

## Systematic Literature Review of Research on Work-Life Balance in Hospitality Industry since Millennium

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— *Review of* —  
**Integrative  
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### ABSTRACT

Work-life balance is not a novel concept. Awareness and application of it and related principles have become a trend in many organisations to ensure workforce sustainability. The concept of work-life balance among the workforce, irrespective of culture and geographical boundaries, still holds its undertone as the prevailing actuality of the hospitality business is highly *gung-ho* and thereby raising the need to focus more on a sustainable workforce for consistency in *service excellence*, *workforce productivity*, *job satisfaction*, *employee retention* and *general well-being*. It is therefore crucial for employers in the hospitality industry to ensure that the work and career goals of their employees balance with their life goals. Any absence of such a balance could lead to *work-life conflicts* and might result in workplace frustration, burnout, and reduced effectiveness at work. Numerous studies in the field of work-life balance are available for researchers and hospitality managers; however, the studies are inconsistent and geographically limited to the western perspectives. This paper tries to analyse the most recent state of work-life balance research by systematically collecting and reviewing articles published at various hospitality journals and thereby providing a methodology for future research and managerial implications on the concept of work-life balance.

Keywords: Work-life balance; Sustainable human resources; Hospitality industry; Strategic human resources.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Extended working hours, heavy workload, erratic shift duties, and handling demanding customers have become the characteristics of hospitality industry jobs (Kusluvan, Kusluvan, Ilhan, & Buyruk, 2010). With the advancement in technology, demographic shifts, international labour mobility, and the blurring of geographical boundaries, work-life balance assumed an essential role in human resources management. More relevantly, erstwhile researches have verified the role of work-life balance on both positive and negative outcomes it plays on one's life as well as at work. As mentioned by Stavrou and Ierodiakonou (2011), for many employers in the hotel industry, flexible work arrangements are a way of meeting life demands through modifying work schedules. Reports of research on work-life balance and its management in the hospitality industry are fragmented, infantile, and erratic. Using articles found in various research databases, this study conducted a systematic review of past research on different dimensions of

work-life balance, topics related to work-life balance, as well as research gaps and limitations. Suggestions of topics, themes, and methodologies for future research and managerial implications are also provided in this paper.

## **2. DEFINITION OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE**

Ironically, there is no commonly accepted definition for the concept of work-life balance. Mohanty and Mohanty (2014) have also noted that many scholars use different terms interchangeably, for example, *work-family balance*, *work-family interface*, *work-family satisfaction*, *work-life satisfaction*, etc. which is perhaps the reason for the absence of a standard definition. As the purpose of this review is to consider the comprehensive concept of work-life balance, Jones, Brukes, and Westman's (2006) definition can be adopted, which proposes that work-life balance includes employees' cognitive perception of their ability to successfully amalgamate work and family domains, functions, and demands. Work-life balance refers to the situation of juggling increasingly conflicting demands of work requirements that eat into the time a person has away from the job, to spend with friends and family, to pursue recreational pursuits, or even to sleep. It is difficult to define as the boundaries of work are shifting as we deal with the use of various communication platforms and personal mobile devices that keep us attached to the workplace even when we are not scheduled to be there. Subjectively each may define it differently. Voydanoff (2005) defined work-life balance as a global assessment that work resources meet family demands and family resources meet work demands such that participation is effective in both domains. Balancing work and family requires an individual to accomplish some socially negotiated role responsibilities, both at work and in the family (Valcour, 2007). Ferguson, Carlson, Zivnuska, and Whitten (2012) explained it as an execution of role-related anticipations that are collaborated and collectively agreed between an individual and his role-partners in the work and family spheres. These definitions have however evolved over the multiple studies conducted by the researchers over time and Allen (2012) concluded it as an umbrella term intended to include all research involving the juxtaposition of various life roles. Similarly, Blake (2014) proposed that work-life balance include employees' cognitive perception of their ability to successfully amalgamate work and family domains, functions, and demands.

In the context of the modern hotel and hospitality human resources trends, balancing both work and life could encompass organisational policies that have a better perspective on the implications of family responsibilities and not merely a description of family-friendly policies. For example, a flexible work arrangement that provides employees with working provisions which will bring a balance in both responsibilities at work and home (Redmond, Valiulis, & Drew, 2006). In this light, work-life balance is also a personal level of involvement that is satisfactory to fit well between the multiple roles in his/her life simultaneously maintaining an overall sense of harmony or equilibrium (Clarke, Koch, & Hill, 2004). Additionally, the concept also analyses the capability of the employees to simultaneously cope with multi-faceted hassles of life (Hill, Hawkins, Ferris, & Weitzman, 2001).

## **3. METHODOLOGY**

The methodology for this study is adopted from Manoharan and Singal (2017). The current study employs a literature review method that involves six steps, namely,

classifying the period, selection of databases, selection of journals, selection of articles, classification of articles, and analyses.

### 3.1. Step 1 – Period:

The period of analysis covered 18 years from 2000 to 2018. The year of 2000 was selected as the starting point to ease data collection.

### 3.2. Step 2 – Database Selection:

Database selection is very crucial as it determines the framework for this review. Relevant articles are carefully chosen from some of the most common databases such as *Science Direct*, *Google Scholar*, *EBSCO* and *EmeraldInsight*.

### 3.3. Step 3 – Selection of Journals:

Most of the articles on work-life balance are scattered among different journals because of its interdisciplinary nature. To broaden the search, several databases were used as the first source to identify the articles; and then 69 journals in the hospitality domain, including the top journals in hospitality management, were identified.

### 3.4. Step 4 – Selection of Articles:

Since work-life balance is the topic focussed in this literature analysis, to ensure that no article was missed, initially broad terms such as *work-life balance*, *work-life satisfaction*, *work-family satisfaction*, and *work-life conflicts* were used.

### 3.5. Step 5 – Classification of Articles:

To achieve the objective of this review, articles were classified into two categories: *work-life balance* (68 papers) and *work-life conflicts* (54 papers).

### 3.6. Step 6 – Analysis of Classification:

The purpose of the final step was to understand in detail how work-life balance research has evolved in general over the millennia. The first step was to classify the articles into the two major topics of *work-life balance* and *work-life conflicts*. The second step was to identify various themes studied within the work-life balance and work-life conflicts literature. The themes within work-life balance and work-life conflicts have been continuously evolving, and thus recurring themes were identified during the classification. Consistent with the previous literature, the eight themes as shown in Figure 3.6.1 were generated.

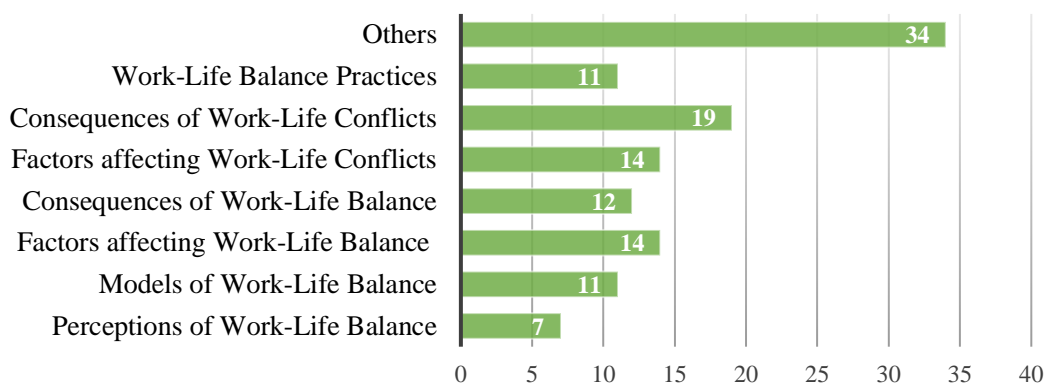


Figure 3.6.1: Themes of Work-Life Balance and Work-Life Conflicts

In the third step, the articles were categorised based on geographical regions such as *Asia*, *UK*, and other *European countries*. As the research studies

scattered across different countries around the world, they were reported separately rather than grouping them all in one classification in order to capture the country context. This process allows us to see where and in which contexts work-life balance has received scholarly attention and where gaps exist (see Figure 3.6.2).

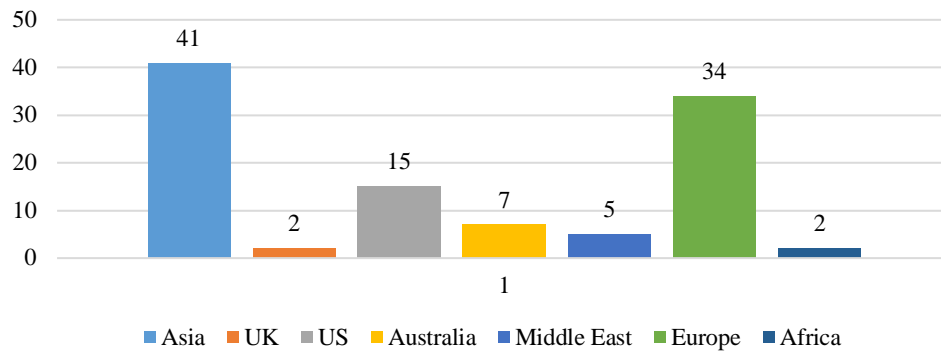


Figure 3.6.2: Research by Geographical Locations

In the fourth step, articles were identified based on the methodological nature of the research. The articles were grouped based on whether they were empirical study and literature review (see Figure 3.6.3).

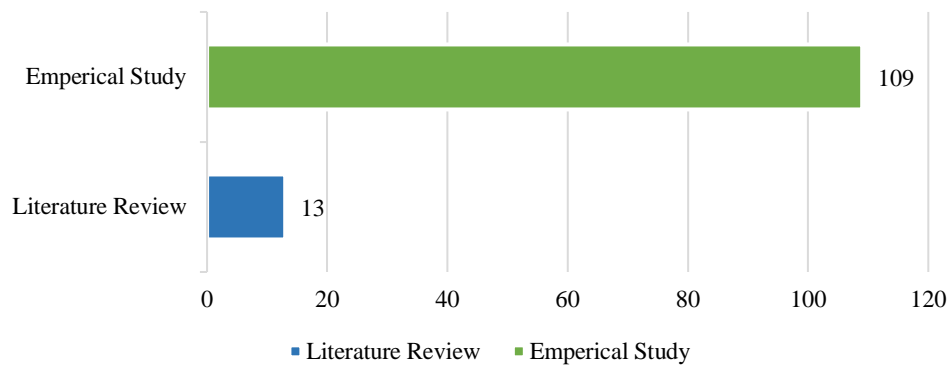


Figure 3.6.3: Research by Nature of Study

In the final step, the articles were grouped based on descriptive details such as the year and the name of journal publishing, etc. This analysis then served as a guide for discussing future research implications (see Figure 3.6.4).

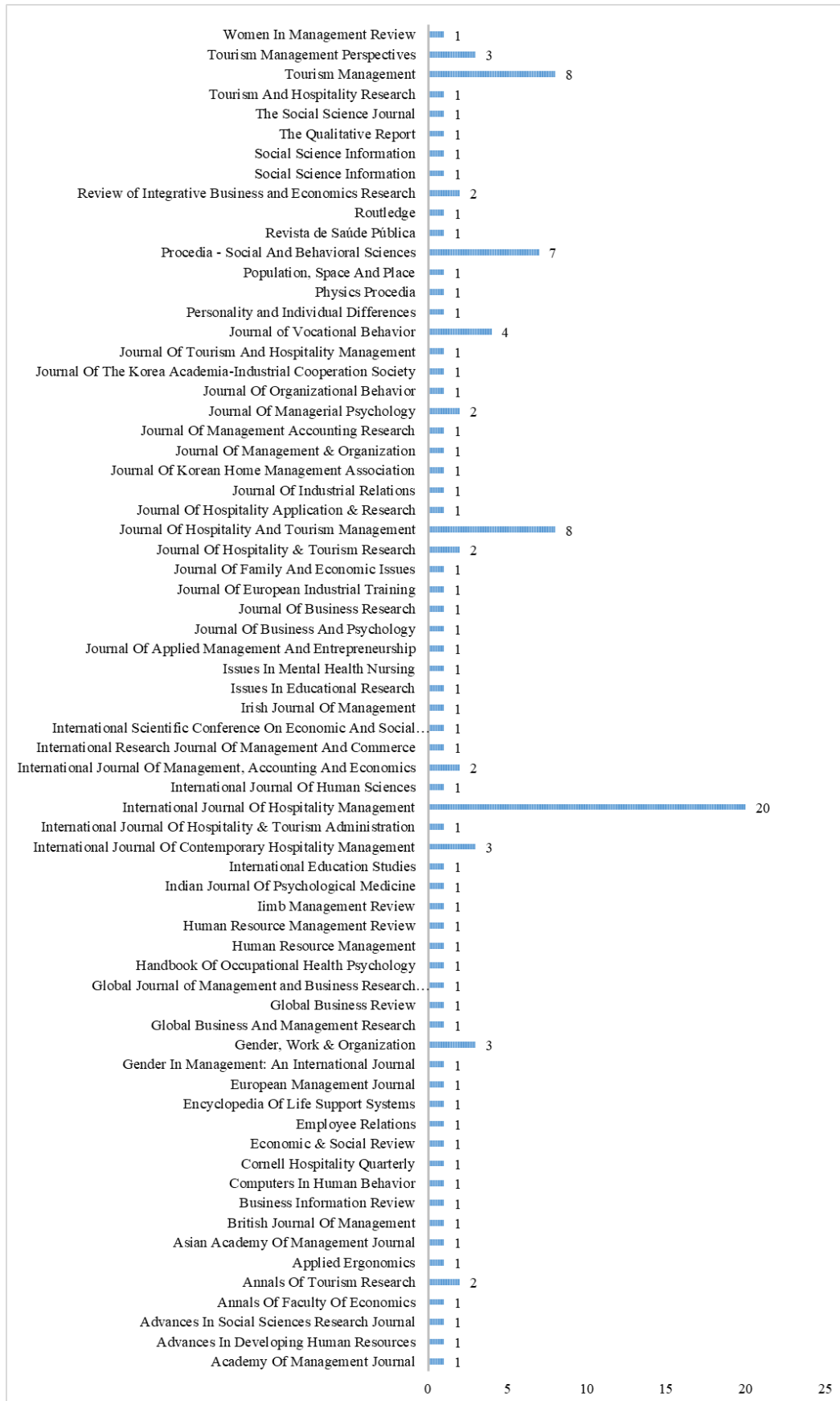


Figure 3.6.4: Research By Number of Publications

#### 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

##### 4.1. *What types of work-life balance themes have been researched?*

Understanding the themes and broad topics that constitute work-life balance helps identify the themes that have been studied and the gaps in the literature. It is clear from the table that the consequences of work-life conflicts were more frequently studied (19). This is not a marginal increase from other themes like factors affecting work-life balance and work-life conflicts (14). The category that constitutes to ‘others’ (34) gains much of the attention because of the heterogeneity of the themes discussed within some individual categories like gender (6), presenteeism (4), job satisfaction (13), life-satisfaction (1), well-being (3), and work stress (7).

**Table 4.1.1: Themes of Work-Life Balance and Work-Life Conflicts**

Themes	No of Publications
<b>Perceptions of Work-Life Balance</b>	7
<b>Models of Work-Life Balance</b>	11
<b>Factors affecting work-life balance</b>	14
<b>Consequences of Work-Life Balance</b>	12
<b>Factors affecting work-life conflicts</b>	14
<b>Consequences of Work-Life Conflicts</b>	19
<b>Work-Life Balance Practices</b>	11
<b>Others</b>	34

Work is a primary constituent of personal well-being as it provides income and signifies social status. Work and well-being are intricately related given that work conditions impact the quality of their own lives (Ardito, d’Errico, Leombruni, and Pacelli, 2012). The Job Demand-Control (JDC) (Karasek, 1979) and Job Demand–Control–Support (JDCS) models (Töres, 1990) are theoretical approaches that are commonly used to understand the relationship among work characteristics, health, and well-being (Häusser, Mojzisch, Niesel, & Schulz-Hardt, 2010). Keeping job and family domains separate makes it easier to manage work-family borders, depending on its strength, which can improve the wellbeing of employees (Clark, 2000). Several studies have illustrated the relationship between various personal, organisational factors and work-family conflicts (Adams, King, & King, 1996; Armstrong, Atkin-Plunk, & Wells, 2015; Mas-Machuca, Berbegal-Mirabent, & Alegre, 2016). Gordon and Whelan (1998), in their study, found that mid-aged women have different requirements from young women employees, and that an organisation should consider such a difference in order to retain women employees.

Bruck, Allen, and Spector (2002) attempted to examine and call attention to the deeply woven relationship between personal life and work in an organisational setting, namely: (a) Compensation effect: wherein employees seek contentment in other domains of life if they encounter low work or personal life satisfaction; and (b) Spillover view: wherein job satisfaction necessarily spills over into one’s work life and vice versa. Greenhaus, Collins, and Shaw (2003)

tried to investigate and considered three aspects of work-life balance namely: a) Balance of time (b) Balance of involvement, and (c) Balance of satisfaction.

Skinner and Pocock (2011) argued that longer working hours 'are consistently associated with worse work-life outcomes on all our work-life measures'. Such findings suggest that there is an unhealthy acceptance of long working hours, especially in the hospitality and tourism industry. In light of the studies above, the 'balance aspect' refers to some sort of equilibrium that a person seeks between the demands of their work and life activities. Thomas and Brough (2015) studied various literatures and pointed out that the term work-family or work-life balance is widely employed.

Many flexible work programmes benefit employees by enabling them to achieve a balance between work and family (Brewer, 2001). However, other factors are affecting flexible work arrangements, such as choices of lifestyle (Özbilgin, Beaugard, Tatli, & Bell, 2011) that determine the delicate balance. The recent trends and concerns about work-life balance have encouraged many employers in other industries to provide various initiatives to their employees to help them balance work and home demands (Beaugard & Henry, 2009). However, within the hospitality industry, many employers lack family-supportive work environments that are proved to be integral for benefitting both employees and the organisation (Matthews, Swody, & Barnes-Farrell, 2012). The primary cause is attributed to the challenges that employees in the hospitality industry experience in achieving a work-life balance (Karatepe, 2010). Deery and Jago (2015) studied the culture of long hours and presenteeism attached to the jobs in the industry. A study conducted by the US National Survey of employees to measure affective commitment instilled by the benefits tied to the family found that employee engagement is more likely to exist in companies that have family-friendly policies, regardless of whether the employees can actually benefit from it or not (Grover & Crooker, 1995).

Providing an inclusive family-friendly policy may have a positive impact on individual employees who utilise these advantages (Grover & Crooker, 1995). Perry-Smith and Blum (2000) examined the association between work-family policies and organisational performance. Beaugard and Henry (2009) established the relationship between work-life balance practices, positive job-related attitudes, and employee engagement. Organisational cultures that support work-life balance are found to have peer and supervisor support that enables career progression without job attitudes like presenteeism to long working hours (Sok, Blomme, & Tromp, 2014). Work in the hospitality industry is also acknowledged for having job characteristics such as long and irregular hours, emphasis on face time, and frequent relocation that are harmful to family life (O'Neill & Davis, 2011). A report by McDonald and Bradley (2005) throws light into the reality of long working hours, which is found to be a substantial barrier to achieving work-life balance. Similarly, a study by Blomme, Van Rheede and Tromp (2010) documented that jobs in the hospitality industry usually have low job security, long and irregular working long hours, and high requirement on teamwork and shift work, which is supported by a study of Hoque and James

(2000). The hospitality industry is also inundated with multiple problems arising out of poor human resource management practices that may lead to job-role stress, erratic work schedules, extended work hours, and job insecurity (Karatepe, 2010). Presser (2004) established that the top 10 lodging management occupations in the US have typical characteristics of nonconforming work schedules (O'Neill & Davis, 2011).

Though there were several studies that offered solutions to balance work and life, Kirby and Nabong (2012) offered a creative solution by recoupling the interests of both the employees and the organisation to obtain higher productivity and excellence in the workforce. It can be viewed as a win-win situation by offering tasks that are appropriately matched with the capabilities of the staff within the establishment. Employers in the hospitality industry will be able to attract and retain their employees by crafting and executing work-life balance policies, and such establishments shall be the choice of most employees (Al-Refaie, 2015). Many strategies are implemented across the length and breadth of the industry include flexitime and shorter workweeks, which are not new to the industry. Such simple strategies will enable employees to balance their roles and maximise their potential at home and work (Adame-Sánchez, González-Cruz, & Martínez-Fuentes, 2016; Deery & Jago, 2009). Similarly, the analysis conducted by Primorac, Bussoli, and Recker (2016) shows that the perceived flexibility at work, the ability to refuse overtime at work, and supportive management practices and policies are three dimensions of work-life conflicts that form a basis for employer strategies to create work-life balance for the employees.

According to a study by Sok *et al.* (2014), flexible schedules create flexible work-home arrangements. Doherty (2004) proposed five broad strategies to conceptualise the work-life initiatives: (a) time, (b) information, (c) money (d) direct services, and (e) company culture. As described in '*work-life balance: the Philippine experience in male and female roles and leadership*' by Haar, Russo, Suñe, and Ollier-Malaterre (2014), the strategies for work-life balance are summarised into three general categories: (a) time and space flexibility, (b) needs related to family, and (c) employee well-being and development. Research exploring the relationship between *work-family conflict*, *job satisfaction* and *organisational commitment* by Namasivayam and Zhao (2007) shows that work-family conflict negatively affects the job satisfaction of employees except when the employees are very committed to the organisation by default. Studies conducted by Hamilton, Gordon, and Whelan-Berry (2006); Hashim, Ishar, Rashid, and Masodi (2012); Jung and Yoon (2018); Karatepe (2011); Karatepe and Baddar (2006); Karatepe and Karadas (2014); Kidd and Eller (2012); Lin, Wong, and Ho (2013); Lin, Huang, Yang, and Chiang (2014); Ma and Yin (2012); Magnini (2009); Mansour and Tremblay (2016); Matthews *et al.* (2012); McNamara, Bohle, and Quinlan (2011); Panatik, Badri, Rajab, Rahman, and Shah (2011); Qu and Zhao (2012); Rashid, Omar, and Shah (2016); Sarbu (2018); Tsaur and Yen (2018); Turliuc and Buliga (2014); Yavas, Karatepe, and Babakus (2004), and; Zhao and Mattila (2013) have shown strong correlations between job satisfaction, perception of work-life balance, and work-family and family-work spillover conflicts. Cleveland *et al.* (2007) researched about three categories of



hotel employees, namely: (a) entry-level job aspirants, (b) various departmental managers, and (c) their spouses. The study showed significant evidence that the demand for being available at all times at work was a determinant factor leading to workplace stress (Armstrong et al., 2015; Chiang, Birtch, & Kwan, 2010; Dhar & Dhar, 2010; Di Pietro & Di Virgilio, 2014). To understand the perceptions of hospitality students who are future entrants in the hospitality industry, O'Neill and Davis (2011) conducted a focus group study and concluded that there is a negative perception about the work schedules of hotel jobs such as *extended*, *erratic* and *irregular*. Similar studies were conducted by Cleveland, Cordeiro, Fisk, and Mulvaney (2006); Hofmann and Stokburger-Sauer (2017); Mohanty and Mohanty (2014); Wan and Chan (2013), and; Wong and Ko (2009). With reference to the Korean hotel industry and health care industry, the studies conducted by Jung Choi and Tae Kim (2012); Kim and Lee (2016) proposed that organisations should invest more in implementing flexible work schedules, consistent working hours, family-supportive work cultures, and additional fringe benefits that could support employees who have families or willing to start a family.

Wong and Ko (2009) proposed an effective management system and organisational culture that will enable employees to deal effectively with both their personal and work demands in their study based on employees' perceptions of work-life balance. The organisational culture envisioned in the study focuses more on the workplace support systems for dealing with family affairs and stipulating ample quality time with family and increased flexibility on work schedule. In the western context, it is expected that ensuring productivity and efficiency at work is more important, which tends to undermine the significance of other work and personal values owing to conflicts of interest (Lewis, Gambles, & Rapoport, 2007). According to Wright *et al.* (2014), changes are necessary within the industry to accommodate work and family commitments. They found in their study that accomplishing a work-life balance was a principal personal challenge. Likewise, Brereton, Clinch, and Ferreira (2008) established that people attributed high value to family relationships when it comes to a choice between work and family, and thus the significance of various employee benefits tied to family support can be used as a recruitment tool (Arslaner & Boylu, 2017; Chang, 2009; Choi & Ahn, 2017; Dulebohn, Molloy, Pichler, & Murray, 2009; Ferguson et al., 2012; Greenhaus, Ziegert, & Allen, 2012; Karatepe, 2009; Kong, 2013; Sok et al., 2014; Walters & Raybould, 2007). A positive organisational culture that accelerates work-life balance can spearhead positive effects on organisational performance (Cleveland et al., 2006; Gurney, 2009; Karatepe, 2009; Root & Wooten, 2008; Walters & Raybould, 2007).

Time management studies were conducted in the western context on the effects of long working hours on employees at the personal level, the family level as well as the organisational level (Arasli, Daşkın, & Saydam, 2014; Ariza-Montes, Arjona-Fuentes, Han, & Law, 2018; Bruck et al., 2002; Chiang, Birtch, & Kwan, 2010; Häusser et al., 2010; Hill et al., 2001; Karkoulian, Srour, & Sinan, 2016; Tromp & Blomme, 2012). Results from these studies consistently show a significant relationship between long working hours and the obscurity in balancing work and family domains (Clarke, 2004; Estes, Noonan, & Maume,

2007; Frone, 2003; Gamor, Amissah, & Boakye, 2014; Hobson, 2013; Mulvaney, O'Neill, Cleveland, & Crouter, 2007; Narayanan & Savarimuthu, 2013; Perry-Smith & Blum, 2000).

Studies conducted by Doherty (2004); Hamilton *et al.* (2006); Emslie and Hunt (2009); Gurney (2009); Okumus, Sariisik, and Naipaul (2010); Reddy, Vranda, Ahmed, Nirmala, and Siddaramu (2010); Desai, Majumdar, Chakraborty, and Ghosh (2011); Mathew and Panchanatham (2011); Stavrou and Ierodiakonou (2011); Valk and Srinivasan (2011); Rehman and Azam Roomi (2012); Mani (2013); Goswami (2014); Krishnan (2014); Kachchaf, Ko, Hodari, and Ong (2015); Bharathi and Mala (2016); Peter and Enock (2016); Shrestha (2016); Peshave and Gupta (2017); Raj and Bansal (2017), and; Smith (2018) investigated work-life balance for women in various industries and found that the fundamental deterrents across all the industries are the concept of *presenteeism* (Arslaner & Boylu, 2017; Cicei, Mohorea, & Teodoru, 2013; Cullen & McLaughlin, 2006; Wan, Downey, & Stough, 2014), *very long working hours* (Bohlea, Quinlana, Kennedy, & Williamson, 2004; Matthews *et al.*, 2012; McNamara *et al.*, 2011; Wright *et al.*, 2014), and *lack of flexibility* (Hill *et al.*, 2001; Ravenswood & Harris, 2016; Skinner & Pocock, 2011; Stavrou & Ierodiakonou, 2011) that keeps women away from exploring career advancement opportunities (Albayrak, 2019; Ben & Galim, 2012; Blomme, Rheede, & Tromp, 2010; Emslie & Hunt, 2009; Estes *et al.*, 2007; Gurney, 2009; Jarvis, 2016; Karkoulian *et al.*, 2016; Ravenswood & Harris, 2016; Rehman & Azam Roomi, 2012; Santero Sanchez, Segovia Pérez, Castro Nuñez, Figueroa Domecq, & Talón Ballester, 2015; Xu, 2018). Ong, Tan, Villareal, and Chiu (2019) concluded that quality work life and prosocial motivation positively affect organizational commitment, which may lead to a lesser turnover intent among professionals.

#### 4.2. Work-life balance articles published by year

Examining the publication timelines helps to understand the trends in publication over the past 18 years. As evident from Table 4.2.1, there is an upward trend in the number of studies conducted over the period of 2000-2015.

**Table 4.2.1: Researches Published by Year**

Year	No of Publications
2000-2005	11
2006-2010	39
2011-2015	44
2016-2019	28

#### 4.3. Work-life balance articles by journal publication

Examining the articles by publication helps us understand the trends of research at hospitality and tourism journals. Majority of the articles appeared at top journals like *International Journal of Hospitality Management* (21), *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management* (8), *Journal of Tourism Management* (8), and interdisciplinary journals like *Procedia - Social And Behavioural Sciences* (7).

#### 4.4. Work-life balance articles by region of study

Majority of the studies were conducted in Asia (41) followed by Europe (34), US (15), Australia (7), Middle East (5), UK (2), and Africa (2) within the time frame.

#### 4.5. *The nature of the research into work-life balance.*

Understanding the nature of the research on work-life balance provides information about the methodologies used and how to improve the current research methods. Among the articles we have examined, 109 of them were empirical studies and 13 of them were literature reviews.

#### 4.6. *Work-life balance articles by the industry of study.*

About 67 of the studies were conducted in the Hotels, Hospitality & Tourism industry followed, 12 in Entrepreneurship, 4 in IT, 2 in each of Nursing, Hospital, and Education, 1 in each of Banking, Finance, Judiciary, Manufacturing, Public Administration, SMEs, and Social Care. There is a clearly dearth of research on work-family balance (Karatepe, 2010; Kusluvan et al., 2010). Moreover, (Cleveland et al., 2006) found that in the hospitality management literature, there is a lack of research related to work-family facilitation. Lucas and Deery (2004) highlighted that most of the research conducted in the hospitality industry is based on quantitative analysis techniques where a considerably small amount of data is drawn from operational employees relative to that from managers. This suggests that there still is a considerable gap in terms of employee-based research studies.

The studies conducted show that job control plays a vital role in mitigating stress and suggests that coping with stress does not solely depend on individual efforts (Ariza-Montes et al., 2018; Chiang, Birtch, & Kwong, 2010; Häusser et al., 2010; Tromp & Blomme, 2012). Although addressing and reducing stress is both a noble goal and is capable of resulting in expense reductions for employers, the nature and amount of hospitality employee stress are not fully understood (O'Neill & Davis, 2011). Jung Choi and Tae Kim (2012) mentioned that work-life balance appears to have become one of the critical variables when addressing issues of employee management and retention. Hotel employees feel distressed when their tasks are unclear, when they lack accurate information or scope about their responsibilities concerning colleagues, and when they are overloaded with work (Tsaur & Tang, 2012). Furthermore, frontline employees in the hospitality industry are often underpaid and suffer from job-related stress (Armstrong et al., 2015; Chu, 2018; Kim & Kim, 2017; Kim, Im, & Hwang, 2015; Mohamed, 2015; Yhong, Yuen, Tay, Peng, & Peggy, 2018; Zhao & Ghiselli, 2016). It is not surprising that work-life balance has attracted numerous contributions from academic researchers and human resources evangelists who attempt to investigate various elements influencing work-life balance, the interrelationship between those elements, and the possible outcomes of different levels of work-life balance prevailing among employees (Poulose & Sudarsan, 2018).

## 5. FUTURE RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

The primary objective of this review of previous literature on work-life balance is to systematically investigate the topic of work-life balance as it appears in the hospitality literature. The investigation indicates that work-life balance offers many opportunities as research topics and that this study contributes in three aspects: (a) this study serves

as a reference about what we already know in the field; (b) it helps in identifying gaps in the literature, and; (c) it opens up future research directions in the context of hospitality with a focus on unexplored themes including the effects of attitudes, values, beliefs, religion, personality, and spirituality on work-life balance, and the methods and geographical locations of research, which will give practical implications and bring hospitality management research into up-to-date mainstream management research.

## 6. LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This systematic and broad literature review has some limitations. First, it is focused on hotel, hospitality and tourism journals, and includes only a few relevant journal articles from other industries and disciplines that have reported research on work-life balance in the context of hotel, hospitality, and tourism. Future literature reviews may include more comprehensive and interdisciplinary articles on work-life balance that are excluded from the present study. Second, this study reviews the literature from year 2000 onwards, which means that some older but relevant articles might be missing from the present review. Third, as in all literature reviews, the choice of keywords like 'work-life balance' to be used in the literature search is influenced by the researcher's biases, which may cause the review to miss out some relevant research articles. Finally, the systematic review methodology adopted in the present review may be subject to pre-conception bias.

Work-life balance can be considered as a core issue of HRM. Indicators of work-life balance were found in past studies to be significantly associated with employee commitment, job satisfaction (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2012), and organisational citizenship behaviour (Grzywacz & Carlson, 2007). Past studies also found that the absence of a delicate balance and notably high levels of work-life conflict correlate to greater turnover intention (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2012) and considerably more frequent sickness absence (Zhao & Mattila, 2013). In addition, work-life balance was found to be linked to employee performance (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2012). This past empirical evidence implicitly or explicitly indicates that work-life balance is at the core of HRM's primary functions and provides critical leverage for promoting individual and organisational effectiveness.

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