

Practicing Literature Searches and Topic Development

Impact of Online Learning on Work-Life Balance

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TOPIC DEVELOPMENT2

Impact of Online Learning on Work-Life Balance

The division of one's time between work and family or recreational activities is known as work-life balance. An individual who maintains a healthy work-life balance makes equal use of their time spent with family, friends, and leisure activities. It is impossible to overstate the value of work-life balance since it reduces stress at work and keeps people from burning out (Bucea-Manea-Ţoniş et al., 2020). Using digital learning environments to carry out learning tasks is known as online learning. As a result, all learning activities can be completed remotely, from home, for example. Significant learning activities are now being conducted online as part of a revolution in education. The ability to work and study from home has had an impact on work-life balance and online learning. Nonetheless, it has been demonstrated that this has a negative impact on people's health, particularly their mental health. According to Berry and Hughes (2019), before technological improvements allowed people to work from home, the lines separating work and family time were rigidly drawn. People spend more time working and studying than they do spending time with their families or relaxing with hobbies.

Furthermore, communication technology blurs the line between work and life, both physically and chronologically, allowing people to transcend boundaries (Berry & Hughes, 2019). People who study or work for extended periods of time without taking breaks risk burnout and chronic stress; as a result, they should strive for a work-life balance by maintaining the boundaries that separate work from family or leisure time. The culture and environment of work and learning have undergone tremendous changes as a result of technology (Bucea-Manea-Ţoniş et al., 2020). As a result of technology breakthroughs, the present generation of workers and learners is adjusting to new modes of working and learning. For instance, there is no need for physical sites because class meetings can be conducted virtually on digital platforms. Increased

TOPIC DEVELOPMENT3

flexibility from online learning can contribute to a better work-life balance. But sometimes, when people are at home in comfort, they are working or studying for longer periods of time. Determining the effect of online learning on work-life balance is crucial.

Evaluation of the Search Approach

The search terms that were utilized are "technology," "work-life balance," and "online learning." Additionally, the search was conducted using the terms "online learning and work-life balance." The terms "technology and online learning and work-life balance" and "online learning and work-life balance" are the most effective ones that generated the most pertinent search results. The most pertinent publications that addressed the research issue under investigation were found using these keywords. Nonetheless, certain ineffective keywords yielded outcomes that were excessively broad, making them unrelated to the influence of technology on virtual education and work-life equilibrium. As a consequence, the best keywords that generated the most pertinent results were those that were entered first, followed by the word "and," and then another keyword. This combination helps to highlight where the most pertinent items are located.

Literature Review Outline

Most research on work-life balance examine work and home life separately. They are said to have boundaries that an individual transcends when working, either physically or mentally. Nonetheless, it is seen that workplaces and learning environments are becoming more digitally oriented. The growth of communication technologies has caused a breakdown in the borders that traditionally divide work from home (Berry and Hughes, 2020). Additionally, many work during what was once thought of as "family time" and occasionally rest during that same period.

Work-life balance can be achieved with the use of digital technologies since one can work in the

TOPIC DEVELOPMENT4

comfort of their homes. However, this has drawbacks; when boundaries are not created, people may spend more time working although they are at home.

The border and boundary theory holds that there are boundaries dividing times, places, and people that are involved in work versus family roles. People cross these borders every time to be working or learning, whether physically or psychologically, as they switch from work and family or leisure time (Johari et al., 2017). Additionally, people have separated their lives in terms of work environment and home or leisure time. Similarly, the spillover theory focuses on when there is a spillover between work and family, creating either negative or positive relationships. Where there is no flexibility between work and family time, there is bound to be a negative spillover. On the other hand, where there is flexibility, there is a positive spill. This means that people with flexible schedules find it easy to create time for family or leisure. At the same time, those without flexibility have difficulty creating time for family or leisure time hence no work-life balance.

Most studies on work-life balance utilized qualitative methodology. This allows the researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of an issue (Berry and Hughes, 2020). Moreover, the data is accurate since the respondents can give their experiences, feelings, and thoughts without any constraint. The researchers can also follow up on the respondents' answers in real-time; hence, the qualitative analysis offers a dynamic approach to research. The respondents in quantitative research can also elaborate their answers whenever necessary, enabling the researcher to gain more insight into the topic.

Future research on the topic should adopt a quantitative methodology to give a further exploration of the issue. A larger sample should be used for the research to increase the

TOPIC DEVELOPMENT5

generalizability of the findings. Moreover, future researchers should look into the impacts of digital working spaces on employees' work-life balance and performance working at home.

Currently, most of the studies explored (Berry & Hughes, 2020; Bucea-Manea-Țoniș et al., 2020; Bauwens et al., 2020) looked into the impacts of technology on online learning work-life balance. Still, no significant studies have fully addressed the impact on performance.

The border and boundary theory outlines that there are boundaries between work and life. Various studies support the fact that there are physical and temporal boundaries in online learning and work-life balance (Berry & Hughes, 2020). However, these boundaries exist psychologically when people are learning online. Additionally, it is easy for people to have a balance of work and life while learning online since they work in the comfort of their homes. However, it may lead to burnout and stress when the boundaries are not adhered to (Bauwens et al., 2020). It is a widespread belief that working at home exposes people to unlimited schedules with no time frames hence a possibility of working longer than required to complete tasks hence work-life balance is compromised. There has been a change in understanding since the various literature used in the study suggests that people can achieve a work-life balance while learning online.

The processes and procedures of the literature search start with a clear definition of the search topic. A topic is defined by asking the questions that need to be answered. For this case, it was whether online learning had any impact on work-life balance. A topic ensures that the research maintains focus on a specific issue throughout the whole research process. A search strategy ensures that relevant information for the study can be obtained. The search study used for this literature search entailed a Preliminary Search using keywords in the Capella University Library databases. The keywords that were successful in locating the relevant articles were a

TOPIC DEVELOPMENT6

combination of 'online learning and work-life balance.' The information obtained was evaluated to ensure that it was credible. This involved considering the currency, authority, and relevance to the topic.

Theory in research has proved important as it enhances its meaningfulness and provides a connection between issues in real life and literature. It establishes meaningful relationships among variables that would otherwise not be considered. Moreover, theories provide the researcher with the guidelines to use as they look for information pointing out the areas that are likely to be successful. It also helps to narrow down the range of facts the research is supposed to study hence helping maintain focus on key issues. Similarly, seminal works present ideas of great importance to a certain field. They helped this study to understand how people can strike a balance between work and life by utilizing online learning as it offers more room for flexibility; hence one can participate in leisure or family activities. The analysis of data-based research helps understand the importance of the use of information in research.

My acknowledgments go to colleagues who gave me unlimited assistance in specific areas of the assignment whenever I faced challenges. Without their effort, I would likely have spent more time figuring out things on my own. Moreover, their support helped maintain focus on key issues that needed to be addressed in the assignment. Therefore, this work is dedicated to their relentless efforts.

References

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Appendix

Annotated Bibliography of sources used

Berry, G. R., & Hughes, H. (2020). Integrating work-life balance with 24/7 information and communication technologies: The experience of adult students with online learning. *American Journal of Distance Education*, 34(2), 91-105.

Berry and Hughes investigate the relationship between online learning and work-life balance as experienced by the students. The researchers carried out their study over a period of three years among 302 students who responded to four open-ended questions. Additionally, they got the response of 210 students who gave their observations and experiences based on the impact of online learning on their work-life balance. Berry and Hughes utilized content analysis and qualitative coding in their research. The researchers found that online learning enhances work-life balance among students compared to traditional learning methods such as classroom learning. This article is relevant to my research since it will help understand the impacts of online learning on work-life balance. This source is highly reliable since it is relevant to my research, it is peer-reviewed, and the authors are well-versed in online learning. Moreover, it is unbiased hence a credible source for study.

Bucea-Manea-Țoniș, R., Bucea-Manea-Țoniș, R., Simion, V. E., Ilic, D., Braicu, C., & Manea, N. (2020). Sustainability in higher education: The relationship between work-life balance and XR e-learning facilities. *Sustainability*, 12(14), 5872.

The study investigates how virtual technologies have impacted lives regarding how they work, study, and socialize. The researchers recruited the 1032 respondents from five private and public universities across nations, including Romania, Serbia, and Hungary. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive techniques. Bucea-Manea-Țoniș et al. found that students prefer

TOPIC DEVELOPMENT9

the use of digital learning environments in studies. Moreover, teachers need to change their cultural mindsets and attitudes towards the use of new technologies in learning. Also, new technologies will present students with a more balanced work and life. The study is relevant to the research because it provides a detailed insight into the benefits of new technologies in learning and work-life balance. The research is unbiased, peer-reviewed, and current hence a credible source.

Bauwens, R., Muylaert, J., Clarysse, E., Audenaert, M., & Decramer, A. (2020). Teachers' acceptance and use of digital learning environments after hours: Implications for work-life balance and the role of integration preference. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 112, 106479. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0747563220302314>

Bauwens et al. investigated the relationship between technology acceptance, use of digital technologies after scheduled office hours to complete work, and work-life balance. Moreover, the researchers sought to determine how the preference to integrate work and life affected work-life balance. The data was obtained from 288 school heads in Flanders (Belgium). The data concerned their use of digital learning environment in school and outside the school. It was found that the preference for integration of digital learning aids at work had higher work-life balance outcomes among the school heads. Therefore, the ability for them to work from home ensured that they had a work-life balance. The study is relevant to the research as it presents the impacts of integrating work and life activities. The study is peer-reviewed, the authors are well experienced in their field and current making in a highly credible source.