

**WORK-LIFE BALANCE STUDY BETWEEN  
GENERATIONS AND GENDER**

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GENERATIONS AND GENDER

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## **ABSTRACT**

Recent research has shown that work-life balance is a common phenomenon. Many people do studies to examine topics related to work-life balance in Turkey and around the world. Work-life balance is categorized in this study in terms of generations and gender dimensions. It compares the 280 survey participants' gender and generational differences. Results change throughout generations as well as between genders. In this study, gender and generational comparisons of working longer hours are examined, as well as comparisons of working arrangements to Generation Z and Generation X, satisfaction with work-life balance and its relationships between generations, the availability of working arrangements in terms of work-life balance compared to gender, and the relationship between working and studying at the same time. By comparing survey responses using Chi-square analysis, five hypotheses are accepted and determined to be statistically correlated, while three are rejected as being non-correlated. The data shows that men are working longer hours than the standard office hours. The comparison of the current working arrangement between different generations was analyzed and the test result shows it is significant. When it comes to satisfaction with work-life balance the result indicates a significant relationship. When comparing the two generations Generation X's satisfaction was found higher than the satisfaction of Generation Z. Also, a comparison between working more than standard office hours and generations was analyzed and it is indicated there was no significant relationship. Examining the relationship between personal life and family responsibilities and appropriateness of work arrangements by gender revealed that there was no significant relationship. The analysis of the relationship between working while studying and gender shows there is no significant relationship. The analysis comparing the impact of Covid 19 on work-life balance between the generations found a significant relationship. Finally, a significant relationship exists between working while studying in the last 2 years and generations.

**Key words:** Generations, Gender, Work-life balance, Generation X, Generation Z.

# JENERASYONLAR VE CİNSİYET ARASI İŞ YAŞAM DENGESİ ÇALIŞMASI

## ÖZET

İş aile dengesi son çalışmalarda popüler bir fenomendir. Hem dünyada ve hem de Türkiye’de birçok kişi bu konuda araştırmalar yapıp iş aile dengesini analiz etmiştir. Bu çalışmada iş aile dengesi jenerasyonel ve cinsiyet açısından kategorilenmiştir. Bu çalışma jenerasyonel ve cinsiyet olarak olarak 280 katılımcının anket cevaplarını karşılaştırır. Farklı jenerasyonlarda ve farklı cinsiyetlerde sonuç değişir. Bu çalışmada incelenen ilişkiler; standart mesai saatlerinden daha fazla çalışmanın cinsiyet ve jenerasyonel karşılaştırılması, çalışma aralıklarının jenerasyon Z ve jenerasyon X olarak karşılaştırılması, iş ve yaşam dengesi memnuniyetinin kuşaklar arası karşılaştırılmasıyla ilişkisi, iş aralıklarının iş yaşam dengesiyle uygunluğunun cinsiyet karşılaştırılması, çalışırken okumanın cinsiyet ve kuşaksal ilişkisinin karşılaştırılması ve Covid 19’un iş aile dengesine etkisinin kuşaklar ve cinsiyet karşılaştırılmasıdır. Anket cevapları Ki-kare testi ile analiz edildi. 5 hipotez kabul edildi ve ilişkiler anlamlı bulundu, 3 hipotez ise , anlamlı bulunmadığı için reddedildi. Veriler, erkeklerin standart çalışma saatlerinden daha uzun saatler çalıştığını gösteriyor. Mevcut çalışma düzeninin farklı nesiller arasındaki karşılaştırması analiz edildi ve test sonucu bunun önemli olduğunu gösteriyor. İş-yaşam dengesinden memnuniyet söz konusu olduğunda sonuç anlamlı bir ilişkiyi işaret eder. İki kuşak karşılaştırılırken X kuşağının memnuniyeti Z kuşağının memnuniyetinden daha yüksek bulunmuştur. Ayrıca standart mesai saatlerinden fazla çalışma ile nesiller arasındaki karşılaştırma analiz edilmiş ve anlamlı bir ilişki olmadığı ortaya çıkmıştır. Çalışma düzenlemelerinin kişisel yaşam ile aile sorumlulukları ile uygunluğu arasındaki ilişkinin cinsiyete göre incelenmesi anlamlı bir ilişki olmadığını ortaya koymuştur. Çalışırken okuma ile cinsiyet arasındaki ilişkinin analizi, anlamlı bir ilişki olmadığını göstermektedir. Covid 19’un jenerasyonlar arasında iş yaşam dengesi etkisini karşılaştıran analizde anlamlı bir ilişki bulundu. Son olarak, son 2 yılda çalışırken okumak ile jenerasyonlar arasında anlamlı bir ilişki vardır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kuşaklar, Cinsiyet, İş-Yaşam Dengesi, X Jenerasyonu, Z Jenerasyonu.

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Göksu ERKILINÇ



To My Parents..

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Concepts of Work-Life Balance**

Achieving work-life balance involves both enjoying life and carrying out one's obligations in the professional sphere. The objective of success and achievement exists in the workplace. On the other hand, having joy and combining joy with happiness are important aspects of enjoying life, as determined by the moment. To achieve better work-life and family balance within the realm of private life, it is important to have support from both your family and your organization. Work-life balance is made up of various factors that affect daily living, such as the pressures of the job, the length of the workday, the frequency of deadlines, and so forth. On the other hand, from the perspective of the employee's private life, caring for children, having an elderly family member live with them, experiencing financial difficulties that lead to the desire to work, the competitive nature of the global marketplace, and the desire to start a new hobby are all factors that contribute to problems with work-life balance (Kumari, 2017).

### **1.2 Generation Z**

Generation Z is a generation that easily adapts to technological improvements since they are accustomed to live in a world where PCs, GSM, and the internet are all around them. This generation has grown up with social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and Foursquare at their fingertips. Generation Z was raised in a technological and electronic environment, which had a significant

impact on how they perceived the outside world and the workplace. Generation Z is used to gaining knowledge as quickly as possible. As a result, individuals are observed to be irritable when confronted with unknowable concepts or unsolvable problems that are out of their control (Berkup, 2014).

### **1.3 Generation X**

The X generation is affected by the global economic crises, wars, and numerous occurrences of depression. The X generation actually saw people struggle to get what they wanted. Because of this and the way they work, Generation X is known as the fighter generation. At work, they are well renowned for their strong commitment and respect for authority. They are very committed to upholding the workplace's structure and rules.

In comparison to Generation Z, females had to work harder than males since they face more obstacles to being independent women. Researchers claim that because Generation X faces difficulties alongside their relatives, they attach a value and show a great respect to their families. Additionally, the X generation is known for staying in one job for a very long time. In addition, compared to the Z Generation, women in the X Generation only recently began to join the workforce (Kaplan & Çarıkçı, 2018).

### **1.4 Gender and Age Group**

In this study, both genders are involved in this survey, and age groups are categorized into 4 groups: a) 20-29 b) 30-39 c)40-49 d)50-59. These variables enable comparisons between gender, age and generation.

### **1.5 Working Arrangement**

The working arrangement has a direct impact on the working style at the workplace. Participants had to choose between a full-time, part-time, job-sharing, and flexible time arrangement. The study aims to determine the ratio of every working arrangement's distribution of the numbers in the survey. Thus, it can be observed which generation works in which working arrangement. Most importantly, the preferred working arrangements by age and gender are the main emphasis of this study

rather than the current working arrangements, which are less essential.

## **1.6 Covid-19 Effect on Work-life Balance**

There are different variations of the studies that measure how the economic crisis has affected the topic under investigation. Since Covid 19 is a recent issue and a worldwide pandemic which has affected everyone, the study also evaluates the impact of Covid 19 on work-life balance.

## **1.7 Research Questions**

1. Is there a significant difference in the results of working overtime based on gender?
2. Is there a significant difference in the results of working arrangements based on generations?
3. Is there any significant relationship between generations and satisfaction with work-life balance?
4. Is there any significant relationship between working more than standard office hours and generations?
5. Is there any significant relationship between the working arrangement and the availability of personal life and family responsibilities based on gender?
6. Is there any significant relationship between working while studying for the last 2 years and gender?
7. Is there any significant relationship between Covid 19 effect on work-life balance based on the generations?
8. Is there any significant relationship between working while studying last 2 years and the generations?

## **1.8 Aim of the Study**

The two dimensions that this study seeks to identify are generational and gender. The circumstance of being a student while working is intended to be measured from the gender perspective on the duration of the working hours and working arrangement consequences of availability of family and personal responsibilities. Additionally, the



study intends to analyze generational disparities in working arrangement preferences (between Generation Z and Generation X). Age groups are separated as oldest and youngest. The study also seeks to identify generational variations in work-life balance satisfaction and duration of working hours, which refers to working longer than the recommended number of hours. Lastly, the study examines how Covid 19 has impacted different generations' perspectives of work-life balance.

### **1.9 Importance of The Study**

The study is distinctive since it will include the working circumstances in Turkey. For instance, the purpose of the study section explains attitudes toward working while attending school as well as the satisfaction with work-life balance and other elements. The study distinguishes itself from other studies by examining gender disparities between men and women and generational differences (X and Z) with respect to their opinions of work-life balance.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

There is an issue in the literature that is presented as a term “work-family conflict”. The concept of work-family conflict involves each side of the family’s demands that have stayed unanswered therefore there is failure and dissatisfaction in terms of their aims. (Nicklin et al., 2022). Work-life balance gains more popularity, especially when the women-labor force has increased in work. In order to achieve their own responsibilities at home and at work, people must find a balance between their personal and professional lives. It has been proven that when work-life balance is achieved, several unavoidable favorable effects occur, such as the reduction of emotional burdens, stress, and healthy communication without grief in the home environment. Even though this issue was dealt with in a straightforward manner, there are explanations for it, such as organizational demands and elders' expectations. Firstly, work-life balance is directly impacted by organizational expectations and the numerous multitask responsibilities that result. These responsibilities lead to depression and an excessive workload for employees. Secondly, the demands placed on elders and families are highlighted, and people spend their energy navigating city traffic and work-related problems. However, because there is also a family concern, employees' tasks are not terminated. Family structure is more complex than just the nucleus type; larger families might also include the elderly. Regardless of their age or health, some people need to care for the elderly, and it can be challenging to strike a balance when both sides participate workforce (S. & S.N., 2021). In the literature review, there are important frameworks that need to be considered: Empirical studies on work-life balance, Z Generation in the Workplace Issues on Work-Life Balance,

## 2.1 Empirical Studies on Work-life Balance

According to a study (Hobson & Fahlén, 2009) conducted in the UK, there is apparently widespread agreement regarding the equal participation of men and women in work and home responsibilities. On the other hand, in the same study, it is found that Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic participants regardless of gender agreed on the statement “Men must have more rights to work rather than women when jobs are insufficient”. However, participants from other 7 countries in the survey are against this idea including Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Germany, Netherlands, the UK, and Spain. Additionally, the study came to the conclusion that the work-life balance requirements of a job are taken into account in almost all nations and by the majority of participants.

Work-life balance is related with long working hours. The research shows that there are differences among countries in Europe in terms of the length of the working hours. For instance, the countries involved in the country of developed Europe, that work less than 36.2 weekly, were Germany, Netherlands Switzerland, Denmark, Norway, France, and Sweden. Compared to OECD member countries such as Canada, Mexico, New Zealand, and Australia, they work more hours weekly with 4.14%. Four countries come to the front, Chile, Mexico, South Korea and Israel. Their weekly and yearly average work hours are more than European ones. The research concludes working long hours cause one to sacrifice free time and self-care. (Iacovoiu,2020).

A study claims that the more complexity of work tasks, the more difficult to have a work-family balance, which is also directly related with organizations. Also in the same study, there is a measurement of the effect of the leader and the effect of the colleagues, and it concludes that there is a positive relation between them. In addition, it is found that if workers put more effort into their work, they will develop good time management skills. On the other hand, when the organization supports a work-life balance-friendly policy, their willingness to engage in work increases. Also, it is shown that it increases colleagues’ interaction and engagement within the company (Žnidaršič & Bernik, 2021).

European Quality on Life Survey concluded that when work and family balance is strong in the organization, there is no overload in the social roles in both work and

family (Rusu, 2018). The survey shows that when there is no conflict in work-life balance, there is no stress, and it paves the way to a rising in quality of life. According to the survey, 41% of young women, aged 34 and under, found it difficult to balance the demands of work and home in 2016. On the other hand, the same study comes to the conclusion that 61% of males aged 35 to 49 have the most trouble dealing with it. Another noteworthy outcome is that, as of 2017, both genders have experienced an increase in work-life balance issues, particularly in Romania, Croatia, and the Czech Republic, as a result of excessive average working hours. (Rusu, 2018)

According to survey data reveals that women have more difficulties balancing responsibilities of work and family than males do. However, working women contribute a lot to the household. There is a suggestion in the study, a refreshment program weekly or monthly may cause more empathy between spouses and can play a helping role in terms of work-family conflict. (Venkatesan 2021).

Research demonstrates that persons between the ages of 31 and 40 are better at managing their work-life balance when various feedbacks from other ages are taken into account. Also, the employee who travels once a month neglect their family and it creates a work-family balance. The same research also demonstrates that an employee's capacity to maintain a work-life balance increases with experience. 15-20 years experienced workers are better than people who have 5-10 years of experience. Lastly, interestingly it is found in that study, families who have more income -more than 26.000 Rupees (Indian currency) have more effort to solve the work-life balance problems. (Kaur, 2017).

In four Nigerian banks found that 87% of the participants believe they could continue working at home after their regular working hours ended, and even then, they couldn't find enough time for their families. Also, the study emphasizes the options within the work-life balance policy such as job-sharing, career break, and childcare options but attendees of the survey believe that there is a crucial need within the organizations. The study measures the management of companies as well, and it finds that because of Nigeria's high unemployment rate, some employers do not know about work-balance programs and methodologies and even do not prioritize learning them (Fapohunda, 2014).

In the educational sector, parenthood in particular can accelerate the onset of work-life conflict. The purpose of research is to analyze how motherhood and academic duties interact. It has been shown that there are options for flexibility,

particularly at the higher education sector level. The possibility of achieving a work-life balance through academic arrangements exists. However, the study emphasizes that it should be embraced in terms of necessity regardless of the social role that women academics play (Mazerolle & Barrett, 2018).

Women employees' work and families create a barrier between them rather than supporting them. According to study findings, more than 93% of the participating women workers share this opinion. The same survey also found that 82% of female employees said that they did not enjoy their professions, and the majority of them connected this to an imbalance between work and life (Tiwari, 2017).

There is a study that focuses on the work-life balance of married women that took place in Malaysia. It shows that it is not only about one factor but many factors such as work environment factors, including how many hours individuals are working, and weight -compulsion- on individuals. In addition to family, some other factors are shown to be undeniable like kids and husbands, emotional burdens, and household situations. All respondents agree that it is only conceivable if those are all managed by women that good work-life balance results can be achieved, which leads to the conclusion that those all should be coordinated and managed correctly (Hassan, 2020).

Fleur (2010) measures in his research whether flexible work arrangement is related to demographic variables such as age, gender, and family conditions, and that relate to work-life balance or not. It is found that there is a relationship between employees and work-life balance with flexible work arrangements. When it comes to groups aged under 45 and workers who are over 60, the 45-age group is found to be satisfied with flexibility because they require a frequent parental need about a settlement between home and work. On the other hand, ages over 60 prefer to utilize a work-life balance policy in terms of flexibility too because they tend to use annual leave. In addition to that, the same study focuses on employees who are in the early stage of their career or maximum middle of it and tend to have an interest in flexible work arrangement because it enables more free time but mostly, they prefer to use child-care facility service in the flexible work choices. This survey concludes that organizations need to pay attention to flexible arrangements' because it is getting popular in almost all age groups (Fleur, 2010).

Being a modern business entails several challenges that cause hardship in terms of expectations for the workplace and the family. Organizations therefore frequently participate in assistance programs like services for resources and easily adjustable

agreements. Flexible work systems typically consist of working remotely, part-time work, and compressed work schedules rather than the traditional idea of labor (Cicei, 2015). There are multiple, interrelated needs for flexible work solutions that facilitate employee comfort. Workers will be able to work more productively and rapidly, for instance, and motivation will be on the rise. The organization's competent and star employees will be preserved, in addition to the spread of motivational spirit. Additionally, it makes firms more likely to become credible and appealing to prospective employees in the future. The organization's flexible work strategy can reduce the percentage of workplace discontinuity. Customers' and employees' perceptions of the company may be excellent in that setting (Sangarandeniya & Ranasinghe, 2020).

A study (Maiya & Bagali, 2014), found that when there is no work-life balance, it leads to giving up on children's ambitions. People postpone having children as planned. The choice of a part-time job is another factor in determining work-life balance. According to the research, many employees put in longer hours at work than is typical, and managers justify this behavior by citing transitory or compounded end-of-month weight as justification. The poll reveals that this is an actual working hour and not something special. According to the report, those real working hours frequently exceed the typical working hours. Interestingly, data reveals that additional working hours vary greatly by industry. Secretarial workers continue to have the lowest number of overtime hours, followed by the construction and transportation sectors. According to a survey, really large organizations are more often than not the ones that offer flexible working arrangements. Small businesses, however, rarely exhibit flexibility. It is claimed that flexible scheduling and shift work are the most desirable employment arrangements. Attendees assert that despite the way shift work is seen, due to its structure, it does not promote freedom in the same way as flexible working does. It has been reported that 74% of people between the ages of 16 and 17 have part-time employment agreements, making this age group the most common. In addition, women typically work more part-time jobs than men (Terence et al., 2001).

Numerous workplace regulations and processes make it challenging for employees to maintain a work-life balance. As a result, there is an inverse relationship between hierarchical rules and orders and work-life balance. Contrarily, when it comes to contract employees, over half of them (49%) concur that a lack of work-life balance and too many contract renewals are related. The majority of respondents believe that

work-life balance-friendly working hours can be achieved by implementing flexible working arrangements. In general, there is a substantial correlation between work-life balance and job satisfaction with current employment. Additionally, it was discovered that at least 50% of the workforce believes reporting time, job satisfaction, and work-life balance are all related. Furthermore, 50% of respondents distinctly declare that, despite being at home, their minds are still at work. (Njeri, 2014)

There is a study about military officers and their difficulties managing domestic matters and military responsibilities in the Nordic nations (Denmark, Finland, Sweden, and Norway). According to the study, Finland has the most influence because of its unsatisfactory family-work balance. It has been demonstrated that the officers in Norway and Finland regularly struggle with work-life balance due to remote assignments. Finland and Norway respondents responded to the survey by citing a lack of flexibility, which led to the conclusion that they are subject to stable shifts and that management has little interest in settling the shift. Additionally, it has been discovered that Norwegian and Swedish officers struggle with commitment due to their systems' rigidity, which interferes with a healthy work-life balance. This study implies that a more predictable work schedule and environment can also avoid imbalances (Oskarsson et al., 2022).

There is a need for organizational assistance across a variety of dimensions, including support for work-life balance and psychological factorial requirements. Research focuses in particular on the need of employees for assistance, both inside and outside of the firm. It has been shown that the HR policy of supporting employees is constrained, particularly in the service sector. When employees receive support from their employer, their performance tends to improve, which also enables them to find time for their families and, as a consequence, they may maintain a healthy work-life balance. There is a great demand for child-care facilities for both men and women, but mainly for women. Although the solution may seem straightforward, it is not as simple as it seems. People share a role in their work and personal lives, which both involve raising children and caring for elderly relatives. Employees have to give up more of their free time at home when there is insufficient support for care, which leads to the unavoidable effects of a work-life imbalance. Another issue is financial support. It has been discovered that, even in the absence of a child-care policy, extra compensation for working additional shifts is considered a potential alternative to resolving the imbalance between work and life. The scheduling of the day off is a crucial and

extremely important matter for handling an emergency situation when it arises during business hours. (Pulhin,2020)

It appears that the organization's most common problem, which results from work-life conflict, is time management. The adoption of flexible working arrangements is in high demand. According to study respondents, there are explanations for why scheduling flexibility at work improves employees' quality of life at home. People who responded to the study said that having a flexible schedule helps them concentrate on their work and decreases stress. It raises their level of job satisfaction. Flexibility in the workplace, a healthy work-life balance, and job happiness are all positively correlated (Lucille, 2017).

Job sharing, the number of hours worked, and vacations are all determined to be crucial factors in achieving work-life balance. Many people experience stress, guilt, and use of absenteeism at the same time, and as a result, they experience guilt. These are all indications that they have a negative impact on both job productivity and work-life balance. Additionally, there is a management issue because many employees abuse their vacation and vaccination privileges to avoid conflicts between work and personal obligations. On the other hand, there are practical approaches of balancing work and life. It has been discovered that job sharing is one of the solutions. Because of job sharing, people can prioritize their work more effectively. Work-life balance is strongly correlated with the workload's stress level, preferences for job sharing, the percentage of absences, and excessive hours worked. Additionally, it has been discovered that as job-sharing working arrangements grow, so does productivity and job happiness (Abayneh, 2020).

Instead of referring to working hours, it is feasible to say that the job intensity is also a significant role in the linked work-life balance. Work intensity is also strongly linked to burning-out syndrome. Finally, there is a negative correlation between work-life balance and the burning-out syndrome. One study demonstrates that Korean neurosurgeons lead busy lives filled with work, regular work hours, but it is simple to extend the standard working time. It is also discovered that Korean neurosurgeons suffer from severe burning out syndrome and struggle to maintain a healthy work-life balance, particularly following the implementation of Special Acts on Korean Medical Residents. The issue of the deteriorating trend in patient satisfaction among Korean neurosurgeons is addressed in the conclusion. It's interesting that women neurosurgeons experience burning out syndrome more frequently than men do (Kim,



2021).

A work-life balance issue can be seen in many different ways, according to a multidimensional study. First, it is demonstrated that a flexible working structure makes it easier to give consent to complete the assignment at home. Flexible employment arrangements are also proved to have drawbacks. It is demonstrated that work from home is made possible by technology tools. However, modern technologies enable work to continue indefinitely, and it is mentioned that some responders must cope with never-ending business as a result of a hazy separation between their home and place of employment. (Berentzen & Christensen, 2019) There may be a problem with boundaries as a result of the hazy situation between work and home. It is claimed that removing distractions from home makes the working environment, when work is done in offices, more professional. It has also been demonstrated that the working from home approach exposes one to a fast-living lifestyle, which is unhealthy as well. Since technology advancements are still relatively new, some studies have found that excessive exposure to electronic equipment can have unanticipated outcomes that could be dangerous. Additionally, it is noted that if working from home allows for constant accessibility, it is possible to experience stress due to the constant messages from the office (Berentzen & Christensen, 2019).

Many employees believe that having a work-life balance policy enhances the quality of their work, particularly when it comes to the Board of Secondary Education. These employees also indicated in survey responses that they agree with the premise that maintaining a work-life balance is both an employee and an employer responsibility. Additionally, it is discovered that more than half (53%) of them have a favorable opinion of their full-time jobs and do not demand a flexible working schedule. Additionally, the study demonstrates that employees who select flexible working do so for a variety of reasons. The most common response demonstrates how it makes it possible to meet all needs, while others contend that flexibility reduces travel issues and large distances, allows for time for school and academic needs, childcare facilities, and the chance to pursue other interests of employees. Thus, it was determined that there is a link between work-life balance and employees' performance at work (VeenaLatha, 2019).

It has shown that the main drivers of a decline in working hours are the working conditions. Home offices, it has been found, have an impact on workers' inclination to work less hours. Additionally, it is demonstrated that there is a chance for the

employees' pleasure even when they work longer than the required number of hours in exchange for remuneration. Job satisfaction will rise if the workload is returned to the employee along with overtime compensation, holidays, or days off. The researcher also discovered that rewarding overtime work decreases employees' desire to work fewer hours (Holly and Mohnen, 2012).

Men's and women's lives may be impacted differently by work-life balance, according to several theories. Men struggle, for instance, with the imbalance between work and life caused by extended work hours, the uncertainty of shift employment, and training after regular office hours. Women primarily struggle with children, domestic duties, and meetings after work hours. Companies prefer to offer job-sharing, holidays, and counseling as solutions. Additionally, it has been discovered that women who work for companies without a work-life balance policy cannot get eight hours of sleep every day. Because of the need to combine work and life, males experience stress at a higher rate than women. Additionally, it has been discovered that the business world's competitive structure, the impact of globalization on day-to-day life, lofty aspirations for advancement and ambition, increased pressure on relationships, and individual expectations are some of the factors that contribute to work-life imbalance (Choudhary et al., 2014).

Some argue that because of the various perspectives, work-life conflict varies from culture to culture. According to one study measure, work-life balance perception for employees, some employees tend to have a low commitment to work and a high commitment to life instead of work. These employees have relatively higher work-life balance conflict than those who have high commitments to work and do not prioritize living a fulfilling life. The study found a connection between having kids and experiencing a work-life conflict. According to research, employees who have children or children under the age of 12 tend to struggle with work-life balance. Additionally, it has been observed that individuals with marital issues and emotionally unstable individuals deal with a greater imbalance between work and life. Additionally, those who place more blame on themselves are more likely to experience an unbalanced work-life balance (Haddon, 2010).

According to the study about Indian IT firms, these firms are evolving into a new type that emphasizes flexibility and mobility. It conveys a strong impression and a good salary and title. Long working hours are a drawback of those positive things, though it is discovered that they are resolved by the implementation of work-life

balance. When a new evolution takes place, it creates jobs without a specific time or location and blurs the lines between work and personal life. It is emphasized that this is a problem for bosses as well as employees under the organizational roof. When there is no work-life balance policy in place, it is still possible to find stressful employees. There is a relationship between work-life conflict and the stress of employees (Rashida Banu & Duraipandian, 2014).

According to studies, there is a strong correlation between work-life conflict and interference with personal life. Employees who experience problems, conflict, or dissatisfaction in their personal lives—regardless of whether they are married—also tend to experience problems at work. Additionally, a worker who has a happy family is more likely to think highly of their workplace and to be better at managing work and personal obligations (Elango & Raj, 2019).

The study based on a survey, dual careers, in which both spouses have careers, lead to issues with work-life balance, which affects not only employers but the entire society. The structure of the hotel industry has led to the discovery that shift work is a common practice among all participants. The majority of participants work day shifts, which are unhealthy and have a negative impact on work-life balance. In addition, it is stated that the hotel's erratic work schedule, lack of flexible scheduling, and the fact that the majority of respondents are parents make finding affordable child care services more challenging (Mohanty & Mohanty, 2014).

Study which is about some traditional families in rural Romania on the social role of the family within relationships have shown that, some still believe that the wife should play a traditional role and should care for children all by herself, implying that it is solely a woman's concern. The majority of participants, however, agreed that it should be a neo-traditional word and that it is the responsibility of both parties to provide for the needs of children and strike a balance between work and life. Because Romania creates a pay difficulty for part-time occupations, there is still work-life conflict there even though the majority of people think it is a dual responsibility. Households have numerous expenses, and the part-time employee's pay is insufficient to support the family. Consequently, a work-life balance policy is required, along with work arrangements. However, it is difficult to find employment arrangements like flexible hours and childcare assistance, which creates a problem of work-life conflict (Sănduleasa & Matei, 2016).

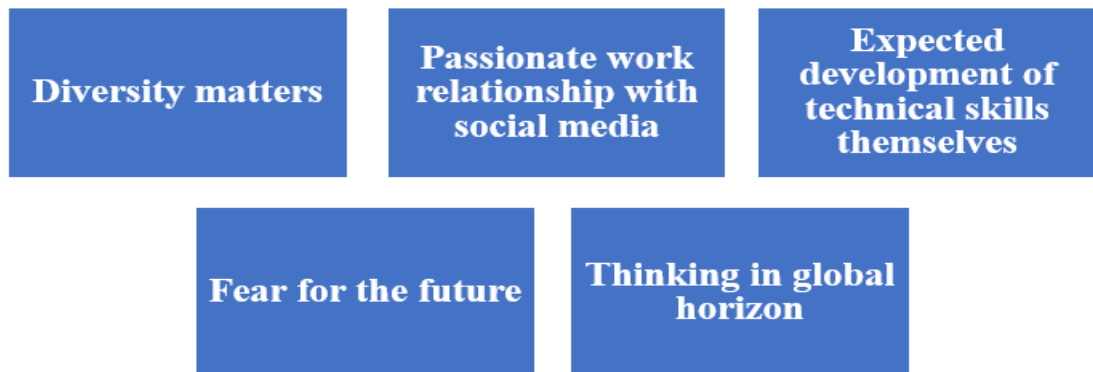
## **2.2 Z Generation in Workplace Issues on Work-life Balance**

According to the researcher who define Generation Z in the workplace, they set themselves out by their expertise in technology and diversity. Technology is a natural ability for Generation Z, and they effortlessly connect to social networks. According to the study, Generation Z tends to be more dependable, forgiving, and lacking in materialism because they do not emphasize money and do not view it as the be all and end all. While generation Y views the future more realistically and with greater optimism. It has been discovered that Generation Z is more impatient and has a quick intellect, yet they lack ambition and are so firmly fixed on their opinions that they are unable to expand their horizons. They have also brought attention to the issue of distractibility. According to research, Generation Z is more self-centered and egoist than previous generations. They also view their job as an opportunity, and not a place to work. The Generation Z is one generation that looks for benefits and possibilities. In the same study, a poll found that generation Z views executives as the leading individuals who are primarily in charge of tasks within the organization, and that they value flexibility in terms of working hours. Generation Z expects a working system that allows them to work in different shifts, and another fact reveals that they also look for good pay as compensation for their efforts. However, the most common expectation was respect for diversity in terms of both genders, ideas, and cultural notions. According to the survey, generation Z's self-confidence score was very high. (Ivanovska Lidiija et al., 2017)

According to the report, Generation X ignores the need for work-life balance. However, Generations Y and Z, particularly Generation Z, prioritize this. Because they want to work while they live, Generation Z views work-life balance as an integral component. People who belong to the Generation Z are those who were born between 1995 and 2004. This group is referred to as the digital generation. Generation Z is aware of several work-life balance techniques, most notably flexible work arrangements that allow for remote work or extended hours. Additionally, it is indicated that a part-time working schedule is a way to deal with difficult work deadlines and the conflict between work and personal obligations. It is widely accepted that workplace flexibility has a positive impact on the reputation of the business (Sánchez-Hernández et al.,2019).

Research shows that Generation Z is motivated by their traits; they build their

bosses, egalitarian ideals, and diversity matters as a principle, and they assume that if the source is online, it should be real. They are discovered to share the conviction that danger lurks everywhere and that the world is filled of tragedies and disasters. The generation Z believes that social media will have a direct impact on their future. On social media, Gen Z users are not afraid to share details about their personal lives. (Wuttaphan, 2018)



**Figure 2.1** Generation Z Characteristics

When Generation Z is investigated in literature, there is a lot of disagreement on whether to highlight the positive or negative aspects of this generation. It has been observed that as generations change, so do the expectations they have of their jobs and of their lives. The expectations of Generation Z for their bosses at work include being a mentor for staff, encouraging open communication among staff members, and serving as a role model and mentor. According to the research Generation Z prefers working in groups rather than alone, yet they are reluctant to heed guidance from previous generations. According to reports, certain Polish businesses provide adaptable internship programs to meet the unique needs of Generation Z. One such program is known as the company body, which offers internships specifically tailored to this generation. The goal of the business body internship is to develop a person who is familiar with the organization's structure, history, and culture. This individual also gets ready to serve as a young mentor to newcomers to the organization. (Cowlrick, 2020) Generation Z is recognized as a generation that practically works in a virtual world at work and lives with technology. Work-life balance is a top issue for Generation Z, and they expect an innovative workplace that accommodates their lifestyles and technological innovations. The majority of the business is discovered to

be particularly interested in the need for work-life balance among Generation Z. As a result, businesses begin to expand their selection of internal flexible working options and remote job opportunities. Businesses are making a lot of effort to adapt to the needs of generation Z (Bieleń et al., 2020).

Although some studies have suggested that Generation Z does not find discussions of money at work particularly interesting, other studies have suggested the opposite. For instance, a study indicated that 76% of generation Z's interests are related to money, with job stability ranking last in terms of interest. Additionally, it is concluded that Generation Z is the group among X, Y, and Z that is most interested in flexible working. Generation Z, on the other hand, looks for employment possibilities that promote work-life balance. (Karácsony, 2019) Another study confirms what surveys have shown: Generation Z, the new university graduates, recognizes the value of leading a life that prioritizes work-life balance. More than 80% of recent graduates who have started jobs contend that work-life balance is a sign of how their professions will develop in the future. Generation Z, whose career is the first three years, dominates this study. The survey reveals that there is a high sensitivity to work-life balance. Additionally, some of the university's recent graduates responded by saying that, if a work-life balance issue arises at their place of employment, they may consider leaving. It has been discovered that Generation Z, which includes recent graduates, embraces the idea of working to live rather than living for work. It has also been observed that Generation Z is able to explore shifting employment with ease if there is a work-life imbalance. Additionally, compared to the more seasoned generation Z, recent graduates are reported to be more tolerant of work-life imbalance (Sturges & Guest, 2004).

The concept of work-life balance for Generation Z consists of the notion that by segmenting the days and weeks, interconnected and life-friendly work life is to enable work to be not a problem and there is time for socializing among colleagues or for a new hobby, or it can be about free time even for extra sleep or tv series. It has to do with the remote working style, which gives room for a career that will be satisfying on all levels. Having a life that has a dimension of other things from the professional working life is more significant than whether you work from home or in an office. Additionally, Generation Z has a strong connection to mobility. In the business sector, mobility is all about investing time and effort to create a less stressful atmosphere and reducing the distance issue by connecting from everywhere. The concept that leaders

need to understand work-life balance and that putting in long hours is not necessary for success is also shared by Generation Z. From the perspective of generation Z, managers must first comprehend that the real objectives for the business should be to ensure a work-life balance policy within the organization. According to this policy, employees are given the freedom to manage their own time effectively. As a conclusion, by combining work and personal life, a healthy work-life balance can be achieved (Soni & Sharma, 2014).

Some studies argue that Generation Z is characterized by a confident and independent mindset, making it undeniable that they prefer flexible working arrangements. However, it is important to note that flexible working doesn't solely mean remote work. Research suggests that Generation Z is open to both remote work and office-based work. They generally have a strong aptitude for handling technological devices, making office work feasible for them. Work-life balance is a top priority for Generation Z, as it directly impacts their work efficiency (Chillakuri & Mahanandia, 2018). Moreover, studies indicate that Generation Z is conscious of economic issues and values stability in their financial lives, much like Generation Y. Additionally, intrinsic motivation is a common trait among Generation Z (Mahmoud et al., 2021). Intrinsic motivation refers to the drive and engagement that arises from personal goals and the perceived connection between an activity and its purpose. It also involves the emotional aspect of engaging in that activity (Fishbach & Woolley, 2022).

Buddeberg-Fischer et al., (2008) focused on the expectations, motivations, and work-life balance of young Swiss family physicians at their study. The research reveals that young medical graduates aspiring to become family physicians demonstrate a relatively low level of intrinsic motivation, which relates to the enjoyment and interest in their chosen career path. Conversely, when it comes to career satisfaction, extrinsic motivation, such as financial incentives, job advancement, and status, is also found to be low. From the perspective of work-life balance, these young physicians prioritize policies that promote a balance between family and work commitments, including appropriate working hours, job security, and leisure time, aligning with their expectations. Regarding future family plans, the study highlights a preference among young female family physicians for a part-time working model for both parents. Only a small number of individuals express a hypothetical desire for a full-time working father and a part-time working mother, suggesting that this arrangement is less favored

in terms of family planning and work-life balance. Specifically, the young generation of female physicians highly value three work-life balance policies: family leaves, resuming work after a career break, and transitioning back to full-time work after a period of reduced hours. Male family physicians, on the other hand, desire a balanced work life that integrates well with their personal lives, although the specifics of this combination are not explicitly specified. The results indicate that the young generation of family physicians within Generation Z tends to prioritize their career to a lesser extent. However, this directly impacts their career expectations and ideas about work-life balance.

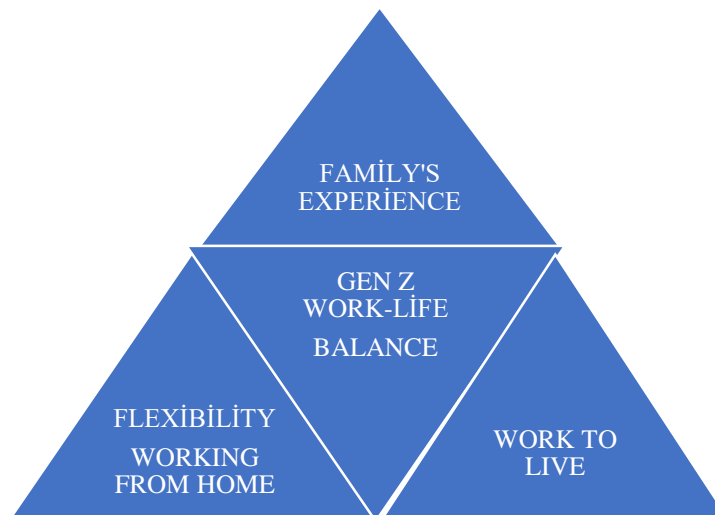
From the perspective of Generation Z's workplace motivation, several factors come into play. The primary motivating factors identified are work pleasure, colleagues, compensation, reward system, success, and career improvement. Additionally, work-life balance holds significant importance in motivating Generation Z employees. Work pleasure refers to deriving enjoyment and satisfaction from the job itself, including finding pleasure in the work's purpose and experiencing positive emotions throughout the work activities. Colleagues play a crucial role in Generation Z's motivation, as Slovakian research indicates that positive relationships and collectivism among colleagues contribute to higher work quality. Getting along well with colleagues positively impacts Generation Z's motivation. The third motivating factor is the presence of rewards or compensation, which makes individuals feel valued and emotionally fulfilled. It is crucial for the younger generation to receive reasonable monetary compensation or performance-based rewards as part of their expectations. Success serves as another motivating factor, as Generation Z's motivation tends to increase when they effectively manage tasks and achieve desired outcomes. However, compared to work pleasure, colleagues, compensation, and success, career improvement holds less significance for Generation Z's motivation (Kirchmayer & Fratričová, 2018). In terms of work-life balance, research highlights the relationship between work motivation factors and work-life balance. Factors such as work-person fit and colleague fit, which pertain to the work atmosphere and environment, influence Generation Z's enthusiasm. The research reveals that Generation Z is inclined to leave a job if their expectations are not met, particularly when it comes to prolonged tenure within the same organization. However, the study also notes that work-life balance is not currently regarded as important among Generation Z employees. This finding can be attributed to the fact that some individuals within Generation Z have limited



exposure to the business world. As full-time Generation Z employees increase, the researchers anticipate that work-life balance and motivation alignment will become more apparent (Kirchmayer & Fratričová, 2018).

Research indicates that the attitudes of the young generation, such as Generation Z, towards work-life balance are influenced by their family's experiences in the workplace. For example, some studies reveal that the young generation is influenced by observing their parents, who are often exhausted due to their work commitments. As a result, Generation Z tends to prioritize living to work rather than working to live. They have developed a sensitivity towards work-life balance and are less willing to sacrifice their personal lives for work. There is a negative correlation between working hours and the academic performance of the young generation. In terms of employment, Generation Z prefers engaging in part-time work to manage both their school life and work-life effectively. Moreover, research indicates that the younger generation expresses lower job satisfaction compared to previous generations (Generation Y and Generation X). Their motivation is influenced by stress, leading them to focus more on the work environment and conditions. The new generation brings about changes in work-life dynamics, leading to an increase in alternative working arrangements such as contract work, flexible work, part-time positions, and temporary roles. Interestingly, research suggests that the young generation, even when not working full-time, experiences similar levels of enjoyment compared to full-time employees. Additionally, Generation Z shows a greater interest in achieving work-life balance rather than pursuing promotions. From a gender perspective, women exhibit less tolerance for prioritizing work over family and personal life, while men tend to have less tolerance for prioritizing work over family and personal life (Loughlin & Barling, 2001).

Generation Z in the workplace places a significant emphasis on mental health and work-life balance policies. The findings of a Likert-scale survey reveal that Generation Z values independence and autonomy in task completion. Moreover, they prioritize a flexible schedule, vacation time, and the option to work remotely. Maternity and paternity leaves, compensation in the form of bonuses, and travel opportunities are also considered essential by Generation Z employees (Harris, 2020).



**Figure 2.2** Factor of Generation Z's Idea of Work-Life Balance

According to a study (Waworuntu et al., 2022), work-life balance and job satisfaction have a direct impact on job performance. Generation Z has specific expectations in the workplace, with flexibility being their primary demand. They prioritize work-life balance policies as a means to reduce company leaves and seek the ability to work remotely from home. Vacation leave is also seen as crucial in achieving a balance between work and personal life. Generation Z values employers who foster a job-friendly environment and offer good working conditions. Their career choices are influenced by personal preferences, making balance an important factor. The research highlights that well-structured work tasks play a role in employees' emotions within the company. Work-life balance in Generation Z has two dimensions: the association between work enhancement and individual life, and the association between individual life and work enhancement. When employees effectively manage their work, it positively impacts their personal life, and vice versa. A good life balance leads to higher job satisfaction, as supported by research. Work-life balance serves as a bridge between emotional intelligence and satisfaction in the workplace, with implications for increasing pleasure at work. Companies that prioritize work-life balance strategies improve communication between employers and employees. Flexibility, such as flexible working arrangements, enables employees to easily meet deadlines, attend meetings, and receive training notifications. Remote work minimizes distance-related issues and offers advantages in terms of energy, time, and cost savings. Generation Z expresses satisfaction with remote work as it reduces time

wastage. Shift working is another popular arrangement among Generation Z, allowing students to continue their studies once their shift is completed and creating a more balanced and regular system. Lastly, leave programs have shown to be effective in reducing leave rates within companies when properly implemented as part of a work-family balance strategy.

Research indicates that Generation Z has become experts in work-life balance due to their departure from traditional working norms, such as fixed 9-to-5 hours. They are willing to accept lower salaries if it means having flexible working arrangements. Generation Z also prefers short-term work opportunities rather than committing to long-term positions under the same employer. In the era of work-life balance, Generation Z seeks work that fits their lifestyle, prioritizing enjoyment and integration of work into their lives. They are more assertive in advocating for their work-life balance rights compared to older generations. However, Generation Z faces increased stress due to the digitalization and constant changes in the business world. Regarding remote work, 45% of surveyed Generation Z participants hold positive opinions about it and prefer a hybrid model that includes office visits 4-5 times per month, rather than fully remote work. Flexible work arrangements are highly valued by Generation Z. The survey also reveals that 60% of respondents are comfortable working on weekends if flexible working conditions allow it. Paid parental leave is considered necessary by Generation Z, as indicated by their responses to the survey. In terms of education on work-life balance, Generation Z expresses great interest in learning about this topic. Real-life simulations and case studies on work-life balance are popular tools for education, along with sessions involving employees from different companies (Anastasiia, 2021).

Based on survey research, it has been observed that when work environments lack a work-life balance policy, both Generation Y and Generation Z are more prone to experiencing burnout syndrome. Generation Z, in particular, is unwilling to compromise their health for the sake of work. They show a strong preference for companies that have implemented work-life policies, and they believe that remote work enhances productivity and fosters loyalty.

Generation Z places great importance on the execution style of work, as it significantly impacts their perception of work in a positive manner. Similar to Generation Y, Generation Z values freedom, flexible work arrangements, and opportunities for career development. Some companies have recognized this and offer

incentives such as scholarships for young employees who demonstrate outstanding performance or provide financial rewards and training. These initiatives exemplify efforts to establish work-life balance and design jobs that cater to the needs of Generation Z. In the research, Google is highlighted as an organization that embraces flexibility in terms of working hours and online work. Given that the younger generation is heavily influenced by technology, it is imperative to maximize the integration of technology in the workplace. The empirical findings of the study indicate that the most desired job design elements among Generation Z include flexibility, the option for partially or fully remote work, and flexible working schedules. Research also reveals that Generation Z considers work-life balance policies to be of paramount importance, often posing questions about these policies during job interviews (Zupan et al., 2022). Generation Z is found that it is a generation that has its own work rules and expectations. There is a study that takes place in four countries: Switzerland, Netherlands, Germany, and Austria. It is about detecting the main values of Generation Z in those countries and finding that the combination between work and family is a crucial issue for this generation. The main goal is having autonomy for Generation Z. A job should be an activity with self-fulfillment. Also, Generation Z looks for reasonable bosses and there must be career advancements such as promotions and titles. Research in China and Slovenia contributed to information Generation Z which was composed of business students. It is found that Slovenian students found important things like salary, improvement, subject of the work, and level of freedom. Also, the same study argues about work-life balance issues within Generation Z and they found that women members of Generation Z have more sensitivity than the men respondents about work-life balance. Women of generation Z demand time for family and a hobby they explained the need for a work-life balance policy. The survey result found women with children do not accept promotions and high salaries by sacrificing work-life balance. However, men are shown most of them would have to accept the work-life conflict if a higher salary and upgrading the position are possible. Besides women with children, generation Z single women are shown to prioritize work-life balance rules within the company more than men. (Marinšek et al., 2022).

### **2.3 Work-Life Balance in Turkey**

In the literature, there are many significant studies on work-life balance in Turkey. As Turgut (2011) states, work engagement is about experiencing satisfactory emotions and positivity related to work. Work engagement is an element that can affect work-life balance both positively and negatively. From a negative perspective, work engagement acts as a stressor in work-life balance, increasing employees' stress levels and contributing to work-life balance problems. However, work engagement can also have a positive impact when employees receive support from employers, have control over their tasks, and benefit from flexible working arrangements. A survey conducted in the study confirms the hypothesis that employer support decreases work-life conflict and that an increase in work-life balance leads to increased work engagement. Moreover, the study reveals that work-life imbalances occur when employees face excessive workloads, and a flexible working system can enhance work-life balance within companies.

According to Özkan (2019), there is a difference between women who have maids in their houses and those who do not. It is found that women who receive help from maids experience more work-life balance problems. Maids do not contribute to reducing work-life conflict within the family. In a study on work-life balance among hospital employees by Koruca and Boşgelmez (2018), many participants expressed dissatisfaction with their working hours and the imbalance between work and private life. Employees also shared a consensus regarding executives' neglect in resolving work-life conflicts. The study revealed that employees favored flexible working systems and shift work, highlighting the demands for such arrangements. Additionally, work-life balance policies were found to enhance motivation in both work and personal life domains.

Acun's study (2016) demonstrates that employees' stress levels increase work-life imbalances, which, in turn, lead to intentions to leave their jobs. When employees feel helpless in their current organization, they tend to seek new work environments that prioritize work-life balance or offer reduced workloads. The study specifically focuses on tourist guides, revealing that their reasons for leaving their jobs are often related to irregular and long working hours, as well as seasonal heavy workloads. The findings indicate a strong association between leaving a job and work-life imbalances among tour guides.

A study examining flexible working arrangements in public offices suggests that the availability of flexible working hours positively influences employees' work efficiency. Biological rhythms vary among individuals, prompting the need for schedule adjustments. While only a few public offices currently implement flexible working arrangements, the study finds that it improves the quality of work-life balance (Taner & Negiz, 2018).

According to Gümüş and Türkyılmaz (2017), Southern European countries, including Spain, Greece, Italy, and Turkey, have implemented similar work-life balance policies. Maternity leave, parental leave, and paternity leave are among the policies compared. In Italy and Greece, parental leave is granted to both men and women, while in Turkey and Spain, it is a one-sided right.

Regarding flexible work arrangements, Southern European countries, including Italy, Greece, and Spain, have analyzed such systems to address the challenges of balancing parental and work responsibilities, particularly for women. However, it is found that these arrangements can have negative outcomes in terms of financial aspects and future career plans. Based on 2017 data, Turkey allocates less public expenditure to work-life balance policies compared to the other four Southern European countries.

There is a study in the category of work-life balance in Turkey that examines sports clubs and their athletes' work-life balance, specifically focusing on the Turkish football league and Beko Women's Basketball League. The study concludes that when work-life conflict increases for athletes, life satisfaction tends to decrease. It is also found that work-life imbalance affects athletes' performance during sports activities. Additionally, the study suggests that athletes with higher incomes tend to have less work-life conflict. It is explained that if athletes contribute significantly to their households, there is a possibility that their families can be more supportive (Tabuk, 2018).

Another study examines the work-life balance situation of people working in the cinema sector, specifically cinema technical staff, focusing on working hours and their relationship with private life and stress issues. 10.9% of participants believe that the cinema sector does not allow for a personal life, while 27% believe that this sector does not provide work-life balance opportunities. However, half of them (50%) confirm that it is possible to have personal time. Other factors such as satisfaction, working conditions, and stress are measured within the work-life balance measure, showing positive results. The study concludes that work-life balance conflict is not a

general problem within the cinema sector (Özdemir & Ayma, 2019).

A study demonstrates that there is a positive association between spousal support, colleague support, and support from friends and family in coping with work-life conflict. These factors help manage time, demands, and support to decrease pressure, which are elements of good work-life balance. Additionally, resilience contributes to achieving a strong work-life balance, particularly in the service sector. When social support from relatives or friends' families decreases, the level of resilience in dealing with work-life conflict also decreases. The study suggests that this is connected to individuals' well-being in the workplace and their strategies for handling work-life and other life issues (Köse et al., 2021).

A flexible working system is considered one of the methods of a work-life balance supportive structure. It is claimed that employee performance is related to job availability for implementing flexible work hours. Flexible working hours have been shown to increase job performance and loyalty, as well as motivation. It has been found that employees who work flexibly tend to be more satisfied and have a positive overall opinion of their job. The study indicates that a flexible working system enables employees to be motivated while working, leading to high organizational commitment (Altındag & Siller, 2014).

According to the study, there is an association between emotional burnout syndrome, job stress, and work-life conflict. When an individual experiences burnout syndrome in their job, it is potential for stress, pressure, and challenges related to work-life balance (Gürel, 2016). Some studies also argue that if the energy consumed by a person increases to fulfill the role, and this occurs between work and personal life, inevitable conflict arises. The size of the organization, the level of freedom given to employees, choices of working style, and family expectations, including child expectations, also play a role in achieving work-life balance. It has been shown that as employees gain more experience over the years, work-life balance conflict tends to increase. Furthermore, when employees experience work-life conflict on a time basis, it is related to their life satisfaction (Güripek & Ediz, 2022).

The Turkish study that examines work-life balance in Japan provides valuable insights. Söylemez and Alpar (2022) highlight that Japan, being a traditional country, faces significant role conflict for women in balancing work and private life. However, it is not just women who experience work-life balance conflicts, as men also encounter these challenges. Despite Japan's advanced industrial status and high labor force

participation, there is a societal perception of men as the family's main provider, while women are expected to support the male figure by taking care of childcare and household duties. This traditional household structure greatly disrupts work-life balance in Japan. Moreover, there is a significant income disparity within households, with women earning 22.5% less than men. This income inequality is attributed to the job structure that most Japanese women have, characterized by irregular employment. In Japan, there is a practice called "enman taisha," which refers to the mutual agreement between employees and companies for an employee to leave when they decide to get engaged or married. Employers actively encourage this practice. Irregular employment is more prevalent among women, resulting in long working hours, overtime, and job demands. However, some irregular jobs offer options such as part-time and contract employment, which enable women to achieve a better work-life balance. The study identifies three main reasons why women choose these options: freedom to schedule available hours, the desire to balance household and childcare responsibilities, and shorter working hours that provide more availability during weekdays. However, the work-life imbalance in Japan has led to a decreasing trend in marriage rates and a decline in the desire to have children, ultimately contributing to a shrinking family size.

### **2.3.1 Generational Studies on Work-Life Balance in Turkey**

In the realm of work-life balance studies in Turkey, several noteworthy studies have focused on generational differences. For instance, Doğan and Şahin (2022) highlight that Generation Z is more influenced by expectations of benefits and rewards in relation to work-life balance compared to Generation Y. As the business environment becomes more demanding and expectations for benefits and rewards increase among Generation Y and Z, work-life balance becomes even more important, particularly for Generation Z. Career management plays a crucial role in meeting the training and development needs of individuals and organizations. It helps employees take responsibility for their labor efficiency and make appropriate choices in the workplace. The findings of these studies indicate that work-life balance contributes to employees' well-being in terms of physical, mental, social, and economic aspects. It enhances the quality and efficiency of work, leading to increased organizational commitment, better communication, and higher motivation. The results also



demonstrate that career management has a positive impact on work-life balance in Generation Z. When employees actively design their careers and work-life balance, they can create healthier and more harmonious arrangements. Moreover, the presence of organizations that support work-life balance policies plays a significant role in mitigating the negative consequences of careers and preventing work-life conflicts.

Work arrangement preferences play a significant role in work-life balance. A study examining the attitudes of Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z towards work-life balance, as mentioned by Bayramov (2019), reveals interesting insights. Generation X tends to adopt a traditional working style characterized by a "live to work" mentality. On the other hand, Generation Y shows a contrasting approach, with 63% of them being open to flexible work arrangements. Generation X displays a higher tolerance for work-life imbalance compared to other generations. Only 35% of Generation X members claim that they cannot work in an environment that impacts their work-life and personal life conflict, whereas Generation Y shows lower tolerance for this issue. Generation Y, in particular, values flexible working hours and does not prioritize hierarchical order as much as Generation X, as they did not grow up in a culture that emphasized hierarchy and position as strongly. Generation Z, the youngest generation in the workforce, holds a general criticism of fixed working hours from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. They view flexible working hours as essential for managing their personal time according to their own preferences. Generation Y follows the motto "work to live" and prioritizes leisure time over unnecessary extra work and long hours. As for Generation Z, being the children of Generation X, they express dissatisfaction with easily obtaining everything they want. They desire less hierarchy and bureaucracy and show a strong inclination towards new working models, particularly flexible work arrangements. Generation Z seeks competitive job opportunities and is open to entrepreneurship. However, it is worth noting that some Turkish members of Generation Z differ from their global counterparts in their emphasis on financial security, a stable income, and the pursuit of public service careers due to the job security it provides.

According to Tarı-Kasnakoğlu et al. (2020), the Turkish education system poses a challenge for Generation Z. The authors suggest that Generation Z's life revolves around three main dynamics: family as a home space, school as an educational space, and work. When it comes to work-life balance, a survey was conducted to gauge Generation Z's perception of their ability to manage it. The results showed that

Generation Z rated themselves at 3.97 out of 5 in terms of their proficiency in work-life balance. The survey also explored the marrying age among Generation Z and found that the average age was 26.5 for girls and 30.2 for boys. Furthermore, Generation Z expressed the highest concerns about work-life balance and finding employment during job interviews.

According to Aksu (2022), Generation Z is characterized as being more focused on their careers compared to other generations. They are pragmatic and goal-oriented, striving for career advancement. However, if they are unable to achieve their goals within a certain timeframe, Generation Z is more likely to leave their job due to impatience. They have high expectations for promotion and may become dissatisfied if those expectations are not met within six months. In terms of work-life balance, both genders in Generation Z attach equal importance to this issue. However, women in Generation Z are particularly committed to maintaining a work-life balance and are unwilling to compromise on their personal lives. Women's heightened emphasis on work-life balance may stem from their diverse roles in both the home and office environments.

### **2.3.2 Patriarchy and Cultural Background on Work-life Balance in Turkey**

Patriarchy is a social structure that perpetuates the belief in male superiority and contributes to the categorization of certain jobs as either "men's work" or "women's work." In patriarchal societies, this structure is used as a means of controlling women and empowering men, not only in the business world but also within societal frameworks. As a result, women often find themselves dependent on men in various aspects, such as economics and societal gender roles, leading to the suppression of women. Despite the increasing presence of women in the Turkish labor force, largely due to improvements in women's education, patriarchal norms and gender roles in society create significant work-life balance conflicts for women. Women are expected to fulfill their gender roles as mothers and caretakers first, with their work lives taking a secondary position. During job interviews, women often need to consider the implications for their home and children, which can be a significant limiting factor. However, when women perceive that a job offers the possibility of work-life balance, their desire to work for that organization increases. Additionally, women face another challenge due to patriarchal norms. Some organizations perceive women as having

more responsibilities than men, leading them to assign less workload to women. This can create barriers for women's career advancement, particularly in reaching executive positions. Achieving work-life balance for women is crucial for their satisfaction and overall productivity. It is recommended that governments and employers implement regulations and policies to address work-life conflicts and support women's success in the workplace (Bakıcı & Aydın, 2020).

Social gender refers to the societal construction of gender roles, expectations, and characteristics associated with men and women. These roles and expectations are determined by cultural norms and vary across different societies and time periods. They encompass the specific behaviors and meanings attributed to individuals based on their gender within a given cultural context. Gender roles are learned and acquired through socialization processes, influenced by family, culture, and the broader social environment. One notable aspect of gender roles is that women often face more work-family conflict compared to men. This conflict arises from the challenge of balancing work responsibilities with family and caregiving roles. Women may experience negative emotions, such as guilt, as a result of these conflicting demands. Empirical evidence supports the association between maternal employment, work-family conflict, and maternal employment delinquency, highlighting the influence of gender roles on these outcomes (Bayar et al., 2022).

In Turkey, a significant gap in work-life policy is the absence of sufficient parental leave, which places the burden of childcare solely on mothers. This lack of support from the state, particularly in low- and middle-income families, creates a dilemma for women who struggle to balance work and family responsibilities. The societal expectations further reinforce the notion that women should be prepared to handle all situations at home, including serious work-life conflicts. Consequently, women are expected to demonstrate exceptional performance and bear the responsibility of managing work-life balance on their own. This perpetuates the belief that women must sacrifice everything to address work-life conflicts. Efforts to provide adequate childcare assistance and financial support would help alleviate this burden and create a more equitable work-life balance for women in Turkey (Karaman, 2014).

Conservative perspectives often view women through the lens of motherhood and traditional family values, which reinforces the association between loyalty to the status quo and family responsibilities. This perception of women as synonymous with the private sphere has a significant impact on their work-life balance in the cultural

context. The burden of household chores, child and elderly care, and other support roles are often disregarded, further entrenching gender-based patriarchal divisions of labor within families. To address these challenges, work-life balance policies should include measures such as flexible working hours and part-time employment options. Such arrangements can help mitigate work-life conflicts arising from patriarchal norms and cultural issues. Transforming organizations rooted in sexist divisions of labor is crucial in achieving work-life balance. By challenging traditionalist views and patriarchal regulations, workplaces can play a vital role in promoting work-life balance for women (Gün, 2016).

The study that analyzes gender inequality in society and its impact on work-life balance through interviews highlights that individuals are often juggling two social roles: the roles assigned by society and the roles associated with their work life. This dual burden of societal expectations and work responsibilities leads to work-life conflicts, particularly for women. The gender inequality and social structural roles imposed by society contribute to these challenges, making it difficult for women to find a balance between their personal and professional lives. The study emphasizes the importance of addressing gender inequality and societal norms in order to alleviate work-life conflicts faced by women (Güzelel, 2020).

The study on work-life balance among academics in Turkey sheds light on the challenges faced by women academics due to traditional gender roles and societal expectations. Women academics not only have to navigate the demands of their professional careers but also carry the burden of traditional duties as mothers and caregivers. The study highlights that the academic profession, although offering flexible working hours, is characterized by a hierarchical career structure and the expectation of continuous learning and perfectionism. The findings suggest that women academics experience a higher level of work-life conflict as they strive to meet the expectations of being both a successful academic and a perfect mother. The study distinguishes between work-life balance, where work responsibilities outweigh personal life, and life-work balance, where personal life takes precedence. It concludes that for academics, particularly women, the greater weight is placed on work-life balance, indicating that work-related responsibilities and long working hours contribute to the conflict. The study attributes the work-life conflict experienced by academics to cultural expectations and traditions prevalent in Turkish society. Academics are expected to excel in their never-ending job and work in the education

sector, which leads to the societal expectation of ensuring flawless education for their own children. This places additional pressure and creates more conflict for academics in balancing their work and personal lives. Overall, the study highlights the complex interplay between societal expectations, gender roles, and professional demands, which contribute to work-life conflict among women academics in Turkey (Tolay & Baysal, 2020).

The argument presented emphasizes the transformation of gender roles in the context of societal changes. In traditional agricultural societies, women were primarily responsible for household and caregiving tasks, including childcare. However, with modernization, women increasingly participate in the workforce while still carrying their traditional responsibilities. This dual burden of work and household duties has led women to become more aware of work-life balance issues and seek recognition of their rights in the workplace. In Turkish traditional families, women are often expected to fulfill the role of a housewife at home while simultaneously playing the role of a businesswoman in the office. The integration of work and family, which are two vital areas of life, creates a complex dynamic where positive and negative experiences in one domain can impact the other. This often leads to conflicts and dilemmas for women, who must navigate the responsibilities and expectations associated with their multiple roles. The situation becomes even more challenging for married women, particularly when they have children. They are expected to balance the roles of wife, businesswoman, and mother, further exacerbating work-life conflicts. These complexities stem from tradition and patriarchy within Turkish society, which impose the notion of women being the perfect mother and wife. The cultural and traditional perspective tends to view men as the leaders of the family and the primary earners, relieving them of additional domestic responsibilities. This societal outlook creates barriers for men to experience work-life conflicts. Consequently, women are disproportionately affected by work-life conflicts due to cultural and traditional expectations. Overall, the argument highlights the challenges faced by women in reconciling their multiple roles and responsibilities, and how traditional gender roles and cultural expectations contribute to work-life conflicts in Turkish society (Candogan, 2019).

## **2.4 Work-life Balance Theories**

The concept of border theory focuses on understanding how individuals navigate between different borders or boundaries, which can be based on factors such as time, emotion, and physical spaces. This theory specifically relates to the separation between work and life balance. The ease of transitioning from one border to another is influenced by the level of synthesis achieved in managing work and life balance. Flexibility is an important factor that determines the possibility of transitioning between different domains. Boundary theory, while similar to border theory, encompasses a broader range of social categories beyond just work and home. It recognizes that individuals can cross these boundaries by assuming different roles in different settings, such as playing specific roles at work and attending to different roles at home. The theory acknowledges that individuals occupy multiple distinct roles and have the ability to navigate between them. Segmentation theory, on the other hand, posits that the work domain and personal life domain are independent of each other and do not significantly influence one another. According to this theory, these two domains can be treated as separate entities. However, there are criticisms of the segmentation theory, suggesting that work and personal life are more interconnected than this theory suggests. Overall, these theories provide different perspectives on the relationship between work and life balance, highlighting the importance of understanding the borders, boundaries, and intersections between these domains.

### **2.4.1 Border Theory**

According to the border theory, work and home are distinct and separate areas. It is individuals who establish the relationship between these two domains. People perceive the transience of borders between work and private life, and they are aware of this interaction. Individuals interact across the border between these two areas, such as the spheres of work and personal life. Just as work and home affect people, individuals are also influenced by their work and home life.

### **2.4.2 Segmentation Theory**

The segmentation theory posits that there is no connection between work life and private life. For example, if an individual experiences happiness or success in one

domain, it does not necessarily affect their emotions or sense of accomplishment in the other domain. This theory assumes a division between individuals' lives at work and outside of work, based on the belief that they can keep them separate. According to this theory, family life is characterized by emotions, intimacy, and significant relational bonds, while the work environment is seen as impersonal, competitive, and instrumental. While the focal point of the work environment is accepted as an impersonal, competitive, and instrumental, individuals strive to maintain a balance between work and family life by suppressing and controlling the influence of one domain on the other, aiming to prevent the reflection of work-related feelings, thoughts, and behaviors in the family setting (Serbes, 2019).

### **2.4.3 Identity Theory**

An individual's identity refers to who they are, and if their attachment to their family identity is stronger than their attachment to their work identity, it results in a family-dominant identity. Conversely, if their work identity takes precedence, it is usually centered around work-related aspects. This relationship is influenced by the amount of time invested in each domain. If individuals invest a significant amount of time in their work, their life becomes work-oriented and their work identity becomes dominant. In identity theory, there are two groups: one group views family and work identities as having equal importance, while the other group believes they are not equal. The group that sees family and work identities as equal experiences more work-life balance conflict compared to the other group (Shah, 2014).

### **2.4.4 Work-Life Conflict Theory**

Employees primarily dedicate a significant portion of their time to one aspect of their lives, often characterized by a competitive work environment. This competition within the work sphere can lead to conflicts and challenges in achieving a balance between different spheres of life. Individuals play multiple roles in various areas of their lives, influenced by their statuses and the corresponding roles associated with them. When employees have numerous responsibilities in both their work and personal lives, it can result in work-life imbalance and complexity. This conflict between roles is known as role theory, which is a conflict theory that examines the clash between different roles an individual assumes. According to this theory, conflicts arise when

individuals face conflicting demands and expectations from their various roles. For instance, individuals may have roles related to their family (e.g., mother, father) and work (e.g., teacher, manager, doctor), and if these roles overlap, conflicts can arise if the requirements of each role cannot be fulfilled simultaneously (Serbes, 2016).

#### **2.4.5 Instrumental Theory**

When individuals make a conscious decision to prioritize and find satisfaction in their private life, it gradually becomes more important and takes center stage in their daily lives. Similarly, when individuals choose to concentrate on their work life, it becomes a determining factor for both their professional and personal lives. For example, a strong commitment to one's work role can serve as a means to achieve personal goals in their private life. For instance, an individual who works long hours to earn more money and meet their family's needs can be seen as an instrumental worker, using work as a tool to fulfill their personal requirements. In such cases, work becomes a means to fulfill personal needs (Serbest, 2016).

#### **2.4.6 Ecosystem Theory**

The ecosystem theory analyzes work-life balance from an institutional perspective, considering personal development as an ongoing process shaped by interactions within a population. This theory comprises four hierarchical systems: the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem.

The microsystem is the system most closely connected to the individual, focusing on the person themselves. It suggests that individual roles, activities, and interpersonal relationships are determined by the person and have an impact on others as well. Within the microsystem, the work and family domains are considered microsystems that exist within the home and workplace.

The mesosystem involves the combination of two or more microsystems, representing the interaction between the home and work domains. Many work-life balance studies focus on the mesosystem because it allows for an exploration of how work and family interact and influence each other.

The exosystem is formed by the combination of two or more microsystems, but it differs from the mesosystem in that it is not directly related to the individual. Studies that focus on the exosystem often examine married couples or families, exploring how



one spouse's work impacts the home life or how parents' work experiences affect their children.

Lastly, the macrosystem encompasses a combination of microsystems, mesosystem, and ecosystems. Work-life balance studies that include socio-demographic variables are examples of macrosystems, as they consider broader societal influences on individuals' work and family experiences.

Overall, the ecosystem theory provides a framework for understanding work-life balance by considering the various systems and interactions that shape individuals' experiences in both the work and family domains (Ay, 2010).

## **2.5 Perception of Work-life Balance**

Different perspectives exist regarding the concept of work-life balance. One study focusing on workload and work-life conflict found that participants perceived work-life conflict as a problem rather than a solution, while the term "work-life balance" was associated with more positive perceptions. The weight of workload was not considered significant, as participants tended to view it as a responsibility or obligation that should not be complained about. The study explained these results by suggesting that participants might have been influenced by the study's title and topic, leading them to emphasize their ability to manage work-life balance effectively (Ay, 2010).

Another study examining work-life balance in the banking sector revealed that work-life balance was considered crucial in meeting employee needs, particularly in terms of work arrangements. The majority of participants believed it to be a shared responsibility between employers and employees, while only a few considered work-life balance solely within the control of employers. (Kumari, 2012)

Although there are examples of individuals who are aware of work-life balance, there are also studies indicating that some employees lack sufficient information and awareness about this concept. For instance, according to a study by Sánchez-Vidal et al. (2012), employees expressed difficulty in perceiving and understanding work-life balance and related policies. However, executives in the company demonstrated not only perceptions but also initiatives to promote work-life balance. Overall, these studies highlight the varied perspectives on work-life balance, with some emphasizing its importance and successful management, while others reveal a lack of awareness

and understanding among certain employees.

Work-life balance perceptions encompass more than just the definition of the term. It involves factors such as support, division of labor at home, and the resolution of work-life conflicts. According to Özel (2019), interviews conducted with female teachers revealed various elements associated with work-life balance in the school context. These elements include having a planned lifestyle, adequate support from school administrators, keeping work responsibilities confined to the office, organizational climate, and job satisfaction. Some interviewees mentioned that work-life balance depends on maintaining a well-organized lifestyle. According to their perception, it involves how individuals organize and plan their lives to balance work and personal responsibilities. For example, teachers who are also mothers may create a schedule to allocate time for work, child care, and caring for elderly family members. They view work-life balance as the ability to program life in a way that allows time for both work and personal obligations, considering it a natural duty. Organizational climate is another factor mentioned by the interviewees. They believe that supportive colleagues and positive organizational attitudes contribute to work-life balance. They give examples of disciplined executives and colleagues who have experienced similar work-life conflicts, guiding and assisting them in managing both their work and personal lives. This support increases their organizational commitment and contributes to achieving work-life balance. Some interviewees perceive work-life balance as not bringing work into the home environment. They claim that by adopting a rule of not engaging in work-related tasks at home, tensions at home decrease. Instead, they prefer to work extra hours at the office rather than being at home amidst chaos. When work-related tasks, including tomorrow's presentation, are completed at home, it often leads to more stress and complexity in fulfilling both the roles of a mother and a teacher, affecting both their spouse and children. The length of working hours is also associated with work-life balance perceptions. Some individuals believe that work-life balance is closely related to the number of hours worked. They perceive work at school as encompassing neither short nor long hours, as evidenced by school managers pursuing master's degrees while working. Time management plays a significant role in their perception of work-life balance. Overall, these perceptions highlight the importance of support, planned lifestyle, organizational climate, and time management in achieving work-life balance in the context of teachers' experiences (Özel, 2019).

A study conducted with prospective teachers examined their perception of work-

life balance and found that they view it as a normal and positive aspect of life, rather than a conflict. The participants believe that the educational sector is effective in enabling them to manage both their work life and personal life simultaneously, indicating that the nature of their profession allows for a balance to be established. The study describes their perception of work-life balance as a healthy relationship. (Polat & Özdemir, 2017).

### **2.5.1 Perception of Flexible Working by People**

The term "flexible working" is understood differently by different people. A study focused on how individuals perceive flexible working found that flexibility in the workplace allows for adapting to changes in economic and social conditions, giving individuals the freedom to determine their preferred working style and conditions. Flexible working is considered a tool within the category of work-life balance. However, the definition of flexible work can vary between employers and employees.

In a study examining the perception of flexible working in school administration (Taşkıran & Kiraz, 2016), both positive and negative perceptions were identified. Some teachers viewed flexible working as a "candy apple," associating it with attraction and allure, but also cautioning about potential harm and addiction. Others perceived it as a "horse race," suggesting that the invisibility of working hours under flexible arrangements requires increased competitiveness. Flexible working was also likened to a "big bubble," seen as demanding and valuable but fragile and not suitable for all tasks. Lastly, it was perceived as "slavery" because it challenges the traditional structure of work. These perceptions highlight the positive aspects of flexibility, such as competitiveness and attractiveness, but also caution about the risks and challenges associated with it.

According to a study on couples, those who both work in a flexible work model tend to perceive less work-life conflict because the boundaries between work and personal life are already integrated due to the flexibility provided by their jobs. On the other hand, couples working in non-flexible jobs are more likely to experience work-life conflict. The study also highlights the importance of reciprocal support from the couple, both at work and at home, in perceiving work and private life balance instead of conflict.

In the context of Generation Z's perceptions of flexible working, research indicates that there are various perspectives. Some individuals associate flexible working with temporary employment or settlement periods, while others view it as related to working on a contractual basis or in a home office setting. The study further surveyed 185 students from Generation Z, and the results revealed that the primary associations with flexibility were related to working hours, remote work or working from home, freelancing or part-time work. Other perceptions included weekend work and employment under civil law contracts. Additionally, some participants associated flexible working with the idea of combining work and study, while some other Generation Z participants mentioned the use of technological tools that allow work to be carried out at home.

## **2.6 Work-Life Balance and Covid 19**

Distance working, also known as remote working, offers a flexible working structure that allows employees to make temporal decisions and overcome time and location barriers. It provides more freedom to employees, but it is not a comprehensive solution to work-life conflict and imbalance. Research on remote working yields different results, and the perception of employees towards technology plays a role in their views. Employees can be categorized as technophobic or technology enthusiasts in terms of their connection with technology. Technophobic individuals view technology as an uncontrollable force that restricts their freedom, while technology enthusiasts believe technology protects and enhances their freedom. This difference in perception significantly influences their views on work-life balance. Technophobes are concerned that technology disrupts the boundaries between work and personal life, while technology enthusiasts see technology as a tool that removes physical barriers and enables flexibility, making work-life balance easier to achieve. Distance working is generally seen as a positive implication for employees, as it minimizes time and place barriers. However, it can also have negative implications, such as blurring the boundaries between work and personal life and making employees constantly accessible. It is important to use distance working in moderation to avoid disrupting the work-life balance. Additionally, advanced technology should not be underestimated, as it can rapidly create work-life conflict. Striking a balance and being mindful of technology usage are essential considerations in maintaining work-life

balance in a distance working setup (Açıkgöz, 2021).

According to Dockery and Bawa (2020), distance working, also known as working from home, has become the new normal during the COVID-19 pandemic. Initially implemented to prevent the spread of the virus, it has continued even after the pandemic has ended. Many people have embraced the new habit of working from home, enabling work to be sustained during challenging times. However, working from home has both positive and negative impacts. From the employers' perspective, working from home has resulted in time savings and increased efficiency for workers due to the comfort of their own surroundings. Employers also find it easier to assign additional working hours to employees as they are readily available and mobile. On the other hand, employees experience a new concept in their lives known as flexible working. While it saves employers from additional expenses such as travel, food, and transportation, it introduces new expenses for employees. Although these expenses may not be purely financial, flexible working demands infinite availability from employees, leading to potential work-life conflicts. The flexibility offered by remote work can create a negative environment by generating endless work demands. However, all employees, regardless of age or gender, must also address the demands of their personal lives. For example, parents need to supervise and support their children, especially during lockdowns. Consequently, there is a multitude of demands from children, as well as potential demands within couples' relationships. Furthermore, long working hours add to the demands placed on employees. Research indicates that Australia exemplifies a situation where long working hours and working from home coexist.

According to Gigauri (2020), the COVID-19 pandemic has led to the implementation of new regulations and requirements. Some companies have faced challenges in adapting to remote work during this time. Difficulties have arisen due to issues related to internet connectivity and the technological capabilities of the company. These challenges have a direct impact on work-life balance. When there is no clear distinction between the work domain and the personal domain, tension and conflicts can arise. It is suggested by experts that employers need to closely monitor their employees during the work-from-home process. Work-life conflict is not solely the responsibility of employees; it is also a concern for employers. Therefore, employers should actively address and manage the work-life balance of their employees.

According to the study conducted by Yenihan and Emel (2021) on nurses and doctors during the COVID-19 pandemic, various aspects of their experiences were examined, including burnout syndrome, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and work-life balance. The study utilized participant interviews to gather insights. The findings indicate that some participants reported working for full 24-hour days, which led to a lack of family and personal life within the work domain. Working long hours and taking on additional work became normalized during the pandemic, contributing to work-life conflict experienced by nurses and doctors. Some participants expressed that despite sacrificing their personal and family domains for their work due to the pandemic, they found the compensation in terms of salary to be inadequate. Additionally, the study highlighted that the implementation of additional shifts in hospitals during the COVID-19 crisis further intensified work-life conflict. Some doctors and nurses were expected to work continuously between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. without sufficient breaks, leading to significant challenges in achieving work-life balance for healthcare professionals. Furthermore, the interviews revealed that some healthcare workers had limited opportunities to spend time with their children due to their demanding working hours. The study sheds light on the impact of the pandemic on the work-life balance of nurses and doctors, highlighting the need for further support and attention to address these challenges (Yenihan & Emel, 2021).

According to a study conducted in Poland, it was found that women experienced a higher level of work-life balance conflict during the COVID-19 pandemic compared to men, as compared to the period before the pandemic. The study also revealed that a significant number of women reported having less leisure time during the pandemic compared to pre-COVID times. The participants, particularly women, expressed that the work-life balance issues intensified during the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the main factors contributing to work-life balance problems was the challenge of concentrating and focusing while working remotely, especially when both partners in a couple were working from home and there was a lack of separate workspace. This situation often led to chaos, particularly when children had to continue their education from home. The increased stress levels due to difficulties in focusing were also mentioned by participants. Furthermore, when work and personal life were conducted from the same location, many participants reported difficulty in differentiating and finding leisure time. Even after the workday ended, there was a lack of a dedicated space for relaxation and separation from work mentally. Additionally, the study found

that family noises and a lack of office discipline during work hours resulted in a higher likelihood of making mistakes. The study highlighted that women experienced more work-life conflict than men during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially during the lockdown period. The combination of work and personal life within the same environment was identified as a significant contributing factor to these challenges, rather than simply an increase in working hours. Overall, the findings indicate that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on work-life balance, with women being particularly affected by the combination of remote work and home responsibilities. Some argue all of this happens because working hour increases but work and private life are combined (Skórska, 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced individuals to share their work environment with their families or roommates, presenting new challenges that they must navigate. For individuals with children, this situation becomes even more demanding, as they bear additional responsibilities when the boundaries between school, family, and work domains blur. Mothers, in particular, find themselves attempting to fulfill multiple demands simultaneously while working remotely. This situation, which emerged during the pandemic, has led to increased work pressure and a decline in work-life balance. As a result, women have been compelled to reduce their working hours more than men, and the merging of these various responsibilities has created barriers to career advancement due to work-life imbalance (Açıköz, 2021).

According to a study conducted by Adisa et al. (2022), interviews were conducted to analyze work-life balance during the Covid-19 pandemic and its impact on working styles. The study highlights that the uncertainty of boundaries is a key factor contributing to work-life conflict. For instance, participants mentioned instances where their children demanded food from the kitchen during online meetings, creating a dilemma between work and private life due to blurred boundaries. This situation leads to inter-role conflict, where individuals struggle to focus on one role, even during critical work moments. Furthermore, the study reveals that work-life conflict has psychological dimensions, particularly affecting young people interviewed. The dynamic changes in working hours, work systems, office environments, and other factors during the pandemic necessitate effective work-life balance to prevent burnout syndrome and emotional exhaustion. However, the study also presents a positive example of achieving work-life balance. One participant emphasized the importance of time management and creating boundaries between work and personal life. By

dedicating specific time and space for work and avoiding distractions, individuals can successfully plan their work activities while still having space for their private lives. This controlled integration allows for a more successful career, reduced burden, and the development of a well-rounded work-life balance.

Based on a Latvian study conducted by Lonska et al. (2021), the issue of work-life balance during the Covid-19 pandemic is brought to attention. The study suggests that work-life conflict arises primarily due to factors such as high work attachment, long working hours, and responsibilities related to household chores and children. Interestingly, the study highlights that remote work, which has become more prevalent during the Covid-19 era, can promote a better work-life balance. When there is a clear job framework and defined expectations, employees are more likely to effectively plan their work and private life, thus reducing work-life conflict. However, the study also acknowledges that work-life imbalance still persists in some companies during the Covid-19 era. Importantly, the study concludes that individuals who reported experiencing higher levels of work-life conflict during this period were more likely to have children below the age of 18. In contrast, respondents with older children or those without children reported experiencing less work-life conflict.

The intensive work pace and imposed working models during the Covid-19 period have had negative effects on both work life and individuals' private life, making it challenging to maintain a balanced lifestyle. Despite individual efforts, it is no longer possible to return to the same pre-Covid-19 routines. The current working conditions blur the boundaries between work and private life and pose various physical and mental health risks. Irregular working hours, continued remote work or working from home, uncertainty, role conflicts, unsatisfactory salaries, and an indeterminate work environment are identified as Covid-19 threats in the research. These threats contribute to work-life imbalance, leading to increased stress and perceived threats during the Covid crisis. The study concludes that this stress and threat significantly impact employee motivation and their perception of work-life balance (Yilmaz & Sağlam, 2021).

The transition to remote working has introduced numerous innovations that businesses, managers, and employees need to adapt to. Given the uncertain environment and changing work styles, organizations have had to swiftly implement new working principles, invest in digitalization, prioritize the physical and emotional well-being of employees, and establish effective corporate communication to support



teams and set standards. Technology teams play a crucial role in assisting businesses that have adopted remote working during the Covid-19 pandemic, as finding quick solutions contributes to better work-life balance for employees. However, some employees still experience difficulties adapting to remote work, even in organizations with work-life balance policies. Another challenge faced by employers in remote working practices is ensuring proper supervision and adherence to working hours. (Uşen, 2020).

A study examining the impact of Covid-19 on work-life balance, specifically focusing on dentists, reveals that one-fourth of the participants reported changes in their sleeping schedules due to new work regulations during the pandemic. Additionally, the majority of respondents expressed their preference to continue working in the office once the pandemic is fully resolved. However, the study found that engaging in internet searches and watching health-related videos during work hours, particularly during lockdowns, negatively affected dentists' work-life balance. Moreover, there is a negative association between working face-to-face in hospitals and work-life balance, whereas dentists who worked as online consultants experienced better work-life balance. (Pai et al., 2021).

The Covid-19 pandemic has presented a double-edged sword when it comes to work-life balance. Typically, people rely on grandparents to help take care of their children and maintain work-life balance. However, during the pandemic, the elderly and grandparents were at higher risk, making it challenging to seek their assistance without endangering their health. Consequently, working parents faced increased work-life conflict due to the absence of grandparental support. Additionally, working from home during the pandemic has created a dual role for both mothers and fathers, further exacerbating work-life conflict. (D'Andrea, 2022).

The study conducted by Sooriyaarachchi (2020), which combines interviews and a survey, focuses on investigating work-life balance during the Covid-19 lockdown period. The findings reveal that working hours and conditions are significant factors influencing work-life balance, with variations observed across different sectors. Interviews with teachers highlight the challenges they face during online lessons, as their children often interrupt their work, leading to reduced job efficiency and performance. Working conditions during remote work also impact work-life balance, as evidenced by interviews with IT professionals who reported working longer hours during the pandemic compared to pre-pandemic times. Self-organization is mentioned

as a crucial aspect of work-life balance by some interviewees who claim that effective planning is essential. (Sooriyaarachchi, 2020).

The study conducted by Mann and Chitranshi (2021) explores the impact of work-life conflict during the Covid-19 pandemic on employees' income. It is noted that the pandemic has led to increased household expenses while salaries remain stagnant, posing challenges for individuals' economic development. The study also emphasizes the importance of creating a dedicated office space at home to separate work and private life. Having a designated room for work has been shown to positively influence employees' performance and work-life balance. However, work-from-home arrangements have also presented negative outcomes, such as communication problems during online meetings, which lack the same level of interaction as face-to-face meetings. The blurring of boundaries between work and private life can diminish the significance of the private domain for employees. The survey findings indicate that many employees experience distractions from their personal lives while engaged in important work tasks, contributing to work-life conflict. These factors associated with Covid-19-related work-life conflict are also identified as causes of emotional exhaustion, as individuals struggle to find adequacy in both their work and personal lives.

A study examining work-life balance among individuals working from home during the pandemic reveals that married employees tend to have higher satisfaction levels in terms of work-life balance compared to their single counterparts. Furthermore, the study indicates a positive correlation between good work-life balance and increased work satisfaction due to the impact of Covid-19. The comparison also reveals that individuals who continue to work from home after the pandemic experience better work-life balance, while those who return to traditional work settings show lower satisfaction and work-life imbalance. Additionally, the study highlights that working from home during the lockdown period has led to a reduction in working hours in some countries, resulting in increased leisure time. Leisure time, defined as time not devoted to work or childcare responsibilities, allows individuals to pursue hobbies and personal interests. However, working from home has also increased the need for childcare and support in managing children's education (Takami, 2021).

Reports from Australia during the Covid-19 pandemic indicate that some mothers have transitioned from full-time to part-time employment in order to achieve a better work-life balance. Additionally, some full-time employees have opted for

flexible work arrangements or sought new jobs that offer the ability to work from home, primarily driven by childcare needs. Research findings suggest that work-life conflict arises not only from the individual's job structure but also due to the lack of flexibility in their spouse's job, leading to challenges in managing work and personal life effectively (Baxter & Warren, 2021).

From the perspective of doctors during the Covid-19 era, it is observed that they prioritize their work life over their private life, feeling a strong sense of responsibility. Any remaining time outside of work is often dedicated to other work-related activities. However, doctors are faced with long working hours, extensive extra work, and the need to work during unconventional hours, which negatively impacts their family life. Many doctors experience high levels of stress due to their demanding schedules, leading to a constant work-life conflict. Female doctors, in particular, struggle to maintain work-life balance, often missing out on important moments in their children's lives. The Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in a continuous need for emergency calls and extra shifts, further disrupting doctors' work-life balance. The study highlights the harmful effects of Covid-19 on doctors' work-life balance, with the demands from the hospital and patients making their lives more challenging. Some doctors even express a willingness to change their profession due to the overwhelming focus on work, causing them to neglect their personal lives. (Dhingra & Vaishali, 2020).

According to Babu (2022), work-life balance during the Covid-19 pandemic is influenced by several factors, including a lack of support from spouses, the requirement to work long shifts, increased household responsibilities, mandatory overtime, and working on weekends and holidays. The study participants, who were employees in various organizations, identified these factors as significant contributors to work-life imbalance. The survey further reveals that organizations have implemented different policies to promote work-life balance, such as flexible work schedules, maternity leave, parental leave, and job sharing. The author suggests that organizations should establish regulations and support teams to facilitate remote working arrangements.

According to Kirchmeyer's definition, work-life balance refers to the ability to allocate time, energy, and maintain good health across different aspects of life, ultimately leading to life satisfaction. The Covid-19 pandemic has brought about significant changes in the structure of work, leading to the widespread adoption of hybrid work models, remote work, and other flexible working arrangements. However,

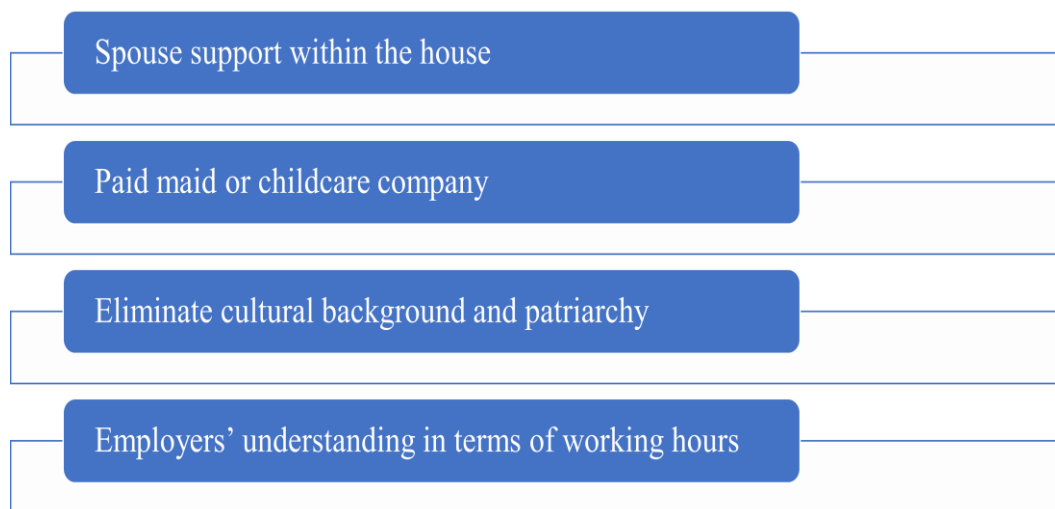
the impact of the pandemic extends beyond office spaces and has affected various aspects of people's lives, including their homes, schools, family dynamics, and recreational activities. Many individuals have had to make significant adjustments in their home lives, making it challenging to achieve a work-life balance. With work and personal spaces merged within the home, there is an increased need for assistance in managing personal responsibilities. Research indicates that people have been seeking more help, such as hiring maids, during the pandemic to better navigate their work-life balance (Saripek et al., 2023).

### **2.6.1 Work-life Balance and Covid 19 Issues on Women**

Research indicates that women have faced more challenges than men in achieving work-life balance during the Covid-19 pandemic. One area where women have experienced difficulties is in the role of female teachers who are conducting online classes from home. Participants in interviews have expressed that it is nearly impossible to work from home effectively due to the constant demands and interruptions from their children. Children tend to disturb the online classes, ask for attention, and disrupt the teacher's ability to focus on her work. This situation creates a significant work-life balance issue as the presence of children hampers the teacher's ability to perform her job effectively, according to the interviews. Another participant in the interviews, who is a teacher with a child in primary school, shared her experience of her child rebelling against her and wanting to close the computer during lessons because they find the online classes boring and prefer to play at home. These examples clearly illustrate the work-life conflict and challenges faced by women during the Covid-19 pandemic due to the shift to online working. Furthermore, another dimension of work-life conflict experienced by women is related to family conflicts that arise when both parents are working from home and need to balance their work responsibilities while also attending to their children's needs.

A study examining the work-life balance of women with children under the age of 12 during the Covid-19 pandemic reveals some interesting findings. The results indicate that while these women may not achieve a perfect work-life balance, there is a certain level of regulation at home when the child is at school and the woman is at the office. This allows them to be more productive and focused on their work tasks. Another participant in the study shared that she is able to maintain a work-life balance

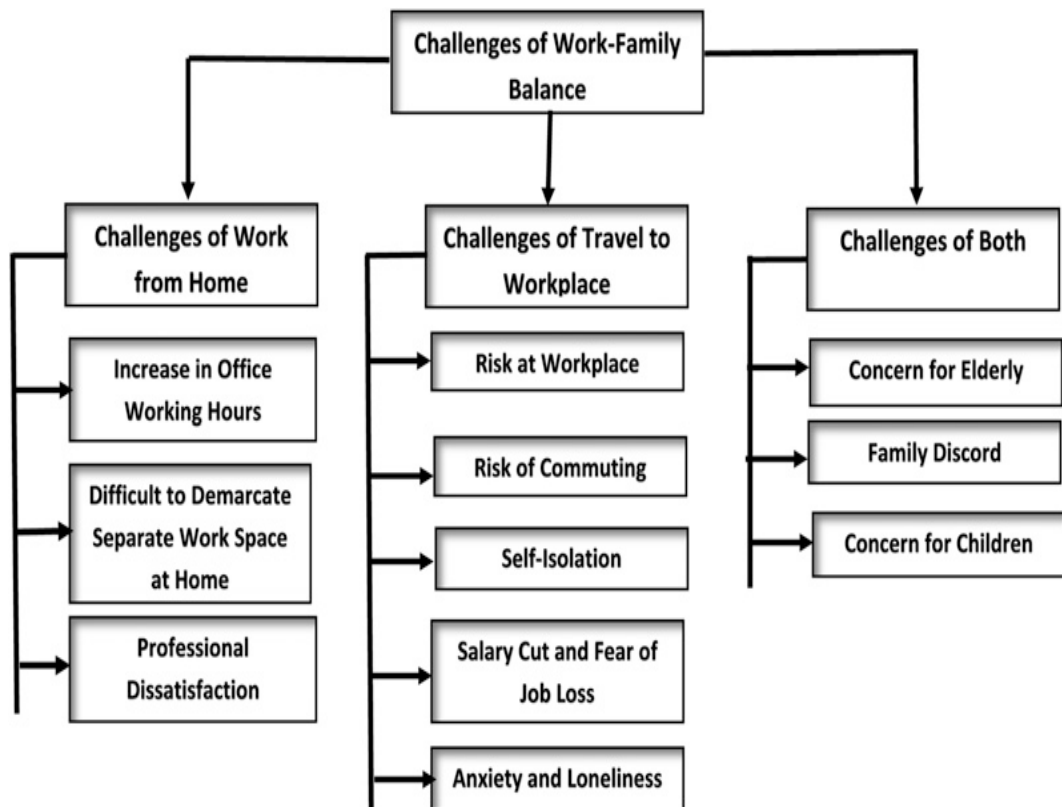
by relying on her children's grandmother for childcare. With the help of the grandmother, she is able to fully concentrate on her job without making any mistakes. Furthermore, the study highlights a relationship between passion for one's job and the ability to tolerate work-life imbalance. Some participants, particularly academics, claim that their love for their job enables them to endure long hours and manage their work-life balance effectively. Overall, the study provides insights into the strategies employed by women with young children to navigate work-life balance challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic.



**Figure 2.3** Work-Life Conflicts Solutions for The Women

The study conducted in India sheds light on the challenges faced by women in terms of work-life balance during the Covid-19 crisis. Traditional societal structures and patriarchal norms play a significant role in these challenges. The pandemic has negatively impacted the perception of women's roles within the household. In Indian culture, there is an expectation of women to fulfill the ideal of perfect motherhood while also contributing to the family's income. However, the pandemic has forced women to work from home, leading to increased working hours and dissatisfaction with work, particularly when employers do not support work-life balance policies. Some Indian companies have increased working hours without providing corresponding salary adjustments, creating a sense of fear among employees about losing their jobs. It becomes challenging for individuals to demonstrate their commitment and effort in remote work settings, which may not be readily visible to

employers. From a cultural perspective, some women are concerned about losing their status within the household due to their employment. They derive a sense of value and pride from being breadwinners alongside their partners. Additionally, the lack of support from husbands in childcare responsibilities at home further affects women's performance at work and contributes to emotional exhaustion. The study highlights the intersection of cultural expectations, gender roles, and work dynamics, which together create additional hurdles for women in achieving a satisfactory work-life balance during the Covid-19 crisis in India.



**Figure 2.4** Thematic Map for Challenges of Working Women in Diverse Work Arrangements

**Source:** Tayal, D. and Mehta, A. K. (2022). The Struggle To Balance Work And Family Life During The Covid-19 Pandemic: Insights Based On The Situations Of Working Women In Delhi. *Journal Of Family Issues*, 0192513X211058817.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **3. METHODOLOGY AND FINDING**

In this chapter, both quantitative (survey findings) and qualitative (in-depth interview) findings will be addressed.

#### **3.1 Design of The Study**

This study is designed to address the research questions through a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative part involves the implementation of a survey to gather data on work-life balance from the target population. The survey, which was adapted from a reliable source (Kemmis, 2012), is conducted online and remains open for a period of three months. Convenience sampling is utilized to select participants for the survey. In the qualitative part of the study, a depth interview method is employed. The purpose of the depth interviews is to further explore and gain a comprehensive understanding of the survey responses. Selected participants from the survey are interviewed to provide detailed and insightful perspectives on their experiences. The depth interviews do not introduce new questions but instead focus on analyzing and clarifying the survey answers. This qualitative approach enables a more nuanced analysis of the data and facilitates a deeper comprehension of the participants' viewpoints on work-life balance.

##### **3.1.1 Quantitative Method**

This study aims to examine empirical examples of work-life balance, specifically focusing on the Z generation in the workplace and Turkish studies, and analyze work-life balance theories found in the literature. The survey includes

questions related to various aspects such as age, employment arrangements (full-time, part-time, job sharing), and preferences for different work arrangements. By comparing the current work style with preferred work arrangements, the study aims to gain insights into individuals' preferences and satisfaction levels regarding work-life balance. Additionally, the study considers factors such as job position, working hours, flexibility options for employees, and the impact of Covid-19 on work-life balance. The survey participants' dominance in achieving work-life balance and their satisfaction levels are measured to assess their work-life balance status.

The quantitative data collected from the survey were analyzed using the IBM SPSS 25.0 software. The survey questions were coded based on a five-point Likert scale. Descriptive statistics for sociodemographic characteristics were initially summarized in Table 3.1. Subsequently, the data distribution and gender-based differences were examined in line with the established hypotheses.

### **3.1.2 Process of Determining the Sample of The Survey**

Sample is composed of 280 employees who are working in Istanbul. All the survey questions were distributed through an online platform, specifically Google Forms. Participants had the convenience of filling out the surveys using the internet or their mobile phones. It was emphasized that participants should carefully read the questions and provide answers in an objective manner, without feeling any pressure or bias.

### **3.2 Time Schedule**

During the first month of the research, the survey was primarily filled out by participants belonging to the 20-29 age group, which represents Generation Z. This age group showed a higher level of availability to participate in the survey at the start of the school and work period. After the first month, there was an increase in the number of participants in the 50-59 age group. These participants, representing Generation X and nearing retirement, played a supportive role in contributing to the work-life balance survey. Initially, there was a higher participation rate of men compared to women. However, by the third month, the ratio of male and female participants became balanced. The participation of other age ranges gradually increased in a balanced manner throughout the survey period.



### 3.3 Chi-Square and Significant Test

In this study, the analysis primarily focuses on the chi-square test, which is a statistical method used to examine the relationship between nominal variables. By using the chi-square test, the study aims to analyze the ratios and differences of proportions and determine their significance. The chi-square test is particularly suitable for assessing the relationship between categorical variables and will be utilized as a primary statistical tool in this research (Yalçınkaya, 2008).

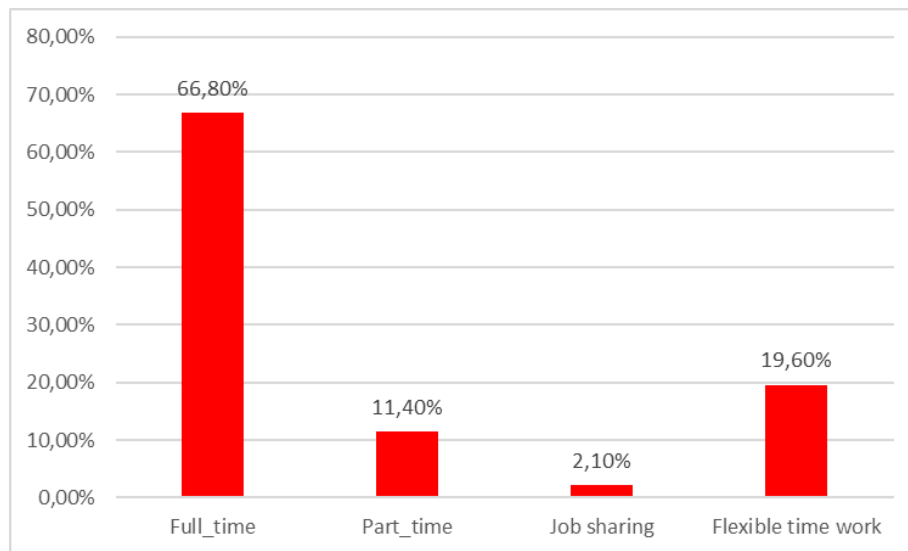
**Table 3.1** Demographical Information

		<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Woman	137	48.9%
	Man	143	51.1%
<b>Age</b>	20-29	75	26.8%
	30-39	64	22.9%
	40 - 49	61	21.8%
	50-59	80	28.6%

According to Table 1, 48.9% of the survey participants are women (137 women) and 51.1% are men (143 men). 26.8% of the participants were in the 20-29 age range, 22.9% were in the 30-39 age range, 21.82% were in the 40-49 age range, and 28.6% were in the 50-59 age range.

**Table 3.2** Employee's Working Status Information

		<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Current working arrangement</b>	Full_time	87	66.8%
	Part_time	32	11.4%
	Job sharing	6	2.1%
	Flexible time work	55	19.6%
<b>Preferred working arrangement</b>	Full-time	87	31.1%
	Flexible time work	134	47.9%
	Other	59	21.1%
<b>Position at work</b>	Executive	134	47.9%
	Chief/Supervisor/Supervisor	43	15.4%
	Employee	103	36.8%



**Figure 3.1** Current Working Arrangement

The survey results indicate that participants have varied preferences when it comes to their preferred working arrangements. Approximately 47.9% of the respondents (134 people) expressed a preference for flexible working hours. The second most popular choice was full-time work, selected by 31.1% of the participants (87 people). Part-time work was preferred by 13.6% of the respondents (38 people), while job sharing was chosen by 7.5% of the participants (21 people), and the most popular option between the attendees is found as a flexible time work (134 people, 47.9%). It is evident that there is a diversity of preferences among the survey participants. The preferences of the participants differ from one to another.

**Table 3.3** Participants' Working Positions

	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	
<b>Working positions</b>	Executive	134	47.9%
	Supervisor	43	15.4%
	Employee	103	36.8%

It is seen that 47.9% (134 people) of the survey participants work as managers, 36.8% (103 people) as personnel, and 15.4% (43 people) as supervisors or supervisors.

**Table 3.4** Opinion About Working More Than Standard Hours

		<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Working more than standard hours</b>	Yes	134	47.9%
	No	146	52.1%
<b>Compensation for working more than standard hours</b>	Payment	22	13.0%
	Payment and Day-off	10	5.9%
	None	137	81.1%

The survey findings reveal that more than half of the participants (81.1%, equivalent to 137 people) are working more than the standard working hours. It is concerning to note that the majority of these individuals do not receive compensation for the extra hours they work.

**Table 3.5** Family-Friendly Policy At The Office

		<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Family-friendly policy at the office</b>	Paternity leave	90	32.1%
	Maternity leave	22	7.9%
	Leave for family reasons	11	3.9%
	Job-sharing	2	0.7%
	Flexible work	20	7.1%
	Contract workers	7	2.5%
	Several at once	215	76.8%

According to the survey results, 32.1% of the participants (90 people) stated that their office has a paternity leave policy. Furthermore, a majority of the participants (76.8%, equivalent to 215 people) reported that their office has more than one family-friendly policy in place.

**Table 3.6** Covid 19 Effect On Work-Life Balance And Work And Study Last 2 Years

		<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Covid 19 effect on the work-life balance of employees</b>	Yes	190	67.9%
	No	90	32.1%
<b>Both study and work in the last 2 years</b>	Yes	115	41.1%
	No	165	58.9%
<b>Support for employees who both work and study</b>	Yes	53	37.1%
	No	90	62.9%

The survey results indicate that a significant portion of the participants (41.1%, equivalent to 115 people) have both worked and studied in the last 2 years. This suggests that a notable number of participants have managed to balance their work and educational commitments during that period. Furthermore, approximately 68% of the participants (190 people) stated that the Covid-19 crisis has had an impact on their perception of work-life balance. This aligns with the existing literature, which highlights the influence of the pandemic on work-life balance due to the introduction of new working arrangements such as remote work, flexible schedules, and hybrid work models. It is important that 32.1% of the participants (represented by the remaining number of people) did not perceive any effect of the Covid-19 crisis on their work-life balance. Overall, the survey findings are consistent with the literature, supporting the notion that the Covid-19 pandemic has brought about significant changes in work-life balance dynamics and introduced new ways of working.

**Table 3.7** Reasons For Working Less Than Full-Time

	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	
<b>Reasons for working less than full time</b>	Working full time	182	65.0%
	Merging childcare and work	8	2.9%
	To have more free time	29	10.4%
	Education and school	44	15.7%
	Not able to find full-time job	3	1.1%
	Others	14	5.0%

Out of the survey participants, 182 people (65%) reported working full-time, indicating that they do not fall into the category of those who work less than full-time. It is important to consider that individuals who work less than full-time have varied reasons for doing so. The most common reason cited by 44 people (15.7%) is the need to allocate time for school or professional training. This indicates a desire to balance their educational or career development with their work responsibilities. Another significant reason for working less than full-time is the pursuit of free time within their personal lives in order to achieve a better work-life balance. This preference was reported by an unspecified number of individuals in the survey. Additionally, 8 people (2.0%) mentioned that they choose to work less than full-time in order to combine childcare responsibilities with work obligations. This indicates the importance of accommodating family needs and balancing work and caregiving responsibilities. Finally, some individuals may have a preference for full-time work, but due to various factors, such as a lack of available full-time job opportunities, they are compelled to work less than full-time.

**Table 3.8** Availability of Working Arrangement and Responsibility and Satisfaction of Work-Life Balance

		<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Availability of Working Arrangements and Responsibility</b>	Pretty much available	39	13.9%
	Available	85	30.4%
	Not sure	52	18.6%
	Not Available	63	22.5%
	Not Available at All	41	14.6%
<b>Satisfaction of Work-Life Balance</b>	Pretty much satisfied	27	9.6%
	Satisfied	111	39.6%
	None of them	21	7.5%
	Not satisfied	66	23.6%
	Not satisfied at all	55	19.6%

The survey results indicate that the majority of respondents prefer to provide responses that fall within the middle range of the given options, rather than selecting extreme choices. This suggests a tendency towards providing nuanced and balanced responses. Furthermore, the findings reveal that a large portion of the participants express satisfaction with their current occupational arrangement. However, it is worth

noting that 66 individuals (23.6%) reported being dissatisfied with their current work situation.

Testing Research Hypothesis;

**Table 3.9** Working longer than standard office hours by gender

		Gender				P
		Woman		Man		
		n	%	n	%	
<b>Do you usually work longer than standard office hours?</b>	<b>Yes</b>	57	41.6%	77	53.8%	0.040*
	<b>No</b>	80	58.4%	66	46.2%	

\*p<0.05

The hypothesis test aimed to examine whether there is a difference in the preference for longer working hours between genders. The chi-square test was conducted, and the results indicated a significant relationship (p<0.05) between gender and the preference for longer work hours. Specifically, the analysis revealed that the proportion of men who answered "yes" to longer working hours (53.8%) was higher than the proportion of women who answered "yes" to longer working hours (41.6%). Based on these findings, the hypothesis is accepted, suggesting that there is a gender difference in the preference for longer working hours.

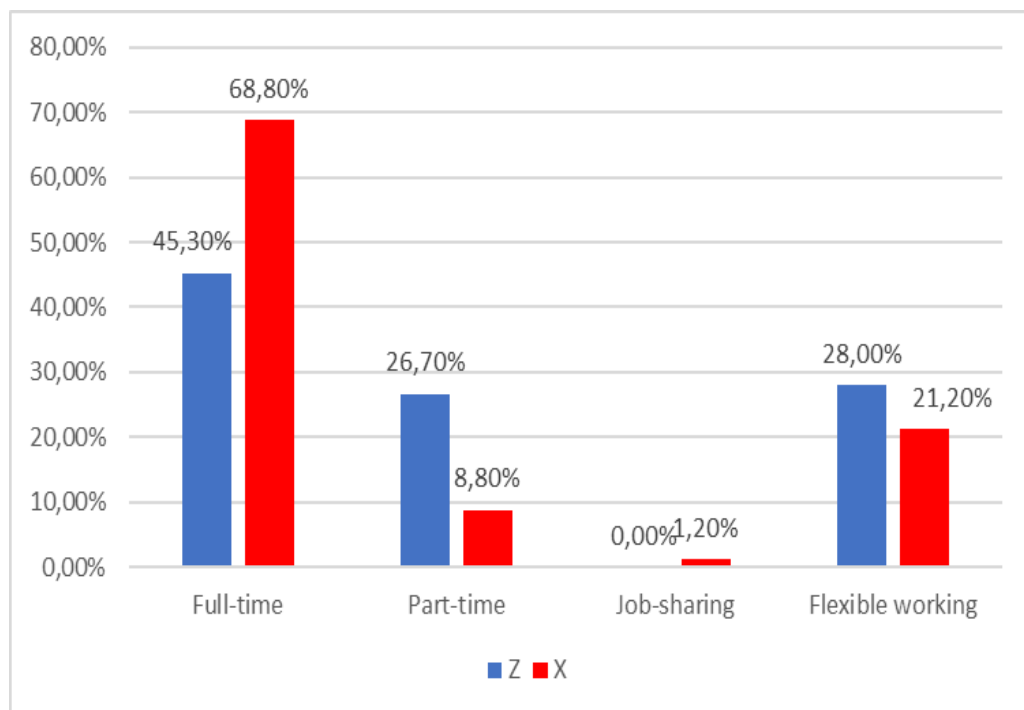
**Table 3.9** Working Arrangement According To Generations

		Generation				P
		Gen Z		Gen X		
		n	%	n	%	
<b>Working Arrangement</b>	Full-time	34	45.3%	55	68.8%	0.006**
	Part-time	20	26.7%	7	8.8%	
	Job-sharing	0	0.0%	1	1.2%	
	Flexible working	21	28.0%	17	21.2%	

\*\*p<0.01

The comparison of current working arrangements between different generations was analyzed, and the results revealed a significant relationship (p<0.05). Specifically,

when comparing Generation X and Generation Z, it was found that a higher proportion of individuals from Generation X were engaged in full-time work (68.8%) compared to Generation Z (45.3%). This difference of 45.3% suggests that Generation X has a higher preference for full-time employment. In terms of part-time work, Generation Z had a higher proportion (26.7%) compared to Generation X (8.8%). This indicates that Generation Z is more inclined towards part-time employment compared to Generation X. Furthermore, flexible working arrangements were more prevalent among Generation Z (28%) compared to Generation X (21.2%). This difference of 21.2% suggests that Generation Z shows a higher preference for flexible working options. Based on these findings, the hypothesis is accepted, indicating that there are significant differences in the current working arrangements between Generation X and Generation Z.



**Figure 3.2** Working Arrangement Compared to Generations

**Table 3.10** Comparison Between Generations and Satisfaction of Work-life Balance

		Generation				P
		Gen Z		Gen X		
		n	%	n	%	
<b>Satisfaction of Work-Life Balance</b>	Pretty much satisfied	6	8.0%	9	11.2%	0.044*
	Satisfied	26	34.7%	37	46.2%	
	None of them	9	12.0%	3	3.8%	
	Not satisfied	24	32.0%	14	17.5%	
	Pretty much satisfied	10	13.3%	17	21.2%	

The comparison between generations and their satisfaction with work-life balance was analyzed, and the results revealed a significant relationship ( $p < 0.05$ ). Specifically, when comparing Generation X and Generation Z, it was found that the satisfaction rate of individuals from Generation X (46.2%) was higher than the satisfaction rate of Generation Z. This suggests that individuals from Generation X tend to be more satisfied with their work-life balance compared to those from Generation Z. Additionally, the proportion of individuals who reported being "pretty much satisfied" with their work-life balance was higher in Generation X (11.2%) compared to Generation Z (8%). This indicates that a higher percentage of individuals from Generation X feel relatively satisfied with their work-life balance compared to Generation Z.

**Table 3.11** Working More Than Standard Hours Compared to Generations

		Generation				p
		Gen Z		Gen X		
		n	%	n	%	
<b>Working more than standard hours</b>	Yes	29	38.7%	41	51.2%	0.116
	No	46	61.3%	39	48.8%	

The comparison between working more than standard hours and generations was analyzed, and the results indicated that there was no significant relationship ( $p > 0.05$ ).



between these variables. The findings suggest that there are no significant differences between Generation X and Generation Z regarding the tendency to work more than the standard working hours.

**Table 3.12** Working Arrangement and Its Availability of Personal Life and Family Responsibility According to Gender

		Gender				p
		Woman		Man		
		n	%	n	%	
<b>Availability of personal and family responsibility in terms of working arrangement</b>	Pretty much available	14	10.2%	25	17.5%	0.070
	Available	39	28.5%	46	32.2%	
	Not sure	22	16.1%	30	21.0%	
	Not available	38	27.7%	25	17.5%	
	Not available at all	24	17.5%	17	11.9%	

The analysis of the relationship between working arrangements, availability of personal life, and family responsibilities according to gender revealed that there is no significant relationship ( $p > 0.05$ ). This implies that the current working arrangements do not differ significantly between men and women in terms of accommodating personal life and family responsibilities.

**Table 3.13** Have You Worked While Studying Last 2 Years?

		Gender				P
		Woman		Man		
		n	%	n	%	
<b>Worked while studying</b>	Yes	56	40.9%	59	41.3%	0.948
	No	81	59.1%	84	58.7%	

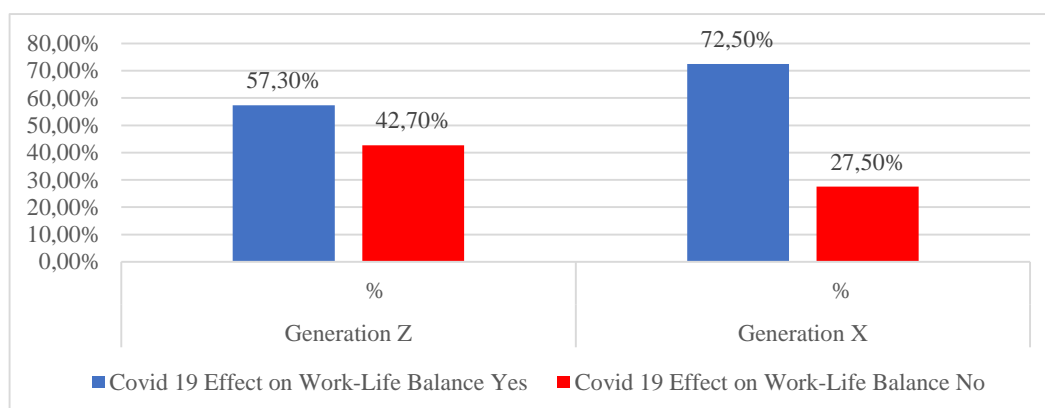
The analysis of the relationship between working while studying and gender revealed that there is no significant relationship ( $p > 0.05$ ). The proportions of women (40.9%) and men (41.3%) who reported working while studying are similar, indicating

that there is no significant difference between the genders in terms of combining work and study commitments.

**Table 3.14** Covid 19 Effect On Work-Life Balance Compared To Generations

		Generation				P
		Gen Z		Gen X		
		n	%	n	%	
<b>Covid 19 Effect on Work-Life Balance</b>	Yes	43	57.3%	58	72.5%	0.048*
	No	32	42.7%	22	27.5%	

The analysis comparing the impact of Covid-19 on work-life balance between generations found a significant relationship ( $p < 0.05$ ). The proportion of individuals in Generation X (72.5%) who reported that Covid-19 had an effect on their work-life balance was higher compared to Generation Z (57.3%).



**Figure 3.3** Covid-19 Effect On Work-Life Balance Compared To Generations

**Table 3.15** Have You Worked While Studying Last 2 Years? Situation For Generation

		Generations				P
		Gen Z		Gen X		
		n	%	n	%	
<b>Worked while studying</b>	Yes	58	77.3%	12	15.0%	0.00*
	No	17	22.7%	68	85.0%	

The analysis comparing the prevalence of working while studying in the last 2

years between generations found a significant relationship ( $p < 0.05$ ). The majority of individuals from Generation Z (77.3%) reported that they worked while studying, while only a small proportion of individuals from Generation X (15.0%) indicated the same.

### **3.4 Qualitative Method**

The qualitative part of the study focuses on gaining deeper insights into the perceptions of work-life balance among the participants. Our finding shows the majority of the participants claim working arrangements are pretty much available for family/personal commitments and the same people claim for the last question very satisfied when it comes to having a balance between work and personal life. This study aims to investigate those populations to find their reasons of answers. Six participants were selected for in-depth interviews out of the total of 280 survey participants. The one who answer as Yes, to the Covid 19 effect of work-life balance, pretty much available and pretty much satisfied answers were selected via Google Form. The purpose of these interviews is to explore their personal experiences, perspectives, and attitudes towards work-life balance in more detail. Interviews were conducted using abbreviations (first letter of first name and first letter of the last name).

#### **3.4.1 Pre-Interview Process**

Before the interview starts, participants are listened by the researcher. Every participant gave some details about their situation at home and related information about the work-life balance.

#### **3.4.2 Interview Participants Profile**

LY is working at the consulate while pursuing a master's degree. She describes her private life as an area that allows time for the gym, new hobbies, and family.

ME is married man who has a primary school daughter. He sees himself as a sacrificing father who helps his wife, especially with tasks like putting their daughter to sleep, as his wife often works late.

NOK, a working in the technology sector, is a mother of two sons. She has the support of two maids at home, and her husband is understanding when it comes to work-life balance.

EK, is a female physiotherapist, is a mother of little daughter. She believes that selecting schools with suitable school hours is crucial for mothers to achieve a good work-life balance.

İE, is a teacher who is married but has no children, shares that her good work-life balance is attributed to not having kids. This allows her to have the freedom to travel and pursue new hobbies in her personal life.

YEV, is a young computer engineering candidate working in software, believes that having stable working hours rather than a flexible working style is key to maintaining a healthy work-life balance. He believes that a balance between work and personal life can be achieved through consistent and predictable working hours.

**Table 3.16** Participants Of The Interview

	<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Sector</b>
1.	P1	LY	Female	1998	International Relations
2.	P2	ME	Male	1973	Sales
3.	P3	NOK	Female	1980	Technology
4.	P4	EK	Female	1985	Health
5.	P5	İE	Female	1992	Education
6.	P6	YEV	Male	1998	Factory Software

According to the survey results, only 2% of the participants reported working in a job-sharing arrangement, indicating that job-sharing is not widely preferred among the surveyed population. This raises the question of why job-sharing is not popular and why it remains an unpopular option in the survey responses. During the in-depth interviews, participants were asked whether they were familiar with job-sharing and to provide their own definition of job-sharing.

I have not heard the job-sharing if you want the truth. I heard it as a name and concept but I have not experienced or did not do it or used it for my work. For me, job sharing is the same job done by more than one person like a shift-working but only occurs at different times. It reminds me of shift working but I think it is a difficult concept so I would not be preferred. (LY).

I have not heard job sharing before, I believe job sharing is a working arrangement that is used in the business world. It is possible it can have some benefits. In my opinion, job sharing is about more than one person completing the same job at different times. (YEV)

LY and YEV, both representing Generation Z, have different perspectives on job sharing. LY finds the concept of job sharing difficult to grasp, resulting in a negative perception of job sharing. On the other hand, YEV believes that despite not having personal experience with it, job sharing can yield positive outcomes in other businesses.

Yes, I heard I know job sharing. A job is done by the allocation of more than 1 person. It is about instead of hiring 1 person for the job hiring short-term 2 or 3 people and as a result, solving the problem. (NOK)

Yes, I heard about job sharing in Covid 19 times. During the pandemic, we used this working for some time at the hospital we are a group of 15 physiotherapists who works at the hospital. We were divided into 2 groups of 7 people and 8 people, first 3 days first group was coming to the hospital, and on the other 3 days 8 people were coming because our patient number was low at Covid 19 times. Therefore, it saves the 15 people who come to the hospital and sit instead we were working as a group. For me, job sharing means when there is not much workload many people do not have to be together in the same place. (EK)

I have not heard the job sharing before. Since I am involving a position in the education sector, I cannot talk about job sharing. However, if I give an example job sharing means for a person who works in the bank the person can go to work for 2 days, and remaining 3 days there is an option to work from home. It is about weekdays being shared between people (IE)

The survey findings indicate that job sharing is not commonly used in the education sector. However, in the health sector, specifically among physiotherapists, job sharing is more prevalent and implemented based on the needs of the patients. In the technology sector, although the participants may not prefer job sharing, they still demonstrate knowledge and awareness of the concept.

I heard of job-sharing before but I have not experienced it. For me, job sharing can be workers who work in a factory on a shift basis. As far as I know, lawyers also experience job sharing as a part of their job. (ME)

When considering the interviewer, who represents Generation X, it is observed that the preference for job sharing may vary depending on the nature of the job itself. The type of job can influence the decision to opt for job sharing.

The survey results indicate that the most preferred working arrangement among the participants is flexible working. During the in-depth interviews, each participant was asked to provide their own definition of flexible working.

Flexible work is a life safer for me in Covid term, because when I think about my regular schedule of office hours which is 9 a.m. and 16 p.m. It brings the

opportunity to spend time with my family. They are also at home and in normal hours spending time with them is stolen for me. However, in flexible work aim is to finish the task, when my family is not active I was able to focus on my work. Therefore, the flexible working system is efficient and more available for me. Flexible working defines freedom for me. (LY)

I think flexible work means there are no certain working hours or working hours can change according to the task which should be done, it is a model which occurs in those situations. (YEV)

Both participants belong to Generation Z, but their genders differ. The female participant perceives flexible working as a concept of freedom that allows her to have quality time with her family. She sees several advantages associated with flexible working. On the other hand, the other participant from Generation Z provides a more neutral perspective on flexible working by simply offering his own definition of the term from his point of view.

Flexible working means working hours and days are determined by yourself and after you take one task the employer does not determine which hours or days for the job. However, tasks need to be delivered on a specific deadline. (NOK)

We used a flexible working system during the Pandemic times, we were able to leave early after finishing the patients' treatment. We went to work at the same time in the morning but we were able to leave work earlier. It was done this way because prevents virus infection to prevent spread. It was usable at that time. (EK)

In Turkish conditions, standard working hours are between 9. a.m and 5. p.m. In flexible working, there are changes in the working days and changes in the times. For instance, leaving work earlier or if work can be finished within the 3 days, remaining days can spend at home. However, there is the possibility of having extra days in the flexible working such as working 6 days. Those are examples of flexible working from my perspective. (IE)

Flexible working is perceived and analyzed in three different ways by the participants in the interviews. NOK and IE view flexible working as a form of freedom, where they are not bound by a strict and fixed schedule, allowing for flexibility in their time management. From the perspective of the physiotherapist, flexible working is closely related to the needs of the patients at the hospital, especially during the early stages of the Covid-19 pandemic. This arrangement provides the opportunity to leave work earlier when necessary.

I think the main element of flexible working is finishing the task, it provides you to manage your own time. However, the disadvantages of flexible work cause a blur like it is not determined who will be in the office and when is the office hours. Working hours are not determined in my opinion. (ME)

The Generation X participant highlights one of the drawbacks of flexible working, which is the uncertainty it brings regarding office hours and the location of employees. Flexible working provides employees with unlimited options for their work environment, which can create challenges in maintaining a structured schedule and a defined workspace.

In addition, during the in-depth interviews, six participants were selected from the 30.4% of participants who reported having a good balance between personal and family responsibilities. These participants were asked about the source of this balance, whether it was a personal effort or a result of the office's working model. The Generation Z participants provided their answers:

I think 70% is a working model of office and 30% is about myself. The reason why I say 70% working model is our working hours is too short. When we compare to the other jobs in Turkey those are between 9 a.m- 6. p.m or 9 a.m- 7 p.m but ours is 9 a.m- 4.p.m. This working style motivates me because I can go home earlier, and I can allocate time for myself so I can plan my work in a more comfortable way. The remaining 30% is about myself. I can adapt to planning work. After 4. p.m I never waste my time. I am doing my occupation in order. For instance, until 5. p.m I eat or I plan sports until 6. p.m so I can have a good program between hours. Most of the work has the obligation of extra working hours but I have not. When there will be an extra working hour they make it possible to know before the time comes. However, from my personal efforts, I effort not to carry work to the next day or not carry work home. It gives better situations (LY)

I believe my personal efforts and working model both play a role. Firstly, when working hours at the office is stable. For instance, during the weekdays when we start the job at the same hours and it ends at the same time every day this supports organizing work-life balance. When working hours change rapidly and constantly every time and every week there needs to have a new plan. If your working hours are blurred you need to have a daily plan according to that day. You can do your plan according to the next day at work and when you take into consideration the working hours. Those can be tiring sometimes; the working model affects it in that way. When it comes to my personal efforts, I think time management is my personal effort. I think personal efforts and working models should not be independent of each other (YEV).

The first participant from Generation Z emphasizes the importance of the work structure and the sector in which they are employed. They believe that having reasonable working hours positively impacts their ability to fulfill personal and family responsibilities, leading to a better balance. They also mentioned the importance of not

bringing work-related stress or tasks home and focusing on completing work within the designated work hours as a way to achieve availability and balance. The second participant from Generation Z expresses the view that having stable working hours allows for better planning and reduces the need for constant and rapid changes in their daily schedule. This stability in working hours contributes to a better balance between personal and family commitments.

I think we can say both, in our jobs after Covid 19 pandemic there is a transition into the voluntary procedure. It means going office is not obligatory if you want to go you will go with the group in which you will work. However, at the executive level, we are usually in the office, which makes hours and days more flexible. As a mother of 2 children when there is a need I leave the office earlier and come and go periodically to help to provide balance. Therefore, it is not me it is also about the opportunities which the workplace is provided. (NOK)

I think it is 50% for both. I work in a state hospital it is in a rural area. It starts at 8.30 a.m and 4.30 p.m. When I send my child to school, I can accompany my children to the service then I go to work. I leave work at 4.30 p.m 1 hour later I come back home my daughter returns from school by service which makes it very suitable. However, my personal effort is that I prefer to register my daughter at a private school because of my working hours. If I would have registered my daughter in a state school, students leave the school at 3. p.m at that school, I leave my work at 4.30 p.m it would have been hard I would have required a nanny for my child therefore, I preferred this way. (EK)

Since I am in the education sector, in Turkey schools have full-time education between 9.00-15.30 we are working between those hours. When we take into consideration of Istanbul conditions, we can assume we arrive home within 1 hour at 4.30-5.00 p.m. It is good for me. It is possible to be at home early and it paves the way for availability between work-life balance. I think it is about my working model. I do not think it is personal efforts it is about the education sector. I would have sacrificed my whole week if it had been a different sector. I started my work life in the education sector and I continued it was a suitable job option to have a work-life balance especially according to hours. (İE)

Participant 1 and Participant 3 both emphasize the significance of the working model and regulations within their respective sectors in achieving a balance between personal commitments and family responsibilities. They acknowledge that a supportive working model is crucial for maintaining this balance successfully. On the other hand, Participant 2 highlights the importance of not only the working model but also the alignment of work hours with their child's school hours. They believe that considering the school hours when planning their work schedule contributes to an efficient balance between personal and family responsibilities.

I think firstly it is about the working model of the office but my personal efforts are contributed too. For example, 2 times a week I had to take my daughter from



school. After I take my daughter, I start to work again at home, this is an example of my effort and the opportunities provided by my employers for me. (ME)

During the in-depth interview, the 6th participant, representing Generation X, expressed the belief that achieving work-life balance requires a combination of both the work model and personal efforts. They emphasized that the attitude and policies of employers play a crucial role in fostering a conducive work environment that supports work-life balance.

The primary focus of the interview was to investigate how the Covid-19 crisis impacted work-life balance, as all 6 participants confirmed that it had indeed affected them. Each participant shared their perspective on how the pandemic had changed their work-life balance. First, let's explore the viewpoints of the Generation Z participants:

During the Covid 19 times, the perception of working has also changed. We learned a new concept which is working from home. I know some firms have already known this concept and used it. However, in the consulate, which was new for us, we looked at the documents in our hands we worked from the office. It changed in any way like I had to work with my home clothes and I tried to create an office atmosphere which made me tired psychologically. There is a reason because in the home environment or family environment it is hard to feel yourself like in the office was incredibly difficult. Even though you had headphones in your ears you affect your environment. It also brings a lot of distraction which spreads quickly. It affected my work-life balance and changed me. I missed the office lives and concentrating on work, I have not had a problem with distraction before but in that era, I started to have a distraction problem it especially changed a lot. (LY)

During the Covid 19 term, my work hours changed and due to the model of working from home, my old working habits had to change. This felt to me hybrid working can be better. (YEV)

The first participant highlighted that the Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on work-life balance. They mentioned that the shift to remote work brought about various challenges, such as distractions and the need to adapt to a new working environment. The participant noted that the boundary between work and personal life became blurred when the home had to serve as both a workplace and a sanctuary, leading to difficulties in maintaining work-life balance.

Similarly, the second participant, who also belongs to Generation Z, shared their perspective on the effects of Covid-19 on work-life balance. They suggested that hybrid working, a combination of remote and in-person work, could serve as a potential solution to reconcile old habits and new ways of working. By adopting a hybrid approach, individuals can find a balance between the familiarity of the

traditional work setting and the flexibility of remote work.

The remaining participants shared their experiences of work-life balance during the Covid-19 pandemic:

During the Covid 19, working from home caused longer working hours rather than 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. At the weekend we reach each other more so flexible working increased. People reach and demand work by saying if you are at home we should work now spontaneously. After the pandemic decreased working from home and distance working continued spontaneously. Working from home is quite active in the technology sector. The flexibility of working hours continues for the weekend it starts to normalize. There is no longer regulation of normal working hours between 9 a.m and 6. p.m (NOK)

As I person who works in the health sector, I had to work with patients in the same environment in one-on-one contact in the same room. Of course, we were taking some precautions, but after Covid 19 started we were wearing masks and even face shields and we were more careful. Before Covid 19 there was a disease such as upper respiratory infection spread from the patients but we were not even aware of it. After Covid 19 started we start to be more conscious about it. If the patient transmits the disease to me, I can transmit it to my daughter and my husband it changed my work-life balance ideas. (EK)

Since I am working in the education sector as a teacher, under normal conditions we are doing our lessons at school, after Covid 19 our lesson place transformed into a computer because we transformed into online education. Therefore, we carry our work home. It created a difference while doing home duties and sustaining an education. In the beginning, it was hard to get used to telling lessons to the class by computer. After some time, we got used to online education. However, in the adaptation process, we experienced a little unbalanced. (IE)

In the technology sector, the Covid-19 pandemic disrupted the traditional notion of regular working hours and introduced flexible working arrangements. Flexible working became more normalized across various sectors, allowing for different workdays, including weekends. Prior to the pandemic, work was typically confined to the standard 5 weekdays, with any additional work limited to those days. However, Participant 3 highlighted that the shift to remote work brought about new challenges, such as spontaneous deadlines and work meetings, as individuals had the flexibility to work from anywhere at any time.

In the health sector, Covid-19 had a significant impact on work-life balance due to the risk of transmitting the virus. Participant 4 shared their experience of the responsibility of potentially bringing the virus home and the need to prioritize the safety of their family. This concern affected work-life balance as extra precautions and attention had to be given to minimize the risk of transmission within the household.

The education sector also experienced changes in work-life balance as a result of the Covid-19 crisis. Participant 5, a school teacher, explained how the shift to online lessons and remote teaching transformed the traditional face-to-face education setting. This new mode of teaching from home disrupted the typical work-life balance for teachers, requiring adjustments to their routines and creating new challenges in managing their professional and personal lives.

From the perspective of Generation X, the participant discussed how the Covid-19 crisis changed work-life balance in general:

We had to work from home because of the Pandemic, in the beginning, it took time but I adapted to the new situation. It shows working from home can be effective as as working from the office. However, there are disadvantages to working from home for instance in the house there are many distractor elements that changed my mind. (ME)

Despite the literature suggesting that Generation X may have more difficulty adapting to changes, Participant 6 in the interview demonstrates a positive perspective towards working from the office. However, it is evident that the issue of distractions is a common challenge experienced by participants across different age groups, including Generation Z.

Regarding the question about how participants managed to achieve satisfaction in their work-life balance, the Generation Z participants provided the following responses:

During Covid 19 times, I thought about work and life conflicts because it felt to me, I am doing two of them at the same time and this made me think I cannot properly do both. It was hard to give attention and focus on both. After Covid 19 to plan properly both made possible. It is important to have a good plan, to do work at the office only and not to carry work home is important. I do my work during normal working hours without any hesitation and do not leave work without being completely done. After I finish the task, it does not stay in my mind, so it does not reflect on my personal life. The idea of unfinished business reflects my day even though I do not have to do it immediately. If I think some task that has not been finished yet it sticks to my mind even at dinner at 8. P.m. It paves the way for work-life conflict, which means I cannot separate work and private life. I prefer not to work in my private life by focusing on the moment if there is no important project. (LY)

When working hours are stable and foreseeable it is easy to have a good plan for your personal life. This may cause a good balance between work and life. For instance, when you leave from somewhere around 5. p.m and it will be your personal time until 7, the only way to organize your plan that you have stable working hours, I am satisfied with my situation, and in my work, there are no changing hours, so I am satisfied. I do not need a different plan for each day of the week. (YEV)

Participant 1 emphasizes the importance of separating work life and personal life in order to achieve work-life balance. They believe that when individuals leave unfinished tasks for home, it disrupts the balance between work and personal life. The participant suggests completing all tasks at the office and avoiding work-related discussions at the family table to achieve work-life satisfaction. They highlight the need to be fully present in both work and personal life, focusing on the present moment, and avoiding distractions. Participant 2 prioritizes the stability and predictability of their work structure. They suggest that having an organized and stable work environment, along with a similar approach at home, contributes to work-life balance. By having clear boundaries and routines in both work and personal life, the participant believes that they can achieve a satisfying balance between the two domains. Both participants from Generation Z highlight different aspects of achieving work-life balance.

I love doing my job very much. When you love to do your job very much it removes the serious restrictions and boundaries. For me during the time of the day within my private life answering the work e-mail or making a job call not to give the idea that I am doing my work, it is different because it is the compensation for your labor at work. At the end of the day, it is about loving your job and doing the job with the love and it is also about seeing your job as a hobby by separating the domains. I also believe in home regulation it is important to have quality time for work rather than working long hours. When you have quality time it provides a balance. (NOK)

I provide this satisfaction by planning. I have no shift at work according to my working system. I also do not work at the weekend and do not need extra work in the evening. I work from the morning to the evening. If I set aside time for myself, I do things in the evening or at the weekend. For instance, if I go to sports, I go at the weekend. If I spend time with my family, I am doing it after work. If my daughter has responsibility for school when her school is finished, I have already left to work so I am planning. Therefore, I provide a work-life balance like that. I am satisfied with this situation right now. (EK)

In the Turkish education sector, schools have holidays on specific dates and summer holidays are pretty much. There are also mid-term breaks, which provide personal time to us. We can have time to do what we desire. It can be time for reading books or traveling to new places, watch the movie you want to see those give time to me for my personal life. I am satisfied because of this situation. After I leave school when work is finished, I try to do things that I love. (İE)

The first participant highlights the importance of loving one's job in achieving work-life balance. When individuals are passionate about their work, they are more likely to enjoy dedicating their private time to it, and it becomes less of a burden. This

passion and love for the job contribute to overall satisfaction with work-life balance. In the health sector, despite its busy nature, it is still possible to plan and allocate special time for personal activities outside of work. The participant suggests that having fixed working hours without additional overtime may contribute to work-life balance. In the education sector, the availability of numerous holidays and breaks compared to other sectors provides an advantage for individuals to have dedicated time for personal life and achieve work-life balance. These observations suggest that participants in different sectors might leverage the unique opportunities and characteristics of their respective fields to create a satisfactory work-life balance. The love for the job, proper planning, and taking advantage of sector-specific benefits can all play a role in achieving a fulfilling work-life balance.

Normally my working hours are between 8 a.m and 4.30 p.m after 4.30 p.m my work life finishes and my private life starts. I can do whatever I want, If there is a private matter that occurs between office hours, I prefer taking time off work, to handle my thing that's why I have no problem with it. I am pretty much satisfied. (ME)

Having work-life balance policies in place, such as time-off and day-off policies, is indeed crucial for organizations to support their employees in achieving satisfaction with work-life balance. These policies provide employees with the necessary flexibility and support to manage their personal and professional responsibilities effectively.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **4. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 Survey Conclusion**

In this study, the primary objective was to examine work-life balance in relation to generational and gender differences. The findings indicate that both women and men are equally interested in participating in work-life balance research. The survey responses revealed that executives were the most enthusiastic group, with nearly half of the participants occupying executive positions.

Furthermore, the study revealed that the majority of participants work full-time, while job-sharing was the least common working arrangement. During the in-depth interviews, the reasons behind the low preference for job-sharing were explored, questioning whether it was due to a lack of familiarity with this working style.

The study also enlightens the issue of working more than standard hours. A significant percentage of participants reported working extra hours without receiving additional payment or time off. This raises concerns about the lack of compensation for the additional workload.

Family-friendly policies have gained prominence in workplaces worldwide, and their importance in achieving work-life balance cannot be overstated. This study examined work-life balance by analyzing working arrangements, opinions on working beyond standard hours, and whether participants received rewards such as compensation or time off for their extra work. The presence of family-friendly policies was found to be prevalent, with more than half of the participants reporting their

companies had such policies. This is likely to contribute to the satisfaction of work-life balance in the business environment.

Fortunately, the survey results revealed that over half of the participants reported having family-friendly work-life balance policies in their companies. This finding suggests a positive correlation between the presence of such policies and satisfaction with work-life balance in the business context. It is evident that work policies designed to support work-life balance are inherently linked to employee satisfaction. This connection will be further explored in the results of the in-depth interviews.

Satisfaction with work-life balance is crucial for the effectiveness of company policies. Our research findings indicate that the majority of participants reported being satisfied with their work-life balance. Companies that offer various work-life balance policies are observed to experience increased productivity, higher levels of satisfaction, and enhanced employee commitment, as supported by the findings of Tosun & Keskin (2017) and our own study.

In our study, over 70% of participants reported having more than one work-life balance policy available to them. These policies included paternity leave, maternity leave, family leave, job-sharing, flexible work arrangements, and contract work. While maternity leave was a commonly reported policy, it is interesting to note that the most popular response was paternity leave, suggesting an increasing recognition of the importance of parental leave for both mothers and fathers.

However, our study also revealed a concerning trend. The majority of participants reported not pursuing any studies while working in the past two years. This suggests that employers are not adequately supporting their employees' desires to continue their education while maintaining their careers. This lack of support can contribute to work-life balance conflicts and hinder employees' personal and professional development.

The Covid-19 crisis has had a profound impact on the business world, affecting employees' work-life balance. Our survey results showed that over half of the participants were indeed affected by the crisis, resulting in negative outcomes in various aspects of their lives. While the survey provided an overview of the impact, the in-depth interviews allowed participants to provide detailed accounts of how their work-life balance was affected by the pandemic.

Another important aspect explored in the study was the alignment between suitable working arrangements and family responsibilities with personal life. The

majority of respondents indicated that they found their working arrangements and responsibilities to be suitable. This was further discussed in the in-depth interviews, shedding light on the reasons behind this alignment. Additionally, our findings confirm that organizations with work-life policies in place tend to have higher satisfaction rates among employees. The availability of such policies was positively correlated with work-life balance and working arrangement satisfaction, as reported by the survey participants.

One of the notable findings of the study is that a portion of the participants reported working less than full-time. Education was identified as a significant factor influencing this trend, as individuals who are still studying tend to opt for less than full-time working arrangements. Additionally, having more free time was another reason cited for working less than full-time. It is worth noting that participants who worked while studying often did not receive compensation from their companies.

Gender differences in working hours have been a subject of research in the business world. Both men and women expressed concerns about working more than the standard office schedule, but the study found that men tend to work more hours than women. This gender difference in working hours was found to have a significant relationship. Thus, the hypothesis regarding gender differences in working hours was accepted.

The study also emphasized the impact of working arrangements on work-life balance. Four types of working arrangements were examined: full-time, part-time, job-sharing, and flexible working. The results revealed a significant relationship between working arrangements and generational differences. Generation X was found to have a higher proportion of full-time jobs compared to Generation Z. Additionally, Generation Z showed a preference for part-time and flexible working arrangements, although the differences were not as pronounced in the case of flexible working. These findings confirm the hypothesis regarding the relationship between working arrangements and generational differences.

The study highlights the significance of work-life balance satisfaction in the business world, as it impacts both work performance and personal life quality. The satisfaction with work-life balance was compared between generations, and the results revealed a significant relationship. Generation X was found to be more satisfied with their work-life balance compared to Generation Z. Additionally, a higher proportion of participants from Generation X reported being "pretty much satisfied" with their



work-life balance compared to Generation Z.

Another important aspect examined in the study was the tendency to work more than the standard office hours. While previous research has explored gender differences in this regard, this study aimed to investigate the relationship between generations and working beyond the standard hours. The findings indicated that there was no significant relationship between Generation X and Generation Z regarding working more than the standard office hours.

The study aimed to examine the availability of personal and family responsibilities in relation to working arrangements, specifically focusing on gender differences. The results indicated that there were no significant differences between men and women regarding the availability of personal and family responsibilities based on working arrangements. Therefore, the hypothesis suggesting a significant relationship was rejected.

Furthermore, the study explored the relationship between continuing one's career and pursuing education or vocational training, considering gender differences. The findings revealed that there was no significant relationship between men and women in terms of working while being a student.

Crisis situations, such as economic crises or disasters, have been known to impact work-life balance. In the context of the recent Covid-19 crisis, the study investigated its effects on work-life balance. Survey analysis indicated that participants affirmed that Covid-19 had indeed affected their work-life balance. Additionally, there was a significant relationship observed between the effects of Covid-19 on work-life balance and generational differences, particularly between Generation Z and Generation X. Generation X participants reported being more affected by Covid-19 in terms of work-life balance compared to Generation Z.

In conclusion, the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between generations and the occurrence of individuals simultaneously working and studying. Generation Z participants reported a higher prevalence of working while studying compared to Generation X. Therefore, the hypothesis stating a relationship between generations and the situation of working and studying concurrently is accepted.

## **4.2 Discussion**

This study focuses on two main dimensions: comparing Generation X and

Generation Z, and comparing men and women participants.

One of the findings from the study is that students who are also working have an expectation for a flexible working environment. The interviews revealed that Generation Z participants are particularly comfortable with working in a flexible environment and view taking time off as crucial in managing their dual roles as students and employees. Additionally, these employees who are also students expressed a desire for more freedom from their organizations. They showed willingness to seek mentorship from the company, but typically after they have become familiar with the organizational structure.

The study by Pekica (2020) highlights that the preference for flexibility among Generation Z employees is driven by their desire to have the freedom to make mistakes and not be constantly controlled. They value the opportunity to work in a flexible manner and view it as an important aspect of their work-life balance.

Another study conducted by Daly (2019) reveals a significant relationship between work-life balance and stress at work. As stress levels increase, work-life conflicts arise, affecting both personal life and work life. This finding suggests that work-life balance conflicts have a pervasive impact. The study also concludes that work-life balance conflicts have implications for job satisfaction, both from the perspective of the organization and the individual employee's motivation. Achieving a satisfactory work-life balance is therefore crucial for promoting job satisfaction and motivation among employees.

The study by Parker (2007) supports the importance of work-life policies in addressing work-life conflicts. The most common work-life policies identified in the study, such as unpaid medical family leave, maternity leave with payment, and part-time work options, align with the findings of our study. Additionally, both studies highlight job sharing as the least preferred work-life balance policy. Another study by Akoğlu and Eroğlu (2019) emphasizes the negative impact of long working hours on work-life balance, affecting both Generation X and other generations. It also reveals that women tend to experience more work-life balance conflicts, leading to greater interference of work in their personal lives compared to men. The study also sheds light on the relationship between income and the awareness of work-life balance. Participants with lower monthly incomes were found to have a higher consciousness regarding the interconnection between their personal and work lives compared to those with higher incomes. These findings contribute to our understanding of the

complexities surrounding work-life balance, including the role of work-life policies, the impact of long working hours, gender differences, and the relationship between income and work-life balance consciousness.

The study by Fatima and Sahibzada (2012) highlights the role of partner support in dealing with work-life conflict and its impact on satisfaction levels among university instructors. It suggests that female instructors tend to experience higher work-life pressure due to childcare responsibilities, leading to greater work-life conflict. Additionally, the study found that female instructors reported lower satisfaction levels than their male colleagues in terms of support from colleagues regarding work-life balance. The study by Hofäcker and König (2013) examines the effects of reduced working hours on work-life conflict, specifically focusing on gender differences. The results indicate that reduced working hours have a negative impact on men compared to women. This can be attributed to the traditional role expectations where men see themselves as the primary breadwinners. On the other hand, the study reveals that women's work-life conflict is influenced by their husband's working hours, while men's work-life balance seems to be independent of their wife's working hours. These studies shed light on the gender dynamics within work-life balance. They highlight the differential experiences and pressures faced by women and men, as well as the role of partner support and societal expectations in shaping work-life balance outcomes.

The research conducted by Hjálmsdóttir and Bjarnadóttir (2021) explores the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on work-life balance, with a particular focus on the experiences of mothers. The study includes interviews with participants who share how their lives have been affected by the pandemic. The findings reveal that the Covid-19 crisis has brought significant changes to individuals' lives, particularly for working women. The division of labor at home, combined with the challenges of working during the pandemic, plays a crucial role in work-life balance for these women. Many interviewees express that their motivation for work is affected by the problems their children face and the challenges of managing home responsibilities while working remotely. Some interviewees mention a preference for working from the office rather than from home, as they perceive a higher level of work-life conflict when working remotely. The study also highlights that the mental health and well-being of both older adults and children can be negatively impacted by the lockdown and the effects of Covid-19, further influencing work-life balance. The external issues arising from the pandemic make it challenging to maintain motivation and achieve a satisfactory work-

life balance.

Overall, this research underscores the significant impact of the Covid-19 crisis on work-life balance, particularly for working mothers, and highlights the interplay between external factors, such as family challenges and mental well-being, and their effects on work motivation and balance.

### **4.3 Suggestions**

Based on the findings of the research, there are several suggestions that can be considered to improve work-life balance policies and address the differences between generations and genders:

1. **Gender and working hours:** Since men tend to work more than standard working hours compared to women, organizations can consider employing more men for job roles that typically require longer working hours. This can help distribute the workload more evenly and reduce work-life balance conflicts for women.
2. **Working arrangements and generations:** Generation X is found to be more engaged in full-time jobs, while Generation Z prefers flexible working arrangements. To facilitate a smoother transition and adaptation process for Generation Z in full-time jobs, organizations can implement mentorship programs where experienced Generation X employees act as mentors and guide the younger generation in adjusting to the demands of full-time work. Similarly, reverse mentorship can be implemented, where Generation X employees learn from Generation Z employees regarding flexible working practices.
3. **Part-time work and opportunities for young generations:** The study highlights the prevalence of part-time work among young generations. Organizations can explore and create more opportunities for part-time employment, especially for students who want to balance work and studies. Increasing the availability of part-time jobs can support the young generation in gaining work experience and maintaining a better work-life balance.
4. **Generational interaction and mentorship:** Encouraging interaction and mentorship between Generation X and Generation Z can foster a sense of belonging and facilitate knowledge sharing. HR departments can establish

mentorship programs where employees from different generations can learn from each other's experiences and perspectives, ultimately improving work-life balance satisfaction.

5. **Childcare support and family consultants:** Recognizing the challenges faced by employees, particularly Generation X, in managing their children's needs during the Covid-19 crisis, organizations can provide childcare support. This can include offering flexible work arrangements, subsidies for childcare services, or access to family consultants who can provide guidance and support for families.
6. **Work-life balance policies for Covid-19:** Given the significant impact of the pandemic on work-life balance, organizations should consider implementing specific policies and initiatives to address the challenges arising from Covid-19. This may include offering remote work options, flexible working hours, mental health support, and resources for managing work and personal responsibilities during these challenging times.
7. **Support for working students:** Recognizing that Generation Z has been juggling work and studies more frequently, organizations can provide additional support for their unique needs. This can include flexible scheduling, financial assistance or scholarships, study support programs, and mentorship opportunities specific to their educational and professional growth.

By implementing these recommendations, organizations can create a supportive environment that promotes work-life balance, enhances employee satisfaction, and effectively addresses the challenges faced by different generations, particularly in light of the Covid-19 crisis. HR departments play a crucial role in driving these initiatives and ensuring they are effectively implemented and communicated to employees.

#### **4.4 Result of The In-depth Interviews**

The in-depth interviews involved two participants from Generation Z who provided insights into how Covid-19 has affected their work-life balance. The aim was to understand their reasons for preferring flexible work arrangements and to explore their knowledge of job sharing, which emerged as the least preferred option. All participants in the in-depth interviews indicated high availability and satisfaction in

response to the last two questions.

The Generation Z participants interviewed experienced difficulties in maintaining concentration while working from home during the Covid-19 pandemic. They found it challenging to create an office-like environment in their homes. However, they viewed flexible working as the optimal solution for managing their family and personal responsibilities. Having the ability to adjust their working hours based on task completion provided motivation to leave work earlier. It was also important to them that any extra work required was communicated clearly and not imposed without prior notice, as this had a direct impact on their satisfaction and work-life balance.

In the in-depth interviews, it was concluded that Generation Z considers working according to a planned schedule as crucial. They believe that avoiding carrying work tasks into their personal lives helps prevent uncomfortable situations and work-life conflicts.

Another important finding from the in-depth interviews with Generation Z participants is their preference for stable working hours and a consistent daily schedule. They value having a structured day, and they take individual responsibility for managing their time effectively as employees.

One participant mentioned that the Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted work routines and blurred the boundaries between work and personal life. The accessibility provided by technology has led to longer working hours, particularly in the technology sector. Participants highlighted the importance of support from domestic helpers and spouses in maintaining work-life balance. Despite having two children, the participant expressed satisfaction with work-life balance, attributing it not only to the support received but also to their love for their job. The interviews revealed that when individuals have a passion for their work and perceive it as a hobby, it positively impacts their ability to manage work-life conflicts and contributes to higher satisfaction with work-life balance among the survey participants.

From the perspective of the health sector, existing literature suggests that doctors often face significant work-life conflicts due to their demanding working hours. However, our study identified individuals within the health sector who reported satisfaction and a good work-life balance. In the in-depth interview with a physiotherapist working in a hospital, it was found that her satisfaction was primarily attributed to reasonable working hours. Unlike doctors, some healthcare workers did

not need to work extra hours due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The study revealed that work-life balance varied among health workers, with some being able to achieve a good balance. Furthermore, the findings highlighted how individuals made efforts to choose private colleges that finish later in the day, eliminating the need for additional childcare or family support. Although work-life policies were present in the survey, participants frequently mentioned supportive tools such as attending a college with late finishing hours.

Additionally, a participant working in the education sector was analyzed and found to be highly satisfied with a good work-life balance. Following the interview, it was observed that the education sector provided individuals with sufficient space and free time outside of work. Although this may vary across institutions, the presence of summer holidays and midterm breaks during semesters was highlighted as motivational and helpful in establishing clear boundaries between work and personal life. Furthermore, the participant discussed the transformation of education into online formats due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and how this shift affected interactions and emotions during the learning process.

Lastly, a Generation X participant working as an employee emphasized the importance of good communication with executives for achieving work-life balance. The participant explained that the organization's executives implemented work-life balance policies effectively, resulting in family leaves, days off, and emergency situations not being problematic. The participant attributed their high level of satisfaction and work-life balance availability to the attitudes of their bosses and the opportunities provided by the company.

#### **4.5 Further Research and Limitations**

Firstly, in the chi-square part of the application, not all survey data were used for differences between generations. The data of the limited number of participants were used. While gender differences are found in all the 280 respondents' answer generational differences were found in only 155 respondents' answer.

In the literature, work-life balance policies are often found to be more prevalent in developed countries. However, this research revealed that despite the high satisfaction rate and suitability of job work-life balance, it was primarily due to the recent efforts made in developing work-life balance policies and the support provided

by some executives. Studies also indicate that in more developed countries, people may not receive compensation for working extra hours, and this situation is similar in Turkey.

In this study, generational and gender comparisons were conducted, and significant differences were found between Generation Z and Generation X, which aligns with expectations. However, in terms of gender, there were only a few differences between men and women, which does not fully align with existing literature. This could be explained by several reasons. Firstly, the study was conducted in Istanbul and the survey was limited to 280 participants. Istanbul is a large metropolis with a high influx of people coming for university education, which may influence the awareness and availability of work-life balance. Additionally, the survey did not include information about income levels, which could be related to the level of satisfaction with work-life balance, as income provides opportunities to seek support in dealing with work-life conflicts. These limitations should be taken into account when interpreting the findings of the study.

For future studies, it would be beneficial to explore the relationship between work-life balance and factors such as education, location, and income level of employees in different cities in Turkey. This would provide a broader perspective and allow for comparisons across different regions, shedding light on any potential variations in work-life balance experiences. By examining the influence of these factors, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of how work-life balance is shaped by different socio-economic contexts and environments. This approach would expand the scope of research beyond generational and gender differences and contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of work-life balance dynamics in Turkey.



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## APPENDIX A

### SURVEY

Merhaba, bu anket formu "Kadın ve Erkeklerin İş ve Aile Dengesinin Kariyere Yansıması" ilişkisini tespit etmek amacıyla yürütülmektedir. Tez çalışmasının bilimsel özelliği bakımından soruları içtenlikle yanıtlamanız son derece önemlidir. Ankete katılanların verdikleri bilgiler kesinlikle gizli tutulacak ve herhangi bir ticari amaçla kullanılmayacaktır. Katılımınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederim.

Yöneticiler için İşletme Yönetimi Programı Gökse  
Erkılınç

Öğrenci

**\* Zorunlu soruyu belirtir**

Adsız Başlık

1. 1-Cinsiyetiniz nedir? \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- Erkek  
 Kadın

2. 2-Hangi yaş grubuna aitsiniz? \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- 20-29  
 30-39  
 40-49  
 50-59

3-Çalışıyor musunuz? \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- Tam zamanlı  
 Part time  
 Dönüşümlü İş Paylaşımı  
 Esnek Zamanlı

4- Hangi çalışma aralığını tercih edersiniz? \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- Tam zamanlı  
 Part-time  
 Dönüşümlü İş Paylaşımı  
 Esnek Zamanlı

5-İşinizi en iyi tarif eden kavram? \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- Yönetici  
 Şef/Gözetmen/Nezaretçi  
 Personel

6-Genellikle standart mesai saatlerinden uzun mu çalışırsınız? \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- Evet  
 Hayır

7-Eğer cevabınız evetse; bunun karşılığı size nasıl döner?

*Yalnızca bir şıkka işaretleyin.*

- Fazla mesai ücreti  
 Ücretli izin  
 İkisi de  
 Hiçbiri

8-Aile dostu politikalardan hangisi çalıştığınız şirkette/kurumda mevcuttur? \*

*Uygun olanların tümünü işaretleyin.*

- Babalık izni  
 Evlatlık Çocuk  
 İzni Doğum İzni  
 Ailevi Sebepler Dolayısıyla  
 İzin Çocuk Bakım Desteği  
 Dönüşümlü İş Paylaşımı  
 Esnek Çalışma  
 Ücretsiz Kariyer Arası  
 İzni Kontratlalı Çalışan  
 Diğer: \_\_\_\_\_

9-Aile iş yaşamı dengesine yönelik fikriniz COVID-19 krizinden beri değişti mi? \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkka işaretleyin.*

- Evet  
 Hayır

10- Son 2 yıl içinde hem çalışıp hem okuduğunuz bir dönem oldu mu? \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkka işaretleyin.*

- Evet  
 Hayır

11-Cevabınız evetse işvereninizden destek aldınız mı? (Finansal destek, ders çalışma izni vb.)

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- Evet  
 Hayır

12-Tam zamanlı çalışma saatlerinden daha az çalışıyorsanız (part-time,dönüşümlü iş bölümü, esnek zaman) sebebi nedir? \*

Zaten tam zamanlı çalışıyorsanız ilk şıkkı işaretleyin.

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- Tam zamanlı çalışıyorum  
 Çocuk bakımı ile işi  
birleştirmek  
 Daha çok boş vakit yaratmak  
 Okula/ mesleki eğitime vakit  
ayırarak  
 Sağlık sebebi ile  
 Tam zamanlı iş bulamadım  
 Diğer: \_\_\_\_\_

13-Şuan ki çalışma aralıklarınız kişisel/aile sorumluluklarınız ile uyumlu mu? \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- Çok uygun  
 Oldukça uygun  
 Emin değilim  
 Çok uygun değil  
 Hiç uygun değil

14-İş ve kişisel hayatınız arasındaki dengeden ne ölçüde memnunsunuz? \*

*Yalnızca bir şıkkı işaretleyin.*

- Çok memnunum
- Memnunum
- Hiçbiri
- Memnun değilim
- Çok memnuniyetsizim

## APPENDIX B

### INTERVIEW

İş ve Yaşam Dengesinin Kariyere Yansıması konulu bir tez yazıyorum. Daha önce anketimi doldurduğunuz için teşekkür ederim. Bu çalışma gönüllülük esasına dayalıdır ve bilgiler gizli tutulacak hiçbir ticari amaçla kullanılmayacaktır.

1- Röportajın kaydedilmesini kabul ediyor musunuz?

2- Öncelikle yaşınızı ve hangi sektörde çalıştığınızı öğrenebilir miyim?

3- İş-yaşam dengesine yönelik fikriniz Covid 19 krizinden beri değişti demişsiniz Covid 19 fikrinizi nasıl değiştirdi?

4- Cevaplarda en az tercih edilen çalışma aralığı dönüşümlü iş paylaşımı orjinal adıyla job-sharing iken en fazla tercih edilen esnek çalışmaydı. Job sharing'i daha önce duydunuz mu?

Dönüşümlü iş paylaşımı sizin için ne anlama geliyor?

Esnek çalışma sizin için ne anlama geliyor?

5- Şuan ki çalışma aralıklarınız kişisel aile sorumluluklarınız ile uyumlu mu sorusuna çok uygun diyen kişilerden birisiniz. Kişisel aile sorumluluklarınız ile uygun olma sebebi sizin kişisel çabalarınız mı, iş yerinin çalışma modeli midir?

6- İş ve kişisel hayatınız arasındaki dengeden ne ölçüde memnunsunuz sorusuna çok memnunum şeklinde yanıtlayanlardan birisiniz, bunu nasıl sağlıyorsunuz?



## **CURRICULUM VITAE**