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WORK-LIFE BALANCE SOLUTIONS OFFERED TO EMPLOYEES IN ENTERPRISES

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Purpose: The cognitive objective of this study is to identify organizational solutions related to the work-life balance of employees in enterprises. The research objective is to obtain answers to the question of what solutions are offered to employees to support the achievement of balance in both their professional and personal spheres.
Design/methodology/approach: This article presents issues concerning the balance between professional work and personal life. In the subsequent part of the study, based on research conducted, particular attention is given to organizational practices and solutions that support the achievement of work-life balance.
Findings: All surveyed organizations confirmed the benefits of providing employees with opportunities for professional and personal development through the co-financing of studies, training, or various types of courses. They also confirmed the positive outcomes of these initiatives, which translate into improved work quality and efficiency.
Research limitations/implications: Future research could be conducted with a larger number of enterprises, which would increase the generalizability of the results.
Practical implications: The considerations presented may be utilized in business practice by organizations, managers at various levels, and employees themselves.
Originality/value: This work lays the foundation for further research and scientific inquiry in the area of work-life balance solutions offered by Polish organizations.
Keywords: work-life balance, solutions promoting balance.
Category of the paper: Research paper.

1. Introduction

Issues related to work-life balance have recently become one of the most interesting social topics (Balla, 2025, p. 30). It is important to note the variety of initiatives undertaken at the organizational level to reconcile the two domains - work and life. Facilitating the reconciliation of work and personal life is described as an ongoing activity of enterprises, particularly in

providing appropriate working conditions, as well as organizing work and working time (Myjak, 2021, p. 48). It is emphasized that working conditions determine the quality of employees' lives (Fontaine, Pailhe, Remillon, 2025, p. 4), and that the balance between professional and private life influences the overall work experience of employees (Xie, Singh, López, 2025, p. 3024). As boundaries between work and private life become increasingly fluid, the risk of imbalance emerges (Lendzion, Telbuch, Gaszewski, 2025, p. 153). Therefore, work-life balance can be considered achieved when the relationship between professional and non-professional life is appropriate from the perspective of an individual and within a defined time frame.

The results of secondary research indicate that work-life balance has a significant and beneficial impact on employee work outcomes (Basuki, Suhermin, 2025, p. 1595). At the same time, these findings show that ensuring balance between private and professional life has become one of employees' main demands. Growing employee expectations in this area compel organizations to pay greater attention to employee needs, particularly to increase work time efficiency, reduce staff turnover, and ensure the effectiveness of motivational systems (Balla, 2025, p. 42). However, it should be emphasized that the full realization of employees' expectations is not always possible due to various factors on the part of employers. When considering the implementation of solutions that support work-life balance, organizations typically take into account the costs and burdens these solutions may impose on the entire enterprise.

Organizational efforts aimed at developing and implementing initiatives and practices related to work-life balance help organizations not only attract but also retain employees (Jung et al., 2025, p. 812). It is understandable that individuals who experience a lack of work-life balance are more likely to seek new employment or new positions (Fontaine, Pailhe, Remillon, 2025, p. 4). Therefore, employer initiatives aimed at supporting employees' work-life balance should not be one-time or occasional efforts, but rather take the form of comprehensive measures that are permanently integrated into organizational practice.

2. Theoretical Approach to Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance is reflected in maintaining harmony between an individual's professional and private life. An individualized approach to balancing professional and non-professional life leads to difficulties in establishing a single, universal, and commonly accepted definition. Balance is a state in which an individual's specific actions are aligned with their core values. It may be understood as the ability to achieve goals in various areas of life, as well as the maintenance of harmony between work and life.

The most general and widely recognized definition is offered by D. Clutterbuck (2005, p. 26). Clutterbuck describes work-life balance as a state in which an individual manages potential conflicts among various demands on their time and energy so that their desire for well-being and fulfilment is satisfied. S. Borkowska (2004, p. 54) defines work-life balance as the ability to combine work with other dimensions of human life, such as home, family, social activity, or personal interests. She also posits that balance is achieved when work does not dominate private life and, conversely, when non-work life is not pursued at the expense of work. E. Robak (2013, p. 75), on the other hand, argues that work-life balance refers to employees having control over how much time, when, and where they devote to activities in both their professional and personal lives. A rather broad perspective on work-life balance is proposed by P. Wilson (2012, p. 29). According to him, it is a state that arises when "all the forces and factors in life are in a satisfying and harmonious whole. Everything is in proportion and no one element stands out at the expense of others". In this sense, balance refers not only to the relationship between work and life, but also to configurations such as needs versus obligations, hopes versus ambitions, and the relationships between different spheres of life in various arrangements. Importantly, balance is not achieved through renunciation, but rather through the integration of all elements of a person's life.

Analysis of the presented definitions indicates that work-life balance can be understood on three levels: time balance, involvement balance, and satisfaction balance (Greenhaus, Collins, Show, 2003, p. 513). However, the proportions of involvement and the time allocated to various spheres of human life do not necessarily have to be equal. These proportions may also change over the course of a person's life and as a result of life changes. An appropriate level of balance between different areas of human activity does not mean that these areas must be equivalent.

It is important to view professional work and private life as complementary rather than opposing domains. This perspective enables satisfaction and a sense of well-being across all areas of life, without requiring difficult decisions that may not positively impact employees' actions (Gotowska, 2014, p. 64). Thus, work-life balance can be understood as maintaining harmony between an individual's work and private life, while acknowledging that the state of balance may mean something different for different people. There is no single, universal point of life balance.

3. Research Methodology

The research was conducted through standardized interviews with representatives of selected enterprises (where work-life balance solutions are in place or a work-life program has been implemented), and a standardized questionnaire distributed among employees of these organizations. The interviews were conducted through direct conversation, based on an original questionnaire developed by the author.

The empirical research was conducted from September 2022 to March 2023. The research process was divided into several stages. Key to the issues presented in this article were two stages in which data regarding companies and their work-life balance offerings was collected. The basis for differentiating these stages was the data collection technique used: the first stage employed interviews, and the second stage employed surveys.

First, interviews were carried out with representatives of organizations in which work-life balance solutions were in place or a work-life balance program had been implemented. These organizations included a Municipal Enterprise, a Research Institute, and an Educational Institution. The sampling was purposive. In the second stage, a survey was conducted among employees of the same organizations. As a result of the above actions, the study covered three organizations and 309 employees working in them. The collected empirical data were analyzed. The data obtained from interviews with organization representatives served as the basis for qualitative analysis and complemented the quantitative analysis of data collected from questionnaires completed by employees of the surveyed enterprises.

4. Research Results

One of the most significant issues examined and analyzed was the number and types of work-life balance solutions offered by the organizations. For each organization participating in the study, a separate table was developed: Municipal Enterprise (Table 1), Research Institute (Table 2), and Educational Institution (Table 3).

Based on information obtained during an interview with a representative of the Municipal Enterprise, the company offers its employees various work-life balance solutions, which are listed in Table 1. As additional solutions available to employees, the representative of the Municipal Enterprise indicated subsidies for organized holidays for employees' children as well as "flexible working hours". This arrangement involves the employer specifying a time range within which the employee can independently decide when to start work. Employees are required to complete the number of hours specified by their applicable daily working time before finishing work. The solutions offered by the Municipal Enterprise were available to all employees, with the exception of those employed under civil law contracts, who were not included in the work-life balance program.

Particular attention should be paid to the solution of guaranteeing a return to work after parental leave, which was confirmed as being offered by only 30% of respondents. This may indicate a lack of awareness of this entitlement among the remaining participants. Furthermore, some respondents indicated the availability of certain solutions that were not mentioned by the representative of the Municipal Enterprise, such as:

- Adjusting parents' vacation to the school year - indicated by 43% of respondents,
- Days or hours off to attend to important personal matters - 27% of respondents,
- Access to information, training, and work tools during parental or childcare leave - 8% of respondents.

Table 1.
Work-Life Balance Solutions – Municipal Enterprise

No.	Solution	Municipal Enterprise				
		Employer	Employees			
			Availability		Utilization	
			Total Response	%	Total Response	%
1	Co-financing studies, training, and professional development courses	yes	110	57%	59	31%
2	Support in caring for children and dependents	yes	0	0%	0	0%
3	Holiday vouchers or gift packages	yes	184	95%	175	91%
4	Co-financing education for employees' children	no	1	1%	0	0%
5	Co-financing or organizing recreation	yes	185	96%	175	91%
6	Additional allowances for the birth of a child	no	2	1%	0	0%
7	Additional health insurance for employees	yes	184	95%	174	90%
8	Health insurance for the employee's family	yes	164	85%	48	25%
9	Days or hours off to attend to important personal matters	no	52	27%	45	23%
10	The possibility to perform certain tasks at home	no	7	4%	3	2%
11	Offering extended, paid parental leave	no	0	0%	0	0%
12	Providing childcare during business trips or training	no	0	0%	0	0%
13	Guarantees of return to work after parental leave	yes	57	30%	46	24%
14	Adjusting parents' vacation to the school year	no	83	43%	75	39%
15	Assistance from a company psychologist	no	0	0%	0	0%
16	Organizing opportunities for employees and their families to spend time together outside of work	yes	148	77%	116	60%
17	Subsidizing employees' sports activities	yes	185	96%	87	45%
18	Access to information, training, and work tools during parental or childcare leave	no	15	8%	12	6%
19	Other	yes	114	59%	98	51%
20	None	-	-	-	13	7%

Source: own elaboration.

This may indicate the existence of informal solutions, implemented exclusively within selected organizational units.

According to the representative, employees are eager to utilize the solutions offered. An analysis of the survey responses in this regard revealed that employees most frequently made use of the following:

- Holiday vouchers or gift packages - 91% of respondents,
- Co-financing recreation - 91% of respondents,
- Additional health insurance for employees - 90% of respondents.

To a much lesser extent, respondents utilized the following solutions:

- Organizing opportunities for employees and their families to spend time together outside of work - 60% of respondents.

- Other - subsidizing organized vacations for employees' children or flexible working hours - 51% of respondents.
- Subsidizing employees' sports activities - 45% of respondents.
- Co-financing studies, training, and professional development courses - 31% of respondents.

On the other hand, among the solutions not indicated as offered by the representative of the Municipal Enterprise, the following were used respectively:

- Adjusting parents' vacation to the school year - 39% of respondents,
- Days or hours off to attend to important personal matters - 23% of respondents,
- Access to information, training, and work tools during parental or childcare leave - 6% of respondents.

7% of employees of the Municipal Enterprise did not use any of the solutions.

Table 2 contains the work-life balance solutions implemented by the Research Institute.

According to information obtained during interviews, the Research Institute offered its employees a relatively diverse range of solutions supporting work-life balance. An additional solution offered to employees turned out to be "flexible working hours", as indicated by the representative of this organization. It can be observed that a significant portion of the solutions declared by the organization as being offered were indicated by less than half of the respondents. This may suggest that they did not have full knowledge or awareness of which solutions they could take advantage of.

Some surveyed employees indicated that certain solutions were available, even though they were not officially declared by the representative of the Research Institute, for example:

- Days or hours off to attend to important personal matters - 32% of responses.
- Health insurance for the employee's family - 30% of responses.
- Access to information, training, and work tools during parental or childcare leave - 9% of responses.
- Additional allowances for the birth of a child - 8% of responses.

Regarding solutions requiring financial expenditure - this may indicate that the Research Institute does not classify them as work-life balance solutions. Similarly to the Municipal Enterprise, these remaining solutions may function on an informal basis.

Table 2.
Work-life balance solutions - Research Institute

No	Solution	Research Institute				
		Employer	Employees			
			Availability		Utilization	
			Total Response	%	Total Response	%
1	Co-financing studies, training, and professional development courses	yes	39	49%	30	38%
2	Support in caring for children and dependents	no	3	4%	0	0%
3	Holiday vouchers or gift packages	yes	74	94%	63	80%

Cont. table 2.

4	Co-financing education for employees' children	no	0	0%	0	0%
5	Co-financing or organizing recreation	yes	35	44%	29	37%
6	Additional allowances for the birth of a child	no	6	8%	2	3%
7	Additional health insurance for employees	yes	71	90%	66	84%
8	Health insurance for the employee's family	no	24	30%	10	13%
9	Days or hours off to attend to important personal matters	no	25	32%	20	25%
10	The possibility to perform certain tasks at home	yes	33	42%	24	30%
11	Offering extended, paid parental leave	no	0	0%	0	0%
12	Providing childcare during business trips or training	no	0	0%	0	0%
13	Guarantees of return to work after parental leave	yes	24	30%	11	14%
14	Adjusting parents' vacation to the school year	yes	26	33%	15	19%
15	Assistance from a company psychologist	no	1	1%	0	0%
16	Organizing opportunities for employees and their families to spend time together outside of work	no	2	3%	1	1%
17	Subsidizing employees' sports activities	yes	63	80%	22	28%
18	Access to information, training, and work tools during parental or childcare leave	no	7	9%	2	3%
19	Other	yes	17	22%	15	19%
20	None	-	-	-	2	3%

Source: own elaboration.

According to the representative of the Research Institute, employees willingly made use of the solutions offered. Based on the responses of survey participants, the most commonly utilized benefits included:

- Additional health insurance for employees - 84% of respondents.
- Holiday vouchers - 80% of respondents.

To a significantly lesser extent, respondents reported using the following:

- Co-financing studies, training, and professional development courses - 38% of respondents.
- Co-financing or organizing recreation - 37% of respondents.
- The possibility to perform certain tasks at home - 30% of respondents.
- Guarantees of return to work after parental leave - 14% of respondents.
- Adjusting parents' vacation to the school year -19% of respondents.
- Subsidizing employees' sports activities - 28% of respondents.
- Other, such as flexible working hours -19% of respondents.

Among the solutions not officially indicated as offered by the Research Institute, utilization rates were as follows:

- 25% of respondents - days or hours off to attend to important personal matters.
- 13% of respondents - health insurance for the employee's family.
- 3% of respondents - access to information, training, and work tools during parental or childcare leave.
- 3% of respondents - additional allowances for the birth of a child.

Notably, 3% of surveyed employees at the Research Institute did not take advantage of any available solutions.

Table 3 presents the work-life balance solutions offered at the Educational Institution.

Table 3.
Work-Life Balance Solutions – Educational Institution

No	Solution	Educational Institution				
		Employer	Employees			
			Availability		Utilization	
			Total Response	%	Total Response	%
1	Co-financing studies, training, and professional development courses	yes	29	78%	26	70%
2	Support in caring for children and dependents	no	0	0%	0	0%
3	Holiday vouchers or gift packages	no	0	0%	0	0%
4	Co-financing education for employees' children	no	0	0%	0	0%
5	Co-financing or organizing recreation	yes	33	89%	32	86%
6	Additional allowances for the birth of a child	no	0	0%	0	0%
7	Additional health insurance for employees	no	0	0%	0	0%
8	Health insurance for the employee's family	no	0	0%	0	0%
9	Days or hours off to attend to important personal matters	no	6	16%	6	16%
10	The possibility to perform certain tasks at home	no	0	0%	0	0%
11	Offering extended, paid parental leave	no	0	0%	0	0%
12	Providing childcare during business trips or training	no	0	0%	0	0%
13	Guarantees of return to work after parental leave	yes	15	41%	15	41%
14	Adjusting parents' vacation to the school year	yes	21	57%	19	51%
15	Assistance from a company psychologist	no	0	0%	0	0%
16	Organizing opportunities for employees and their families to spend time together outside of work	no	1	3%	1	3%
17	Subsidizing employees' sports activities	no	0	0%	0	0%
18	Access to information, training, and work tools during parental or childcare leave	no	0	0%	0	0%
19	Other	no	0	0%	0	0%
20	None	-	-	-	3	8%

Source: own elaboration.

Among the organizations studied, the Educational Institution offered its employees the fewest work-life balance solutions. No additional measures beyond those included in the supplementary sheet of the interview questionnaire were identified.

Respondents indicated that the following work-life balance solutions were available to them:

- Co-financing studies, training, and professional development courses - 78% of respondents.
- Co-financing or organizing recreation - 89% of respondents.
- Guarantees of return to work after parental leave - 41% of respondents.
- Adjusting parents' vacation to the school year - 57% of respondents.

Analysis of the responses provided by employees of the Educational Institution suggests that they either do not possess full awareness of the available solutions or do not perceive them as measures supporting work-life balance. Consequently, their actual utilization of these solutions is even lower, as reflected by the following data:

- Co-financing studies, training, and professional development courses - 70% of respondents.
- Co-financing or organizing recreation - 86% of respondents.
- Guarantees of return to work after parental leave - 41% of respondents.
- Adjusting parents' vacation to the school year - 51% of respondents.

It is noteworthy that 16% of respondents identified "days or hours off to attend to important personal matters" as a solution offered by the Educational Institution. The same individuals reported utilizing this option, which, as in the case of other organizations studied, may indicate its informal character.

8% of surveyed employees at the Educational Institution did not use any of the available solutions.

It is important to emphasize that the representatives of all the surveyed organizations confirmed that candidates are informed about the available benefits during recruitment interviews.

In summary, results regarding the utilization of work-life balance solutions offered by the surveyed organizations indicate that the highest proportion of employees made use of the following:

- Additional health insurance for employees - 78% of respondents.
- Holiday vouchers - 77% of respondents.
- Co-financing or organizing recreation - 76% of respondents.

To a lesser extent, the following solutions were utilized:

- Organizing opportunities for employees and their families to spend time together outside of work - 38% of respondents.
- Co-financing studies, training, and professional development courses - 37% of respondents.
- Other (such as flexible working hours or subsidies for organized holidays for employees' children) - 37% of respondents.
- Co-financing recreation - 37% of respondents.
- Adjusting parents' vacation to the school year - 35% of respondents.
- Subsidizing employees' sports activities - 35% of respondents.

Another issue addressed during the research concerned the organizations' own perceptions of work-life balance solutions. The representatives of the surveyed organizations were asked to identify which work-life balance solutions they considered most beneficial from the perspective of the organization itself. Their responses were as follows:

- **Municipal Enterprise**
  - Co-financing studies, training, and professional development courses.
  - Additional health insurance for employees.

  - Organizing opportunities for employees and their families to spend time together outside of work.
  - Subsidizing employees' sports activities.
  - Flexible working hours.
- **Research Institute**
  - Co-financing studies, training, and professional development courses.
  - Flexible working hours.
- **Educational Institution**
  - Co-financing studies, training, and professional development courses.

5. Conclusions

A review of the relevant literature, along with the results of empirical research, confirmed that employees' perceptions of work-life balance are largely individualized, depending on their current life circumstances. The study revealed discrepancies between the solutions offered by organizations and those actually utilized by employees. As a result of the conducted research, specific work-life balance solutions implemented in practice within organizations were identified. It was found that the range of solutions offered varies significantly depending on the organization, its nature, and specific operational conditions.

The solutions offered by all organizations surveyed included:

- Co-financing studies, training, and professional development courses.
- Co-financing or organizing recreation.
- Guarantees of return to work after parental leave.

All organizations agreed on the benefits of providing employees with opportunities for professional and personal development through co-financing of studies, training, or various types of courses. The representatives of the organizations surveyed confirmed the positive outcomes of these initiatives, which, in their view, translate into higher quality and efficiency of work. Co-financing of studies, training, or professional development courses was unanimously recognized by all three representatives as one of the key solutions supporting work-life balance. The organizations studied regard employee development as advantageous, contributing to enhanced qualifications and work quality. Additional health insurance, which enables employees to access specialists and receive medical advice more quickly, has a positive effect on reducing absenteeism and improving health, as does the co-financing of sports activities. Joint activities and integration strengthen teamwork and communication, while flexible working hours largely address issues of absenteeism and tardiness, ensuring that employees are available and able to fulfil all assigned tasks.

Directions for further research emerging from the study should focus on identifying the scope of solutions supporting work-life balance, including their formalization, employee attitudes toward flexible employment options and the extent to which they are utilized within organizations, as well as the equalization of opportunities and organizations' capabilities in offering employees solutions that support work-life balance.

A limitation of the study was the limited availability of only three similar organizations, financed fully or partially from the state budget. Furthermore, the range of solutions offered was similar to the characteristics of the organizations studied. The consequences of a certain degree of flexibility in other companies (e.g., those with different sizes, industries, or operational areas) would demonstrate possible solutions and their implications for adaptation in companies similar to the ones studied.

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