routledge.
- Csiernik, R. (2011). Employee assistance program utilization: Developing a comprehensive scorecard. *Journal of Workplace Behavioral Health*, 26(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15555240.2011.540978>
- Deal, J. J., & Levenson, A. (2016). *What millennials want from work*. McGraw-Hill Education.

- Eisenberger, R., Huntington, R., Hutchison, S., & Sowa, D. (1986). Perceived organisational support. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 71(3), 500–507.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.71.3.500>
- Eurofound. (2020). *Living, working and COVID-19*. Publications Office of the European Union. <https://doi.org/10.2806/467608>
- Eurofound. (2021). *Right to disconnect: Exploring company practices*. Publications Office of the European Union. <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/en/publications/all/right-disconnect-exploring-company-practices>
- Eurofound. (2023). *Employee well-being and organisational attractiveness: European survey findings*. Publications Office of the European Union.
- Eurofound. (2024). *European Working Conditions Survey 2024*. Publications Office of the European Union. <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/en/surveys-and-data/surveys/european-working-conditions-survey/ewcs-2024>
- Eurofound, & International Labour Organization. (2020). *Telework and ICT-based mobile work: Flexible working in the digital age*. Publications Office of the European Union. <https://doi.org/10.2806/337696>
- European Commission. (2023). *Work-Life Balance Directive (EU) 2019/1158: Implementation report*.
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52023DC0577>
- European Commission. (2024). *Demography report 2024*.
<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/interactive-publications/demography-2024>
- European Commission. (2025). *Education and Training Monitor 2025: Greece*.
<https://op.europa.eu/webpub/eac/education-and-training-monitor/en/country-reports/greece.html>
- European Institute for Gender Equality. (2023). *Gender Equality Index 2023*.
<https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2023>
- Eurostat. (2024). *Labour force survey 2024: Working time and telework*.
<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>
- Eurostat. (2025). *Labour market statistics*. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=EU_labour_market_-_quarterly_statistics
- Gallup. (2024). *State of the Global Workplace: 2024 report*.
<https://www.gallup.com/workplace>
- Goleman, D. (1998). *Working with emotional intelligence*. Bantam Books.

- Goode, W. J. (1960). A theory of role strain. *American Sociological Review*, 25(4), 483–496. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2092933>
- Greenhaus, J. H., & Beutell, N. J. (1985). Sources of conflict between work and family roles. *Academy of Management Review*, 10(1), 76–88. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1985.4277352>
- Greenhaus, J. H., Collins, K. M., & Shaw, J. D. (2003). The relation between work-family balance and quality of life. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 63(3), 510–531. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0001-8791\(02\)00042-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0001-8791(02)00042-8)
- Greenhaus, J. H., & Powell, G. N. (2006). When work and family are allies: A theory of work-family enrichment. *Academy of Management Review*, 31(1), 72–92. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2006.19379625>
- Greenleaf, R. K. (1977). *Servant leadership*. Paulist Press.
- Hellenic Statistical Authority. (2024). *Demographic and social statistics 2024*. <https://www.statistics.gr>
- Hobfoll, S. E. (1989). Conservation of resources: A new attempt at conceptualizing stress. *American Psychologist*, 44(3), 513–524. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.44.3.513>
- International Labour Organization. (2020). *Teleworking during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond: A practical guide*. https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_protect/@protrav/@travail/documents/instructionalmaterial/wcms_751232.pdf
- Kalleberg, A. L. (2009). Precarious work, insecure workers. *American Sociological Review*, 74(1), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240907400101>
- Khammissa, R. A. G., Roman, N. V., Bhana, A., & Coetzee, M. (2022). Burnout and its impact on mental health. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsy.2022.855397>
- Kossek, E. E., & Ozeki, C. (1998). Work-family conflict, policies and the job-life satisfaction relationship. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 83(2), 139–149. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.83.2.139>
- Likert, R. (1932). A technique for the measurement of attitudes. *Archives of Psychology*, 140, 1–55. https://legacy.voteview.com/pdf/Likert_1932.pdf
- Lyberaki, A., & Tinios, P. (2012). The informal welfare state and the family in Greece. *Social Policy & Administration*, 46(6), 673–689. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9515.2012.00858.x>

- Maslach, C., & Leiter, M. P. (2016). Burnout. In G. Fink (Ed.), *Stress: Concepts, cognition, emotion and behavior* (pp. 351–357). Academic Press.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/303791742_Burnout
- Microsoft. (2024). *Work Trend Index annual report 2024*.
<https://www.microsoft.com/worklab>
- OECD. (2019). *OECD Employment Outlook 2019: The future of work*. OECD Publishing.
<https://doi.org/10.1787/9ee00155-en>
- OECD. (2024). *OECD Employment Outlook 2024*. OECD Publishing.
<https://doi.org/10.1787/ac317c5d-en>
- Ragu-Nathan, T. S., Tarafdar, M., Ragu-Nathan, B. S., & Tu, Q. (2008). The consequences of technostress for end users in organizations: Conceptual development and empirical validation. *Information Systems Research*, 19(4), 417–433. <https://doi.org/10.1287/isre.1070.0165>
- Randstad. (2024). *Randstad Workmonitor 2024: Global report*.
<https://www.randstad.com/workmonitor>
- Randstad Greece. (2023). *Workmonitor Greece report 2023*. <https://www.randstad.gr>
- Rhoades, L., & Eisenberger, R. (2002). Perceived organizational support: A review of the literature. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87(4), 698–714.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.87.4.698>
- Rodríguez-Modroño, P. (2021). Telework, gender and work-life balance. *Sustainability*, 13(21), 11743. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su132111743>
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2019). *Research methods for business students* (8th ed.). Pearson.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/240218229_Research_Methods_for_Business_Students
- Tarafdar, M., Tu, Q., Ragu-Nathan, T. S., & Ragu-Nathan, B. S. (2007). The impact of technostress on role stress and productivity. *Journal of Management Information Systems*, 24(1), 301–328. <https://doi.org/10.2753/MIS0742-1222240109>
- The Guardian. (2024, July 1). Greece introduces six-day working week for some businesses. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/article/2024/jul/01/greece-introduces-growth-oriented-six-day-working-week>

Twenge, J. M. (2023). *Generations: The real differences between Gen Z, Millennials, Gen X, Boomers, and Silents—and what they mean for America's future*. Atria Books.

United Nations Population Fund. (2025). *State of world population 2025*.
<https://www.unfpa.org>

Weil, D. (2014). *The fissured workplace: Why work became so bad for so many and what can be done to improve it*. Harvard University Press.

Westover, J. H. (2023). *Humanity at work*. HCI Press.

World Bank. (2023). *Fertility rate, total (births per woman): Greece*.
<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.TFRT.IN?locations=GR>

World Health Organization. (2019). *Burn-out an "occupational phenomenon": International classification of diseases*. <https://www.who.int/news/item/28-05-2019-burn-out-an-occupational-phenomenon-international-classification-of-diseases>

World Health Organization. (2022). *Mental health and COVID-19: Early evidence of the pandemic's impact*. https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-2019-nCoV-Sci_Brief-Mental_health-2022.1

Appendix A: “Research Questionnaire”

Section 1: Demographic Information

1. Gender

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

2. Age Group

- Under 25
- 25–34
- 35–44
- 45–54
- 55 and above

3. Educational Level

- High School Diploma
- Vocational Education and Training (VET)
- University Degree
- Master's Degree
- PhD

4. Employment Sector

- Public Sector
- Private Sector
- Self-employed
- Other

5. Organisation Size

- Small (1–49 employees)
- Medium (50–249 employees)
- Large (250+ employees)

6. Do you have children?

- Yes
- No

7. If yes, how many children do you have?

- One
- Two
- Three or more

Section 2: Employment Characteristics

8. What is your current work arrangement?

- On-site
- Hybrid
- Remote

9. What is your typical work schedule?

- Fixed schedule
- Flexible schedule
- Shift work
- Other

10. On average, how many hours do you work per week?

- Less than 35
- 35–40
- 41–50
- More than 50

Section 3: Work Schedule and Flexibility

11. How often do the following apply?

(1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often, 5 = Always)

- I work beyond my contracted hours.
- I work during weekends.
- I receive work notifications outside working hours.
- I check work-related messages during my free time.
- I respond to work e-mails outside working hours.
- I feel pressure to remain available while on leave.

Section 4: Digital Disconnection and Burnout

12. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

(1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

- I find it difficult to disconnect from work after working hours.
- I feel mentally exhausted at the end of the working day.
- Work-related communication affects my personal time.
- Technology makes it difficult to separate work from personal life.

Section 5: Organisational Support and well-being

13. Does your organisation offer employee well-being programmes?

- Yes
- No
- I do not know

14. Have you ever used any of these programmes?

- Yes
- No

15. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

(1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

- My organisation supports employees' work-life balance.
- My immediate supervisor supports my personal and family responsibilities.
- I feel comfortable discussing work-life balance issues with my manager.
- Flexible work arrangements are genuinely encouraged in my organisation.

Section 6: Work-Life Balance**16. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?**

(1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

- I am able to balance my professional and personal responsibilities.
- My work allows me to spend sufficient time with my family.
- My work negatively affects my personal life.
- My work leaves me with enough time for hobbies and leisure activities.
- I often neglect personal needs because of work.

Section 7: Parenthood and Family Responsibilities**17. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?**

(1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

- Family responsibilities create challenges in my professional life.
- Work responsibilities interfere with family life.
- I sometimes feel guilty about the time I spend away from my family because of work.
- I miss important family moments because of work obligations.
- Work has influenced my decisions about having children.

18. In your opinion, can parenthood contribute to the development of professional skills?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Section 8: Corporate Social Responsibility and Organisational Culture

19. How important is it for you that your organisation is involved in social or environmental initiatives?

(1 = Not Important at All, 5 = Extremely Important)

20. Do you feel that your organisation contributes positively to society?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

21. Have you ever participated in a social responsibility initiative organised by your employer?

- Yes
- No

Section 9: Media and Social Expectations

22. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

(1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

- Social media creates unrealistic expectations about work-life balance.
- Society places pressure on parents to successfully balance work and family.
- Working parents are often judged more harshly than non-parents.

Section 10: Work Preferences

23. Which of the following best reflects your wish regarding your work?

- I would prefer to work fewer hours.
- I would prefer a different work arrangement (e.g., more flexibility).

- I am satisfied with my current work arrangement.

24. If you could choose freely, which work model would you prefer?

- On-site
- Hybrid
- Remote

Author's Statement:

I hereby declare that, in accordance with article 8 of Law 1599/1986 and article 2.4.6 par. 3 of Law 1256/1982, this thesis/dissertation is solely a product of personal work and does not infringe any intellectual property rights of third parties and is not the product of a partial or total plagiarism, and the sources used are strictly limited to the bibliographic references.