



Work-Life Balance Expectations of Young Talents: Projections to the Year 2026

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Abstract

Work-life balance is a pressing issue in the current workplace environment. Failure to address it by both employees and employers results in a multitude of long-lasting consequences, which primarily stem from improper communication and misalignment of expectations with realities for both parties. Therefore, a practical explanation of work-life balance is needed, and expectations of it must be laid out.

In that regard, this study aimed to explore in-depth the phenomenon of work-life balance and its current action. Furthermore, the present study aimed to understand young talents' expectations from their work-life balance in 2021 with projections to the year 2026.

To reach the above objectives, the author has chosen the triangulation method. Therefore, survey and interviews were carried out with 80 responses for the former and three organized group discussions with a total of 7 participants for the latter.

The selected research methods' implementation allowed the author to gain valuable insights about expectations and factors affecting the work-life balance of the sample group. Additionally, Pearson correlation was used to identify correlations and their significance between certain survey variables. To that extent, the current study has indicated significant correlations between gender, supervision, salary expectations and education, among other. The qualitative data added value by providing the researcher with deeper understanding of the factors and expectations affecting the views of the studied population.

Keywords/tags (subjects)

Work-life balance, HRM, career expectations, talent

Miscellaneous (Confidential information)

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1 Introduction

The working environment has been changing rapidly over the last few years due to several significant factors such as digitalization, optimization, flexibility and shift to the online world. Visible changes started happening, especially when the COVID-19 pandemic hit the world and forced the majority of the working population to work remotely without having the opportunity to close even basic needs, e.g., go to the supermarket or meet relatives. Companies were not prepared to transfer all their operations online properly. Neither were employees equipped to move all their work to their homes. Naturally, being locked up in 4 walls and trying to get through the chaotic transition of working operations while combining it with personal life has impacted peoples' mental and physical health by ruining their work-life balance. Work-life balance is an irreplaceable part of everyone's life, whereas the "work" part consists of work or studies and the "life" part of personal life out of working/studying settings. It implies a balance between work and life and how one can combine two areas of life. Imbalance in either part inevitably leads to decreased quality of life. It is more complicated and harder for modern humans to maintain equilibrium between work career and personal life in a rapidly changing environment. With the hit of the pandemic, which led to remote work, restructuring and general changes to the working process, well-being has been put on hold for millions of people.

Work-life balance is the core determinant of a healthy working environment. At this time of worldwide working transitions, it is vital to maintain a work-life balance throughout the career journey. Companies are responsible for cultivating and maintaining conditions that would assure employees' work-life balance. It is crucial for young talents confused about their next career steps to form and express their expectations from their working life. They also should be able to identify what factors can affect their well-being.

This study explores factors affecting work-life balance and expectations of young talents towards their careers with projections to the year 2026.

1.1 General importance & motivation

Work-life balance has been a growing concern in modern society for several years. More and more people have been working more to correspond to the expectations that management set for employees. Competition grows, global migration creates opportunities and threats at the same time for the working population. With the surge of the COVID-19 pandemic, it has become apparent: work-life balance significantly affects one's quality of life. To get a deeper understanding of the problem, it was decided not only to conduct a literature review but also to conduct a survey and interview people with different backgrounds by suggesting scenarios of the future work-life environment with projections for the year 2026.

The author's principal motivation to research work-life balance and talents' expectations is being a young talent herself. Interest in understanding the work-life balance and investigating it deeper was born after the Human Resource Management course. Additionally, being a witness of the COVID-19 pandemic and its effect on oneself, fellow students, professors and workers across industries, it felt almost essential to research it. Nevertheless, the work-life balance issues have deeper roots that existed long before the coronavirus outbreak and will not go away with the end of the pandemic either. It felt crucial to understand the perspective of the future workforce about their views and opinions on specific work-life balance issues and expectations. In addition, understanding the importance of work-life balance and imbalance is crucial for any working person to manage it, feel it, recognize patterns and/or take preventive measures.

1.2 Research objectives & questions

Although work-life balance has been a growing issue for the past years, affecting millions of employees worldwide, businesses often do not take any action to deal with this problem. It is hard to foretell the future and map out a direction for professional development in a rapidly changing world. Therefore, it is helpful to explore what the young workforce that is currently at the very beginning of their career think and expect from work-life balance issues in the near future (the year 2026).

1. To expand knowledge about the work-life balance phenomenon and current action

2. To understand better young talents' viewpoints and expectations on upcoming career and work-life balance
3. To understand how organisations can positively contribute to the work-life balance of young employees

The purpose of this research is to identify factors affecting the work-life balance and expectations from the work-life environment of young talents in the year 2021 and in the future (the year 2026) when they are graduated and have made their first career steps. The thesis will aim to answer the following questions:

RQ1: What work-life balance expectations do university-level students and graduates have: projections to the year 2026?

RQ2: What factors influence the work-life balance of current university-level students and graduates in 2021 vs. in 2026?

RQ3: What should the stakeholders in the organisations do to benefit from findings?

1.3 Thesis structure

According to Saunders et al. (2009), research can be defined as a systematic way of collecting, interpreting and reporting data with a clear purpose. The overall aim of the research is to increase the author's knowledge base. Therefore, systematic research must follow a structure to be able to proceed logically and serve the purpose. This study starts with an introduction where the topic is defined, and the author's motivation is explained. The introduction chapter also includes research questions and objectives. The following chapter is a literature review where the author compiles theoretical knowledge base. This chapter introduces fundamental concepts and creates a solid knowledge base for the study in question. It gives a clear understanding of the phenomenon and current action. After the literature has been reviewed, the research design and its justification are described. The author needs to clarify specific research design details, first of all for oneself. It should be clear what kind of research approach was chosen and why, what methods were used and the reason behind that, how data was collected, interpreted, analyzed and reported.

Moreover, this chapter covers a plan for ethics and the quality of the research, which is vital to follow. The following chapter opens up about results. In this research, results will be reported according to themes due to mixed-method techniques used in the data collection process. Then, overall research results and conclusions are drawn. Also, the limitations of the research and implications for further research are covered.

2 Literature review

Literature review is essentially the description and critical analysis of what has been already written. While general purpose of the literature review is to help author gather the existing knowledge base around the topic, other purposes of this process are to help in modifying research questions and objectives, also to enlighten the possibilities for own research (Saunders et al., 2009). The figure below represents a graphic summary of topics included in theoretical knowledge base of this research. First 4 subchapters focus on the phenomenon and its elements such as definition of work-life balance (WLB), determinants and factors affecting it. Then, subchapters 2.5 and 2.6 concentrate on the current action on work-life balance as a part of human resource management and review talents' expectations. Concluding subchapter 2.7 summarizes the knowledge base.

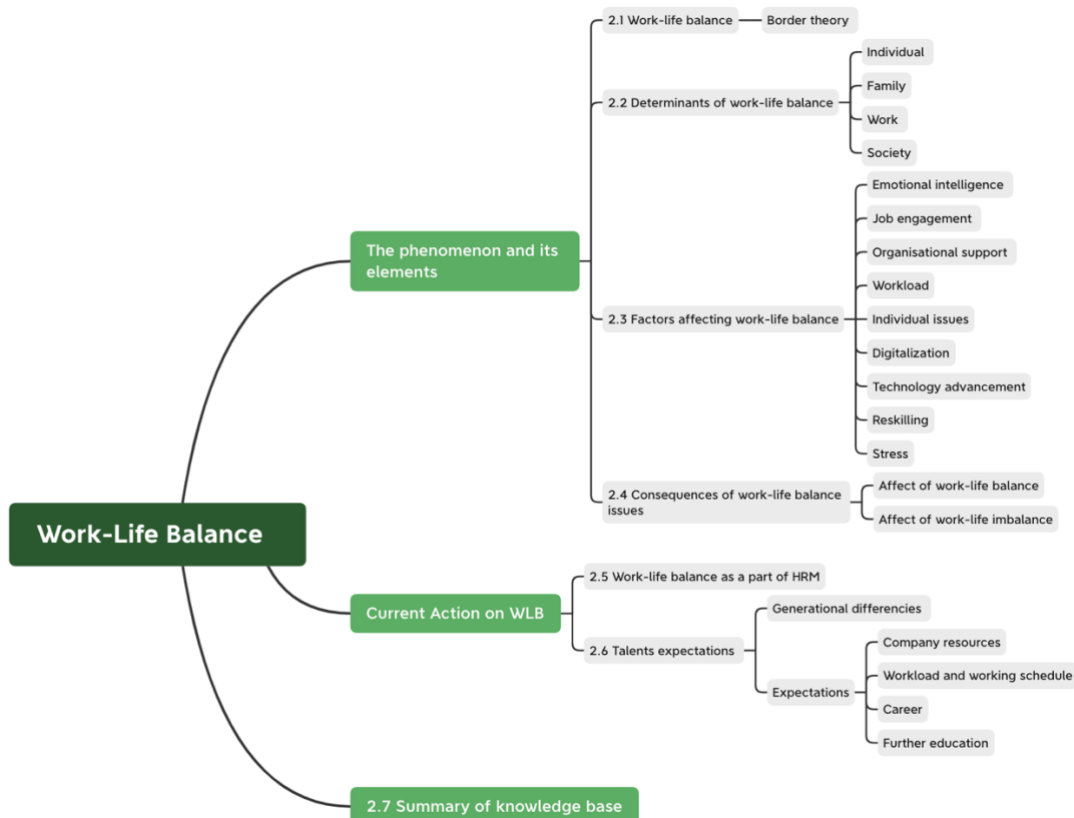


Figure 1. Literature review overview

2.1 Work-life balance

There is no universal definition of what work-life balance represents. Delecta (2011) defines work-life balance (WLB) as one's ability to combine work life and private life commitments in line with other non-work tasks and responsibilities. Interestingly, Abbott (2013) describes WLB as one's ability to manage actual and potential disputes in working and private living areas in a way that fulfils one's needs and demands. A healthy balance between two parts of the individual's life is essential both for the individual and company as it affects mentioned employee's performance. Nowadays, balancing and combining a growing number of tasks and responsibilities in both areas is more than ever crucial for companies and individuals to invest in work-life balance and make corrections (Ratul & Hossain, 2019). Riordan (2013) suggest that rather than using the term "work-life balance", we should use "work-life effectiveness" because balance implies that a person pays an equal amount of time to both spheres of one's life, whereas in fact, s/he should be fitting work into other life because life sphere is much bigger than work sphere. Rather than dividing spheres equally, it is wise to take a holistic approach to integrate work into one's life instead of thinking of it as a separate necessity life.

Border theory of work and life family

Border theory suggests that work and other life are interconnected. The spectrum of emotions that person experiences in one field can be and probably will be transferred to a second field. This theory reveals that people are border-crossers who cross borders daily and many of those working online – several times per day. Earlier in history, work and family fields were researched as independent areas of one's life because work and family were physically and locationally distant from each other. Men were perceived as money makers, while women – as home wives. In 1978, Katz and Kahn assumed that work and family lives are indeed interconnected and interdependent. They, among others, researched how circumstances at work can affect family life and vice versa. Several theories were born out of these conclusions, such as "spillover theory" which suggested that though work and family and physically separated, they are interconnected and "compensation theory" that postulated that people tend to invest in one field heavier to make up for what they are missing in another one (Clark, 2000).

With time, work-life relationships got complicated, leading to significant changes in countries where developments such as increasing percentage of women labor force participation, more flexible working arrangements, increasing mobility, improving life quality, higher demands, rising share of women pursuing working career over midwifery and growing percentage of men involved in parenting took place. Hence, proving theories that work and life are interconnected and interdependent. Research continued and soon transformed border theory into work/life border theory filling gaps in previous ones. This theory tried to explain why and how work and life are different. Demand to research the work-life balance has been growing ever since. The figure below shows the central concepts of the theory developed by Sue Clark in the early 2000s.

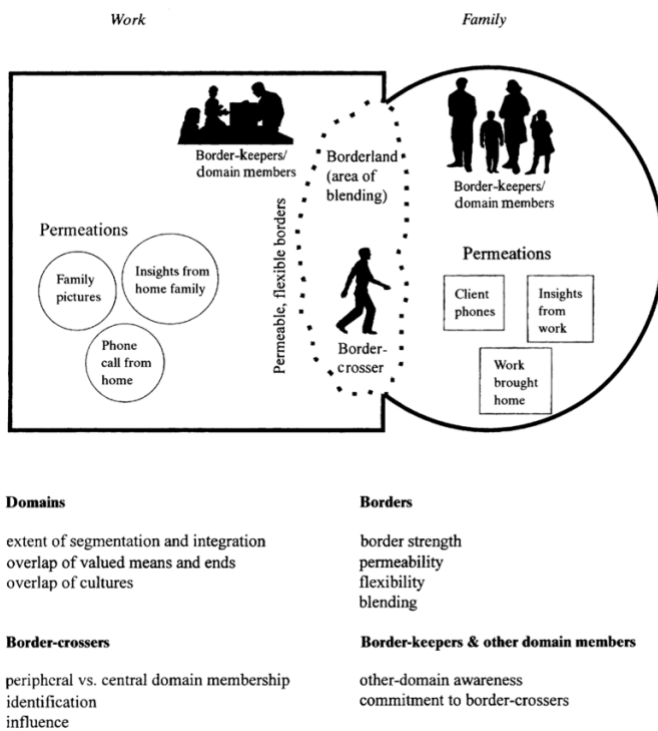


Figure 2. Central concepts of border theory (Clark, 2000)

From the figure 2 it is seen that there are permeations in both domains and there is a blending zone that has grown in both ends recently, blurring the borders. Border strength has also weakened due to blurred boundaries. Clark (2000) proposed that when one border is stronger than other – the work/life disbalance will be inevitable. The consequences of work/life balance disbalance will be described closer in chapter 2.4 (2.4 Consequences of work-life balance issues).

2.2 Determinants of the work-life balance

Individual

The individual is the core determinant. There are different types of people, and their nature varies. Hence, their behavior and commitment to work and/or private life will vary. On the working life spectrum, some people are workaholics, and some are apathetic. Identical with personal life spectrum – some are heavily committed people, and some of them don't care. But most people stay somewhere in the middle throughout their lives. Those on the edge of each spectrum will suffer significantly from a heavy imbalance of life spheres (Delecta 2011).

Family

Most likely, everyone has someone to care for throughout their lifetime. While some prefer not to commit to relationship or child-raising, the average person goes through the following stages in life: marriage, child-raising and caring, supporting children both financially and emotionally, caring for elderly parents etc., meaning sacrificing a significant number of resources, e.g., time, money or emotions (Delecta,2011). All these variants come with responsibilities, tasks and sacrifices, taking away time from potential working time. Cutting working hours, giving up a career, settling down for a more stable job etc. Low family satisfaction can result in lower job performance, lower productivity and even absenteeism. Ratul and Hossain (2019) argue that female employees face difficulties balancing more often than male employees due to a more significant share of household chores, care after kids etc.

People moving abroad for study or work purposes tend to face obstacles in maintaining contact with their families due to different time zones and long-distance. O'Mahony and Jeske (2019) state that while education abroad has exceptional value for a career, it increases the chances of work (study) – life imbalance and increases risks of mental health issues. In addition, people who stay away from their family tend to stress out about inaccessibility and feel guilty for not being there when their family needs them. In general, people living abroad for work/study-related reasons tend to express rather heavy reliance on their family and close ones.

Work

Work usually requires a tremendous amount of resources, including, but not limited to, time, mental health resources, commitment, effort and passion (Delecta,2011). Moreover, it requires prior education and often prior working experience. Besides, working in the organisation usually means communicating with other people, following orders from above, working closely with other people etc. Overtime working is another factor that affects work-life balance and weight on the work side of the balance (Holly & Mohnen, 2012). Being an entrepreneur requires a significant number of resources and brings more stress for the individual. Based on an exploratory study on the work-life balance of women entrepreneurship in India (Mathew & Panchanatham, 2011), the conclusion can be made that women entrepreneurs face more issues than men entrepreneurs as women are traditionally seen as caregivers for children and housekeepers. Being an entrepreneur doesn't free women from the aforementioned roles, leading to more significant risks of work-life imbalance and associated consequences.

On the contrary, in developed countries like the US, women entrepreneurs can manage better own work-life balance than those employed by someone else. Thus, work determinant is interrelated with cultural and geographic factors. It is also true for international students or people working abroad. Having challenges to adapt to a new environment and working culture, they tend to experience more difficulties to "dive in" the working process than local people who are starting/continuing their work/studies (O'Mahoney & Jeske, 2019).

Finally, people who work in international companies and either work remotely or work closely with one or more team members living in different time zone tend to experience more stress and disbalance due to working non-standard hours and having delays in communication. (Cummings et al., 2009).

Society

The social environment is another critical determinant of work-life balance. It is especially relevant in those collectivistic countries, where individuals are more involved in community life. Moreover, societal factors affect work and study immigrants.

O'Mahoney and Jeske (2019) argue that international students' or workers' experiences are often not shared with local society, causing misunderstanding, stress, isolation and loneliness. The main obstacles are the language barrier and cultural differences. Without family/culture support, foreign students/workers struggle to find social support and make new connections. This group of people usually gets cut off social systems and feel left out. This leads to drops in motivation, lower productivity, mood swings, anxiety and stress, creating a continued disbalance between work and life. The best-case scenario in this situation is that person dives into work disproportionately and spends all time working in isolation. In the worst-case scenario, a person loses the motivation to work either and ends up doing nothing, which is very dangerous. It can lead to returning to own country/substance abuse/depression, or suicidal thoughts.

2.3 Factors affecting work-life balance

While organizations are under pressure to improve the working conditions for their employees constantly, the work-life imbalance is rising across the world. According to the website of the Finnish Institute for Occupational Health (TTL, n.d.), every fourth employee in Finland suffers from work-related stress now and then. Each of the four main determinants of work-life balance described above in chapter 3.1 is a cluster of smaller (more local) factors affecting WLB regularly. Factors described below can affect a person both positively and negatively.

Emotional intelligence is the ability to cope with other people (including but not limited to) at the workplace and interact with them proactively. Depending on one's ability to proactively manage and interact with co-workers, one can either build an appropriate relationship with co-workers or live in constant distress and tension. However, it is also applicable in the individual's personal life – inability to deal and manage relationships with others inevitably leads to distress. Human beings should be able to experience, explain, and translate emotions appropriately to have proper communication. Kumarasamy et al. (2015) states that there is not enough evidence that emotional intelligence is indeed interrelated with work-life balance as only a few empirical studies were conducted. However, it doesn't contradict the implication of Kumarasamy et al. (2015) that emotionally intelligent employees would be able to control and monitor their own emotions and understand the emotions of others.

Job Engagement is about how a person is involved in a job/project. To what extent this person is attached to the organization/workplace/institution both emotionally and intellectually. A person can be absorbed by the organization, which would lead to a significant imbalance of life's spheres and result in absorption of the personality/overload/burnout/lower productivity etc. (Kumarasamy et al., 2015). On the other hand, little to no job engagement means that person is not committed and not interested in organizational prosperity. In this case, also lower productivity/slacking/increased absenteeism etc. can occur. For example, if an employee doesn't have a clear and up-to-date goal, s/he is prompted to lose motivation over time and experience mental distress. Additionally, being excluded from a group and working alone can result in feeling isolated and depressed at the workplace, leading to decreased job engagement and worsening of job performance. On the contrary, working in a team and having a smooth interaction can increase motivation and a feeling of belonging (TTL, n.d.).

Organizational support implies that the employer also influences the WLB of employees. Matters like working premises and corporate policies can affect tremendously. Companies that don't recognize organizational support as a leading factor and don't see their role in employees' WLB usually end up abusing their employees and increasing their chances of getting a trauma (not safe premises) or increasing absenteeism (unprotected employees' rights). In addition, if there is no workplace recognition and in-time performance review/performance feedback, the employee is prompted to lose motivation. Many studies show that organizational support indeed facilitates work-life balance within the company (Kumarasamy et al., 2015).

Workload is another essential factor that can affect individuals both ways. Frequent overloads, pressuring deadlines, and overtasking will result in burnouts/ stress/ anxiety/ lower productivity or absenteeism. Remote work has become more complicated in controlling appropriate working hours as many employees and employers have failed to set boundaries from the beginning (Vyas & Shrivastava, 2017). In addition, if the person cannot adjust the workload and workplace according to his abilities and needs, it can result in mental pressure (TTL, n.d.). Additionally, to ration the workload, many companies have already integrated flexible hours system in their work processes, resulting in outstanding work-life balance (Shagvaliyeva & Yazdanifard, 2014).

Individual issues impact one's WLB significantly and can be seen as an individual's relationship with family, friends, partner or society. Personal problems are usually not related to work but can affect job performance. For example, across the world, women working from home have suffered significantly since not being able to use the help of other than closest family or maids amid covid-19 pandemic lockdowns. They had to work more to be able to keep up with two jobs (their professional work and their home job – taking care of kids and households). All that overload of personal issues most likely will lead to work-life imbalance (Kaur & Sharma, 2020).

Digitalization has recently become a "hot" topic since more and more businesses are shifting to online work/remote work and technology usage, while the world has been in the acceleration phase of the digital economy (OECD, 2020). Pandemic has forced companies to shift to online, and employees' WLB shifts caused by it show how well companies/enterprises have managed this change. Digitalization has taken place in many companies around the globe over the last few years. Technology enables a flexible approach in working settings and eases personal lives (e.g., communication). At the same time, technology makes work more accessible than ever, which blurs boundaries and make it harder to switch between work and life. Work-related mobile notifications distract people in their free time (Kumarasamy et al., 2015).

Technology advancement has progressed over the last few years, enabling companies to allocate resources more efficiently and cut unnecessary costs. However, it came at the cost of technology replacing humans at the workplace. Complex technology processes such as robotization and integration of artificial intelligence are in the process of rapid adoption. According to the associate director at KPMG Melanie Batley (2021), AI adoption has skyrocketed during the coronavirus pandemic, and it is moving too fast. It is affecting the majority of industries. The figure below shows the AI adoption rate for the last year in seven sectors in the US. Batley (2021) also adds that millennials and gen Z generation business leaders are more likely to adopt AI in their business operations than older generations giving the same conditions. Such rapid changes require strong re-skilling of employees involved in AI operations, both directly and indirectly. Pressure like this can cause stress and the inability to cope with the transformation.

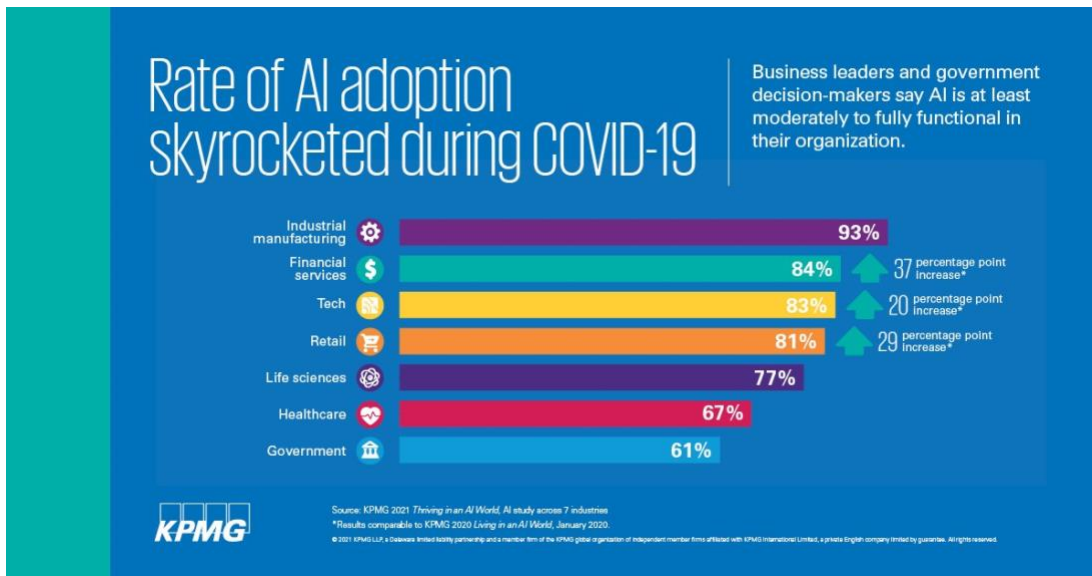


Figure 3. Rate of AI adoption in 2020. (KPMG, 2021)

For example, Debb et al. (2020) emphasize that generational gap (between millennials and generations Z) continues to impact awareness and actions taken in cybersecurity and data protection matters in workplace. He notes that older generation might not be aware of best practices or be aware but not taking any actions to protect own and/or shared data. However, it is not known how well young talents are informed about mentioned technological matters.

Furthermore, figure below shows the example of technologies that are planned to be adopted by US companies in within the next 4 years (World Economic Forum, 2019). It is interrelated with the next factor **Reskilling**. All of listed technologies require additional knowledge if not a full degree to deal with it.

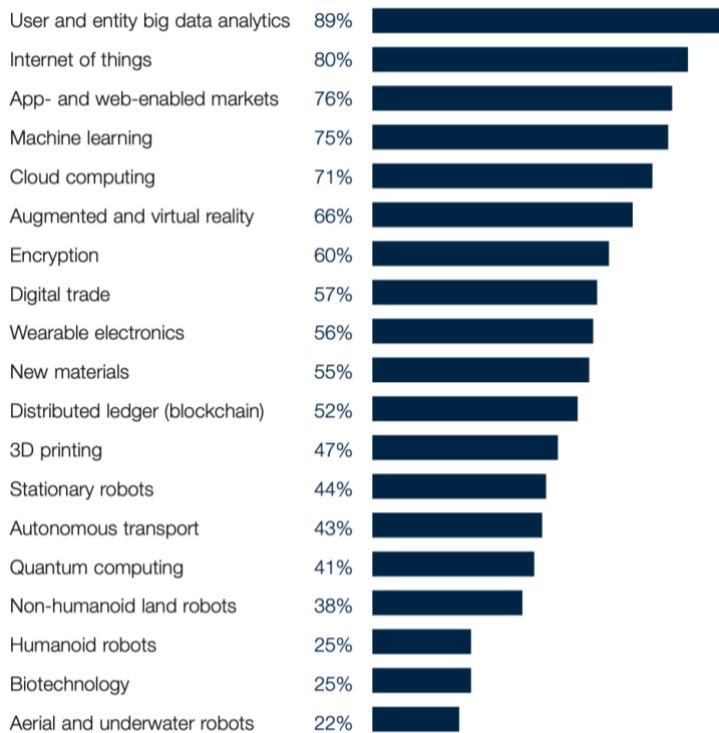


Figure 4. Planned technology adoption by US companies within the next 4 years (World Economic Forum, 2018)

Reskilling factor is another important factor heavily affecting work-life balance. With the acute urge to adapt to new technologies and ways of conducting business operations differently rather than 20 and even 10 years ago, the need for reskilling has surged. Employee that is unable to keep up with the changing requirements can experience extra stress and deemed unqualified. According to Ellingrund et al. (2020), automation revolution will affect every single job in coming years. That said, employees have to develop new sets of skills to stay competitive and qualified for developing positions. Upskilling and reskilling depends both on employees' capabilities and employer's readiness to provide the opportunity. Education requires time and willingness and combining it with work might put an extra pressure on an employee.

According to the World Economic Forum published in 2020, at least 50% of employees in the world will need reskilling by 2025. Its estimate is that at least 85 million jobs will be replaced by automation, at the same time roughly 97 million new will emerge. Figure below represents the top 10 skills of 2025.

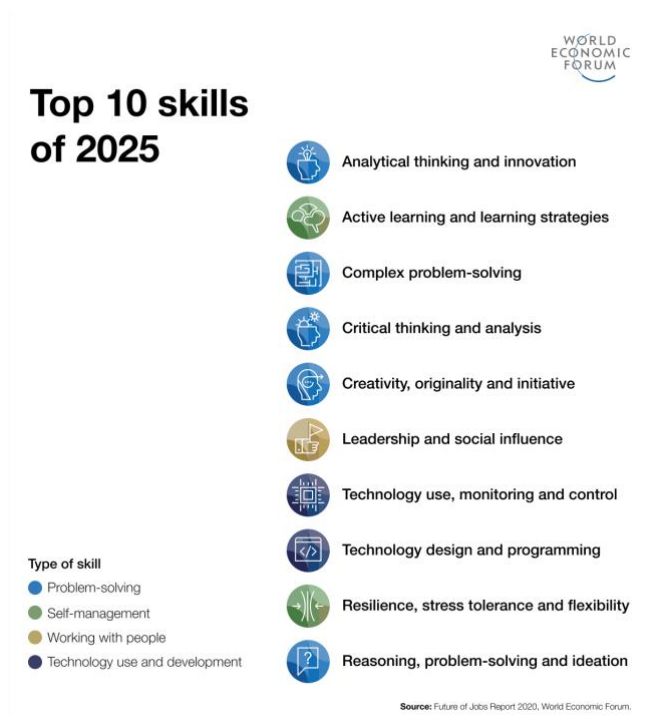


Figure 5. Top 10 skills of 2025, (World Economic Forum, 2020)

As can be seen, list includes both soft and hard skills. Acquiring these skills can take multiple forms from online courses to full-time degree in higher educational institutions.

Stress is so common trait seen among working population across the world that it stands out of “mental health issues” general category, despite being related to it. Appropriate amount of worrying about a job tasks or daily stress is very important to stay at minimum level and not to be brought home. However, it is usually not the case. Working stress has proved to be the main reason of unhappiness among employees and cause disbalance conditions such as burnouts, mental illnesses as depression, fatigue, increased absenteeism, etc. (Vyas & Shrivastava, 2017). More about stress complications can be found in following chapter 2.4 (2.4 Consequences of work-life balance issues).

2.4 Consequences of work-life balance issues

The imbalance starts when one of the parts (work or life) starts to extrude another. Usually, it is a stress-based collision and might lead to a wide range of consequences, e.g., burnout, end of career, mental distress, personal problems, substance abuse, relationship issues etc. Despite the difficulty that individual faces, it impacts well-being (Delecta, 2011). As was already explained

above in border theory by Clark (2000), crossing permeable borders too often cannot result in work-life balance. That would mean that individual doesn't exist in 1 domain at the time but instead lives in 2 realms at the same time with no apparent difference in it.

Affect of imbalance

Numerous studies show that almost every employee and/or student of a higher education institution has experienced stress and difficulties coping with workload. For instance, Tarsilano (2019) states roughly 83% of all American employees suffer from stress related to their workplace. As can be seen from the figure 6 below, job pressure is number 1 cause of stress.

| Top Causes of Stress in the U.S. | | |
|---|-------------------|---|
| | Cause | Factors |
| 1 | Job Pressure | Co-Worker Tension, Bosses, Work Overload |
| 2 | Money | Loss of Job, Reduced Retirement, Medical Expenses |
| 3 | Health | Health Crisis, Terminal or Chronic Illness |
| 4 | Relationships | Divorce, Death of Spouse, Arguments with Friends, Loneliness |
| 5 | Poor Nutrition | Inadequate Nutrition, Caffeine, Processed Foods, Refined Sugars |
| 6 | Media Overload | Television, Radio, Internet, E-Mail, Social Networking |
| 7 | Sleep Deprivation | Inability to release adrenaline and other stress hormones |

Figure 6. Top Causes of Stress (Tarsilano, 2019)

In the same report, it states that only 43% of employees believe their employers take proper care of their well-being at workplace. Additionally, Milenkovic (2019) reported that 8/10 college students experience frequent stress throughout their studies, from application process to securing a job offer upon graduation and paying bills. Situation is tougher for those students who move away from home to pursue studies and have to experience separation phase from their family and loved ones. Being in a new environment surrounded by new people can also lead to stress and anxiety, that might result even in discontinuation of studies.

Companies lose money and other resources on daily basis because of the poor work-balance of their employees. It is seen in absenteeism, lower productivity, frequent visits to mental health

professionals, quitting etc. To give some perspective, only in US burnout employees cost companies about \$150 billion every year in healthcare costs. According to Blanding (2015), about 8% of healthcare spending goes to treatment of workplace healthcare issues. Workplace stress is coming from sources like job insecurity, long hours, overload, uneven division of tasks and impossible deadlines. All that lead to chronic stress which in turn can cause heavier consequences e.g., alcohol or drug abuse, eating or mental health disorders etc. In last years, digital “always-on” environment has also contributed to the burnouts and increased stressed. Employees are multitasking using digital tools and it takes away their focus, at the same time increasing the average time spent on a task by 25%. Remote work also brought in fair number of unnecessary meetings that take away employees’ focus and, most importantly, time. Garton (2017) argues that companies have to adapt agile principles of work and better do it quickly. Reviewing of working processes in all units and leaving out unnecessaries can improve workplaces significantly. Employees shouldn’t be the ones who are responsible for their time as they don’t have the ability for such decisions, rather such norms and policies should come from above. Needless to say, that poor working conditions and neglect of safety can lead to devastating consequences (Tarsilano, 2019).

Affect of balance

Contrary of what was described above, work-life balance plays positive role in one’s life. Everyone is benefiting from workplace well-being. Besides cut expenses on healthcare, companies get greater motivation, satisfied employees, higher productivity, less absenteeism and improved organizational culture. Addressing employees needs and wants appropriately and timely is a key principle that ensures smooth change. Preventive initiatives and programmes, as well as proportionate hiring can also contribute to healthier organizational culture source.

Among many initiatives and programmes, flexible hours are highlighted. Many companies have already adapted such type of work. Flexible hours imply variation of time and place of doing the actual working process, including breaks, part-time and/or term-time options (Shagvaliyeva & Yazdanifard, 2014). Studies show that flexibility provides advantages both to employer and employees. It doesn’t mean reduced hours but rather tailored schedule that fits one’s life instead of traditional 9-5 variation. Of course, it is not applicable for those jobs that cannot be done in

other than preset time or remotely. For company, adapting flexible hours system is a great way to show and prove to employees it cares about their well-being and such system can increase employee's loyalty, productivity and company's competitiveness. For employees, flexible hours mean more opportunities outside of working life, increased motivation and, for example, for parents of small children to stay on career path while parenting without the need to take a long break. It is also applicable for employees who have other commitments outside work (Shagvaliyeva & Yazdanifard, 2014).

2.5 Work-life Balance as a part of human resource management

Although human resource (HR) is traditionally perceived as a narrow-function unit that deals with recruitment and payroll, it is much more than that (Richman, 2015). HR deals with every employee from the beginning (recruitment stage) to the end (resignation/retirement stage). HR is also involved in educational/awareness training, direct and indirect benefits and well-being programmes (Shah,2020). Nowadays, HRM is also working closely with management on organizational problems to maximize employees' performance (Brown et al., 2009).

Human resources can be divided into parts that play different roles to serve the common goal – building a bridge between management and employees. Human resource management plays the role of managing a company's human capital. It includes such activities as talent acquisition, management, employee benefit plans, well-being and safety programs etc. Human resource development is another part that is concentrated on strategic development and learning path of employees such as training, skills development, career growth, appraisal discussions, performance reviews etc. (Richman, 2015).

Factors that negatively affect employees can naturally impact their job performance, influence their performance, and bring a bad reputation and weakened competitiveness. For the HR unit, it is essential to develop, implement and practice functioning well-being policies. Many factors are affecting the rapid change of the working environment that HR must adjust to. Only some of them are digitalization, talent management and retainment, and mobility. The company is mainly responsible for employees' well-being. These changes have already started to change the HR and its operations. Low capacity to adjust and low flexibility of HR inevitably hit employees' well-being. Work-life balance should be one of the critical objectives of every organization. Tariq et al. (2012)

state that work-life balance programmes can enhance productivity and build a loyal workforce that gains a competitive advantage.

Additionally, companies should provide direct and indirect benefits to own employees such as medical insurance, parental leave, equipment, special bonuses and many more. Such actions are also favorable for retaining employees and attracting new talents to the organization. All mentioned benefits bring organizations immeasurable advantages in the market. Listening and responding to the workforce's expectations can put organization steps ahead of competitors (Tariq et al., 2012). In today's environment, companies should make an effort to retain their talents.

Rikleem (2020) argues that companies should address their young employees' needs more effectively. For instance, organizations should provide skill development opportunities to their young employees because they are entering the working environment unprepared. Due to the worldwide shift to online education and towards individual learning, graduates are lost in the world of work and are not equipped with the right skills. Orientation programs and the mentoring system should be seriously considered to ensure a smooth transition to the working life of a young employee. Such measures provided by HR can speed up and smoothen the transition process and help a new employee to settle faster.

Additionally, tackling stress issues that generation Z is facing is crucial to avoid absenteeism, demotivation and employee turnover. Rikleem (2020) highlights that coronavirus has significantly affected the mental health of young employees; however, companies often fail to react. Emotional intelligence was mentioned as one of the factors affecting work-life balance (2.3 Factors affecting work-life balance), and research (Rikleem, 2020) shows that companies that help to develop such aspects of emotional intelligence as self-motivation, empathy and self-awareness build a respectful work environment and develop effective leadership.

2.6 Talents' expectations

Although "talent" can be used in numerous settings, it is critical to understand what "talent" is referred to in this research. Historically, the word "talent" had several definitions and, naturally, has undergone changes in meaning (Tansley, 2011). To this day, there are two distinguishable

differences in the use of the word "talent". The term "talent" can be either a subject or an object. Though talent management has been a widespread practice in many businesses for years now and organizations worldwide are integrating different policies and programmes to attract, acquire, raise and retain talents, not many have the fundamental understanding of what they mean by "talent". There is no consensus on what "talent" means in the working environment, and research (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013) shows that definitions vary. The definition of "talent" is flexible, and companies adjust it depending on their needs and want. In a working environment, it is often used as a subject, meaning that organizations address their workforce as "a talent" to highlight the human capital conception that people are the most valuable asset of the company. In an organizational context, talent can also be defined as all people in the organization. Such an inclusive approach suggests that all people bring value to the company, and "talent hunting" is referred to applicants and potential employees. In this case, talent management is similar to appropriate human resource management. Despite all the above, talent can also be seen as employees who show outstanding performance, which implies segmentation of the workforce (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013).

All in all, there is no consensus about what "talent" means. However, in this research, "talent" will correspond to the inclusive approach described above that implies that all potential/present employees can be seen as talents, and they are the workforce; hence, this research is about expectations of the young talents' aka students finishing their studies and graduates who are on their early career stages. That being said, research focuses on young people born in between the years 1995 – 2003. Although there is no united scale of measure of the generations, research shows that people born from 1995 onwards are considered to belong to Generation Z. Adapted table X from Berkup (2014) research demonstrates the apparent difference in business life between generation Y and Generation Z. Table has been adapted specifically to fit this research, thus, contains only work-related differences whereas original table covers other topics of business life as well. The world has developed a lot in the last 50 years, and people born in the 1980s don't share the same values, mindsets, goals and views as people born in the 2000s. Generation Y is also known as millennials and has been the first technological generation. Generation Z is also known as Children of the Internet and has been in constant comprehension of changing world and adoption of technology (Berkup, 2014).

| Business Values and Viewpoints Regarding Business Life | Generation Y (1980 – 1994) | Generation Z (1995 –) |
|---|---|--|
| Basic Values and Beliefs regarding Job and Company | Work to live. Work wisely rather than working long hours. Request for structure and guidance | Living comes before working, Working much by having fun, Multitasking, Entrepreneurship |
| Educational Background for Success in Business | A road to be able to go there | Incredibly high-priced spending |
| Career Improvement | A flexible career. A proactive approach to career improvement for more promotion and experience within and outside corporation | Parallel (Multiple) careers. Entering business life with more experience. Asking opportunities and experience |
| Working Style | Working until obtaining a result, A mentality 'Let you have a life' Adaptation of office and home to flexible picture | Short-term and flexible working, Adaptation of office and home to flexible picture |
| Communication Style in Job Environment | Informal, direct and electronic communication, Need for feedback, Communication with customer through e-mail | Quick, informal, direct and advanced technology-based communication, Communication with customer through e-mail, instant messaging and messaging |
| Balance between Business and Social Life | A clearer balance between family and work | Not only balance between business and life but also among business, relations and personal improvement |
| Education, Development and Consultancy | Willingness to know what's exactly demanded, Flexibility in learning, Informal team structure and working independently with less control | Willingness to take risk. Ignore making mistake and consider it as an education, Teamwork, Training with fun |
| Technology in Working Environment | Technology must be utilized if it is necessary to achieve, Checking e-mails and mobile phones for 7/24 | Willingness to work with up-to-date technology, Checking e-mails, mobile phones and instant messages for 7/24 |
| Motivational Tools and Rewards | Freedom, Fun, Fair remuneration, Extra earning in return for extra working, Enjoyable atmosphere, Let them question authority and experts | Personal Satisfaction, Opportunity given to take responsibility of a project and be part of team, Need for entertainment and control over environment, Working with creative people, Flexible working, Gaining new skills. New learning opportunities |
| Give me more.... in work environment | Time | Acknowledgement |
| Job | The fastest way to get result | Satisfaction |

| | | |
|--------|-------------------------|--|
| Career | It is a part of my life | It is an opportunity to be appreciated |
|--------|-------------------------|--|

Table 1. Generational differences in business life (adapted from Berkup,2014)

Furthermore, studies show that Gen Z is more stressed than previous generations, largely due to rapid change and “constant online” mode (Rikleen, 2020).

According to IBM Corporation (2021), more than half employees in 2021 expect to have a proper work-life balance, though it is hard to sustain. Many report lack of organizational support especially during remote work caused by pandemic. Moreover, it was reported that employees felt lack of communication and transparency in the workplace, though it is highly expected. Workplaces are expected to communicate with staff proactively and reward them with direct and indirect benefits for high job performance.

In 2019 World Economic Forum has surveyed more than 360 thousand employees and jobseekers in order to better understand their expectations from workplace. Though work-life balance is listed second one in this list, all mentioned expectations are part of work-life balance.

| Rank | Global work preferences |
|------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Good relationship with colleagues |
| 2 | Good work-life balance |
| 3 | Good relationship with superior |
| 4 | Learning & training opportunities |
| 5 | Career development options |
| 6 | Financial stability of employer |
| 7 | Job security |
| 8 | Financial compensation |
| 9 | Work being appreciated |
| 10 | Interesting work |

Figure 7. Global work preferences of employees and jobseekers (World Economic Forum, 2018)

PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PWC) (2018) in its “*Workforce of the future, the competing forces shaping 2030*” has proposed several futures scenarios which underline some workforce’s

expectations by dividing them into 2 worlds (blue and red). Blue world assumes that specialists will be of high value and organizations will decrease the number of employees down to vital. Those few will use innovations and technology to substitute human labor and use machines heavily, that will cause massive shrinkage of workforce. University degree value and prestige will depreciate. More gig work opportunities and less permanent jobs. This will lead to mass migration and geographically neutral society. Moreover, scenarios propose use of cognitive-enhancing medicine in order to maximize one's working performance. In Red World, scenarios propose rather opposite picture. People get strong support from their peers and organizations that cultivate new talents. In this case, people are working together with technology hand-in-hand, not replacing each other. Non-financial rewards increased, and flexible hours have replaced 9-5 office routine. Organizations and companies are transparent and behave in ethical manner. Work approach is result-oriented. HR's role in this scenario is advanced by technology and includes advanced analytics for talent acquisition to predict the best fit. Meeting these expectations are the best motivation for young talents.

Company resources expectations

During the recruitment process, young employees are seeing entry interviews not like a test but rather a conversation to see how each party fits other. People are now more than ever able to correlate their expectations with what is offered and make a rational choice (Miller & Yar, 2019). Youngsters expect to have a clear and efficient communication system with HR, as well as clear guidance and reachability throughout their working placement in the company, from recruitment to resignation.

Additionally, studies shows that organizational culture and values play key role in building long-term relationships between company and employee. It is crucial for young talents to share values and see clear direction of the company in order to be loyal. None the less, talents also expect development and growth opportunities provided by company that could be compatible with work (Kucherov et al., 2019).

Workload and Working Schedule expectations

In her publication Miller and Yar (2019) says that Gen Z is learning to understand the true meaning of work in life. Result-based work schedule is a much better fit to an individual's life than a 9-5 office day. It gives young people the opportunity to build own life and fit work into it instead of fitting own life in between working schedule. This type of working schedule has a positive effect on work-life balance as then the true balance can be reached, and person can stay in harmony with both spheres of life. Despite the traditional when person is working in the office from 9 to 5 from Monday to Friday with 2 weeks off a year, Gen Z likes to challenge the status quo. They demand flexibility and shift to result-based work. People tend to agree to lower salary if it means they can have flexible schedule (Miller & Yar, 2019). According to results from survey conducted by Fuller et al. (2019), employees expect flexible hours, proper work-life balance and remote work. This is also supported by paper written by Shagvaliyeva and Yazdanifard (2014) that was overviewed in chapter 2.4 (Consequences of work-life balance issues).

According to King et al. (2019), there are also generational differences in working approaches. Thus, Gen Z and Gen Y have different attitudes towards working life. This research finds that Gen Z is the most benefitting from flexible hours. With technological era employees have been "programmed" to answer emails and phone calls immediately, even outside of working hours. However, such generational differences create difficulties in communication and implementation of such programmes as flexible hours systems.

Career expectations

According to IBM Corporation (2021), more than 40% of workforce expect to have career advancements opportunities. However, "advancement" doesn't mean climbing up the career ladder in Generation Z case. It means continuously improving working conditions and aiming at work-life harmonious symbiosis (Miller & Yar, 2019). Young talents want to shape their jobs they fit THEM, not anyone else. They want to enjoy their professional career. They don't want to shape their life around career, they want to have the opportunity to blend their career into their

lives. Moreover, there is a *flexibility stigma* that implies that women after maternity leave using flexible schedule can never recover their career. But if more and more people, not only mothers switch to flexible schedule the stigma can disappear. Furthermore, younger people expect to have more autonomy and being trusted to do their work.

According to Kucherov et al. (2019), young talents are basing their career expectations on company brand image and reputation. They are not afraid to learn new and challenge themselves, amidst humble working experience. Young talents value competitive business environment. However, Kucherov et al. (2019) states that young talents rarely make final decision based solely on salary. Instead, majority report expecting decent salary to have means for living. Furthermore, they pay special attention to indirect benefits such as leased car, medical insurance and pension programmes.

Further education

As it was mentioned in chapter 2.3. (2.3 Factors Affecting Work-Life Balance), more than half of all employees are expected to acquire new skills by 2025. Almost all employers (94%) now expect their employees to get new skills, especially in IT area. While majority of reskilling can be done in 6 months or less, at the workplace or online, still many choose to apply for higher education in educational institutions. However, the main focus is on online training and demand for online courses at platforms such as Coursera or Udemy has skyrocketed (World Economic Forum, 2019). As was mentioned several times above, on-site re-skilling opportunities are highly expected from the workplace.

2.7 Summary of knowledge base

The concept of work-life balance appears to be a blurry and often misunderstood for both talents and companies. It seems fragile and affected by many outside and inside factors. Although many factors can affect one's work-life balance, 9 factors were reviewed in this research as ones affecting the work-life balance of young employees. Factors are listed below, not numbered by significance.

1. Emotional Intelligence

2. Job engagement
3. Organizational support
4. Workload
5. Individual issues
6. Digitalization
7. Technology advancement
8. Reskilling
9. Stress

Furthermore, young talents actively break stereotypes about working life, willing and demanding to shape it in a tailored form that suits THEM. They have been building a whole new value system that is transforming the future of working life. Due to technological advancements and learnings from history, Gen Z is so progressive that they ask and expect things previous generations couldn't dare to have. For example, they are expecting flexible hours, on-site reskilling, etc. They see, and they know there is much more to life than work. They are starting to choose time over money. At the same time, young talents are confused and disoriented when entering working life. Due to rapid change and high pressure, they are more stressed than before.

Nonetheless, companies are not always ready to respond to young employees' expectations and demands. One of the studied reasons was generational differences and miscommunication. While many companies prove by actions that they care about their own employees' well-being and their employees are being heard, most companies are still far behind in responding to employees' demands. There are various ways to tackle this, from direct/indirect benefits to full-scale programmes and systems. Based on gained knowledge, the profile of an average young talent was built with the position "I would like to...". Noteworthy, gender is not relevant to this profile, but the profiling factors are.

Ms. X profile: I
would like to....



Share same values and vision as my company
 Work flexible hours, and being evaluated based on the result
 Be guided and mentored, especially during first months in the company
 Be able to move within the company and grow professionally and personally throughout the career
 Get medical insurance, re-skilling opportunities, own pension plan
 Enjoy work and have work-life balance
 Have necessary equipment for remote work

Figure 8. Profile of an average young talent based on knowledge base

3 Methodology and Implementation

This chapter covers methodological choices made and implemented in this research. It describes selected sample, data collection, research implementation, data analysis and interpretation. This chapter is important because it highlights the main aspects of research design and approach.

3.1 Research design

Research design is a learning path that leads the researcher from the beginning – choosing the topic and defining the problem – to the end when it is time to overview the results and conclude (Sileyew,2019). To conduct systematic research, the author needs to pay attention to research-related details and make informed choices regarding the type of research, research design, suitable method, collecting and reporting data appropriately. This chapter describes all important decisions made to conduct systematic research.

In this research, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. Despite the possibility of combining research approaches, this research's selected approach is analytical induction as it allows the structure to be modified if needed. To support chosen approach, it is essential to understand that this research is exploratory. Its primary purpose is to understand what is happening and to gather insights from the focus group. Exploratory studies are flexible and can adapt to changes that often occur if the approach is inductive. One of the principal ways of conducting exploratory research is to conduct an interview with subjects of the topic (Saunders et al., 2009).

The selected methodological choice is triangulation: This research contains qualitative (interviews) and quantitative (survey) data collection techniques, which means that this research has mixed methods. The particular reason for using the mixed-method design is triangulation (Saunders et al., 2009). Jick (1979) states that triangulation in its geomantic nature allows reaching accuracy using multiple viewpoints.

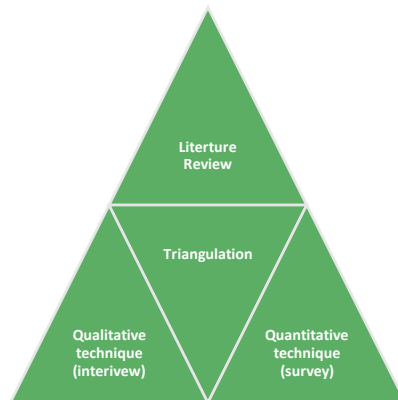


Figure 9. Triangulation method (modified from Saunders et al., 2009)

Despite the aim to discover work-life balance expectations of young talents with projections to year 2026, this study is considered to be cross-sectional because of the rather strict time constrains.

3.2 Sample

According to Saunders et al. (2009), there are several sample techniques. For this research, probability sampling was selected. The sample frame identified the target group as young talents, meaning students close to graduation (2nd year onwards) and recent graduates (who have graduated not more than two years ago). The nationality, age, country of residence was not relevant; therefore, not asked. Sample frame allowed both working and not working at the moment respondents. Survey was sent to roughly 400 individuals within the sampling frame. The realistic assumption was that not everyone would respond; however, it was favorable to get at least 70 responses to have an analyzable response pool. According to Saunders et al. (2009), it is essential to include the response rate in the research. Formula for measuring the total response rate can be found below.

$$\text{total response rate} = \frac{\text{total number of responses}}{\text{total number in sample} - \text{ineligible}}$$

Based on this formula, the total response rate (80/400) was 0.2 or 20%. According to Saunders et al. (2009), reasonable response rate can vary a lot and depends on the survey type. As this was a self-administered internet mediated survey, 20% response rate can be considered reasonable.

3.3 Data collection & implementation

Data can be divided into two types: primary and secondary. Primary data traditionally refers to raw information collected by the author in some form depending on the selected technique Saunders et al. (2009). In this research – primary data was the one collected from survey and interviews (mixed methods). Secondary data refers to the already processed data found on the internet or in the library, e.g., an article (peer-reviewed), a book, a publication, conference paper, a newspaper, a journal, exploratory studies etc. Every source of data should be checked for credibility and reviewed critically. A few examples of credible data sources are databases like Google Scholar, Eric, EBSCO, Research Gate, and journals like Emerald, Harvard Business Review. Secondary data is used to gain a fundamental understanding of the phenomenon and current action. Generating keywords increase the compatibility of search request with results.

Both qualitative and quantitative data can be either primary or secondary. Saunders et al. (2009) state that qualitative data is based on meanings derived from words which can be collected in numerous ways, from open-ended survey questions to interviews. Qualitative data is usually non-standardized, which means it requires separation into categories. It is a rich and full base for observation. At the same time, Saunders et al. (2009) specified that quantitative data is based on sources derived from numbers and is collected as numerical and categorized data. Quantitative data analysis is often conducted via diagrams, tables and statistics.

Survey design

Data collection started with the survey (quantitative method). According to Saunders et al. (2009), there are different types of surveys. It was decided to use a self-administered, internet-mediated survey created on the Webropol platform because it was the easiest and safest way to collect the

answers. Respondents could fill in the survey at their own time and pace. Saunders et al. state (2009) that questions have to be easy to understand in the survey, straight to the point. When making projections, people naturally give estimates and expectations. In the survey, attributes, opinion and behaviour variables mix.

For simplicity, the author used mainly multiple-choice questions and category questions. To assess the validity of the survey, pilot testing was conducted. It was sent to individuals not involved in the research process. After completion, they were asked how much time it took to fill in the survey, whether there was anything unclear in questions and whether there were difficulties in moving from one theme to another. After ensuring questions were clear and understandable, a survey was sent to the actual sample group. With the survey, an explanation message was attached to clear the purpose of the survey, anonymity and timeframes. The purpose of the survey was also seen on the first page of the survey to avoid any misunderstanding (appendix 1).

The flow and order of questions are important both for the respondent and for the author. Questions have to be structured and divided into themes. In total, there were 25 questions (question with contact details for interview discussion was not counted). The schematic structure of the survey can be found in table 2 below:

| Question | Theme | Data | Type of question |
|----------|---|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1-6 | Demographics | Demographical data – sample fitting | Multiple choice, Category |
| 7-10 | Factors affecting work-life balance in 2021 vs. in 2026 | Primary data, addressing RQ2 & RQ3 | Multiple choice |
| 11-15 | Career target expectations | Primary data, addressing RQ1 | Multiple choice, Category |
| 16-17 | Skills expectations | Primary data, addressing RQ1 | Multiple choice, Rating |

| | | | |
|-------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 18-22 | Workload expectations | Primary data, addressing RQ1 | Multiple choice, Category |
| 23-24 | Company resources expectations | Primary data, addressing RQ1 | Multiple choice |
| 25 | Learning course on work-life balance | Primary data, additional | Multiple choice |

Table 2. Survey structure

In every survey, there has to be an opening, main part and closing (Saunders et al., 2009). It is wise to move from simple and general questions to more complex and precise ones. It is also important to think about data analysis already in the designing phase to better structure questions. For example, answer options can be categorized or be listed one by one – it depends on the purpose of the question (Jenn, 2006).

To make sure the respondent fits sample parameters, demographic questions were asked first. After that, such questions as the current status (student or graduate), study area, gender, employment status, size of the present company (if working) were asked.

Questions were justified by a built theoretical knowledge base. However, some questions originated from common knowledge and the author's experience. For example, salary expectations were an important question to ask, but based on the assumption that not all respondents are planning to work in Finland in 5 years, it was decided to provide respondents with information about the average salary in Finland for all jobs before taxes, according to Clausnitzer (2021). Respondents could choose option lower than provided average, same or higher. That way, even if they are not planning to work in Finland, they had a base point to justify their answer with. Furthermore, the last survey question that asked about whether it would be useful to have a learning course about work-life balance came from the author's assumption that such a course could improve students' perception of work-life balance and prepare them better for upcoming career obstacles.

Interview design

Following survey, interviews (qualitative method) were implemented. To compliment the survey best, it was decided to use a semi-structured, non-standardized, group informant interview type (Saunders et al., 2009). This type is the most informal, where participants can freely express their thoughts and beliefs on the given topic. Each interview had a proposed structure in the form of short headlines that formulated a certain scenario of the working – social life. The scenario was presented to participants in the form of written headlines, and they could freely express their opinions. Interviews were navigated by questions from the author (see Appendix 2), but participants could go off-road with their thoughts. The selected type of interview is an advantageous approach to collect data from open-ended questions.

The author has decided to use futures scenarios as a base for the interviews. It is an interesting, non-traditional, but often employable approach that many companies have been using for years now (Wilkinson & Kupers, 2013). Futures scenarios planning imply there is no one definitive future anyone could predict, but it is wise to oversee how events can unfold in several settings. Scenarios can be found in appendix 2. Scenarios can be challenged by controversial headlines to provoke discussion between participants (Wilkinson & Kupers, 2013).

The interview scenario was built using two tools: elaborated questions that were asked in the survey; scenario headlines from PWC (2018) report "Workforce of the future: The competing forces shaping 2030", where it presented three different scenarios for the working life of 2030. In each scenario presented to a focus group, there were approximately ten headlines, depending on the scenario. Futures scenarios were named "Corporates rule", "Caring companies" and "Humans first" and reflected related aspects and probabilities of working life as flexible hours; overload; trust/mistrust of management towards employees; 4 days week; unemployment rate and many more (see Appendix 2).

Data Collection

The survey was sent to students close to graduation (2nd year onwards) and recent alumni (who graduated not more than two years ago from bachelor's degree) from a personal account. The survey was open for roughly two months and got 80 responses. At the end of the survey, respondents were asked whether they were interested in participating in the interview regarding

work-life balance expectations of young talents futures scenarios. Those who agreed were contacted, and interviews were scheduled.

Each interview lasted for approximately an hour. The focus group consisted of 7 people in total, divided into three groups. People were selected rather randomly from those who provided their interest and contact details in the last survey question, which can be found in appendix 1 (Survey questions). Interviews were transcribed and analyzed. Due to the size of all transcriptions, the author has decided not to include interviews in the research, however, will store them in private files until the end of the thesis process.

Research Implementation

When writing research, it is very important to plan and follow the structure in order to implement systematic research. The author made a visual graph that demonstrates the implementation of current research. The thesis process started in January 2021 by choosing a topic that was interesting to the author. Once a broad topic was decided, it had to be narrowed down. Briefly but critically reviewing already existing research helped in this process. Once the topic was defined, the author drafted research questions and objectives. The data collection process began in March 2021 with a critical review of existing research related to the chosen phenomenon that assisted in answering the research questions. Additionally, defining methodological choices and selecting research strategy allowed to proceed with data collection using the triangulation method. In April 2021 survey was designed, tested and sent to the sample group. In June 2021 author proceeded with semi-structured interviews. Then, collected data were categorized and analyzed using various analyzing tools. Finally, research questions were answered, and research quality was assessed in chapter 5 (Conclusions and Discussion). Limitations and implications for further research were overviewed as well.

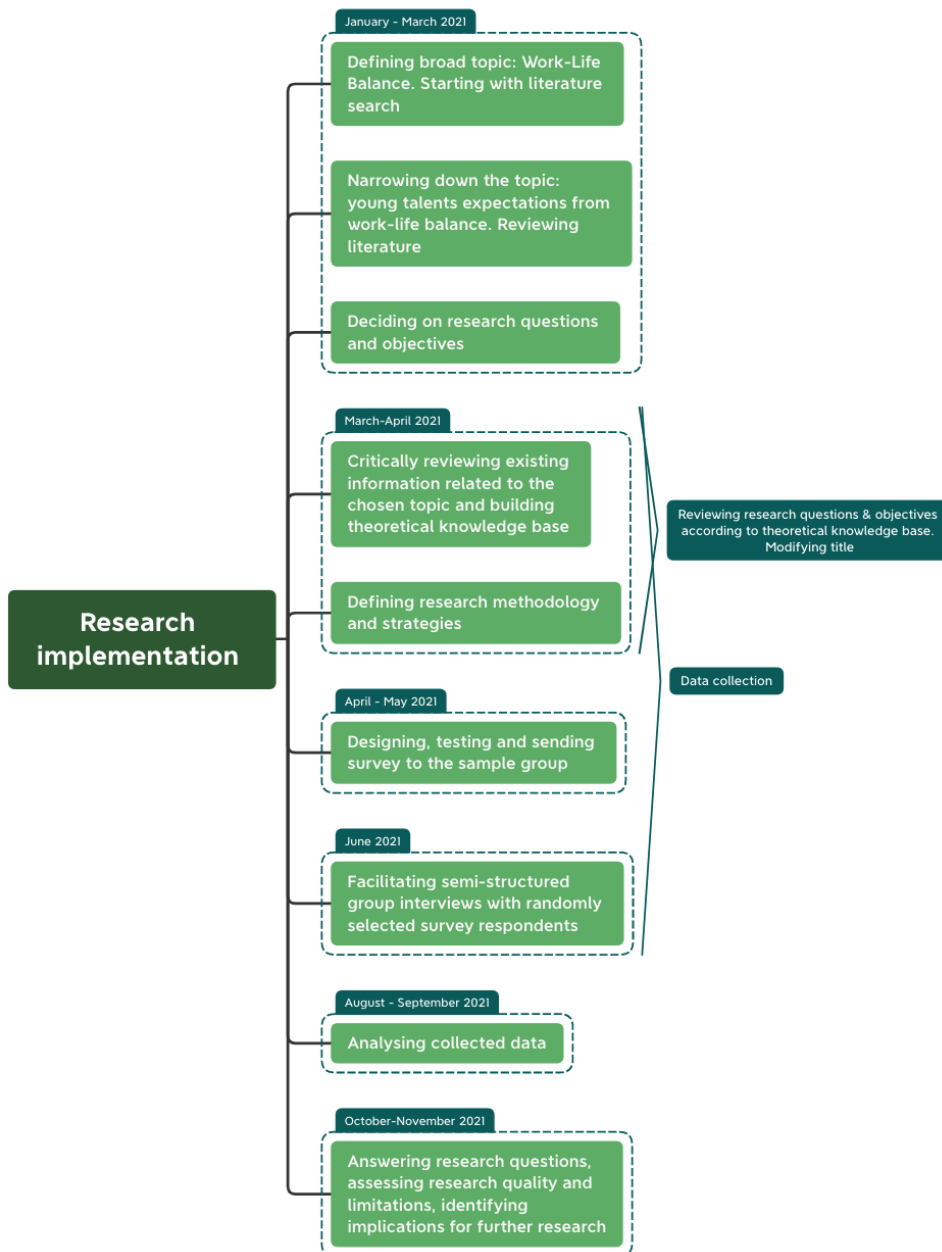


Figure 10. Research implementation

3.4 Data analysis & interpretation

Survey data were analysed in the Webropol survey system using its own analytical tools. Results from demographics and factors affecting work-life balance were used for descriptive analysis. However, results about expectations were coded and analysed by bivariate correlation analysis in SPSS software to identify possible correlations between young talents' expectations. Nickolas (2021) defines the Pearson correlation coefficient as an indicator of a linear relationship between selected variables. Correlation can be positive or negative. It can also be significant or insignificant

depending on the strength of the relationship. This method was used to evaluate the strength of the relationship in the current study. In total, ten variables were used to identify possible correlations. Some of the variables were ordinal, and the rest were nominal, corresponding to the types of questions. Both positive and negative correlations were found.

Interviews were recorded and analysed by the author. Responses were divided into categories matching survey themes and reported in the results chapter. To support thematic content analysis, some expressions were included in themes as well.

3.5 Plan for research quality and ethics

The survey was created in the Webropol survey platform and shared with participants as a public link. The survey link was sent in the mass email, and the email message informed potential respondents about the purpose of this survey and the anonymity guarantee. Only the author has access to survey results. The survey was conducted anonymously, hence, it did not contain any questions that could reveal respondents' identities. However, the last optional question asked whether the respondent was interested in participating in the interview round and required an email. Those who were interested had to provide the email address via which the author contacted them in order to schedule an interview. It is important to note that respondents' survey responses did not affect interview discussion at all. Saunders et al. (2009) has identified several ethical principles. Following ethical principles were thought of when collecting data:

1. Privacy of all participants
2. Voluntary participation
3. Clear purpose and ensured anonymity were explained with description email when sending survey
4. Interview participants consented to be voice recorded and informed that recording will be kept private
5. When asking gender in the survey option "prefer not to say" was provided
6. Nationality/country of current residency was not asked
7. Name of the university (if a student) nor company name (if a working graduate) was not asked
8. When asking about factors affecting WLB, option "other, please specify" was provided

As was mentioned above, pre-testing was done by sending the survey to several respondents to check the clarity of the survey. Their answers were deleted before sending survey to the actual sample group, therefore, did not affect the final results presented in chapter 4 (4. Results). Besides demographics, questions were neutral and did not require any personal or intimate answers. Questions about salary expectations and working hours expectations included categorized options, hence, respondents did have to provide any specific answer. During interviews, participants were not forced to answer questions as the discussion was informal. The author has given control over the discussion to participants in goodwill to obtain as truthful and rich a view as possible.

Secondary data was also used in this research, primarily when reviewing the literature. Literature was reviewed carefully, and relevance was assessed. All resources that were referred to in this research are recognized and mentioned in the list of references.

4 Results

This chapter provides information about results from survey and interviews. As the author used qualitative and quantitative methods to collect the data, results will be divided into themes used in the survey and partially used in the interviews. Survey questions and interview plan, and questions can be found in appendix 1 and appendix 2, respectively. Also, correlation analysis results will be presented, overviewing in/significant and/or un/expected correlations.

The table below highlights some interview respondents' expressions on the general question "how would you rate your work-life balance in this scenario".

| Scenario "Corporates rule" | |
|---|--|
| I1: I think that if there are blurry boundaries and flexible schedule, but at the same time I experience pressure from employer, meaning that I have to do everything thoroughly and in | I2: I think that if I wouldn't have a job as many other people in this scenario, I don't want to work in corporate and I would want to open my own business, I simply couldn't do it. So, it |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>time and I have many tasks on my plate, then it will lead in either that I will stop caring and do a sloppy work and will get fired, or that I will be living only in work dimension and not having time for anything else, because when you have a flexible schedule, it is very hard to divide hours and your own time. I don't think it will be a good balance and good life quality. I think I would be very stressed.</p> | <p>looks like I don't have that many options either way. I would feel very depressed and lost.</p> |
|---|--|

Scenario "Caring companies"

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>I3: I would also rate it around 8. I need discipline and routine in order to be productivity. It is also easier if when you have a partner with the same schedule, it is easier to combine work and private life. But I feel that flexible hours would only harm my productivity.</p> | <p>I4: I think on the scale from 1 to 10, I would be around 8 max. I need defined deadlines and working hours, or routine in other words. Because otherwise, I will be all over the place and then I would not be very successful or productive.</p> | <p>I5: I think that it is possible to manage both aspects of life. But I think that having commitments take a lot of time and that you could spend on work. I think I would concentrate on work in this scenario as work-life balance would be achieved.</p> |
|--|--|--|

Scenario "Humans first"

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>I6: I also think that work-life balance should be easier to achieve in this scenario, because people would have more time to live, not only work, and if they also have extra activities it is also great, because then people can also relax during this time.</p> | <p>I7: I think in this case there will be a proper work-life balance and it is easy to manage both spheres.</p> |
|--|---|

Table 3. Interview highlights

4.1 Correlation analysis

Bivariate Pearson correlation coefficient correlation analysis was made in SPSS software to identify possible correlation between variables. Figure 11 below demonstrates found correlation between several questions. Significant correlations highlighted in purple. Since sample data is limited, author has also highlighted significance between 10-15%.

| | | V1:Gender | V2:Career Trgt | V3:Supervision | V4:Salary Exp | V5:CompSize Exp | V6:EduLevel Exp | V7:HrsPer WeekExp | V8:Remote Hrs | V9:Flexible Hrs | V10:Weekend Work |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------|----------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------|-----------------|------------------|
| V1:Gender | Pearson Corr | | 0,158 | 0,169 | 0,181 | -0,002 | -0,003 | 0,153 | -0,15 | -0,112 | -0,035 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | 0,165 | 0,137 | 0,11 | 0,988 | 0,98 | 0,177 | 0,188 | 0,326 | 0,762 |
| | N | 79 | 79 | 79 | 79 | 79 | 79 | 79 | 79 | 79 | 79 |
| V2:CareerTrgt | Pearson Corr | 0,158 | | -0,161 | ,367*** | -,276*** | 0,113 | -0,028 | 0,009 | 0,028 | -0,171 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0,165 | | 0,154 | 0,001 | 0,013 | 0,32 | 0,806 | 0,938 | 0,809 | 0,129 |
| | N | 79 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 |
| V3:Supervision | Pearson Corr | 0,169 | -0,161 | | -0,217* | -0,131 | 0,053 | -,245** | 0,071 | -0,048 | 0,018 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0,137 | 0,154 | | 0,053 | 0,248 | 0,638 | 0,029 | 0,534 | 0,673 | 0,876 |
| | N | 79 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 |
| V4:SalaryExp | Pearson Corr | 0,181 | ,367*** | -0,217* | | 0,181 | ,223** | 0,096 | 0,022 | -0,132 | 0,008 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0,11 | 0,001 | 0,053 | | 0,108 | 0,047 | 0,397 | 0,846 | 0,245 | 0,943 |
| | N | 79 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 |
| V5:CompSize Exp | Pearson Corr | -0,002 | -,276** | -0,131 | 0,181 | | 0,038 | ,469*** | -,221** | 0,012 | 0,169 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0,988 | 0,013 | 0,248 | 0,108 | | 0,736 | 0 | 0,049 | 0,914 | 0,133 |
| | N | 79 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 |
| V6:EduLevel Exp | Pearson Corr | -0,003 | 0,113 | 0,053 | ,223** | 0,038 | | 0,039 | 0,094 | -0,005 | -0,031 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0,98 | 0,32 | 0,638 | 0,047 | 0,736 | | 0,73 | 0,405 | 0,965 | 0,787 |
| | N | 79 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 |
| V7:HrsPer WeekExp | Pearson Corr | 0,153 | -0,028 | -,245** | 0,096 | ,469*** | 0,039 | | -,292*** | 0,093 | -0,084 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0,177 | 0,806 | 0,029 | 0,397 | 0 | 0,73 | | 0,009 | 0,41 | 0,461 |
| | N | 79 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 |
| V8:Remote Hrs | Pearson Corr | -0,15 | 0,009 | 0,071 | 0,022 | -,221** | 0,094 | -,292*** | | -0,001 | 0,067 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0,188 | 0,938 | 0,534 | 0,846 | 0,049 | 0,405 | 0,009 | | 0,992 | 0,554 |
| | N | 79 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 |
| V9:Flexible Hrs | Pearson Corr | -0,112 | 0,028 | -0,048 | -0,132 | 0,012 | -0,005 | 0,093 | -0,001 | | 0,121 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0,326 | 0,809 | 0,673 | 0,245 | 0,914 | 0,965 | 0,41 | 0,992 | | 0,283 |
| | N | 79 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 |
| V10:Weekend Work | Pearson Corr | -0,035 | -0,171 | 0,018 | 0,008 | 0,169 | -0,031 | -0,084 | 0,067 | 0,121 | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0,762 | 0,129 | 0,876 | 0,943 | 0,133 | 0,787 | 0,461 | 0,554 | 0,283 | |
| | N | 79 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 |

| | |
|-----|--|
| * | * Correlation is significant at the 0.10 level (2-tailed). |
| ** | ** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). |
| *** | *** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). |

Figure 11. Correlation analysis

Several significant correlations were found. This paragraph reviews them in column order. First of all, a somewhat significant positive correlation was found between gender (V1) and supervising other people (V3) at work. Noteworthy, sample data propose a less significant positive correlation between gender (V1) and salary expectations (V4). There is a highly significant positive correlation between career target (V2) and salary expectations (V4). However, there is also a significant

negative correlation between career target (V2) and company size expectations (V5). There is also an insignificant negative correlation between career target (V2) and weekend work (V10). Sample data suggests that there are significant negative correlations between supervising others (V3) and working hours/week (V7) and salary expectations (V4). Sample data suggests that salary expectations (V4) significantly correlate with education level expectations (V6). A less significant positive correlation exists between salary expectations (V4) and company size expectations (V5). Results propose a highly significant positive correlation between company size expectations (V5) and working hours/ week expectations (V7). There is also a somewhat significant positive correlation between company size expectations (V5) and weekend work (V10). However, there is a highly significant negative correlation between company size expectations (V5) and remote hours/week expectations (V8). Additionally, sample data proposes a significantly high negative correlation between working hours/week expectations (V7) and remote hours/week expectations (V8).

Despite the author's assumption that flexible hours would correlate with salary expectations or career targets, no correlation was found.

4.2 Theme 1: Demographics

This theme represents general results and draws a picture of sample group. This theme describes quantitative data as it was collected only from the survey. Questions below were not asked during interviews. Total number of respondents was 80. Out of 80, 69 were students and 11 were alumni. Among 69 students, 40 of them study on business programmes, 14 in logistics or engineering programmers, 15 in tourism. Out of 80 respondents, 53 are females, 26 males and 1 preferred not to say. Majority of respondents (47) were students.

Among 80 respondents, 27 reported to be working, regardless of their status (student/alumni). Respondents were offered several options in euro based on average salary/month among all jobs in Finland. Also, option "I don't work full-time right now" was provided to include those who are not yet working fully but have already some working experience and understanding of working life. Those who reported to be working, were asked additional question regarding size of the company they are working in (measured in employees). Majority (63%) reported working in rather big companies (250+ employees).

4.3 Theme 2: factors affecting work-life balance in 2021 vs. in 2026

This theme contains both qualitative and quantitative methods reporting. Survey and interview scenarios can be found in appendix 1 and 2 respectively. In the survey, respondents were asked to choose max 5 factors that affect their work-life balance positively/negatively right now in year 2021 and in year 2026 (their expectations) from the same list of factors in order to see dynamics. Only “stress” option was added to negative factors, as it cannot be considered as positive factor. During interviews, participants were able to bring up their own factors based on the headlines of the scenario, and many mentioned factors were corresponding with those mentioned in the survey.

| Factor | Affect positively, year 2021 | Affect positively, year 2026 | Affect negatively, year 2021 | Affect negatively, year 2026 |
|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Stress issues (burnout/anxiety/depression) | | | 78.8% | 70.0% |
| Organisational support (well-being policies in the company/culture of the company/career perspectives/incentives/motivation) | 53.8% | 57.5% | 5.0% | 5.0% |
| Information technology (24/7 assessability/connectivity/remote work) | 47.5% | 46.3% | 17.5% | 22.5% |
| Emotional intelligence (ability to cope with other people) | 50.0% | 50.0% | 18.8% | 12.5% |
| Mobility (due to remote work) | 30.0% | 27.5% | 13.8% | 15.0% |
| Robotization & Automation | 6.3% | 16.3% | 2.5% | 16.3% |
| Artificial Intelligence | 5.0% | 30.0% | 3.8% | 11.3% |
| Digital Culture | 17.5% | 13.8% | 20.0% | 17.5% |
| Workload (tasks volume/hours) | 35.0% | 23.8% | 56.3% | 45.0% |
| Working conditions (facilities/safety/equipment) | 37.5% | 40.0% | 18.8% | 27.5% |
| Individual issues (ability to cope with life at work/at home/with friends/family/society) | 40.0% | 25.0% | 37.5% | 35.0% |
| Job engagement (commitment to the job/involvement in day-to-day tasks) | 23.8% | 41.3% | 17.5% | 6.3% |
| Reskilling (getting new skills/improving existing ones) | 21.3% | 28.7% | 5.0% | 13.8% |
| Shift from individual to team performance | 7.5% | 5.0% | 7.5% | 15.0% |

Table 4. Factors affecting work-life balance in year 2021 vs in year 2026

According to the results presented above, **stress** factor affects 78% of respondents’ WLB already now, and expected to drop insignificantly. Organizational support was selected as positive factor by 50% of respondents in year 2021 and in year 2026. As negative factor both now and in the

future, it was selected only by 5%. Additionally, in the interview (scenario 1) all interviewees mentioned that stress would affect them significantly and they would be subjects to such implications as burnout, depression and anxiety.

There were no major changes in **organizational support** factor, majority chose it as a positive factor that will remain such, and only 5% reported it as a negatively affecting factor both in year 2021 and in year 2026. In all interview sessions, all respondents mentioned they would expect company to play a major role in their work-life balance, and referred to provided resources, HR support, psychologist availability etc.

Information technology was chosen by approximately 50% of respondents as a positive factor. 17% and 22% reported it as negative factor in year 2021 and in year 2026 respectively.

Information technology implied not only IT system itself, but also accessibility and “instant online” mode that it brings along. During interviews, many interviewees mentioned they would expect to have advanced technological solutions used in the workplace by the year 2026, for example, in the first interview (scenario 1) where productivity software were introduced, interviewees decided it would put too much pressure on them and they would be unable to perform their best.

Emotional Intelligence was selected by half of respondents as a positive factor and less than quarter selected it as a negative factor both now in year 2021 and in the year 2026.

Mobility was not selected by that many respondents (approximately 30% selected it as a positive factor for year 2021 and for the year 2026) and less than 20% selected it as a negative factor. By mobility author meant mass relocation of working population due to shift towards remote work and increased possibility to telecommute. Interestingly that in the interview scenarios, there were headlines such as “geographically neutral community” or “40% of staff working remotely” in year 2026 and all interviewees were quite positive about it.

Robotization & automation was selected as future positive factor by 16% of respondents, however, also 16% of respondents selected it as a negative factor. It can be interpreted as robotization and automation doesn't not affect young talents that much right now, neither positively nor negatively. Same with **artificial intelligence (AI)** – it wasn't selected as affecting

factor now but was selected as future positive factor by 30% of respondents. At the same time, only 16% marked AI as negatively affecting factor in the year 2026. Many interviewees referred to robotization, automation and AI as something negative and unexplored, most of them didn't have clear understanding how exactly it will replace their potential jobs.

Respondents didn't seem to have definite opinion about **digital culture**, roughly 1/5 selected it as a positive and negative factor in year 2021 and in the year 2026. However, shift to online world and "instant online" mode were brought up by participants during interviews several times, however, opinions vary. Some reported it as a positive factor in year 2026 that open new opportunities. Other said it brings up limitations and blurs boundaries between work and life.

Results propose that **workload** affects more than half respondents negatively now, meaning respondents face frequent overload in hours and/or tasks volume. Only 35% reported workload as positive current factor. 23% selected workload to affect positively WLB in the year 2026, while 45% reported it as negative. Interview scenario 1 showed that overload would create a significant imbalance.

Working conditions factor was chosen as a positive factor both in year 2021 and in year 2026 by roughly 40% of respondents. At the same time, 18% and 27% selected it as a negative factor in year 2021 and in the year 2026 respectively. Working conditions included workplace safety, workplace culture and equipment. It was noticed in the interview, that working conditions play a great role regardless of the mode of work (offline or online). All interviewees agreed that they would expect to have proper equipment and safety guidelines at their disposal at all times. Some of them mentioned that it should be included in the job description too.

Almost half selected **individual issues** as positive factor now, meaning they are able to cope with personal and social life, but only 25% selected it as a positive factor in year 2026. This might be related with the overload and increased stress factors, that were reported as negatively affecting both now and in the future. In interview scenario 1, many mentioned that overload and stress will encourage them to put their personal lives on hold in order to manage at work. They reported decreased abilities to participate in social lives and handle personal matters.

According to results, **job engagement** is expected to affect more people positively in the future as it was selected almost by half of respondents. Less than 1/5 selected it as a negative factor. In interviews, participants confirmed that job engagement is important to them and they are expecting from employer to integrate job engagement activities, including job descriptions. Job engagement is also a part of HR, that was also mentioned during interviews. Achievement recognition was included into job engagement as a crucial motivational resource.

There are no major differences in perception of **reskilling** (20% and 28% selected it as positive and negative factor respectively). However, in comparison to current situation where only 5% reported it to affect negatively, 15% selected it as negatively affecting factor in year 2026. In interview scenarios many interviewees selected they would prefer to continue their education to obtain additional skills or upgrade existing skills. Many marked new skills as a necessary component to competitiveness.

Shift from individual to team performance – was not selected by many respondents and doesn't have noticeable changes in expectations. However, 15% of respondents selected it as a negative factor in year 2026 as a fear of team evaluation instead of individual evaluation. It was also noted that poor team engagement and procrastination of certain team members adds up to their perception of team performance as a negative factor.

4.4 Theme 3: Career and salary expectations

This theme also contains both quantitative and qualitative methods reporting. In the survey, 5 questions regarding career and salary expectations were asked. Results are reported below. Moreover, open-ended questions with regards to this theme were asked during the interview, therefore, participants' answers are reported here as well.

The first question was about career position expectations in year 2026. Options were provided from entry level position to CEO/founder position. The range contained 6 options in total and the distribution of replies can be seen below in figure 12. As can be observed, almost 25% expects to have middle-level management position, and roughly 18% selected either first-level management position or intermediate/experienced position. 10% and 7% selected top management position

and CEO/founder position respectively. However, results show that less than 5% of survey respondents expect to be in the entry-level position by the year 2026.

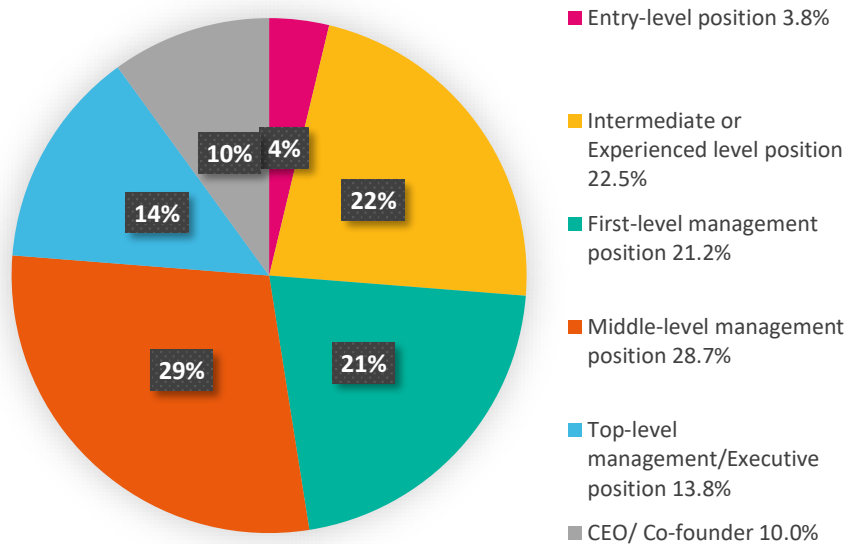


Figure 12. Career expectations

Following question was about supervision. Majority selected they would like to supervise other people, despite additional responsibilities, and only 19% stated they would prefer not to have people in supervision. According to the results, the career level target didn't affect respondents' interest in supervision as it was selected both by those who chose CEO/founder positions and those who chose entry level position. Correlation between people supervision and gender can be found in chapter 4.1 Correlation. In the interviews, participants mentioned they would prefer to supervise other people if there would be trust between management and employees. They also mentioned they would consider scenario 2 or 3 (see appendix 2) conditions to be favorable to supervise other people.

Third question was regarding the salary expectations. It was hard to formulate the survey question about salary correctly as some respondents might not live in Finland in year 2026. However, the question was based on average salary in Finland for all jobs. 7 options were provided. As can be seen in figure 13, more than half of respondents stated they expect to have roughly average salary. Only few estimated they would get significantly below average salary. Roughly 25% estimated to get somewhat above average. Finally, over 13% stated they expect to get more than

5500euro per month before taxes by year 2026. Correlation between salary expectations and career target can be found in chapter 4.1 Correlation analysis.

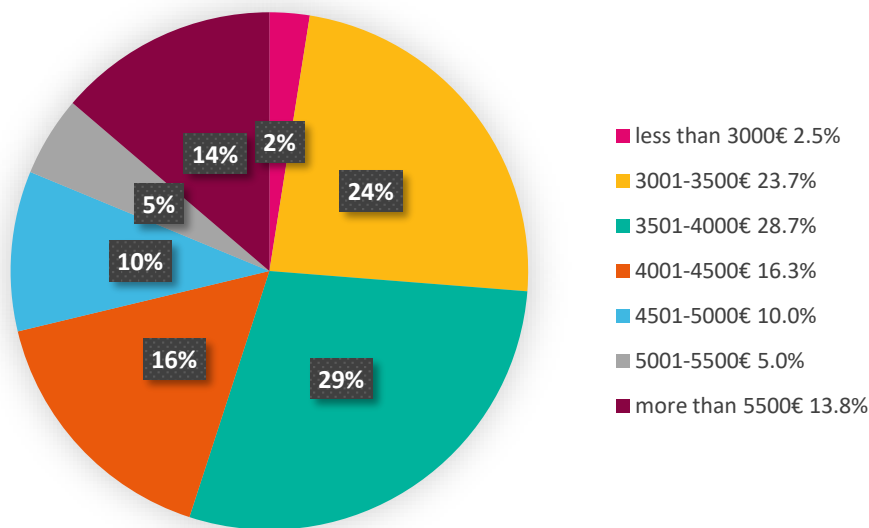


Figure 13. Salary expectations

Interview participants' expectations on salary were highly dependable on the presented scenario, therefore, in the first scenario, participants were not expected to get more than average due to unfavorable working environment, but in the second and third scenario participants claimed they would expect to make significantly more than average salary. Those participants who didn't have real working experience yet aka students, didn't have definite opinion on the salary expectations.

Following question was about size of the company respondents would like to work in year 2026. 34% set their expectations to work in a 51-249 employees' company, while 29% preferred to work in a 250+ employees' company. Roughly same number of respondents preferred working in the 11-50 employees' company. Only 11% selected they would expect working in a small company up to 10 people. Correlation between company size and salary expectations or people supervision can be seen in chapter 4.1 correlation analysis. Results indicate interview participants didn't have common opinion about the size of the company. Some mentioned they would prefer working in a large corporation due to career growth and higher salary, while others chose to work in small or medium-size companies claiming it would help them develop their professional skills better.

Despite that, all participants agreed that it is hard to maintain work-life balance in a big company and chances of flexible approach at work are smaller in big companies and vice versa.

Last question in this theme was about education level expectations by year 2026. Survey respondents were asked what educational degree they would expect to obtain by year 2026. Majority (60%) responded they expect to start/obtain master's degree by that time, while 30% would expect to obtain only bachelor's degree, meaning they would not continue their education at least until year 2026 after completing their current degree. Only 10% reported they expect to start their PhD degrees. Correlation between education and salary expectation can be found in chapter 4.1 Correlation analysis.

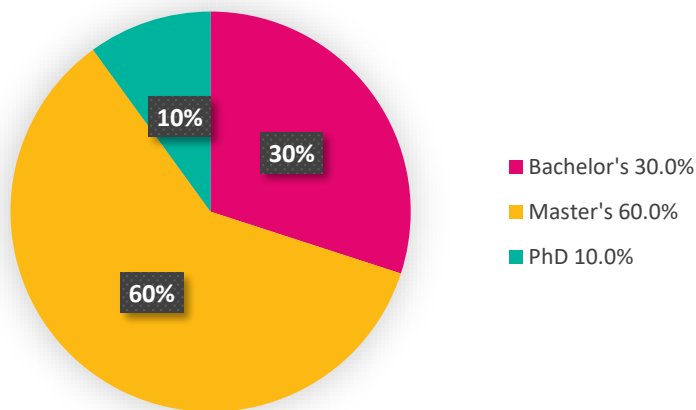


Figure 14. Education expectations

During interviews, participants were asked whether they would prefer to continue their education in given scenario. Results propose participants would like to take their education to the new level in favorable environment, provided flexibility at work. Many marked flexible hours at work as crucial moment for continuing education. Also, many reported continuous education as part of the future working-life and a necessity for competitiveness on the job market.

4.5 Theme 4: Skill set

This theme contains both quantitative and qualitative methods. Although survey contained only 2 regarding skills expectations and skills proficiency, it was very important to include skill set in the

survey. More open-ended questions were asked throughout interview process to get a deeper understanding of the theme.

First question asked about skills in demand in year 2026 (World Economic Forum, 2019). As can be seen from the table 5 below, creative thinking was selected by majority of respondents (63.7%), followed by problem-solving skills (55%), technology use (50%) and leadership skills and technology design and programming (both were chosen by 41%). Noteworthy, there was no skill that was chosen by less than 30% of respondents. Since respondents were limited in their choice (they had to select only 4 skills), results propose all presented skills are important for working life in year 2026. Second question asked to rate own proficiency in the same skill set as mentioned in the previous question. Table below shows the results.

| | Selected by | No expertise | Beginner | Intermediate | Expert | Average |
|--|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Analytical skills | 33.8% | 1.2% | 42.5% | 46.3% | 10.0% | 2.7 |
| Active learning | 40.0% | 1.3% | 15.0% | 65.0% | 18.7% | 3.0 |
| Creative thinking | 63.7% | 2.5% | 25.0% | 55.0% | 17.5% | 2.9 |
| Problem-solving skills | 55.0% | 1.3% | 20.0% | 60.0% | 18.7% | 3.0 |
| Leadership skills | 41.3% | 2.5% | 38.7% | 46.3% | 12.5% | 2.7 |
| Technology use, monitoring and control | 50.0% | 11.3% | 30.0% | 51.2% | 7.5% | 2.6 |
| Technology design and programming | 41.3% | 48.8% | 30.0% | 17.5% | 3.7% | 1.8 |
| Artificial Intelligence skills | 31.3% | 51.2% | 32.5% | 12.5% | 3.8% | 1.7 |
| Stress tolerance and flexibility | 36.3% | 5.0% | 28.7% | 48.8% | 17.5% | |

Table 5. Skill set and level of expertise

Results indicate that more than half of respondents have no expertise whatsoever in artificial intelligence despite that it was chosen by 31.3% as a skill in demand in 2026. Same situation with technology design and programming – almost 50% have no expertise in it although it was chosen by 41.3% as a skill in demand. At the same time, there was no skill in which more than 18.7% respondents would have “expert” expertise. Most of respondents have somewhat intermediate expertise in most of the skills.

During interviews, participants brought up several times necessity to cope with stress and workplace pressure, especially in scenario 1. They noted they don't have necessary skills to deal with pressure right now. Many also noted self-discipline as an important skill to have in order to succeed in remote work mode. Many stated they would expect HR to provide training to update/acquire skills needed for work and work well-being.

4.6 Theme 5: Workload

Workload theme covers young talents' expectations regarding workload issues such as working hours/mode of work etc. It contains both quantitative and qualitative methods.

The first question was about the number of hours young talents expect to work per week in 2026. Majority (51.2%) stated they expect to work 31-40 hours/week which is a regular full-time working week. 31.3% reported they expect to work 20-30 hours/week. 12.5% reported they expect to work more than 40 hours/week while only 5% selected the option to work less than 20 hours/week. Correlation between number of hours/week and salary expectations and career level can be found in chapter 4.1 Correlation analysis.

Following question was about number of hours respondents would like to work remotely. Results indicate that on average, 45% of working time respondents would prefer to work remotely. This question was also brought up during interviews. Participants mentioned that when having full flexibility and possibility to work remotely, they would even consider relocation, however, they would still like to visit office at least couple of times per month. Interestingly, participants who expressed interest in supervision stated they would prefer to work most of the time at site to stay filled in the process and oversee subordinates.

Next question asked if respondents would like to work flexible hours instead of traditional 9-5 office schedule of working day. Majority (67.5%) of survey respondents indeed preferred to work flexible hours. This was backed up by almost all interview participants who expressed interest in result-based working model and possibility to adjust working hours to own schedule. Only 10% stated they do not want to work flexible hours. 22.5% reported they would agree to work non-standard hours only if there would be emergency at work. Correlation between flexible hours and salary target and career level can be found in chapter 4.1 Correlation analysis.

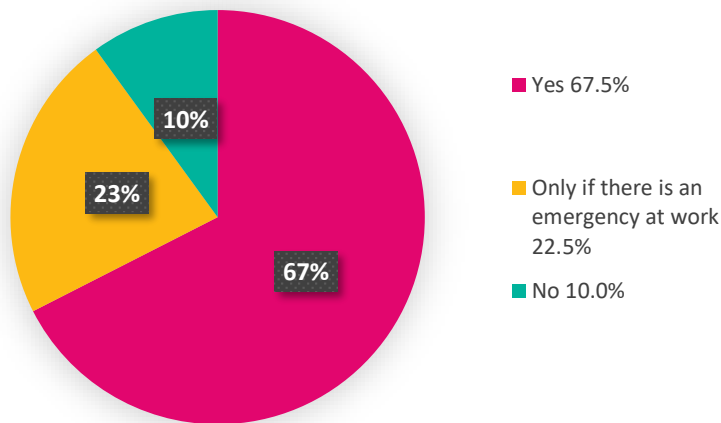


Figure 15. Flexible hours system

At the same time, only 11% reported they would like to work on weekends too in comparison to 40% who stated they would not want to work on weekends. Other 49% reported they would work on weekends if there would be work emergency. Roughly the same number of respondents (51%) stated they would only check their phone/email on weekends/holidays only if there would be an emergency at work. 14% reported they would like to keep up and follow news and updates, while 35% reported they would not check work-related matters.

4.7 Theme 5: Company resources

This theme covers the company resources expectations including HR support and direct/indirect benefits. It contains both quantitative and qualitative methods. It is an important theme as it gives the actual understanding what do young talents value and expect from their workplace. Figure X below demonstrates that as many as 90% of respondents expect their company to provide medical insurance. It was also brought up during the interviews, that participants expect to have access to medicine, especially if they are foreigners. Additionally, many added psychologist and therapist services.

| | n | Percent |
|-----------------------------------|----|---------|
| Medical insurance | 72 | 90.0% |
| Paid parental leave | 55 | 68.8% |
| Leased car | 13 | 16.3% |
| Leased bicycle | 4 | 5.0% |
| Sport activities (e.g., gym pass) | 55 | 68.8% |

| | | |
|--|----|-------|
| Free food/drinks supply in the office | 38 | 47.5% |
| Pet insurance/per friendly office | 13 | 16.3% |
| Re-skilling opportunities (e.g., company-organised courses/webinars) | 68 | 85.0% |
| Annual bonuses | 62 | 77.5% |
| Other: Free parking/leisure places | 3 | 3.8% |

Table 6. Company resources expectations

Second place take re-skilling opportunities, 85% have listed it as one of their expectations, and as it was mentioned in theme 4 chapter 4.5 (Theme 4. Skill set), many rely heavily on on-site re-skilling, as to not to interrupt their career. Paid parental leave and sport activities were also selected by almost 70% of respondents. Other company resources were not as important for respondents as already mentioned ones.

Second question was about resources young talents expect to receive from company when working remotely. Table 7 below shows that most of all respondents expect to get proper internet connection set and paid by company and computer. More than 70% also mentioned access to productivity and collaboration apps is expected. On the contrary, discount on food delivery was expected least of all.

| | n | Percent |
|---|----|---------|
| Computer | 71 | 88.8% |
| Cellphone | 43 | 53.8% |
| Chair and desk | 24 | 30.0% |
| Headset | 32 | 40.0% |
| Printer | 25 | 31.3% |
| Second screen | 22 | 27.5% |
| Access to productivity and collaboration apps (e.g., Zoom/Trello) | 62 | 77.5% |
| Discount on food delivery services | 16 | 20.0% |
| Internet connection (new router or subscription plan) | 46 | 57.5% |

Table 7. Company resources for remote work

During interviews, many participants mentioned they would expect to get proper equipment for efficient work process, including computer, monitor, chair and table.

At the end of the survey respondents were asked if they would like to have work-life balance learning course in any format and what they would like to see in it. Based on answers, all provided options were found rather useful to have in degree programme. Figure X below demonstrates that 60% selected applying skills to practice by simulating real life work situations. Half of respondents selected in-class sessions with HR professionals and employees from companies of different sizes. 49% also reported learning about work-life balance management as useful skill to learn.

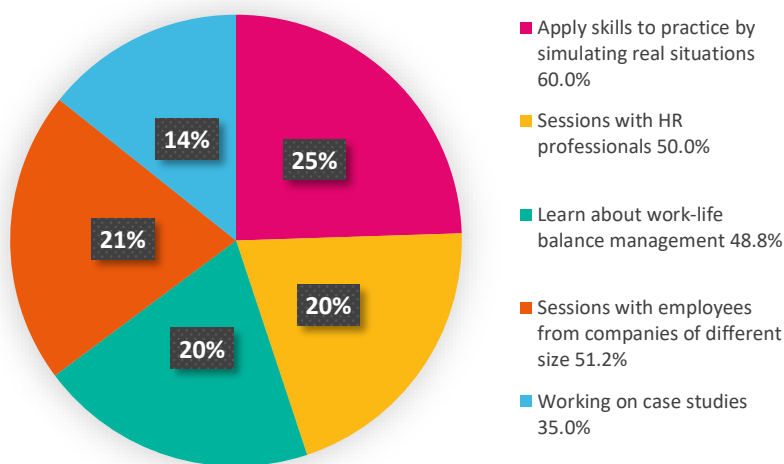


Figure 16. Learning course expectations

5 Discussion & Conclusions

This chapter covers discussions and conclusion on answering research questions and identifying implications for further research. Research quality and implications are also covered in this chapter.

5.1 Answering research questions

Based on the title of this research, the primary purpose was to discover work-life balance expectations of university-level students and graduates pr young talents on their career with projections to the year 2026. It was also essential to identify factors affecting work-life balance in the year 2026. Naturally, factors affecting work-life balance already now should have been taken into consideration to compare it and identify shifts.

Research objectives were met, and research questions were answered. Research questions were modified and ended up being more descriptive than the author anticipated. Answers to research questions can be found below.

RQ1: What work-life balance expectations do university-level students and graduates have from their career: projections to the year 2026?

In general, young talents have relatively high work-life balance expectations from their careers. Results show that on average, young talents expect to have first/middle-level management positions, supervise other people at work, earn a roughly average salary, work in a company with 50+ employees, study in master's degree. The majority expect to improve their skills, especially in the area of technology and artificial intelligence. Furthermore, the majority wish to work 30-40 hours/week with a shift to a result-based working process where they don't have to work standard hours 9-5. Talents don't expect to work on weekends or holidays unless there is an emergency at work, meaning they would set a proper work-life balance. Finally, the majority expect the company to provide such resources as medical insurance and re-skilling opportunities. Almost everyone expects to be provided with a computer, phone and access to productivity/communication apps. Based on research data, the following figure 17 provides the average set of expectations young talents have. In this figure, fictional Mr. Y is the representative of an average sample subject. Noteworthy, gender is not relevant to this profile, but the profiling factors are.

Mr. Y profile:



Works on first/middle level management position

Works 30-40 hours a week

Works in a company with 50+ employees and have strong organizational culture

His company provides her with laptop, phone, access to productivity and communication apps

He works when she wants

His company provides her with medical insurance and re-skilling opportunities

| |
|----------------------------|
| He supervises other people |
|----------------------------|

Figure 17. Profile of an average young talent based on results

Results also indicate that young talents expect all described skills be in high demand by the year 2026. The highest in demand skill selected is creative thinking. Least in demand according to results is artificial intelligence skills, which contradicts with previously acquired knowledge.

RQ2: What are the factors affecting work-life balance of current university-level students and graduates in year 2021 vs in year 2026?

Initially, 14 positive factors were proposed to respondents for evaluation of their effect on respondents now vs in 2026. Among those 14 factors, those with changes of more than 10% in 2026 were selected and reported below. The whole table can be found in the results chapter (4.3 factors affecting work-life balance in 2021 vs 2026). As can be seen, individual issues are expected to have lesser affection on work-life balance in the near future, while artificial intelligence is expected to have greater preference. However, such changes are not very relevant and need further research.

| Factor | Affects positively in year 2021 | | Affects positively in year 2026 |
|---|---------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Robotization & Automation | 6.3% | → | 16.3% |
| Artificial Intelligence | 5.0% | → | 30.0% |
| Workload (tasks volume/hours) | 35.0% | → | 23.8% |
| Individual issues (ability to cope with life at work/at home/with friends/family/society) | 40.0% | → | 25.0% |
| Job engagement (commitment to the job/involvement in day-to-day tasks) | 23.8% | → | 41.3% |

Figure 18. Positive factors affecting work-life balance based on results

Overall, artificial intelligence is the least significant positive factor influencing work-life balance right now in the year 2021, while the most significant factor is organizational support (see be found in the original table in 4.3 Theme 2: factors affecting work-life balance in 2021 vs in 2026). Although organizational support was selected only by 57% of respondents in the survey, all

interview participants referred to organizational support as a key factor setting the base for work well-being.

The same evaluation was proposed regarding negative factors affecting one's work-life balance in the year 2021 vs in the year 2026. The table below demonstrates changes more than 10%.

| Factor | Affects negatively in year 2021 | | Affects negatively in year 2026 |
|--|--|---|--|
| Robotization & Automation | 2.5% | → | 16.3% |
| Workload (tasks volume/hours) | 56.3% | → | 45.0% |
| Job engagement (commitment to the job/involvement in day-to-day tasks) | 17.5% | → | 6.3% |

Figure 19. Negative factors affecting work-life balance based on results

Figure 19 highlights significant shifts in negative factors. As can be seen, only robotization & automation was selected as a growing negative factor, increasing to more than 10%. However, it was also selected as a growing positive factor, which suggests the polarization of respondents' opinions regarding the subject; part of them consider robotization and automation positive, while others are negative. As results indicate, the workload will affect less in year 2026 than now (in 2021). In the original table (chapter 4.2) it is obvious that stress issues negatively affect the work-life balance of as many as 78% of respondents.

Surprisingly, stress issues were not selected as a growing negative factor. On the contrary, only 70% of respondents selected it as a negative factor in year 2026 compared to 78% of respondents who selected it as a negative factor affecting work-life balance in year 2021. It might be linked to post-epidemic destabilization in the working environment and uncertainty the majority face in the presence but expected to smoothen over in 5 years.

Q3: What should stakeholders in the companies do to benefit from findings?

Stakeholders should consider asking questions about factors affecting work-life balance and expectations for the near future of their recruits regularly, for example, in the entry interview and then annually. Such measures can help identify the company's weak spots and address employees'

needs rationally. It will ensure smooth communication between employer and employee. Additionally, being heard and noticed raise morale and motivate employees to stay within the company.

Results propose that young talents have strong expectations about workload and working hours. For example, about half of respondents mentioned they would prefer working remotely and non-standard hours, giving them opportunities to relocate or plan their lives. Companies should introduce flexible hours systems to correspond to these expectations. Such measures can help employees fit more in their day and make them happier. It is also beneficial for the company because, for example, an employee that is not attached to a particular place can move to another city to pursue a higher degree combining it with work.

As was indicated in the results, most young talents expect to have re-skilling opportunities, preferably on-site or in a way that could be combined with work. Companies should take this into account and provide relevant re-skilling resources, depending on company possibilities. It can be a light webinar or a full-scale programme.

One of the key highlights is that companies should re-evaluate their approach to remote work. If they propose remote working possibilities, they have to equip employees accordingly. Providing all necessary resources is vital as to not harm the working process and cause potential damage to an employee.

Results also indicated high demand for a learning course within a university programme that would prepare students to build work-life balance properly and identify factors affecting it.

5.2 Theoretical & practical implications

A likely profile of an average young talent named Ms X was gathered based on the built theoretical knowledge base. Then, based on collected data, the possible profile of an average young talent called Mr Y profile was compiled as well. They indeed shared common expectations about flexible hours systems and the overall importance of work-life balance. They also shared high expectations on reskilling opportunities provided by the organization as well as other direct and indirect benefits. Exploration of the relevance and importance of a learning course on work-life balance

within the university programmes that interested all survey respondents can be added to the knowledge base. Overall, the author agrees with already existing studies and confirms that most factors and general expectations match. However, despite Batley (2021), Debb et al. (2020), and World Economic Forum Report (2019) studies that robotization, automation and artificial intelligence affects young employees a lot already now, results have not indicated such significance. It is also seen based on the skills expectations. Only 31% of survey respondents have chosen artificial intelligence as a skill in high demand in 5 years (2026). One explanation could be that artificial intelligence awareness is still relatively low among young talents. Furthermore, gathered data confirms that projection of skills that are expected to be in high demand by 2026 according to World Economic Forum (2019) also was chosen each at least by 30% of survey respondents.

It was assumed by Hassan et al. (2020) that companies might not want to invest in young talents as they tend to change workplaces more often than previous generations, therefore, employee turnover is higher than before. However, companies need to invest in organizational culture and workplace well-being. One of the practical implications can be a partnership of HR representatives with universities or a joint project that would enable university-level students. Another practical implication built on interview answers is that companies should reconsider their recruitment process and be more transparent. It is especially relevant to international talents.

Additionally, appraisal discussion and job performance thoroughly done can help to raise morale, boost productivity, tackle rising issues on an individual level, better understand employees and increase job satisfaction. Regarding forced remote work (due to coronavirus), it is necessary to provide employees with physical activities sources, whether it is a subscription to an app with exercises or membership in a gym. Furthermore, cultivating multi-generational culture can add value to the company as Gen Z and older generations have their strength and can improve its operations. All in all, heavy work-life balance promotion is necessary for every organization.

5.3 Assessment of research process & results quality

In total, the whole research process has lasted for approximately a year – from choosing the topic to the final submission. The author has followed and implemented selected methods that were described in chapter 3 (Methodology and Implementation). In the author's opinion, the most

challenging part was analyzing the data as a mixed-method approach was selected. The author encountered difficulties categorizing data and reporting it appropriately.

According to Yin (2013), research quality can be judged based on validity and reliability. Validity and reliability are interrelated, meaning if research is deemed valid, most likely it is reliable. Validity refers to the accuracy of the method measurements, whether results represent what they are supposed to mean. The survey excluded open-ended questions, and only multiple-choice or category questions were provided based on a built theoretical knowledge base to minimize threats to validity. Although interviews were semi-structured and participants could express their opinions freely, the author had asked a set of questions to maximize relevance of obtained information.

Reliability refers to results' consistency, which means how results can be repeated using the same method and sample. Saunders et al. (2009) identify four main threats to reliability: participant error, participant bias, observer error and observant bias. To minimize threats to reliability author sent out the survey in a neutral time, and since the survey was internet-administered, so respondents were not under the pressure of completing it and could submit it at any suitable time. Additionally, the author refrained from asking any personal or intimidating questions. Well-structured survey without open-ended questions allowed to gather already categorized data. In other words, similar results most likely would have been achieved repeating the study i.e., using the same method and the same sample. Naturally, over time, their expectations and viewpoints might change. Furthermore, the author was not dependent on any organization or representative.

Furthermore, the author carefully followed ethical principles, and the anonymity of all respondents remained throughout the research process. The author's personal beliefs or opinions have not affected research anyhow.

5.4 Limitations of this research

This research had several limitations due to various reasons. For example, respondents were mainly residing in Finland, albeit international background of some of them. They all were studying in Finnish universities, hence, had similar academic experiences despite different degree programmes. Because of that, their expectations from work-life balance are limited to this particular region. However, HRM practices are mainly worldwide spread. Survey collected 80

responses and there was some attrition that means some people didn't finish the survey they started. This may be due to rather complicated issue area and some concepts were necessary familiar to respondents. Open-ended questions would allow survey respondents to elaborate their opinion on specific questions, but the analysis would be more laborious. On the other hand, the issues surveyed were elaborated in the qualitative part of this study. More participants could have been invited to the interviews to obtain more categorized results. There were also limitations in reliability since current research measures expectations of the particular sample, and expectations tend to change over time.

5.5 Implications for further research

With the rapidly changing working environment and the world of work in general, work-life balance is a fast-growing issue. More and more companies are under pressure to respond to employees' needs and ensure their well-being at work. The younger workforce is ready to stand by their beliefs and expectations. More research is needed to understand the young workforce's expectations and what companies can do in response.

For example, HR professionals in big companies that recruit young talents could bring valuable insights into how companies deal with incoming requests and expectations. Collected data could be compared with "reality" in different companies. Analyzing actual factors that affect employees' well-being would make an important comparative study.

A bigger pool of sample data would ensure a clearer and more reliable picture of the situation, surveying not only Finnish universities students. The nationality question was not asked as it was thought as irrelevant at the time, but it would help to link cultural backgrounds to possible varieties in expectations. Additionally, it was noted that due to survey imperfection, some respondents chose several factors, both positive and negative. It led to some inaccuracy in results which could have been avoided.

Surveying and interviewing more graduates with at least two years of working experience could be a great way to determine expectations before starting a career change once a working career starts. This kind of longitudinal study would be an appealing strategy to follow yet reaching the same people might be extremely difficult.

As was noted in 5.1, there is a polarization in responses about the robotization & automation factor and its influence on work-life balance. It would be interesting to investigate aspects of such polarization.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Survey



Work-life balance expectations of young talents

 Mandatory fields are marked with an asterisk (*) and must be filled in to complete the form.

This survey is a part of research about work-life balance expectations of young talents. Please answer the questions below regardless of your status (student/graduate/employed/unemployed). If you are a student, discuss about your study-life balance, if you have already graduated and work, discuss about your work-life balance. If you are unemployed at the moment, please refer to your latest experience.

This survey is anonymous and provided answers will be used only in this research.

Your current status is *

- Student
- Graduate

You are *

- Female
- Male
- Don't want to specify

You are currently *

- Studying
- Studying and working (internship counts only if it is more than 20h/week)
- Graduated and continue studying on higher level or another programme
- Graduated and unemployed
- Graduated and working

Seuraava/Next

What factors affect your work-life balance positively currently (year 2021)? (choose max 5) *

- Organisational support (well-being policies in the company/culture of the company/career perspectives/incentives/motivation)
- Information technology (24/7 assessability/connectivity/remote work)
- Emotional intelligence (ability to cope with other people)
- Mobility (due to remote work)
- Robotisation & Automation
- Artificial Intelligence
- Digital Culture
- Workload (tasks volume/hours)
- Working conditions (facilities/safety/equipment)
- Individual issues (ability to cope with life at work/at home/with friends/family/society)
- Job engagement (commitment to the job/involvement in day-to-day tasks)
- Reskilling (getting new skills/improving existing ones)
- Shift from individual to team performance
- Other: what?

Please select maximum 5 options
Selected options: 0

What factors affect your work-life balance negatively currently (year 2021)? (choose max 5) *

- Stress issues (burnout/anxiety/depression)
- Information technology (privacy/ boundaries/ loneliness)
- Emotional Intelligence (ability to cope with other people)
- Mobility (due to remote work)
- Robotisation & Automation
- Artificial Intelligence
- Digital Culture
- Organisational support (proper well-being policies in the company/culture of the company/career perspectives/incentives/motivation)
- Overload (tasks volume/hours)
- Working conditions (facilities/safety/equipment)
- Individual issues (ability to cope with life at work/at home/with friends/family/society)
- Job engagement (commitment to the job/involvement in day-to-day tasks)
- Reskilling (getting new skills/improving existing ones)
- Shift from individual to team performance
- Other: what?

Please select maximum 5 options

Career and salary targets:**What is your career level target in 5 years (year 2026)? ***

- Entry-level position
- Intermediate or Experienced level position
- First-level management position
- Middle-level management position
- Top-level management/Executive position
- CEO/ Co-founder

Do you want to supervise other people? *

- Yes
- No

Imagine that you are working in Finland 5 years from now (year 2026): what do you expect your salary to be? (Please note that salary options are given based on average salary/month for all jobs in Finland before taxes which is 3500 euros) *

- less than 3000
- 3001-3500
- 3501-4000
- 4001-4500
- 4501-5000
- 5001-5500
- more than 5500

What is the size of the company you would like to work in in 5 years time (year 2026)? *

- 1-10 employees
- 11-50 employees
- 51-249 employees
- 250+ employees

What level of education are you planning to obtain in 5 years time (year 2026)?(Either start or finish) *

- Bachelor's
- Master's
- PhD

Skill set:

In your opinion, these skills will be in demand in 5 years time (year 2026): (choose max 4): *

- Analytical skills
- Active learning
- Creative thinking
- Problem-solving skills
- Leadership skills
- Technology use, monitoring and control
- Technology design and programming
- Artificial Intelligence skills
- Stress tolerance and flexibility
- Other: what?

Please select maximum 4 options

Selected options: 0

Rate your proficiency at the moment (year 2021) in following skills: *

| | No expertise | Beginner | Intermediate | Expert |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Analytical skills | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Active learning | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Creative thinking | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Problem-solving skills | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Leadership skills | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Technology use, monitoring and control | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Technology design and programming | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Artificial Intelligence skills | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Stress tolerance and flexibility | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Workload:

How many hours per week do you want to work? *

- Less than 20 hours
- 20-30 hours
- 31-40 hours
- More than 40 hours

How many hours per week do you want to work remotely? *



Do you want to work flexible hours (not standard time e.g., 8-16 or 9-17) *

- Yes
- Only if there is an emergency at work
- No

Do you want to work on weekends? *

- Yes
- Only if there is an emergency at work
- No

Do you want to check your emails/work phone on weekends or holidays? *

- Yes, I want to keep up
- Yes but only if that's an emergency that requires my immediate response
- No

Company resources:**What benefits you expect to receive from the company? ***

- Medical insurance
- Paid parental leave
- Leased car
- Leased bicycle
- Sport activities (e.g., gym pass)
- Free food/drinks supply in the office
- Pet insurance/per friendly office
- Re-skilling opportunities (e.g., company-organised courses/webinars)
- Annual bonuses
- Other: what?

Please select maximum 10 options

Selected options: 0

What you expect company will provide for remote work? *

- Computer
- Cellphone
- Chair and desk
- Headset
- Printer
- Second screen
- Access to productivity and collaboration apps (e.g., Zoom/Trello)
- Discount on food delivery services
- Internet connection (new router or subscription plan)
- Other: what?

Assuming there will be a learning course on work-life balance provided by your university, what would be useful to have in it? *

- Apply skills to practice by simulating real situations
- Sessions with HR professionals
- Simulation of day-to-day challenges of working-life
- Learn about work-life balance management
- Working on case studies
- Sessions with employees from companies of different size

Would you be interested in participating in a 45-60 mins discussion session in May-June where real-life work-life scenarios will be discussed in small groups? *

- Yes, sure
- No, thanks

You can be contacted for the discussion session via this email address: (Please note that your email address will be used only for the invitation to the discussion) *Email address:

Appendix 2. Interview Questions and Scenarios

- Describe your feelings about this scenario.
- Do you think you could succeed in this scenario? What skills would you need for that?
- Do you think it is sustainable environment?
- Do you think company will make profit in this scenario? Do you think it's fair?
- What kind of HR support you would like to see in this scenario?
- Can you identify positive and negative factors affecting your well-being in this scenario?
- What would you expect from a company in this scenario?
- What would you expect your salary would be?
- Would you choose to continue with your education instead of working in this scenario?
- Would you prefer to work remotely, in the office or elsewhere? Please justify

| Scenario 1 "Corporates rule" | Scenario 2 "Caring companies" | Scenario 3 "Humans first" |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory vaccination passports • Layoffs, only essential workers stay • Urgent need for re-skilling • Technology replaces humans • Corporations suppress small businesses • Unemployment rate up to 15% • Income inequality • Strict management • Pressure to perform • A lot of entry requirements, hard to get a job • Productivity softwares on laptops (monitor your pure working time) • Mass trials of cognitive-enhancing drugs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory vaccination passports • 40% of staff is working remotely • 4 days week • Unemployment rate dropped to 3% • Easy to get a job, slow career movement • Complete trust between management and staff • Thousands of new jobs • Income equality • Flexible hours, choose your hours • Afterhours activities: meditation days, picnics, etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory vaccination passports • Job descriptions are disappearing • Geographically neutral society (mobility) • Technology setback • Complete trust between management and staff • Government supports small businesses • Move towards sharing economy • More gig work, less and less permanent jobs • Ethicacy and transparency • Flexible hours, choose how much you want to work |