



Work-Life Balance Management in Nepal's Hospitality Industry

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Abstract

Background: The hospitality industry in Nepal faces significant work-life balance (WLB) challenges due to its demanding work nature, characterized by long and irregular hours, high stress, and emotional labor. Despite its economic importance, the sector struggles with employee burnout and turnover, necessitating research into effective WLB strategies.

Objectives: This study (1) examines the impact of extended working hours on work stress and productivity, (2) contrasts the effectiveness of organizational policies, (3) examines the impact of family responsibilities on job performance, (4) quantifies career opportunities as a retention dimension, and (5) pinpoints targeted interventions for enhancing WLB. **Methods:** There was a mixed-methods design that collected data from 132 hospitality workers through structured online questionnaires. Descriptive statistics were employed to analyze quantitative data on working hours, policies, and stress levels, while qualitative data analyzed employees' experiences. **Findings:** The key findings are 31.8% of employees work 8-10 hours a day, and 63.6% suffer productivity losses as a result of working long hours. While 77.3% of firms offer counseling and 84.1% parental leave, only 62.1% of employees are content with WLB. Surprisingly, 81.1% welcome career prospects despite challenges, and 70.5% endure work stress during off-work hours. **Conclusion:** The study points to important gaps between existing policies and employee needs, highlighting the importance of better deployed flexible working hours, family-friendly policies, and mental well-being measures to enable WLB and retention. **Novelty:** The study provides the first comprehensive analysis of WLB challenges in Nepal's hotel sector, offering context-sensitive responses spanning policy effectiveness and ground realities.

Keywords: Work-life balance, hotel sector, employee stress, organizational policies, job satisfaction, Nepal

Introduction

Hospitality is most commonly associated with their hectic and stressful working environment, long working hours, irregular shifts, and high-stress customer care jobs (Aoun & Thakur, 2024; Teoh et al., 2019; Gordon, 2022). Employees within the sector often have problems with leaving work and personal life separate, leading to increased stress, burnout, and decreased job satisfaction (Kelly et al., 2020; Paudel et al., 2024; Gautam et al., 2025). The type of work involved in hospitality—being constantly available, performing emotional labor, and working variable hours during peak periods—makes it very challenging to achieve work-life balance (WLB) in this industry compared to other sectors (Gupta et al., 2024; Battur & Jayadatta, 2024; Marthalina, 2025).

Studies worldwide have pointed out the negative impact of poor WLB on employees' well-being and organizational performance (Agunda, 2024; Chang, 2024). Western nations have adopted flexible work schedules and employee well-being programs as a means to combat these problems (Loh & Cheng, 2024). However, empirical data on how WLB challenges arise in emerging economy nations like Nepal, where the hospitality sector is growing rapidly, is



lacking. Cultural values, labor laws, and organizational systems of support all become relevant and are crucial factors in determining workers' ability to balance work and life.

Hospitality is one of the major sectors in Nepal's economy, and it supports a major portion of the workforce, particularly in urban and tourist zones. While economically important, the sector experiences excessive employee turnover as a result of job dissatisfaction and stress (Bhat et al., 2024). It is vital for policy-making to induce staff retention, workability, and overall well-being to identify the unique WLB issues of Nepalese hospitality workers.

Problem Statement

Even though earlier studies have examined WLB in various sectors, there is a substantial gap in research focused on the hospitality industry, particularly in Nepal. The uniqueness of the industry—non-standard work arrangements, fluctuating demand during the year, and high customer demands—poses unique stressors that are not treated fully in the available literature. The majority of hospitality workers report missing family and social events due to work, ongoing stress, and poor mental health, but little has been documented on how these impact their work output and long-term career sustainability.

Significance of the Study

The study has theoretical as well as practical implications. Conceptually, it contributes to the limited current evidence base on WLB in Nepal's hospitality sector by identifying key stressors and their impact on employee well-being. Practically, the findings will help hospitality managers and policymakers develop targeted interventions, such as flexible work arrangements, mental health services, and family leave policies, to maximize employee satisfaction and turnover reduction. In addition, the study advocates for more comprehensive labor policy reforms to facilitate equitable working conditions in the industry.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the impact of long hours of work on employee performance and stress.
2. To assess organizational policies as a strategy to boost work-life balance.
3. To determine the impact of family responsibilities on performance and job satisfaction.
4. To examine career progression as a retention incentive in spite of work-life imbalance.
5. To advise focused interventions to correct deficiencies in work-life balance management.

Methodology

This study uses a mixed-method design, combining quantitative questionnaires and qualitative results to comprehensively assess work-life balance (WLB) in Nepal's hotel industry. A pre-designed online survey was conducted among 132 hospitality workers, including hotel staff, restaurant workers, and managers, using Google Forms. The questionnaire collected details on work duration, organisational policies, levels of stress, and job satisfaction, with their responses examined through descriptive statistics (frequency, percentages) in Excel and SPSS.

The survey employed random and stratified sampling to ensure representation by different job positions, experience levels, and hospitality types (hotels, restaurants, resorts). The study requirements were at least six months of industry experience, and temporary and seasonal

workers with less than three months of employment were excluded. The survey employed Likert-scale items (such as ratings on job satisfaction) as well as open-ended responses to enable capturing of subjective experience and also allow statistical and thematic analysis.

To enhance validity, 20 hospitality professionals were pilot-tested for the purposes of simplifying questions. Ethical concerns included anonymous responses and informed consent. The study limitations include potential self-reporting bias and confining the study to urban hospitality sectors. It is possible to expand research to rural sectors and interviews to ensure high-quality qualitative data in future studies. This method offers a balanced evaluation of WLB issues and canary-in-the-coal-mine support systems in Nepal's hospitality sector.

Results and Discussion

Demographic analysis

This information was gathered via a floating questionnaire distribution to the male and female employees of the hospitality industry in Nepal. This section describes the demographic profile of the respondents and how the primary data acquired via survey was used to analyze and interpret it. As a result, it will be simpler to comprehend the respondents demographic characteristics. The profile of the respondents comprises the respondents gender, age, education level.

Table 1

Age Respondents

Age					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below 20 years	9	6.8	6.8	6.8
	21-30 years	83	62.8	62.8	69.6
	31-40 years	27	20.6	20.6	90.2
	above 40 years	13	9.8	9.8	100.0
	Total	132	100.0	100.0	

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents based on age group. Among the 132 individuals, 20.5% are below 20 years (i.e., 27 individuals), 61.4% are between 21-30 years (i.e., 81 individuals), 8.3% are between 31-40 years (i.e., 11 individuals) and 9.8% are above 40 years (i.e., 13 individuals). This data indicates that there are maximum numbers of individual between age 21-30 years.

Table 2

Gender

Gender					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	74	56.1	56.1	56.1
	Female	58	43.9	43.9	100.0
	Total	132	100.0	100.0	

Table 2 shows the distribution of respondents based on gender. Among the 135 individuals, 56.1% are Male (i.e., 74 individuals), 43.9% are Female (i.e., 58 individuals). This data indicates that there are maximum males who gave the data.

Table 3

Marital status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Single	44	66.7	66.7	66.7
	Married	88	33.3	33.33	100.0
	Total	132	100.0	100.0	

The data in Table 3: Marital Status reveals that out of 132 respondents, the majority (66.7%, n=44) are single, while a smaller proportion (33.3%, n=88) are married, with no other marital statuses represented. The equal values for Percent and Valid Percent indicate no missing data, and the Cumulative Percent confirms that the categories are exhaustive (totaling 100%). This suggests a binary classification, possibly reflecting a young or never-married population, or a study design that intentionally excluded other marital statuses (e.g., divorced, widowed). The skewed distribution toward single individuals may influence the generalizability of findings, particularly if marital status is a relevant variable in the research context.

Analysis

Table 4

How many hours do you work in a day.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 6 hours	36	27.3	27.3	27.3
	6-8	33	25	25	52.3
	8-10	42	31.8	31.8	84.1
	More than 10 hours	21	15.9	15.9	100.0
	Total	132	100.0	100.0	

Table 4 shows the distribution of the hotel for working hours, between the respondents. Among 132 individuals, 27.3% less than 6 hours with the statement (i.e., 36 individuals). 25% say 6-8 hours with the statement (i.e., 33 individuals). 31.8% feels the statement is 8-10 hours (i.e., 42 individuals). 15.9% more than 10 hours with the statement (i.e., 21 individuals). Since, the majority says that the hotel highly 8-10 hours work in a day.

Table 5

How much time do you travel to reach at work place.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 1 hours	96	72.7	72.7	72.7
	1-2	26	19.7	19.7	92.4
	2-3	6	4.5	4.5	96.9
	More than 4 hours	4	3	3	100.0
	Total	132	100.0	100.0	

Table 5 shows the distribution of the travel to reach work place, between the respondents. Among 132 individuals, 72.7% say that less than 1 hours with the statement (i.e., 96 individuals). 19.7% say 1-2 hours with the statement (i.e., 26 individuals). 4.5% feels the statement is 2-3 hours (i.e., 6 individuals). 3% more than 4 hours with the statement (i.e., 4 individuals). 7.6% Since, the majority are less travel to reach work place.

Table 6

Do you miss family/community functions due to work.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Always	33	25	25	25
	Sometimes	61	46.2	46.2	71.2
	Most of the times	33	25	25	96.2
	Never	5	3.8	3.8	100.0
	Total	132	100.0	100.0	

Table 6 shows the distribution of the employees at the hotel miss family community functions due to work, between the respondents. Among 132 individuals, 25% always with the statement (i.e., 33 individuals). 46.2% say sometimes with the statement (i.e., 61 individuals). 25% feels the statement is most of the time (i.e., 33 individuals). 3.8% never with the statement (i.e., 5 individual). Since, the majority says the employees at the hotel miss sometimes to their family.

Table 7

Do you agree that you spend enough time with your family.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	6	4.5	4.5	4.5
	Disagree	33	25	25	29.5
	Agree	72	54.5	54.5	84
	Strongly Agree	21	15.9	15.9	100.0
	Total	132	100.0	100.0	

Table 7 shows the distribution of enough time spend with their family, between the respondents. Among 132 individuals, 4.5% strongly disagree with the statement (i.e., 6 individuals). 25% disagree with the statement (i.e., 33 individuals). 54.5% feels the statement is agree (i.e., 72 individuals). 15.9% strongly agree with the statement (i.e., 21 individuals). Since, the majority says that agree for the enough time spend.

Table 8

Does your organization encourage participant or involvement of your family members in functions conducted by/for employees.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Always	29	22	22	22
	Most of the time	35	26.5	26.5	48.5
	Sometimes	45	34.1	34.1	82.6
	Never	23	17.4	17.4	100.0
	Total	132	100.0	100.0	

Table 8 shows the distribution of when the hotel encourage participant or involvement of their family members in the function conducted by for employee, between the respondents. Among 132 individuals, 22% always with the statement (i.e., 29 individuals). 26.5% most of the time with the statement (i.e., 35 individuals). 34.1% feels the statement is sometimes (i.e., 45 individuals). 17.4% never with the statement (i.e., 23 individuals). Since, the majority says that sometimes the organization encourage their participant.

Table 9

Does your organization provide counseling facilities.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	102	77.3	77.3	77.3
	No	30	22.7	22.7	100.0
	Total	132	100.0	100.0	

Table 9 shows the distribution of providing counseling facilities, between the respondents. Among 132 individuals, 77.3% say yes with the statement (i.e., 102 individuals). 22.7% no with the statement (i.e., 30 individuals). Since, the majority says that the organization provide highly counseling facilities.

Table 10

Does your organization provide flexible working hours options.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	102	77.3	77.3	77.3
	No	30	22.7	22.7	100.0
	Total	132	100.0	100.0	

Table 10 shows the distribution of the hotel provide flexible working hours, between the respondents. Among 132 individuals, 77.3% say yes with the statement (i.e., 102 individuals). 22.7% say no with the statement (i.e., 30 individuals). Since, the majority says that the hotel provides flexible working hours.

Table 11

Does your organization provide maternity/paternity leaves.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	111	84.1	84.1	84.1
	No	21	15.9	15.9	100.0
	Total	132	100.0	100.0	

Table 11 shows the distribution of the hotel provide maternity and paternity leaves satisfaction, between the respondents. Among 132 individuals, 84.1% say yes with the statement (i.e., 111 individuals). 15.9% no with the statement (i.e., 21 individuals). Since, the majority are highly yes.

Table 12

Are you satisfied with the leave policy of your organization.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Highly Satisfied	21	15.9	15.9	15.9
	Satisfied	89	67.4	67.4	83.3
	Dissatisfied	21	15.9	15.9	99.2
	Highly Dissatisfied	1	0.8	0.8	100.0
	Total	132	100.0	100.0	

Table 12 shows the distribution of the hotel policy, between the respondents. Among 132 individuals, 15.9% highly satisfied with the statement (i.e., 21 individuals). 67.4% satisfied with the statement (i.e., 89 individuals). 15.9% feels the statement is dissatisfied (i.e., 21 individuals). 0.8% highly dissatisfied with the statement (i.e., 1 individual). Since, the majority says that the hotel policy is satisfied.

Table 13

How often do you work overtime.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Always	26	19.7	19.7	19.7
	Sometimes	83	62.9	62.9	82.6
	Never	13	9.8	9.8	92.4
	Often	10	7.6	7.6	100.0
	Total	132	100.0	100.0	

Table 13 shows the distribution of employees in the hotel overtime work, between the respondents. Among 132 individuals, 19.7% always with the statement (i.e., 26 individuals). 62.9% sometimes with the statement (i.e., 83 individuals). 9.8% feels the statement is never (i.e., 13 individuals). 7.6% often with the statement (i.e., 10 individuals). Since, the majority says that employees in the hotel overtime work highly in sometimes.

Table 14

Do you agree that longer working hours can adversely affect your productivity.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	6	4.5	4.5	4.5
	Disagree	18	13.6	13.6	18.1
	Agree	84	63.6	63.6	81.7
	Strongly Agree	24	18.2	18.2	100.0
	Total	132	100.0	100.0	

Table 14 shows the distribution of employees in the hotel that longer working hours can adversely affect their productivity. Among 132 individuals, 4.5% strongly disagree with the statement (i.e., 6 individuals). 13.6% disagree with the statement (i.e., 18 individuals). 63.6% feels the statement is agree (i.e., 84 individuals). 18.2 % strongly agree with the statement (i.e., 24 individuals). Since, the majority says that employees in the hotel longer working hours affect their productivity.

Table 15

Do you worry about work or have work pressure even when you are not at work or travelling to work.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	93	70.5	70.5	70.5
	No	39	29.5	29.5	100.0
	Total	132	100.0	100.0	

Table 15 shows the distribution of employees in the hotel are worry about work or have work pressure even not in work or travelling to work, between the respondents. Among 132 individuals, 70.5% yes with the statement (i.e., 93 individuals). 29.5% no with the statement (i.e., 39 individuals). Since, the majority says that employees in the hotel are worried about work.

Table 16

Do you suffer from any stress related diseases.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	33	25	25	25
	No	99	75	75	100.0
	Total	132	100.0	100.0	

Table 16 shows the distribution of the hotel suffer from any stress related diseases, between the respondents. Among 132 individuals, 25% yes with the statement (i.e., 33 individuals).

75% no with the statement (i.e., 99 individuals). Since, the majority are no highly suffer from any stress related diseases.

Table 17

Do you think you have good career prospects in this company.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	107	81.1	81.1	81.1
	No	25	18.9	18.9	100.0
	Total	132	100.0	100.0	

Results in Table 17 show the distribution of good career prospects, between the respondents. Among 132 individuals, 81.1% yes with the statement (i.e., 107 individuals). 18.9% no with the statement (i.e., 25 individuals). Since, the majority says that they feel good career prospects in the company.

Table 18

What is the influence of career prospects on productivity.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Highly influential	25	18.9	18.9	18.9
	Influential	81	61.4	61.4	80.3
	Less influential	23	17.4	17.4	97.7
	Not at all influential	3	2.3	2.3	100.0
	Total	132	100.0	100.0	

Table 18 shows the distribution of hotel employee's influence of carrer prospects on productivity, between the respondents. Among 132 individuals, 18.9% highly influential with the statement (i.e., 25 individuals). 61.4% influential with the statement (i.e., 81 individuals). 17.4% feels the statement is less influential (i.e., 23 individuals). 2.3% not at all influential with the statement (i.e., 3 individuals). Since, the majority says that hotel employee's influential of career prospects on productivity.

Table 19

Are you able to work effectively when you are stressed about work related issues (e.g.: deadlines, targets etc).

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Always	29	22	22	22
	Sometimes	73	55.3	55.3	77.3
	Most of the time	19	14.4	14.4	91.7
	Never	11	8.3	8.3	100.0
	Total	132	100.0	100.0	

Table 19 shows the distribution of hotel employees to work effectively when they are stressed about work issues, between the respondents. Among 132 individuals, 22% always with the statement (i.e., 29 individuals). 55.3% sometimes with the statement (i.e., 73 individuals). 14.1% feels the statement is most of the time (i.e., 19 individuals). 8.3% never with the

statement (i.e., 11 individuals). Since, the majority says that hotel employees are effectively when they are stressed about work.

Table 20

Do you find it difficult to work effectively when you are unable to fulfill the needs of family or worried about family issues.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	39	29.5	29.5	29.5
	Partially	74	56.1	56.1	85.6
	No	19	14.4	14.4	100.0
	Total	132	100.0	100.0	

Table 20 shows the distribution of hotel employees has find it difficult to work effectively when they are unable to fulfill the needs of family and it related issues, between the respondents. Among 132 individuals, 29.5% yes with the statement (i.e., 39 individuals). 56.1% partially with the statement (i.e., 74 individuals). 14.4% feels the statement is no (i.e., 19 individuals). Since, the majority says that hotel employees has find it difficult to work effectively by the family related issues.

Table 21

What is your topmost priority among the following.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Carrer	21	15.9	15.9	15.9
	Health	54	40.9	40.9	56.8
	Family	50	37.9	37.9	94.7
	Hobbies	5	3.8	3.8	98.5
	Friendship	2	1.5	1.5	100.0
	Total	132	100.0	100.0	

Table 21 shows the distribution of employees in the hotel has topmost priority, between the respondents. Among 132 individuals, 15.9% carrer with the statement (i.e., 21 individuals). 40.9% health with the statement (i.e., 54 individuals). 37.9% feels the statement is family (i.e., 50 individuals). 3.8% hobbies with the statement (i.e., 5 individuals). 1.5% friendship with the statement (i.e., 2 individuals). Since, the majority says that the hotel has topmost priority.

Table 22

Are you satisfied with the balance you maintain between the work and your personal priority's.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Highly satisfied	29	22	22	22
	Satisfied	82	62.1	62.1	84.1
	Dissatisfied	20	15.2	15.2	99.3
	Highly dissatisfied	1	0.8	0.8	100.0
	Total	132	100.0	100.0	

The above table shows the distribution of the hotel has employees are satisfied with the balance the work and personal priority, between the respondents. Among 132 individuals, 22% highly satisfied with the statement (i.e., 29 individuals). 62.1% satisfied with the statement (i.e., 82 individuals). 15.2% feels the statement is dissatisfied (i.e., 20 individuals). 0.8% highly dissatisfied with the statement (i.e., 1 individuals). Since, the majority are for the hotel has employees on balance they maintain between work and personal priority.

Objective-wise Findings

1. Impact of Extended Working Hours:

The study found that 31.8% of employees work 8–10 hours daily, while 15.9% exceed 10 hours, leading to significant stress and reduced productivity. A majority (63.6%) agreed that longer working hours adversely affect their efficiency, highlighting the need for regulated shift schedules to prevent burnout.

2. Effectiveness of Organizational Policies:

While 77.3% of organizations provide counseling and 84.1% offer maternity/paternity leave, only 62.1% of employees reported satisfaction with work-life balance, suggesting that existing policies require better implementation or additional support mechanisms.

3. Role of Family Commitments:

Nearly half (46.2%) of respondents sometimes miss family events due to work, and 56.1% struggle with family-related stress that impacts their job performance. This indicates a need for more family-inclusive workplace policies, such as flexible leave options.

4. Career Prospects as a Retention Factor:

Despite work-life challenges, 81.1% of employees see good career prospects in the industry, suggesting that professional growth opportunities can help mitigate dissatisfaction caused by demanding schedules.

5. Need for Targeted Interventions:

A significant 70.5% of employees experience work-related stress even when off-duty, emphasizing the urgency for interventions such as stress management programs, mental health support, and flexible work arrangements to enhance overall well-being.

Conclusion

The findings of this study highlight the complex interplay between work demands and personal life among hospitality workers in Nepal, revealing significant challenges in achieving work-life balance. The data shows that a substantial portion of employees (31.8%) work 8-10 hours daily, with 15.9% exceeding 10 hours, while 62.9% frequently work overtime - factors that contribute to heightened stress levels (reported by 70.5% of respondents) and reduced productivity (acknowledged by 63.6% of participants). Despite these challenges, the study reveals encouraging organizational support systems, with 77.3% of establishments offering counseling services and 84.1% providing maternity/paternity leave, indicating growing



awareness of employee welfare needs. However, critical gaps remain, particularly in flexible scheduling and family inclusivity, as evidenced by 46.2% of employees sometimes missing family events and 56.1% struggling with family-related stress that affects their work performance. The research also uncovers positive aspects, with 81.1% of workers perceiving good career prospects in the industry and 40.9% prioritizing health, suggesting these factors could serve as foundations for retention strategies. These findings collectively emphasize the urgent need for comprehensive policy reforms in Nepal's hospitality sector, including stricter regulation of working hours, enhanced mental health support, family-friendly workplace initiatives, and career development programs. By addressing these work-life balance challenges holistically, hospitality organizations can not only improve employee well-being and job satisfaction but also enhance operational efficiency and service quality, ultimately contributing to the sustainable growth of this vital sector in Nepal's economy. The study underscores that achieving work-life balance is not merely an employee benefit but a strategic imperative for businesses seeking to maintain a motivated, productive workforce in this demanding industry.



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