

# ANALYSIS OF PERSPECTIVES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE IN ENHANCING EMPLOYEE LOYALTY AT THE MSME MEDIA CREATIVE (*LET'S GRADUATE*) IN SAMARINDA ULU DISTRICT, SAMARINDA CITY

<sup>1</sup>Muhammad Yusuf Amrillah,<sup>2</sup>Tuti Wediawati,<sup>3</sup>Khairil Anwar  
<sup>4</sup>Fareis Althalets

<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>Business Administration, Social and Political Science, Mulawarman  
University, Samarinda, Indonesia

Author's Email:

<sup>1</sup>[yusufamrillah12@gmail.com](mailto:yusufamrillah12@gmail.com); <sup>2</sup>[twidiawaty@gmail.com](mailto:twidiawaty@gmail.com); <sup>3</sup>[khairil.anwar@fisip.unmul.ac.id](mailto:khairil.anwar@fisip.unmul.ac.id)  
<sup>4</sup>[fareis@fisip.unmul.ac.id](mailto:fareis@fisip.unmul.ac.id)

Corresponding author: [yusufamrillah12@gmail.com](mailto:yusufamrillah12@gmail.com)

**Abstract.** *The implementation of the work-life balance concept in the workplace has become a strategic approach to enhancing employee loyalty, particularly in the creative SME sector. This study aims to analyze the perspective on the application of work-life balance in increasing employee loyalty at the creative media SME "Let's Graduate" in Samarinda City. The research employed a qualitative approach through in-depth interviews with several employees as key informants. The findings indicate that flexible working hours, support for personal development, and a culture of open communication significantly influence employee loyalty. Employees feel valued as individuals and as part of the team, contributing to increased productivity and job satisfaction. However, challenges remain, particularly in creative roles that often require working beyond regular hours. The study concludes that the implementation of work-life balance at "Let's Graduate" is effective in enhancing employee loyalty. To sustain these positive impacts, the company is recommended to develop adaptive policies that support the balance between work and personal life, especially in managing work-related pressures in the creative sector.*

**Keywords:** *Creative Industry, Work Life Balance, Work Loyalty.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Work-life balance (WLB) emphasizes the importance of maintaining equilibrium between work demands and personal life to ensure physical health, mental well-being, and overall life quality. In today's dynamic work environment, WLB has become increasingly essential as technological advancements and social changes blur the boundaries between professional and personal spheres. According to Hewlett and Luce (2007), WLB is not merely about dividing time between work and home but achieving harmony that enables individuals to thrive in both aspects.

The concept of WLB gained widespread attention in the late 20th century, alongside shifts in work patterns brought about by globalization and digitalization. Researchers such as Catherine Hakim emphasize that WLB is a pressing necessity, particularly for individuals juggling dual responsibilities at work and home. Implementing WLB has been shown to benefit both individuals and organizations. Research by Gallup (2018) highlights that employees with good WLB are more productive, satisfied, and engaged in their roles. Simultaneously, organizations that support WLB experience higher employee retention rates, enhanced loyalty, and improved overall performance.

Strategies for implementing WLB vary, including flexible working hours, remote work policies, and fostering organizational cultures that prioritize employee well-being. Kossek and Ozeki (1999) argue that job flexibility can reduce conflicts between work and personal life, thereby enhancing well-being and job satisfaction. Furthermore,

managerial support in understanding employees' needs is a critical element in creating a conducive work environment.

Employee loyalty, defined as the emotional commitment of individuals toward their organization, serves as a key indicator of WLB implementation success. According to Mowday et al. (1982), employees who feel valued and can effectively manage their time

are more likely to remain committed to their organizations. High loyalty not only fosters a positive work environment but also supports long-term organizational sustainability and competitiveness (Kotter, 1996). In the context of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), particularly in the creative media sector, maintaining employee loyalty becomes increasingly significant due to high work pressures and tight deadlines.

In Indonesia, SMEs play a vital role in the national economy. According to the Indonesian Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs, this sector contributes over 60% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employs 97% of the workforce. However, SMEs face various challenges, including the need to improve human resource management. Within the creative media industry, employees often encounter heavy workloads and irregular schedules, making WLB an essential strategy to sustain loyalty and productivity.

Previous studies have shown that WLB positively correlates with employee loyalty. Taufick & Kurniawan (2023) found that millennials who can balance work and personal life exhibit better work quality. Sulistyo & Syarif Ali (2023) also noted that effective WLB implementation significantly increases employee loyalty. However, research by Putri et al. (2024) revealed that despite high job satisfaction levels, challenges in balancing work and personal life can reduce long-term productivity.

Based on this background, this study is titled "Analysis of Work-Life Balance Implementation in Enhancing Employee Loyalty at Let's Graduate UMKM in Samarinda Ulu, Samarinda City." The study aims to identify how effective WLB implementation can contribute to increasing employee loyalty in SMEs, particularly in the creative media sector. By understanding the challenges employees face in managing time between work and personal life, this research seeks to provide strategic recommendations for organizations to foster healthier, more productive, and sustainable work environments.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Perspective**

Perspective is an individual's way of viewing an object, event, or situation, influenced by their experiences, knowledge, and social context. Perspective plays a significant role in how individuals understand and assign meaning to the world around them. According to the Indonesian Dictionary (Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia), perspective is defined as "a point of view or a way of looking at something."

Perspective is defined as "the observation of objects or events obtained through the process of interpreting information" (Rakhmat, 2007). This highlights the importance of an individual's understanding of the context and background that influence their way of perceiving things. Suharman (2005) adds that "there are three aspects of perspective relevant to human cognition: sensory recording, pattern recognition, and attention," all of which contribute to how individuals shape their perspectives.

According to Jalaludin Rakhmat in his book *The Psychology of Communication*, the concept of perspective refers to the interpretation of an event or phenomenon generated through the synthesis and interpretation of information, as well as an individual's attitudes. This indicates that perspective has the potential to influence a person's behavior. Rakhmat identifies several components in his perspective, including:

1. Ideas, which are initial assumptions or questions that need to be addressed regarding a specific subject of study.
2. Knowledge, encompassing all information that has been understood or can be continuously learned.
3. Values, serving as standard criteria for selecting important or practical characteristics for humans.
4. Thought, which arises when individuals strive to comprehend a phenomenon.
5. Comparison, an analysis conducted to compare one statement with another.
6. Method, referring to the strategies employed to achieve the desired research objectives.
7. Observation, which means examining an object or phenomenon attentively and with full focus.

From the above explanation, it can be concluded that perspective is a cognitive process involving observation, interpretation, and individual evaluation of their surroundings. This process enables individuals to understand and assign meaning to their experiences, which can, in turn, influence their attitudes and behaviors, including within organizational contexts.

## 2.2 Management

Management is a vital process in the corporate world, involving a series of steps and stages designed to achieve objectives effectively and efficiently for the company (Nursam, 2017).

The concept of management encompasses planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and supervising human and natural resources, with a particular emphasis on human resources, to accomplish predetermined goals. It combines both the art and science of administration. George R. Terry, as cited in RD Syahputra (2023), emphasizes that management is a series of processes that include planning, organizing, executing, and controlling, where elements of science and art are integrated to achieve desired outcomes.

Beyond these concepts, another way to think about management is as a decision-making process. This is evident in how executives carry out their responsibilities, including selecting target markets, creating new products, expanding the company, developing marketing plans, and hiring or dismissing staff. This understanding aligns with previous definitions. Upon closer examination, management is fundamentally about achieving specific results through interactions with others. In this context, the decision-making process is crucial, where managers must set objectives, identify involved parties, and determine the appropriate timing and methods to achieve these goals.

From the various definitions above, both from the perspectives of science and art, it can be concluded that management is a process involving planning, organizing, leading, and controlling the activities of organizational members. Its goal is to utilize all the resources available to the organization—including human resources, skills, experience, and other assets such as technology, financial capital, and the loyalty of employees and customers—to achieve the set objectives.

Management is generally understood as an approach to achieving a process through systematic planning. Its primary goal is to maximize results while minimizing expenses or effort, optimally utilizing all supporting elements such as financial resources, human resources, and assets, all aligned with the defined strategy.

Effective supervision is essential to fulfill management goals optimally. If control is applied during the planning stage, management objectives can be successfully achieved. According to Hery (2021), the purposes of management include:

1. Implementing developed planning strategies and evaluating their effectiveness to ensure they adhere to guidelines.
2. Monitoring how management tasks are executed and how teams accomplish

their responsibilities.

3. Adjusting management functions, particularly implementation strategies, when plans deviate to ensure objectives are met.
4. Assessing organizational strengths and weaknesses and anticipating potential risks.
5. Supporting innovative ideas to improve team performance, as these ultimately help achieve the planned strategies.

From the points above, it can be concluded that management's purpose is to control and ensure the effective achievement of objectives. This includes executing and evaluating planning strategies, reviewing management functions and team dynamics, and adjusting strategies to overcome potential obstacles. Additionally, analyzing organizational strengths and weaknesses, preparing for threats, and fostering innovation are essential to enhance group performance. This, in turn, positively impacts the achievement of organizational goals by optimally utilizing available resources.

Management functions are fundamental elements that must exist in every managerial process, serving as guidelines for performing tasks to achieve goals through planning, organizing, coordinating, and controlling steps.

According to Koontz (2011), management functions are divided into five categories:

1. Planning

Management plays a crucial role in a company due to its capacity to plan and evaluate various activities that have been or will be undertaken. Establishing the company's main goals and the necessary actions to achieve them relies heavily on planning. By employing short-term, medium-term, and long-term plans, managers work to identify options to reach the final objectives. For growing businesses, failure to anticipate operational deviations could lead to significant disruptions or even bankruptcy.

2. Organizing

Organizing enables large-scale activities to be transformed into smaller, more manageable tasks. The goal is to help managers execute tasks more effectively and allocate resources required for each completed task, ensuring a more efficient process. Organizing focuses on what tasks need to be accomplished and how they should be executed so that the company's goals can be achieved in a structured manner.

3. Staffing

While similar to organizing, staffing focuses on managing overall resources. While organizing emphasizes human resources, staffing includes other resources such as equipment, tools, and company inventory.

4. Directing

Directing ensures that every company or group can achieve its goals and objectives in line with established management protocols. When issues arise that hinder implementation, management provides direction to keep the plan on track.

5. Controlling

Control is essential to oversee plans and actions that have been implemented. Here, management's role is to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness of business assets. Managers monitor scheduled resources to ensure everything proceeds as planned. Any errors or deviations can be corrected, and lessons learned can be applied to future planning.

### *2.3 Human Resources Management*

Human Resource Management (HRM) originates from the English term "manage," which means to oversee, control, and lead. Management is a series of processes aimed at achieving organizational goals through collaboration with available resources. According to Robbins & Judge (n.d.), management is "planning,

organizing, directing, and regulating organizational resources to achieve predetermined objectives."

Meanwhile, HRM encompasses a broader and more complex meaning. According to Mondy (2005), HRM is "a process that includes all activities related to recruiting, developing, and maintaining a productive workforce." Thus, HRM is not only focused on administrative tasks but also includes the development of employees' skills and potential.

From a process perspective, HRM involves stages such as planning, organizing, directing, and supervising. Dessler et al. (n.d.) state that "HRM is an ongoing process of planning, recruiting, training, and evaluating employees to ensure they can contribute to organizational goals."

The author concludes that human resource management is both a science and an art of managing human resources effectively and efficiently to achieve organizational goals through collaboration and individual growth, based on the definitions provided by experts.

#### *2.4 Work Life Balance*

Work-life balance refers to the harmony between personal and professional responsibilities, allowing individuals to effectively manage their work, family, and personal commitments. Achieving this balance fosters satisfaction in both areas of life. According to Lumunon et al. (cited in Kurniawan et al., 2020), *work-life balance* "A state where individuals can effectively manage their time and balance personal interests, family life, and work responsibilities."

For employees, it involves managing work commitments while meeting personal and family needs. A supportive and productive work environment plays a key role in enhancing employee performance, well-being, and loyalty. Balancing these aspects benefits both individuals and organizations by fostering satisfaction and sustainable productivity.

The author describes work-life balance as a vital aspect of managing obligations between work and personal life, as outlined in the definitions provided earlier. Beyond enabling individuals to fulfill responsibilities at work, home, and in social settings, this balance enhances personal fulfillment. Research highlights the positive impact of work-life balance on employee motivation, productivity, and stress reduction, all of which contribute to organizational success. Therefore, creating a supportive and comfortable workplace is crucial in fostering this balance. In summary, work-life balance is an essential factor for individuals to perform their roles effectively, achieve satisfaction, and carry out tasks with focus and efficiency.

#### **Aspects of Work-Life Balance.**

Hayman, as cited in (Wenno, 2018), categorizes work-life balance into three dimensions:

1. WIPL (Work Interference with Personal Life): Refers to the extent to which an individual's personal life is affected by their work responsibilities.
2. PLIW (Personal Life Interference with Work): Refers to how personal life can hinder an individual's ability to perform work tasks.
3. WEPL (Work Enhancement Personal Life): Describes the extent to which personal life positively influences workplace performance.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that work-life balance involves the interplay between personal and professional life. This balance ensures individuals feel comfortable in both domains, with personal life potentially enhancing work performance.

### **Indicators of Work-Life Balance**

Indicators are tools used to measure progress toward achieving specific goals. While they may not provide a complete picture, they serve as estimates or representations of a given state.

McDonald and Bradley, as cited in (Dina, 2018), identify the following key aspects for measuring work-life balance:

1. Time Balance

Refers to maintaining an equilibrium between time allocated for professional duties and time spent with family and friends.

2. Involvement Balance

Relates to how individuals psychologically manage their personal, family, and professional needs. It highlights the importance of psychological commitment to decisions affecting work-life balance and aims to minimize conflicts and uncertainties across these domains.

3. Satisfaction Balance

Evaluates how satisfied individuals are with their ability to balance personal, professional, and family life. This satisfaction level reflects how effectively or poorly someone manages the integration of these aspects.

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Time balance, involvement balance, and satisfaction balance are critical work-related metrics that enable individuals to harmonize their professional and personal lives, preventing conflicts between these domains.

### **Factors Influencing Work-Life Balance**

Work-life balance is shaped by various job attributes unique to individuals, such as workload, work habits, and working hours. These elements often contribute to the emergence of conflicts in balancing work and personal life.

According to Thimmapuram (cited in Wulansari, 2023), three primary factors influencing work-life balance are:

1. Workload

2. Workflow

3. Scheduling

In Wulansari (2023), additional factors influencing work-life balance include:

1. Personal considerations

2. Work stress

3. Workplace conflict

Personal attitudes—shaped by knowledge, emotions, and tendencies—play a crucial role. Social attitudes are also critical in shaping how individuals balance their responsibilities.

According to Putri (cited in Wulansari, 2023), five key factors influencing work-life balance are:

1. Time
2. Economic conditions
3. Family
4. Loyalty
5. Attitude
6. Salary

Family and economic factors include childcare needs, family support, health, and basic necessities. Attitude factors involve avoiding overexertion and workplace disputes, while loyalty reflects the duration of employment in a particular profession. Satisfaction with financial compensation correlates with the salary element.

Key factors influencing work-life balance include job demands, schedule flexibility, supervisor support, company policies, and an individual's ability to maintain healthy boundaries between personal and professional life. Addressing these elements effectively can significantly enhance an individual's work-life equilibrium.

### *2.5 Definition of Loyalty*

According to Vika Riyanti (2017) Employee loyalty is the capacity and dedication to perform tasks with full accountability, demonstrating consistent attitudes and behaviors in daily activities and task execution. This perspective emphasizes that employee dedication originates internally, shaped by their responsibilities and skills, and includes loyalty to the organization where they work.

Hasibuan (cited in Molo, 2023) work loyalty encompasses various tasks, responsibilities, and contributions made by employees through their time and ideas to achieve organizational goals. Employee loyalty is demonstrated by their dedication to the organization, influenced by individual and organizational factors.

Kadarwati (cited in Rachmadina & Baskoro, 2024) Employee work loyalty involves social, psychological, and physical activities motivating individuals to adopt rule-abiding and committed attitudes. It reflects a responsibility-driven, meaningful, and knowledge-based approach to work. This form of loyalty includes persistent dedication and personal evaluations of efforts to achieve company goals, based on experiences that enhance organizational performance.

Employee loyalty reflects behaviors and conditions encompassing social, psychological, and physical elements that foster a sense of belonging, accountability, and a strong commitment to helping the organization achieve its objectives. Loyal employees actively contribute to organizational success through their dedication, knowledge, and consistent efforts.

## **3. RESEARCH METHODS**

This research will adopt a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design, aimed at understanding how individuals subjectively experience and give meaning to the phenomena they encounter. The sampling technique used will be snowball sampling, which initially starts with a small number of data sources and gradually grows larger as new participants are identified through initial informants. This method allows for the expansion of data collection as more sources are added.

The research focus is designed to help the researcher better understand the topic and narrow the scope of the study. With this focus, the researcher can more efficiently process the data necessary to draw conclusions. The study will focus on work-life balance and employee loyalty. Specifically, the aspects of work-life balance

include time balance, involvement balance, and satisfaction balance, while employee loyalty will be explored through personal and job characteristics.

Data sources for this study will be primarily informants, selected based on their relevance to the research topic and willingness to provide data. Qualitative data, which includes words, schemes, and images, will be collected from these informants through interviews, observations, and document reviews. These informants will provide the necessary information, and the use of snowball sampling ensures that as data is collected, more sources will be identified to enhance the breadth of the study. In this case, key informants will include the owner of Let's Graduate, an MSME in Samarinda Ulu, Samarinda City, while main informants will be the employees of Let's Graduate. Additionally, supporting informants, such as friends or family of the main informants, may be included to validate statements regarding the implementation of work-life balance.

The sampling process will continue until data saturation is reached, which occurs when no new information emerges from interviews or observations. The inclusion criteria for informants include permanent or freelance employees of Let's Graduate who have worked for more than one year and reside in Samarinda Ulu. Exclusion criteria include those unwilling to be informants, those with serious health issues, or those who do not participate in all stages of data collection.

Data will be collected using three techniques; observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation will involve direct field observation, while interviews will be conducted with individuals involved with the MSME to gather specific data related to the research needs. Documentation will be used to obtain written materials or other documents created by or about the research subjects.

The data will then undergo several stages of analysis. First, the data will be edited to ensure the completeness and clarity of responses. Next, the data will be classified based on similarities with other informants' answers. The data will then be verified to confirm its validity before being used in the research. Finally, the data will be analyzed through content analysis, where patterns and themes will be identified from the interviews, observations, and documentation. This process will allow for the extraction of meaningful information from the collected data, enabling the researcher to draw comprehensive conclusions about the work-life balance and employee loyalty in the context of MSMEs.

#### **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

##### **Results**

Based on interviews with key informants regarding the implementation of the work-life balance concept at the creative media SME "Let's Graduate" located in Samarinda City, it was found that all informants have a fairly good awareness of the importance of maintaining a balance between work and personal life. All informants expressed that they felt comfortable working at this company because of the supportive atmosphere, flexibility in work hours, and the freedom to arrange personal schedules, which significantly affects their loyalty to the company. Below is a statement from one informant about their experience working under the work-life balance concept implemented by the company:

*"...I feel very valued here because at Let's Graduate, we are given the freedom to manage our work time and personal life. When work piles up, we are given time to rest or do other things that help reduce stress, like going out or meeting friends. This makes me feel more loyal and want to grow with the company." (21 Years Old, Samarinda City)*

In addition to the above interview, another key informant added that flexible time has been very helpful in maintaining productivity without neglecting personal and



family needs. For instance, they revealed that they often take advantage of their free time to spend time with family or engage in social activities that refresh their mind. Here is an additional statement from another key informant:

*"I always try to keep a balance between work and family. At Let's Graduate, they really support my family activities, like giving me special time when there's an important family event. This makes me feel valued and even more loyal to the company." (22 Years Old, Samarinda City)*

However, there are also challenges faced by some employees regarding the implementation of work-life balance. Some of them find it difficult to balance the demands of work, which sometimes requires extra time, with their desire to have personal time. A few employees feel that even though the company offers flexibility, the pressure from creative work often forces them to bring work home. One informant explained:

*"Yes, there is a policy for work-life balance here, but sometimes creative work can't be predicted in terms of time. When I'm in the mood to work, I can work through the night, and that sometimes interferes with my personal time. But the company is quite understanding and provides support." (23 Years Old, Samarinda City)*

In addition to flexible time, the company also provides opportunities for employees to develop themselves through training and workshops that are not only related to work but also personal development. This becomes an important factor in increasing employee loyalty. As stated by one of the informants:

*"I feel supported by the training provided by the company. They also give us the opportunity to go on vacation or develop ourselves in other areas, such as learning languages or attending creative workshops that I'm interested in. This is what makes me feel truly valued." (23 Years Old, Samarinda City)*

An open work environment and good communication between superiors and employees also play a key role in the implementation of work-life balance. The main informant stated that the good communication culture at Let's Graduate allows them to discuss the challenges they face in their work and personal needs without fear or hesitation. This makes them feel more comfortable and increases their sense of loyalty to the company. Here is a statement from the key informant regarding this:

*"At this company, I don't feel pressured. We are often invited to have direct conversations with the leadership about what we can improve and how we can balance work and personal life. This makes me feel valued as an individual." (21 Years Old, Samarinda City)*

Based on these research findings, it can be concluded that the implementation of the work-life balance concept at the creative media SME "Let's Graduate" in Samarinda City significantly impacts employee loyalty. The company's support in creating a flexible work environment, offering opportunities for self-development, and fostering a good communication culture are key factors that enhance employee loyalty. However, challenges in maintaining this balance still exist, especially in jobs that require high attention to detail and creativity, which sometimes force employees to work beyond their designated hours.

Therefore, the company needs to continue paying attention to employee well-being and provide ongoing support to create a work environment that increasingly supports the balance between work and personal life to ensure that employee loyalty remains intact.

## Discussion

Based on the research conducted, the implementation of work-life balance at the creative media SME "Let's Graduate" in Samarinda City shows significant impacts on employee loyalty. A supportive work environment and flexible policies are the main elements that create comfort for employees, making them feel more engaged and motivated to contribute their best.

Most informants revealed that flexible working hours play a crucial role in increasing their loyalty. This policy allows employees to manage their time independently, enabling them to balance work and personal responsibilities. For instance, permissions to attend family events or handle sudden errands create a sense of appreciation. Informants also stated that flexible schedules reduce stress levels, ultimately having a positive impact on their mental health. This demonstrates that work-life balance not only benefits employees but also enhances overall company productivity.

However, challenges persist in implementing work-life balance, particularly when the company faces a high workload. Informants mentioned that although flexible working hours are provided, they still need to be prepared for emergencies such as urgent client requests. In such situations, employee loyalty remains intact because the company provides adequate support, whether through appreciation or understanding of their personal situations.

In addition to flexible working hours, a supportive work environment is also a key factor in enhancing employee loyalty. Informants mentioned that moral support from supervisors and colleagues creates a harmonious work atmosphere. They feel that the company is not only results-oriented but also cares about employee well-being. This support not only creates a sense of comfort but also fosters a sense of ownership toward the company. Some informants expressed that they feel like part of a big family within the company, which makes them reluctant to seek job opportunities elsewhere.

The implementation of work-life balance also contributes to reducing employee turnover. Informants mentioned that the company's attention to their life balance makes them feel valued, thereby increasing their loyalty to the company. This proves that effective work-life balance policies can be a primary strategy for retaining quality employees in a competitive work environment.

However, this study also found that external factors, such as personal needs and social pressures, can influence the effectiveness of work-life balance policies. For instance, employees with greater family responsibilities tend to appreciate flexible working hours more than those without similar obligations. Therefore, the company needs to continuously adapt these policies to remain relevant to the individual needs of employees.

Overall, the findings of this study affirm that the consistent and adaptive implementation of work-life balance can increase employee loyalty at the creative media SME "Let's Graduate" in Samarinda City. By creating an optimal balance between work and personal life, the company can not only retain productive employees but also establish a healthy and sustainable work ecosystem.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study on the implementation of the **work-life balance** concept at the creative media SME "Let's Graduate" in Samarinda City, it was found that this approach has a significant positive impact on employee loyalty. Employees experience tangible benefits from flexible working hours, support for personal development, and open communication between management and employees. These factors create a conducive work environment where employees feel valued both as individuals and as part of the team.

Flexible working hours allow employees to balance the demands of work with personal and family needs. The company's support through training and development opportunities not only enhances work-related skills but also provides deep emotional satisfaction. Additionally, the open communication culture enables employees to express their challenges and needs, making them feel heard and appreciated.

However, the study also identified challenges, particularly in roles requiring high levels of creativity, where employees often need to work beyond designated hours. Although the company has provided support, the pressures of creative work can disrupt employees' work-life balance.

Overall, the implementation of work-life balance at "Let's Graduate" has proven to be an effective strategy for enhancing employee loyalty. Nevertheless, the company should continue to develop more adaptive policies to address challenges in maintaining this balance, such as offering additional support for employees facing work-related pressures. By doing so, the sustainability and success of the work-life balance implementation can be further improved, enabling the company to retain loyal, productive, and satisfied employees.

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