IMPACT OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE ON EMPLOYEE'S PHYSICAL WELLNESS: A STUDY ON VFX EMPLOYEES, INDIA

by

ROCHEL TRESA ROBERT, M.B.A., B.Sc. Vis Comm, Diploma in Animation Digital Arts

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by

Rochel Tresa Robert

Supervised by

Dr. Anuja Shukla

APPROVED BY

Vasiliki Grougiou

Dissertation chair

RECEIVED/APPROVED BY:

Renee Goldstein Osmic

Admissions Director

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my dearest parents and to my loving son, Bourne Stan Nesil. Without their love, support, patience, and understanding, the completion of this work would not have been possible.

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To my wonderful parents, Robert and Lawrentia, who always stood by my side, offering support throughout my educational and life journey. Their unconditional love and support have been my strength in looking forward to a better tomorrow. I owe this acknowledgement to you and am proud to share this milestone.

This dissertation is dedicated to my son Bourne Stan Nesil. You may not understand the importance of the words written in these pages today, and that is perfectly fine. Someday, whenever you wish to know, I will always be ready to explain.

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ABSTRACT

IMPACT OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE ON EMPLOYEE'S PHYSICAL WELLNESS: A STUDY ON VFX EMPLOYEES

Rochel Tresa Robert
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Dissertation Chair: <Chair's Name>
Co-Chair: <If applicable. Co-Chair's Name>

Indian Visual Effects industry has experienced a booming business that has been spearheaded by international companies, outsourcing and growth in technological innovations, yet it has come with the concern that employees physical well-being is at risk as they work under strict deadlines, long working hours and random working schedules. This thesis has checked how physical wellness of employees in the VFX industry in India depends on work-life balance, where creativity and technical excellence matter a lot but are often realized to the expense of employee health. This study aimed at investigating the effects of work-life balance on physical wellness and to examine the moderating effects of the work environment and workload management in the determination of such a relationship.

The research was a mixed-method study, which is a qualitative and quantitative study. The respondents provided with a well-developed questionnaire comprised 375 VFX professionals who were employed at different companies in India and were asked to provide information related to work-life balance, working environment, workload,

fitness, and nutrition. Descriptive statistics, pattern identification, and SmartPLS-SEM were used to study the data in order to understand the relationship and the trend.

The results indicated that there was a significant interdependence between work-life balance and physical wellness that most 51% of the respondents indicated that a healthy work-life balance allowed them to eat well, engage in sleep routine and exercise routines, and lack of it led to fatigue, stress and sickness. Workplace conditions emerged as a two-fold: the work-from-home conditions offered flexibility and reduced travelling stress, whereas the work-from-office conditions offered form and working as a team but involved travelling stress. The workload management was considered to be a significant aspect and 65.9% of the respondents related the excessive work hours and the unequal allocation of tasks to waning health. To this end, 80% of them cited the need to exercise, and 82 percent of them emphasized nutrition as a key to energy and creativity maintenance, but exercise and nutrition were regularly undermined by hectic work schedules.

The study found that work life balance was significant towards ensuring that VFX professionals in India were physically well, and effectiveness of work life balance was dependent on workplace supporting practices, balance in distribution of work and flexible work patterns. The research had an impact on the academic literature by extending the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model to include the physical wellness outcomes in creative industries. In practice, it predetermined the necessity of hybrid working models, systematic resource distribution, and wellness-based policies to contribute to long-term sustainability of the health of the employees and organizational performance in the VFX industry.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Description
AR	Augmented Reality
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
BAFTA	British Academy of Film and Television Arts
BMI	Body Mass Index
CAGR	Compound Annual Growth Rate
COR	Conservation of Resources
CR	Composite Reliability
EWP	Exercise and Work Performance
EWS	Exercise and Work Constraints
HR	Human Resources
HWE	Home Work Environment
IATSE	International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees
IPAQ	International Physical Activity Questionnaire
JD-R	Job Demands-Resources
ML	Maintaining Lifestyle
NBC	National Broadcasting Company
NCW	Nutritional Challenges on Work Demands
NWP	Nutrition on Wellness and Performance
OTT	Over-The-Top
OWE	Office Work Environment
PLS-SEM	Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling
PSQI	Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index

SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
VES	Visual Effects Society
VFX	Visual Effects
VR	Virtual Reality
WH	Working Hours
WHO	World Health Organisation
WLB	Work-Life Balance
WLBH	Work life balance on health
WM	Workload Management

CHAPTER I:
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Visual Effects (VFX) business had become a valuable contributor to the entire entertainment industry across the world, where its rapid growth was shaping the local and global markets (Omidi et al., 2022). This industry was now significant to the creation of films, episodes, television programmes, video games, and digital content due to the work of an experienced labour force, affordable labour, and rising demand of high-quality visual effects (Lobo et al., 2021). The business had become a central activity in the entertainment industry, which changed the manner in which people consumed movies, television shows, video games, and other media (Mahale, 2021). Moreover, the Indian Government initiative of the so-called Digital India, which is meant to bring internet services to cities of tier II and III, was set to change the whole landscape of the media and entertainment industry, bringing a groundbreaking change to the consumption behavior and business model (Kumar et al., 2016). NBC, Universal, DreamWorks, Warner Bros., Sony, and Disney were some of the largest studios that had already established operations in India not only understanding the efficiency and value of Indian VFX talent but also the oftentimes global acclaimed projects produced (Hamzah et al., 2020). The vast majority of these studios globally ensured that at least one of their studios was based in India to reduce cost in production by augmenting the margin and revenue line. India also had talented VFX artists, animators, and technicians who had been internationally acknowledged to have done quality work and possess expertise in it. Indian talents were nominated in a number of other prestigious awards as well including Oscars and the BAFTA (Hafeez et al., 2016). Therefore, this growth did not only contribute to the

economic growth of India but also highlighted the issues that the VFX workers were struggling with, in particular, physical wellness and work-life balance.

The VFX industry is dynamic and trends that were witnessed in the industry continued to change. The domestic productions had been on the rise and the Indian filmmakers have been using VFX in domestic productions such as the regional cinema and the Bollywood. The launching of television in 1959 was a great milestone in India. This was initially restricted to state owned broadcaster Doordarshan where it grew significantly between US$ 8.7 billion to $9.7 billion in 2017. The current industry was made up of 48 paid subscription broadcasters, more than 6,000 cable operators, and 6,000 multi-system operators (Lobo et al., 2021). Compound Annual Growth rate (CAGR), of 16.4 had also been experienced in the animation industry in 2016 to reach a significant figure of US$ 878 million and US$ 1.9 billion in India alone. This demand spurt was credited mainly to the fact that the demands of domestic content companies, which generated 1,600 hours of original content on Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms, 1,800 movies, and 200,000 hours of entertainment had risen (Lobo and Bhat, 2021). It was so due to the necessity to produce an attractive high quality movie that would compete worldwide. In addition, the companies have an initiative in the state-of-the-art infrastructure, technology, and talent development. We had observed that the Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms and streaming services in India were growing increasing, and as a result, the web series and online content of the VFX. The VFX factor was an important aspect in appealing to the viewers in the digital platforms. The Indian VFX industry was experiencing a trend of virtual production techniques which involved the use of virtual sets and real time rendering. This also improved the efficiency and creativity in the film-making field. The VFX studios and the educational institutions worked together to provide specialized training programmes and courses to develop the talent on VFX field.

The government concurrently assisted by making efforts to encourage the media and entertainment sector of the economy including VFX by providing incentives and encouragement to local and international partnerships. Remote working in the industry had been more rapid because of the COVID-19 pandemic. It concentrated on managing the issues in these periods, which were dealing with team and data security. These tendencies were a sign of the increasing role of VFX on the domestic and international arenas. The development of Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) was destined to the future when new interfaces would provide a better way of interconnecting people and technology. These innovations were driven by the numerous advances that were being made such as haptics feedback, machine learning development, the implementation of AI, the use of neural networks, introduction of spatial capture technology, and improved positioning systems. All of these developments created the path to a more intensive integration of people with immersive technologies (Okun et al., 2020).

The reorganization of production pipelines, in which the studios are more decentralized with multi-studio workflows that spread tasks across continents has also been strongly associated with the booming global expansion of the VFX industry (Allison, 2020). This networked ecosystem has made India an essential station in global production networks, which has not only provided labour power, but also technical expertise and originality (Goldsmith and O'Regan, 2021). With global studios outsourcing complicated sequences to Indian agents, the demands and anticipations on the accuracy, speedy response, and technical skill progressively mount pressure on the professional, placing them into the realm of high-pressure digital ecosystem, which necessitates constant up-skilling, extended working hours, and active cognitive involvement (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2017).

Besides global outsourcing, the trend of real-time VFX, which is driven by game engines like Unreal Engine and Unity, has also changed the dynamics of the workplace. The pace of production demanded by real-time technologies is forcing artists to work in loops at an unprecedented speed, flattening the traditional production timelines (Beane, 2022). Although these innovations increase the potential of creativity, they also create additional physiological and psychological pressure on workers, who are required to spend extended time in front of the screen and adjust to the constantly changing digital arsenal (Roberts and Carver, 2019). The factors are highly relevant to physical health when there are no organized recovery options and ergonomic protection (Shaw and Politis, 2020).

The new forms of content consumption have also contributed to the development of the industry. The unabated expansion of streaming services, which is enhanced by the digital availability in semi-urban and rural India, has led to a boom in the demand regarding high-quality episodic and short-form content (EY India, 2023). OTT content may need compressed delivery timelines compared to feature films, which usually take the company long to make. VFX studios thus work on rush schedules, and with the overlaps of their projects, accumulation of work increases (FICCI–EY, 2022). It adds to the lack of regular working hours, insufficient sleep patterns, and time spent on the erosion of rest time, which have a direct influence on the physical health of the employees (Caruso, 2014).

In the meantime, the labour market organization in the Indian VFX industry has been conceptually transformed. The labour force is becoming younger, with young professionals joining via specialized institutions, and being creative in nature and not necessarily of their long-term occupational health risks (Cunningham and Craig, 2019). There are a significant number of such professionals that are contracted or project based

and this may hurt access to organisational health benefits, ergonomic aids and well-structured wellness programmes. Lack of standards in the industry increases the susceptibility of artists in their initial stages of career, who often agree to accept excessive workloads in order to build credibility and find contracts in the future (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2017).

One more new area that is defining the industry is connected with the convergence of the pipeline, or the incorporation of animation, gaming, virtual production, and VFX into the single workflow (Allison, 2020). Although such convergence encourages creativity, it also increases the scope of technical skills demanded by artists. It is common to spend long hours in a single place, make repetitive hand movements, and switch between thinking, which increases exposure to musculoskeletal strain and posture-related disorders (Shaw and Politis, 2020).

The growing dependency on global collaboration at the organisational level has brought social complexities with regards to time. Indian studios regularly coordinate their work with other colleagues operating in North America and Europe and in East Asia (Goldsmith and ORegan, 2021). This intercontinental addiction requires sitting and deliveries beyond the normal working hours, which adds to the disrupted circadian rhythms among the workers. Such trends lead to sleep deprivation, metabolic imbalances, and more fatigue over time, factors with a strong correlation with physical ill health and burnout (Virtanen and Kivimaki, 2018).

Moreover, the increased complexity of VFX contents has created pressure on constant software rendering, simulations and asset optimisation, which leads to the creation of last-minute revision. The loops of revision can be much shortened production window, pushing the employee into one wave after another of peak output (VFX Voice, 2023). VFX pipelines have a cyclical approach to crunch, unlike the traditional industries

where workload levels off after increasing phases, and there is little room to rest. This model of organization, which has been greatly criticized by the post-production unions and labour researchers globally (O'Donnell, 2014), is widespread in the Indian context in which workforce availability and cost competitiveness contribute to the swift growth. The development of immersive solutions like VR and AR presents physical tension in the form of new ways, as well. Artists involved in immersive content are involved in the work that involves a high level of depth observation, the ability to spend a long time in a 3D stereoscopic environment, and adjustment to spatial computing software (Bailenson, 2018). Such tasks exert more severe strain on the eyes and put the strain on the vision in particular at risk when performed over a long time without necessary breaks or ergonomic adjustments (Reeves and Brown, 2020). The increased use of immersive media presents a potential more significant increase in the physiological workload on VFX professionals that cannot yet be effectively covered in the current industry wellness standards.

Simultaneously, the sustainability and environmentally friendly production trend has prompted studios to turn to efficient energy consumption rendering methods and cloud computing. Although such innovations make the environment less damaging, they introduce new dimensions of digital addiction that are associated with the necessity to be always connected, iterate quickly, and have a communication channel available always (Mazmanian et al., 2013). This constant digital connection confers an always available culture in which personal-professional time lines are increasingly damaged, leading to exhaustion, loss of sporting habits, and less favorable nutrition (Wajcman, 2019).

In spite of these systemic changes, formal wellness policies are not uniformly enforced through Indian VFX studios. Although multinational studios can implement international standards related to labour, small and mid-size domestic studios usually do

not have any organized system to meet the needs of ergonomics, nutrition, and physical health (VFX Voice, 2023). This gap makes wellness experiences unequal in the workforce and the gap between operational expectations and well-being of the employee's increases. The lack of evidence-based insights to inform policy formation is a critical issue that can be addressed through evidence-based policy formulation at the industry level (EY India, 2023).

Taken together, these changing conditions in the industry confirm the relevance of investigating the overlap between work-life balance and physical wellness in the Indian VFX industry. The convergence of technological acceleration, competitive globalization, unstable production cycles, and a highly young labour force develops a specific occupational environment in which physical health is particularly vulnerable to being affected (Caruso, 2014). The knowledge about these mechanisms is critical in enhancing interventions, which facilitate healthy and sustainable professional practice, in a sector that is at the heart of the Indian digital future.

1.2 Research Problem

The Indian workforce had overgone the Digitalization and globalization extreme change over the years. The conventional spheres of professional and personal life corrected the modifications which led to economic employment and development. Work-life balance was one of the key determinants among the employees that were previously a luxury of the semi-urban and urban professionals.

Work-life balance (WLB) has gained momentum as a topic of discussion among the employees of various industries, including VFX, in the last few years because it directly influenced the physical well-being and, consequently, organizational performance and the productivity of the workforce (Thilagavathy et al., 2021). In India,

the visual effects industry has been experiencing fast-growing and booming industries, which has made it a perennial objective to balance work-life and wellness optimally. Despite the rapid development of the industry, employees tended to be fatigued and unsteady because of the strenuous conditions of work and were affected by these conditions in the long term on physical health (Kumar et al., 2016). VFX was an under-researched field in academia of media or film studies, and its culture was known to be project-based. It was coupled with the pressure to meet high deadlines, weekly targets, the last minute client changes, and the need to multi-task, upper management pressure, resource and training deficit and created an environment where employees could not maintain a healthy balance between their personal and professional lives. Research had revealed that a high work-life imbalance was associated with numerous health problems including frequent headaches, anxiety, obesity, high blood pressure, musculoskeletal, depression, sleep disturbances, and cardiovascular strain among others as a result of stress at work (Sharma et al., 2021; Greenhaus and Allen, 2011; Kar and Ghosh, 2018). Hesmondhalgh and Baker (2013) implied that creative employees might not be entirely aware of their experiences and conditions, even though their processes might be creative at the pressure of prolonged working hours, temporary contracts, and unpredictable future careers. According to their results, all good work does not necessarily mean creative work because of issues of job insecurity and inadequate work-life balance (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2013). Such an unbalance usually caused problems among employees, including insufficient sleep, improper nutrition and lengthy time of inactivity; all these resulted in extreme health and well-being consequences.

To add to the matter, the increase in the number of VFX workers in India was characterized by a large number of professionals, most of whom were still at the age of the majority, and due to the increased digital connection to work, this work did not

always provide the separation of home and job activities. This had become more pronounced in the past couple of years where remote or hybrid working environments had erased the delineation, which led to ergonomics injuries and a lack of physical activity (Velayudhan, B et al., 2021). Even though the global relationship between WLB and physical wellness is well-documented (Kortum, 2014), India was lacking in the field specifically, which influenced the variety of industries and different demographic categories. Despite these well-known dangers, a scanty body of scholarly study in the Indian setting that explored the connection between work-life equilibrium and physical well-being impacts of VFX experts was found.

This disparity between theory and actual reality calls for a dire necessity of research to examine the work-life balance effect of particular VFX employee in India; this not only aids one in comprehending the cause, but also devising superior recommendations and suggestions. The fact that this relationship is more comprehensible was important towards enhancing not just the health and work-life balance of employees, but also introducing organizational effectiveness that was vital in the creative and dynamic sectors of the Indian industries.

1.3 Purpose of Research

The present research aims at solving these issues by considering approaches to integrating work-life balance with physical well-being among VFX employees in the organisations. It is also intended to create integrated solutions, which included such components as sleep, nutrition and fitness which were significant to support work-life balance and improve the state of workers. Through a combination of these factors, this research has endeavored to offer an in-depth analysis that employees had put in place to enhance their morale, work satisfaction and general betterment of the quality of life.

Along with this, the purpose of the research was to investigate the aspect of the VFX industry that is not commonly discussed to offer new perspectives and remedies that can be implemented to make the work environment more accommodating and viable. Staff welfare was one of the major issues in the majority of the contemporary organisations over the recent past due to the increased number of workers at the workplace. The studies and research were exclusively concentrated on a single state in Australia, which restricted generalization and was not addressed (Zheng, C et al., 2015). The disadvantages of the work-life balance affected both the employer and employee, thus affecting job, mental, and physical well-being and individual organizational performance adversely (Roopavathi et al., 2021). There was also poor physical, psychological, and emotional well-being caused by work-life balance and the research was restricted to the publications that were published exclusively in the English language (Thilagavathy, S et al., 2021). Budhiraja, S et al (2021) reported the findings of other studies that lacked control of work-life balance, physical health problems such as high cholesterol and depression were reported.

It was the primary factor that made us target the combined union of work-life balance and physical wellness of employees in the specific industry of the visual effects in India. Our intention was to research different work-life practices of the employees and how we can adjust the physical wellness to fit the visual effects work culture in India. The number of research papers that contained information regarding work-life balance and wellness in various sectors and countries but did not investigate the visual effects industry, and that too within this geography, was quite a lot. Therefore, this research contribution would be valuable to the employees, organisations and simultaneously, the industry.

1.4 Significance of the Study

With the revolution of the VFX industry still going on and expanding, as the technology advanced and more connections formed between the studios and the educational institutions, the well-being of the employees was a priority that led to the expansion. The work-life balance and physical wellness issues were not merely important to employee retention in the organisation but also to the long-term success and competitiveness of the VFX industry in the global market (Roopavathi et al., 2021). This work and research was considered as a significant move towards establishing a healthier, more balanced working environment in VFX industry where the well-being of the employees was perceived to be a part of the general success of the organisation. The most significant thing in these contemporary work organisational structures was work-life balance and physical wellness of employees as we had a hybrid model of working at home and at the studio.

The employees in this field were under the pressure and fast tracked environment and the balance of work life with physical wellness became extremely important to the output and health of both the employee and the well-being of the organisation. At present, this was in the back seat and this was directly impacting the employee and organisation.

Several findings and insights assisted in the perception of the opportunities and challenges of the employees in this industry. And these solutions assisted in achieving a conducive and long-term working environment. In addition to this, it was found that the companies had to do these proactive actions to meet the work-life balance and well-being issues of the employees. This study helped to gain a greater knowledge and offer unending work to achieve a balanced and satisfying life.

The primary purpose of the work was to offer a long-term objective in advancing the understanding of work-life balance and physical health in the life of a VFX worker and comprehending the importance of two mentioned fields.

The following objectives were the result of this research:

1. To know the views of VFX employees on a work-life balance situation.

2. To determine how bad work-life balance affects the physical health of the VFX professionals, such as working long hours, living poorly, eating well, and living a fulfilling life.

3. To explore the correlation between work life balance problems and physical health outcomes in the case of VFX workers.

4. To create awareness and discussion about the relevance of work-life balance and how it affects the well-being and health of the VFX professionals in the industry and the community at large.

These goals helped achieve a better generalization of the problem that VFX professionals have to deal with, as well as offer actionable recommendations on how to create a healthier and more conducive workplace in the industry. The result of the study was beneficial and it was intended to improve the positive well-being of the employees in the VFX industry.

1.5 Research Purpose and Questions

Although the work-life balance has been examined concerning the physical wellness of employees in various fields, there was limited literature on the research that was conducted specifically in the VFX field in India. The gap highlights the possibility of further research and the in-depth examination of the interconnection of work-life balance and physical well-being of employees working in the VFX industry.

With the ever-changing environment of the visual effects sector, in India, the problem of employee work-life balance towered large on the minds of employees and they many times would find themselves in conflict with the irregular working hours, tough deadlines and constant pressure on perfection that comes with customers and project. These required not only to eliminate personal time but also to eliminate such important components of well-being as sufficient rest, nutrition, exercise. The specifics of VFX work, its technicality, and creative pressure contributed even more to the problem of finding a harmonious balance between professional and personal life. Moreover, the problem of work-life balance was not only time management but also the health of the employees and their job satisfaction. To solve this problem it was necessary to have a closer insight into the specific issues of these professionals and plans of how to execute and give priority to the well-being of employees without impacting the creative productivity and competitiveness of the industry.

This peculiarity of the work environment also posed a range of difficulties to the issue of the physical well-being of the employees. This also involved immense stress and mental exhaustion that translated into physical health problems of back pain, bad posture, and muscle pain caused by the work schedule in VFX, which was irregular and prolonged, etc. furthermore, the irregularity of the VFX work schedules impacted on the regularity of sleep patterns and caused sleep deprivation and the resultant health effects. The overall physical health was even worsened by the inability to eat healthy food and spend time doing any physical activities.

Therefore, the concept of preserving the well-being and healthy condition of the VFX professionals and establishing a sustainable working environment in the industry was critical. Moreover, the significance of understanding more of the cross-section of the work-life balance and the physical wellbeing of visual effects industry employees

provided a complex issue that needed an in-depth analysis. With the rapid development and evolution of the industry, the effects of work-life balance as an outcome on the well-being of the employees, and physical well-being in particular, became more evident.

The following research questions were used to handle this complex issue:

1. What was the impact of work-life balance on the physical wellness of employees in VFX industry?

2. How did the management of work environment and workload contribute to the development of the relationship between work-life balance and physical wellness?

3. Which particular issues arose with VFX professionals as they tried to achieve a balance between personal and professional lives, and how these issues affected their work-life and physical health?

4. What was the impact on and interaction between work-life balance and physical wellness in the VFX industry with variables like long working hours, exercise, nutrition, sleep and other variables?

1.6 Assumptions and Limitations

Simon (2011) explains that the assumptions within the study were the ones that had something to do with you, which were slightly beyond your control, however, and in case they went away, your study would be pointless. Simultaneously, they were possible weaknesses in your study and you had no control over them. We were frustrated in nearly everything we did. There is an assumption that the respondents submitted truthful and honest information in the questionnaire and that the participants were well aware of their work-life balance and physical health condition. The research also assumed that WLB directly and visibly affected physical wellness in the employees of VFX and that physical wellness was not solely due to lifestyle or medical history but also due to work stress and

culture. It was assumed that the organizational culture at India VFX studios did not favor work-life balance policy in an equal manner. In India, the majority of studios worked as per the international deadlines, outsourcing and vendor schedules, and customer requirements and had prolonged working hours with reduced individual time. This was assumed in this study both in large and small studios. The research was not a comprehensive study of all Indian states; rather it conducted a study on Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Hyderabad, West Bengal, and Maharashtra because of the few resources they had to carry out the research. The sample of VFX employees that was selected was representative of the wider industry of VFX and this observation was composed of a general trend and experience within the industry.

The research involved VFX employees only which was a limitation to the generalization of the results to the other sectors and industries. Self-reported data also had the greatest limitation of being subjective. Participants can minimize a problem like stress or physical pain due to internalized work culture and fear of criticism. Moreover, the characterization of gender can be biased since it is an industry dominated by men. The data taken on the issue of work-life balance and physical wellness failed to take into consideration long-term effects, since the data was taken at a particular time. This study had not fully investigated the outside forces like the various organizational cultures and various geographies in India. The sample size and the diversity of the research were restricted due to the limitations in accessibility and the desire of the employees to participate in the research. Besides that, the research was also limited to physical wellness only and did not take into account emotional and mental well-being.

These reasons led to the fact that further study should be taken into account in the future with more diversified states and higher sampling size of the data collection over the course of the period.

1.7 Summary

The Visual Effects (VFX) business in India had rapidly emerged as one of the primary providers of entertainment to the world, particularly in India, since it is capable of providing low-cost and high-quality services with the help of a specialized workforce. The industry had expanded quite fast with the rising demand to watch the fascinating contents in digital media, television and movies which were boosted by government efforts such as the Digital India, Disney, and Warner Bros and universal were just some of the international studios that had set up their infrastructures in India. This was to capitalize on the talent and cost effectiveness. Along with the adoption of such advanced technologies as real-time rendering and the use of virtual production, this impressive growth was achieved. Original local and OTT based content had been increasing in the industry. The expanding industry though came with long working hours, severe employment pressures and challenging client demands often leading to unfavorable job satisfaction and physical ill health among the VFX artists. Although the employees of the Indian VFX were highly visible and known globally, the academic studies continued to overlook the physical wellbeing of the workers.

The emerging change in the workforce in India, particularly in the technology and more of the creative industries such as Visual Effects had posed significant challenges in ensuring good work life balance. The physical health of the VFX professionals had been in conflict with having a blurry distinction between work and personal life (which was the case when we had transitioned to work-at-home setting). Overtime work, revisions on clients, deadlines that are too short and continuous pressure to produce or contribute to the creative work had led to exhaustion, lack of sleep, poor diet and other health complications. Even though it was recognized worldwide that work-life balance was the key to the success of organizations and the well-being of the employees, we observe that

there is lack of studies that concentrate on its effects on the Indian VFX industry. Workers in this industry experienced this pressure and neglected any physical suffering due to the current lifestyle of overworking, risk of termination, and working on contract or employment basis. This created the urgent necessity to explore the specifics of circumstances and outcomes of health and well-being of VFX workers in the industry in India.

This research had the basic objective of investigating the impact of work-life balance on physical wellness in VFX industry in India. This was because the scope was intended to be achieved through compromising the factors of nutrition, exercise and sleep as a result of workplace necessity. The study wanted a proposed combined wellness action plan to accommodate the VFX work environment, and this has the ability of improving and increasing the morale, quality of life and job satisfaction of an employee. Majority of the available studies on the same had been done on other nations; this study was used to fill the significant gap on specifically targeting Indian geography, especially in the field of VFX. This had illuminated a great unknown region, which sought to make the policymakers and industry practice more health-promising and creative profession.

This study was particularly relevant in the current times, when the context of hybrid working conditions and digital addiction had been grown exponentially and had led to physical health issues among the staff. The environment of the VFX industry due to the deadline-related nature of the work, as well as the great pressure, did not see the necessity to acknowledge the significance of the well-being of the people employed. Maintaining and retaining healthy and productive talent was one of the major considerations by the companies competing with the global market. With this discovery, the research was optimistic that it would assist the employees in making initiative efforts

in prioritizing WLB and physical wellness. It also added to the greater and bigger discourse regarding the India creative workforce.

To facilitate this goal, the research presents key questions regarding the particular issues that VFX practitioners experience in sustaining work-life balance, unhealthy state and unfit, and the interplay of lifestyle, nutrition, sleep, and exercise issues and work requirements. These questions will enable the research to give a comprehensive insight on the role of work-life balance on physical wellness and how this can be reduced. It introduced consciousness and fostered messages and real-life interventions, which enhanced a healthier and balanced life of VFX professionals in India.

As much as the research was an eye opener, it had its assumptions and also limitations. The respondents were believed to have been giving accurate self-report assessment of their physical health and work-life balance. It was also restricted to the selected Indian cities and the results might not be generalized to the rest of the areas. Also, since the data were collected at a single point in time and through self-reporting, this could have not encompassed the long term health effects. In spite of these shortcomings, the research was significant milestones in providing solutions to an acute but neglected problem of one of the fastest growing and most powerful sectors in India.

CHAPTER II:
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Work-life balance encompasses two primary dimensions: the engagement in multiple roles within work and non-work life, the minimization of conflict between these roles (Joseph et al., 2019). Furthermore, it was conceptualized as the perceived optimal allocation of personal resources to effectively cope with stressors and maintain effective functioning in both work and non-work domains (Grawitch et al., 2010). The evolving nature of work in the media industry had increasingly shaped various belief systems, emphasizing the critical role of employee well-being in modern organisations due to the expanding workforce (Omidi et al., 2022). However, existing research had primarily focused on specific regions, limiting the generalizability of findings (Zheng et al., 2015). The repercussions of work-life balance issues extended to both employers and employees, adversely affecting job satisfaction, mental and physical well-being, and organisational performance (Roopavathi, 2021). Moreover, the adverse effects of poor work-life balance on physical, psychological, and emotional health had been documented, with research predominantly confined to English-language publications (Thilagavathy et al., 2023). According to Budhiraja (2021), studies had linked a lack of control over work-life balance to physical health problems such as high cholesterol and depression.

This underscored the significance of exploring the integrated relationship between work-life balance and employee physical wellness, particularly within the visual effects industry in India. The research specifically addressing work-life balance and wellness within this sector, particularly in this geographic context, highlighted the need for comprehensive investigation. Therefore, this study aimed to examine the various work-

life strategies adopted by VFX companies and to tailor physical wellness initiatives to align with the unique work cultures prevalent in the Indian VFX industry. By filling this research gap, it was anticipated that the findings of this study would not only contribute to organisational management practices but also benefit individuals as a whole.

2.2 Theory of Reasoned Action

2.2.1 Definition and Importance of Work-Life Balance

There was no one clear definition of work-life balance, as many authors had described and explained it differently. According to Sirgy, M.J. et al. (2017), work-life balance definition was categorized into two sections–one was multiple role engagement in work and non-work life, and the second one was minimal conflict between work and non-work roles. Work-life balance was also defined as an individual's perceived optimum allocation of personal resources that helped in coping with the stressors and guarantees the effective functioning of both work and non-work roles (Grawitch et al., 2010). Personal resources comprised time, finances, physical and mental attributes, knowledge, and skills (Grawitch et al., 2010). The impact of the nature of work in the media industry had been significantly increasing over the last years, and this had a critical role in shaping various belief systems (Omidi, A. et al., 2022).

Numerous definitions of work-life balance had come up from various scholars, which led to the contradictory understanding of many meanings over several years (Kumar et al., 2017). The table below shows various scholars' interpretations of work-life balance.

Table 2.1 Work-life balance from various studies

Author (Year)	**Definitions**
Clark (2000)	Achieving satisfaction and effective performance in both professional and personal life while minimizing conflicts between the roles.
Pillinger (2001)	Flexible working arrangements refer to various options given to the employees enabling them to achieve a harmonious balance between professional responsibilities and personal responsibilities.
Rapoport et al (2002)	Proposed work-life balance Integration refers to the concept of harmonizing various aspects of one's life based on individual priorities, rather than striving for traditional balance. This emphasis on the seamless blending of personal and work responsibilities according to personal preferences recognizes this integration will not require an equal number of personal resources.
Frone (2003)	Achieving a balance between work and family life was characterized by a low level of conflicts and strong support between different roles.
Greenhaus and Allen (2006)	The degree to which an individual's effectiveness and fulfillment in work and family roles were aligned with the individual's life priorities.

Grzywacz and Carlson (2007)	Accomplishing the expected duties and responsibilities agreed upon between an individual and their colleagues or family members within their personal and work life.
Kaliath and Brough (2008)	The personal belief that both non-work and work activities align with and promote an individual's current life priorities.
Emslie and Hunt (2009)	Balanced contentment and good functioning in both personal and professional life, with limited conflict between the responsibilities.
Ioan Lazar, I et al. (2010)	In today's competitive business world, achieving success depends mainly on maintaining a balanced relationship between unpaid and paid employment obligations.
Delecta (2011)	An individual's capacity to meet work responsibilities while also managing commitments outside of work, including those related to personal and family life.

This data indicated the absence of a universally agreed-upon definition, despite the extensive application of the work-life balance concept. Work-life balance had been progressively acknowledged as an important influence on employees' health and wellness, organisational effectiveness and performance, and overall job fulfilment. In creative industries such as Visual Effects (VFX), professionals go through high pressure, especially in India, where work-life balance is not a luxury but a necessity for sustaining effective productivity and physical wellness. The VFX industry was familiar for its project-centric structure, erratic workload, extended working hours, and pressing client timelines. These circumstances, while cultivating creativity and bringing out imaginative work, frequently blurred the borderline between professional and personal life, giving

employees very little time for relaxation, leisure, or personal well-being (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2013).

In India's situation, the issue of work-life balance in VFX industries had gained greater significance in meeting both domestic and international demands. Employees often reported long working hours, especially during the project delivery time, which resulted in altered sleep patterns, poor nutrition, and prolonged sedentary lifestyles (Kumar et al., 2016). Most of the studio's function is in line with global countries' time zones and expectations; continuous pressure led to long-term stress, exhaustion, and various physical health issues like cardiovascular problems and musculoskeletal disorders (Sharma et al., 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic had further complicated the balance, where hybrid and remote work environments made it more difficult to maintain professional and personal boundaries (Velayudhan et al., 2021).

Various studies confirmed that absence of work-life balance not only impacts physical wellness but also mental health, job satisfaction, and sustained professional commitment. Greenhaus and Allen (2011) argued that lack of balance in employees' personal and professional lives led to role clash and, in due course, diminished performance in both areas. In the VFX context, where creativity and accuracy were of greater importance, the physical stress of extended hours and less recovery time could impact cognitive and artistic competency. In addition to this, emerging professionals becoming part of the industry were often forced to overwork to set up their careers, indirectly forming unhealthy routines and patterns that impacted their well-being (Hafeez et al., 2016).

On the contrary, when companies advocated work-life balance–through practical and feasible schedules, psychological help, ergonomic workplace designs, and well-being initiatives–they looked forward to seeing a positive result in employees'

morale, retention, and creative output (Thilagavathy et al, 2021). Therefore, implementing WLB strategies was not just an employee's concern but a judicious investment in the workforce. In India's VFX industry, where our creative talent performance was directly linked to the global competitiveness, work-life balance was an important element for sustaining innovation and excellence. Identifying the significance of WLB and acknowledging it proactively would not only enhance the physical wellness of the employees but also play a major role in the long-term stability of the VFX industry.

2.2.2 Theories and Models of Work-Life Balance

There were various determinant factors for the work-life balance, such as professional life, personal life, and family life (Robert, 2023). This research focused on professional life in the VFX employees (refer to Figure 2.1).

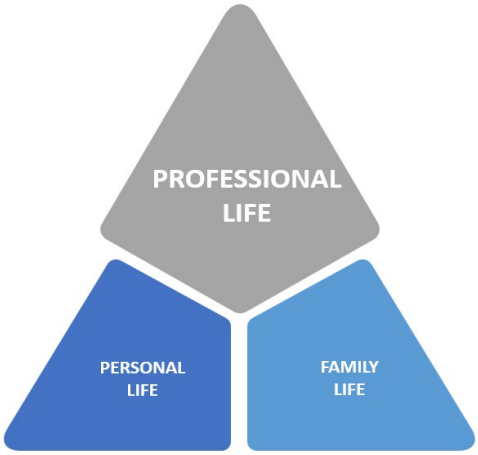

Figure 2.1 Determinant Factors of Work-Life Balance. Source: Author's compilation

The activities within one sphere supported and enhanced the amenities of the other sphere. Below, Table 2.2 shows work family segmentation to work family integration (Kiran.T. et al., 2022).

Table 2.2 Theories of Work-Life Balance

Theories	Segment	Era
Structural Functionalism	Conflict Perspective	Early 1900s to late 19's
Role Strain		
Compensation	Compensation Perspective	Early 1960s to early 1990's
Supplemental and Reactive Compensation		
Overall Appraisal		
Spill over	Balance to Integration Perspective	Late 1980s to present
Role Enrichment		
Work Enrichment		
Integration		
Ladder		
Ecology system		
Instrumental		
Congruence		

2.3 Human Society Theory

2.2.1 Spillover Theory

Over the last two decades, there has been a lot of work focusing on theories related to work-life balance, with a notable emphasis on positive and negative spillover (Zedeck, 1992). According to Wilensky (1960), the spillover model proposed an 'extension' of experiences from the work area to the non-work area; this created a

perception that the social interactions of both areas were effectively boundary-less for an individual (Parker, 1971).

The theoretical characterization of spillover included positive spillover and negative spillover (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2 Characterization of the Spillover Theory. Source: Author's compilation.

In the literature papers, the concept of positive spillover comes under various terms such as extension, generalization, familiarity, identity, isomorphism, continuation, and congruence (Staines, 1980). Positive spillover essentially tells us that success and satisfaction in one area led to fulfilment and achievement in another area (Vijayakumar et al., 2017). On the other hand, the negative spillover, also known as contrast, complementarity, opposition, regeneration, and heteromorphic, alongside additional terminology cited in the literature, showed the relationship between the area of work and non-work was characterized by a contrasting and antithetical nature (Staines, 1980). In another context, this theory had been classified into vertical and horizontal categories (Figure 2.3).

Figure 2.3 Classification of the Spillover Theory. Source: Author's compilation.

Horizontal spillover provides the definition of influence of one of the areas of life on the adjacent area. For instance, this might include how job satisfaction impacted one's personal life. Vertical spillover, on the other hand, related to domain hierarchy, highlighting the hierarchical arrangement of life priorities such as work, family, and leisure. Contentment or discontentment in a lower-tier area tended to overflow into a higher-tier area. Given its status as the foremost tier, any impact on overall life significantly affected the entirety of one's experiences (Sirgy et al., 2001).

Quite a lot of researchers had incorporated the spillover effect into measurement scales. According to Small and Riley (1990), the origins of empirical work-life balance measurement can be traced back and credited to the development of the Work Spillover Scale (WSS). Also, based on Grzywacz and Marks (2000), they expanded on this initiative, acknowledging both positive and negative spillover effects. They devised a comprehensive 16-item scale specifically designed to assess the impacts of work-family spillover. Further to this development, Kinnunen, Feldt, Geurts, and Pulkkinen (2006) brought up a four-factor model that gauges negative work-to-family spillover, adverse family-to-work spillover, beneficial work-to-family spillover, and positive family-to-work spillover.

Additional contributions to spillover measurement included Greenhaus and Beutell's (1985) interdomain conflict scale, Kirchmeyer's (1993; 2000) assessment of both positive and negative spillover, and Higgins, Duxbury and Lee's (1992) application of role enhancement theory. The latter researchers developed measures encompassing positive, negative, and neutral impacts of work-family spillover. This diversity of vast measurement tools highlighted the evolving and nuanced understanding of the complex dynamics inherent in the spillover phenomenon.

Despite their having been considerable research conducted on spillover, it faces criticism as well. According to Guest (2002), in reference to the spillover theory, the proposition had been articulated in a broad manner, rendering it of limited or no value. A thorough investigation into the origins, causes, reasons, and consequences was essential. The application of this theory provided valuable insights into the dynamics of visual effects, highlighting its role in innovation, creativity, and collaboration.

2.2.2 Ladder Theory

According to Bird (2006), the theory stated the most basically equitable balanced approach to work-life balance, as discussed by Rincy and Panchanatham (2014). The theory suggested that every situation had two sides, mirroring the principle underlying work-life balance. The ladder theory comprised a dual dimension for work-life balance; these dimensions can be referred to as the two legs of a ladder, the right leg representing individual responsibilities towards the company and personal well-being, and the left leg reflecting the company's obligations and support towards employees.

Achieving equilibrium in work-life balance necessitates attention to both legs, as they were equally vital for work-life balance (Bird, 2006; Rincy and Panchanatham, 2014) (refer to Figure 2.4).

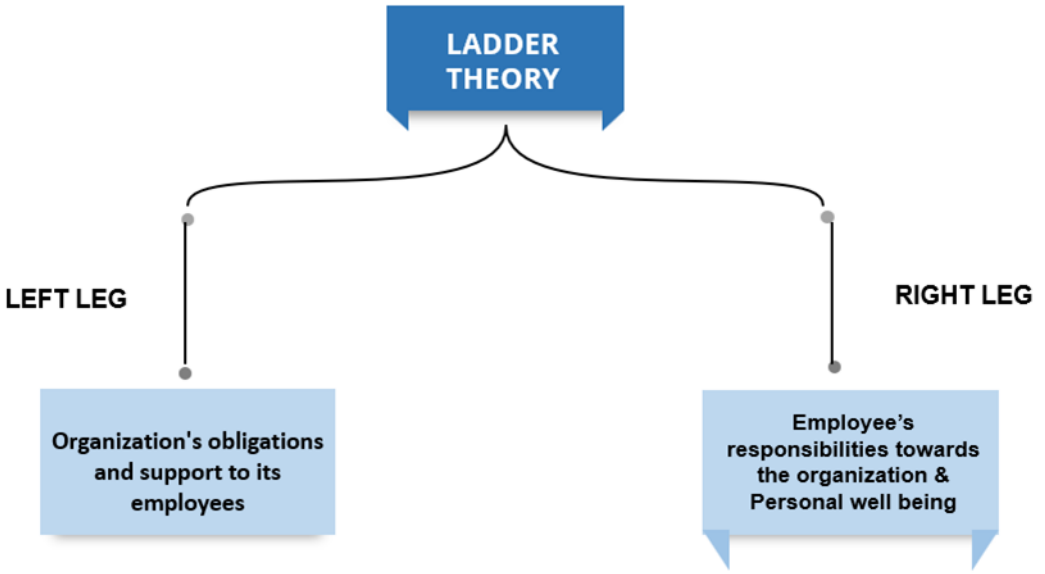

Figure 2.4 Dimensions of the Ladder Theory.

Source: Author's compilation.

These legs were connected to each other through steps, including profits, revenue, commitment, customer service, morale, productivity, retention, and recruitment. In this conceptualization process, an employee's journey started at the recruitment step, and the final step ended in profits. To achieve a balanced work and life required both these legs to function effectively throughout this journey. This also provided a valuable framework for understanding the career progression dynamics within the VFX industry.

2.2.3 Compensation Theory

This theoretical framework stated that individuals who were driven by a deficiency of satisfaction in one domain make up to redress and compensate in another domain. Furthermore, this theory also contended that both work and family areas coexist within the same environment, and because of this, there existed a compensatory influence between family and work (Mathew et al., 2014). The compensation mechanism was mainly characterized by a negative effect between work and family. This negativity was termed whereby adverse experiences in one area led to a positive perception of the other

area. This applies to the VFX industry, highlighting the influence of compensation practices and their implications for organisational effectiveness, employee motivation, and talent retention.

As per the findings of Edwards and Rothbard (2000), there were two forms of compensation. The first form involved less engagement with the dissatisfying areas of life and is coupled with an augmented involvement in an area that provided satisfaction. Conversely, an individual might react to dissatisfaction within one area by actively looking for rewards in another area. These rewards brought experiences that fulfilled personal desires, thereby contributing to heightened satisfaction. This compensation mechanism was further divided into supplemental and reactive compensation (refer to Figure 2.5).

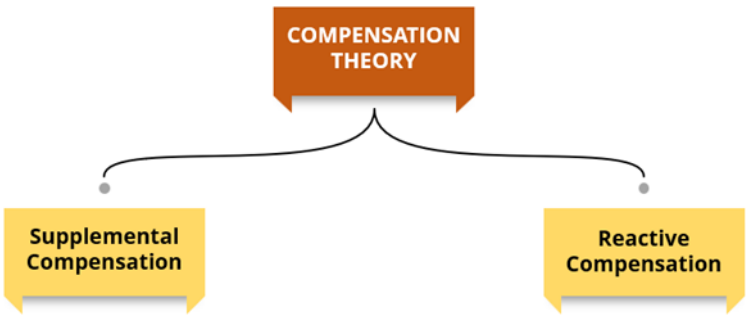

Figure 2.5 Classification of the Compensation Theory.

Source: Author's compilation.

Supplemental compensation became apparent when the rewards in one area were inadequate, which prompted the individual to seek fulfillment in another area. On the other hand, reactive compensation occurred when unfavorable experiences in one of the areas were counteracted by actively engaging in desirable experiences within another area (Zedeck et al., 1990). While it might look similar between compensation and enrichment, they showed clear fundamental distinctions. Compensation involved

redirecting focus to another area in search of positive feedback when dissatisfaction was experienced in one area. On the other hand, enrichment showed the enhancement of experiences in one area through the application of skills and values from another area (Roy, 2016).

2.2.4 Conflict Theory

This theory came from Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), who stated that the attainment and accomplishment in one area of life impacted the other area of life. This theory posited that life and work were inherently incompatible domains, each governed by distinct norms and standards. Based on the earlier research, such as Kahn et al., 1964; Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, and Rosenthal (1964) and Katz, Kahn, and Kahn (1978), Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) defined work-life conflict as "a form of inter-role conflict in which the pressures arising from roles in the work and family domains were mutually discordant in certain aspects." In other words, engagement in one role was hindered by the involvement in the other role. According to Powell and Greenhaus (2010), he based this theory of the conflict theory on that of the role theory, which itself was rooted in a scarcity perspective. This perspective stated that individuals faced limitations in the amount of energy and time available, which is being distributed among various other roles. Despite its cultural significance and economic contribution, the VFX sector was not immune to the socioeconomic conflicts and power struggles that categorize many industries operating within the framework.

In categorizing the conflict theory, Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) categorized three distinct forms of conflict, namely, time-based conflict, stress-based conflict, and behavior-based conflict. This is shown in the diagram below (Robert, 2023).

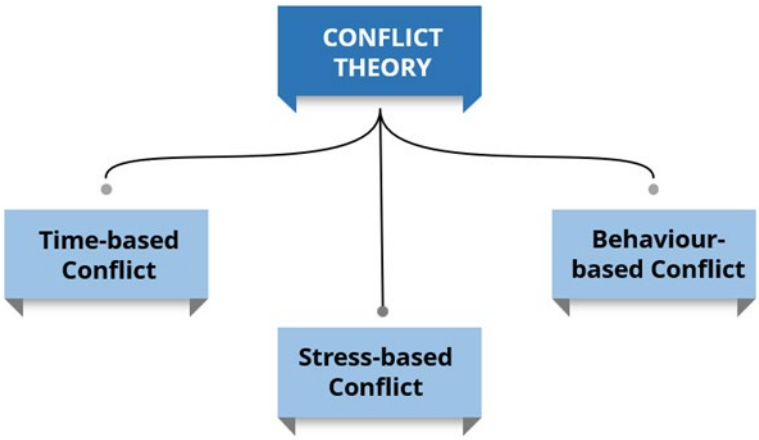

Figure 2.6 Classification of the Conflict Theory.

Source: Author's compilation

The conflict associated with time-based roles arises due to constraints on availability of time, posing challenges in effectively balancing the demands of diverse roles. Factors contributing to time-based work-life conflict include prolonged working hours, irregular shifts in timing, and inflexible work schedules. Strain-based conflict comes from psychological stressors inherent in work, such as interaction tiredness and burnout in the job. Behavior-based conflict is manifested when work demands involve behaviors incongruent with family roles, and moving between these roles becomes a potential source of conflict (Roy, 2016).

2.2.5 Segmentation Theory

The earliest perspective from various scholars was that the interplay between work and home was considered two separate independent entities, and these 02 aspects did not affect each other (Edwards and Rothband, 2000; Kanter, 1977; Staines, 1980; Young and Kleiner, 1992; Zedeck, 1992). However, Bruke and Greenglass (1987) as well as Voydanoff (1987) had previously demonstrated a close relationship between family and work. Throughout past centuries, the division between life and work had been

ingrained, marked by distinctions in space, function, and time, dating back to the industrial revolution (Gragnano et al., 2020). It was argued that individuals employed a mechanism where they consciously compartmentalize thoughts, actions, and emotions related to work when at home, and similar is the case when at work. This approach enables individuals to effectively delineate boundaries between family and work, facilitating the skilled management of their lives (Piotrkowski, 1979). In the context of the VFX industry, this theory found relevance in understanding the diverse needs of clients, ranging from film and television production to advertising and gaming.

Despite its historical prevalence, the segmentation theory faced skepticism regarding its empirical support in the context of the relationship between employee social life and work. Consequently, it was considered more as a theoretical concept than one substantiated by robust empirical evidence (Guest, 2001). Nevertheless, this theory had found utility in Work-Life Balance (WLB) studies, illustrating and showing the connections between various areas of employees' lives to mitigate stress arising from diverse roles (Parasuraman, Greenhaus and Granrose, 1992; Zedeck, 1992).

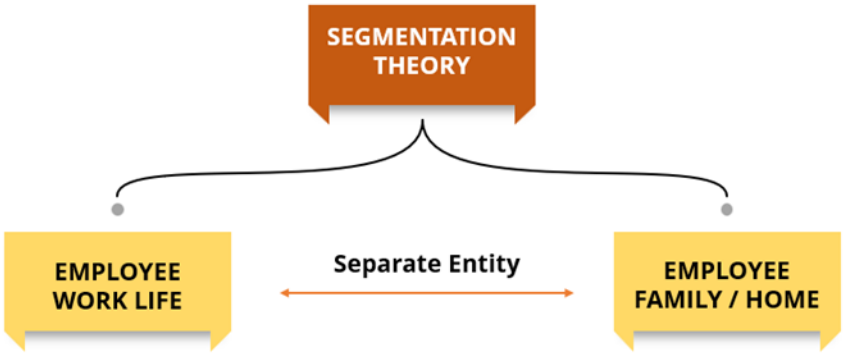

Figure 2.7 Classification of the Segmentation Theory. Source: Author's compilation.

2.2.6 Enrichment Theory

This theory was also called Enhancement Theory. This theory defined that gaining experience in one's work life contributed to the enhancement of the other life areas, and conversely, experiences in various life roles have an impact on the quality of one's work. According to Morris and Madsen (2007), the theory encompassed the influence of skills, values, and abilities, as well as mood and satisfaction, in bringing up the quality of other life areas. Based on the Greenhaus and Powell (2006) mentioned that individuals perceived improvements in both professional and personal roles. This contributed to the enhancement of the positive impact of experiences on overall quality of life in each area of life. Consequently, getting a favorable outcome in one's personal life created a precedent for the same success in work life and vice versa, as highlighted by Zedeck and Mosier (1990). The overarching theory undermined the reciprocal and beneficial relationship between family and work life, in which contributing positive experience in one area gave positive influence to the other. By understanding the underlying factors that contributed to job satisfaction, creativity, and innovation, studios, and professionals within the VFX industry can implement strategies to enhance employee engagement and well-being.

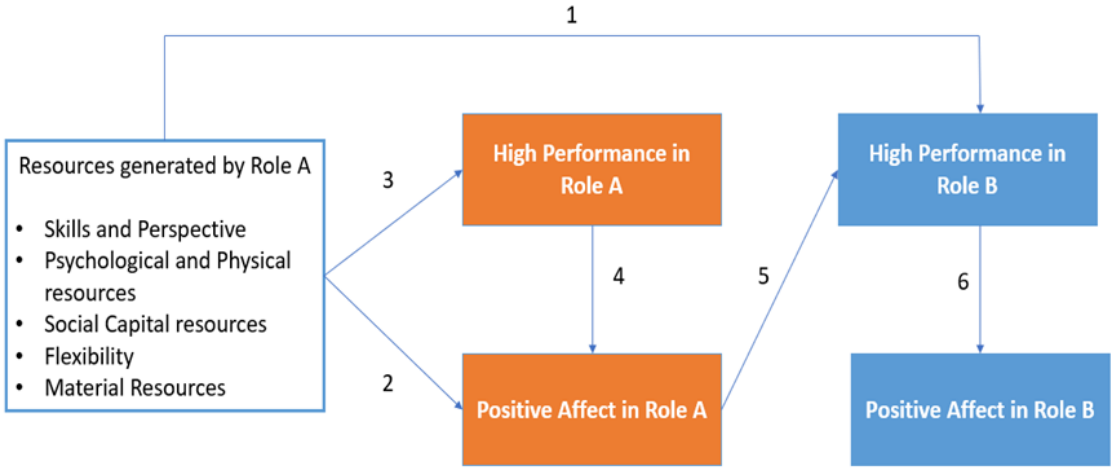

Figure 2.8 Theory of Work-Family Enrichment. Source: Greenhaus and Powell (2006)

2.2.7 Congruence Theory

This theory stated that factors were directly associated with family or work responsibilities, which can influence the stability of various other roles. This influence came through various variables such as behavioral patterns, genetic influences, sociocultural factors, and personality traits (Edwards and Rothbard, 2000; Zedeck, 1992). For instance, this theory also considered factors such as educational attainment or cognitive abilities, where these variables can also impact work and family roles positively (Rincy and Panchanathan, 2014). One of the key aspects of Congruence Theory in the VFX industry related to the culture of the organisation. Organisational culture encompassed the shared values, beliefs, and norms that guided behavior within an organisation (Schein, 2010).

2.2.8 Instrumental Theory

This theory stated that activities undertaken within a particular area enabled attaining things in the other area (Guest, 2002; Zedeck and Mosier, 1990). This theory further implied a positive correlation between two areas, which resembled to the spillover theory (Guest, 2002) because actions carried out in one area contributed to accomplishing the objective of the other area. This implied that when a person's engaged in work, the individual also gets resources in personal life (Fredriksen-Goldsen and Scharlach, 2001).

2.2.9 Ecological Systems Theory

This theory was formulated by the Russian-born American psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner (1917-2005). This theory helped in understanding the relationship between the individual and the society. This framework has contributed and helped many other psychologists to understand and analyse human behavior and societal roles. Uric's model had divided ecological system theory into five parts, which were also known as

five environmental systems. These systems were microsystem, mesosystem, ecosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem. The microsystem of the VFX industry encompassed individual artists, technicians, and creative professionals who contributed to the production process. Within the micro-level context, factors such as expertise, skills, and personal attributes influenced the quality and efficiency of VFX work (Jeffrey. et al., 2012). The ecological system theory had also been applied to human development, which was the reason why it was also called the human ecology theory (Ray, 2015). Over the period, this theory was applied in the context of work-life balance by Grzywach and Marks, 2000. This concept suggested that ecological system theory examined the interaction between individuals and their surroundings, thereby shaping personal growth and development (Rincy and Mathew, 2014). The theory also stated family and work were interlinked outcomes of activities influenced by context, time, and individual behaviors (Kumar and Janakiram, 2017). However, the theory went through a lot of transformation, which delved into the correlation between the individual and environmental factors. The exploration of these relationships was conducted within the realms of social, physical, and natural environments (Bello and Tanko, 2020).

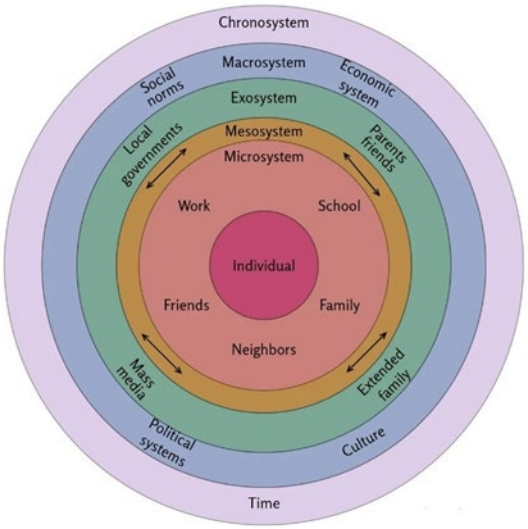

Figure 2.9 Ecological Systems Theory. Source: Urie Bronfenbrenner model

2.2.10 Integration Theory

In Clark's (2000) perspective, the assumption was that optimal outcomes were achieved when integration of work and family included all parties, which fostered a mutual responsibility. This stands in contrast to situations where independent solutions were devised (Googins, 1997). The theory suggested that a robust approach, permeable boundaries, and being flexible were more effective in enhancing various domains such as family life, community, and work life (Clark, 2000).

This theory had also been acknowledged as the most suitable explanation for integrating contextual elements related to work and family into the body of knowledge (Morris and Madsen, 2007). Furthermore, the theory aimed to provide a contemporary perspective that defined traditional work-life norms, transforming parties into dynamic collaborators with equal voices shaping a comprehensive model of work-life balance (Morris and Madsen, 2007). This highlighted the importance of collaboration and coordination among different departments, teams, and external partners involved in the production pipeline. For instance, integration between VFX studios and production houses facilitated tighter integration of VFX assets within live-action footage, leading to enhanced visual coherence and narrative consistency in film and television shows (Wolf, 2019).

a) Physical wellness concepts

There were different areas of well-being, such as emotional well-being, physical well-being, social well-being, spiritual well-being, financial well-being, and intellectual well-being (Robert, 2023; refer to Figure 2.10). This research focused on the physical well-being of the employees in the VFX organisation.

Figure 2.10 Different domains of well-being.Source: Author's compilation.

Physical wellness was a structure that referred to the body's ability to run smoothly, not having any diseases, the ability to recover from stress and strain, and doing day-to-day activities daily with the same energy. The World Health Organization (WHO) defined health as "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not just the absence of disease," which placed physical wellness as a more important part of overall health than just not having any illness (WHO, 1948). In applied public health and occupational research, physical well-being was often referred to as interrelated domains like fitness and exercise, nutrition, recovery and sleep, musculoskeletal health, and preventive health behaviours (Caspersen et al., 1985; Sallis et al., 2000). For the professionals in the VFX industry, because of the high demand, physical wellness interacted with the workplace, which demanded not only short-term but long-term as well. The primary pillar was fitness and physical activity. Regular exercise improved cardiovascular fitness, efficient metabolism, and musculoskeletal resilience. On the other hand, long hours of desk work were very common among the VFX professionals–as a result, the risk of obesity, insulin resistance, and musculoskeletal pain increased (Sallis et al., 1998). The secondary pillar was nutrition. Fluctuating work schedules, tight timeline projects driven by the clients, and limited breaks for meals were usual in VFX, which led to poor food habits (consuming highly processed food and irregular intake); this

negatively impacted the energy, reasoning, and recovery (Bull et al., 2020). Sleep and recovery were very important–disruption in sleep impacted cognitive performance and increased the risk of cardiovascular diseases and inflammation. Continuous lack of sleep was the usual pathway because of long hours and irregular shifts, which impacted the physical wellness of the employees (Akerstedt, 2006).

Another unique area that VFX employees frequently faced was *ergonomics and musculoskeletal health*. Recurring tasks, still posture, poor position of the workstations, and continuous screen exposure added to stress on eyes, neck, shoulders, and lower back pain. Precautionary and corrective ergonomics, like proper chair/monitor setup and frequent breaks in between rotation of tasks, were some of the proof-based measures to reduce physical issues. In conclusion, preventive health checkups, timely vaccination, and implementing some of the stress management techniques can reduce the impact of work stress on physical outcome, which directly contributes to overall well-being.

There were various theoretical frameworks that were useful to show as the link between processes in the workplace and physical wellness. One of the models was the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R), which stated that health and performance were affected due to the high job demands (long working hours with time pressure), which increases strain unless balanced by resources (autonomy, social support, and recovery opportunities) (Demerouti et al., 2001). The Efforts-Recovery framework equally highlighted the same issue that accumulated tiredness and physical strain led to insufficient recovery from the work demands (Meijman and Mulder, 1998). Conservation of Resources (COR) theory further stated and explained how loss of energetic and health resources under consistent work pressure precipitated physical and psychological declined health (Hobfoll, 1989). These were some of the models and frameworks that explained and related to professionals, especially in VFX industries, where they worked

to tight deadlines and did not have enough time for rest. They were more prone to having a decline in physical wellness.

Physical wellness in workplace research had a combination of self-report and objective measures that had indicators and measurement. Self-report methods that were commonly used were the SF-36 or WHOOOL physical domain for general physical functioning, the International Physical Activity Questionnaire (IPAQ), and the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI) for sleep (Craig et al., 2003; Buysse et al., 1989). Validity strengthens when we checked on the objective data such as BMI, waist circumference, monitoring sleep/activity through actigraphy, blood pressure, and other functionality tests. For musculoskeletal and ergonomics issues, pain scales and other validated checklists (e.g. the Nordic Musculoskeletal Questionnaire) were standard (Kuorinka et al. 1987). From the VFX point of view, doing a combination of workload measures of survey and physical metrics of WLB can pave a pathway from work condition to physical outcomes.

Intervention concepts should be introduced at multiple levels to protect and improve the physical wellness of VFX employees. At the organizational level, we needed to have realistic planning and scheduling, protected breaks, avoidance of last-minute crunches by advance planning, and ergonomic workplace standards. At the managerial level, various training sessions for different levels of managers to identify stress, policies for creating flexibility in schedule, and other benefits through which recovery can happen (onsite activities/fitness memberships, virtual physiotherapy). And finally, at the individual level, promoting taking frequent breaks, encouraging a sleep pattern, providing nutritional guidance, and providing preventive health checkups. There was evidence that proved that combining individual and organizational intervention brought in better health outcomes than doing it alone in either way (Proper et al., 2003). With the current known

VFX project-based culture, incorporating wellness into client contract negotiations and project planning became very important (to avoid and reduce unpredictable deadlines and scope of work).

Finally, applying the concept of physical wellness into the research study implied both exposure (working hours, work-life balance, intensity of the projects, and availability of various resources) and outcomes (having a good quality sleep, self-reported physical health rating, activity levels, pain, etc.). The specific aspects of the VFX industries, like frequent pressure in delivering according to client deadlines, being available in the global studios' time zones for collaboration and communication, and a largely young, digitally inclined workforce, mean we need to include more physical wellness strategies like ergonomics, addressed the risk of sedentary working, and included more recovery opportunities for the professionals.

b) Impact of Work-Life Balance on Physical Wellness

The VFX industry encountered numerous challenges related to work-life balance and physical well-being. These challenges arose due to the rigorous demands of the job and the expectation to deliver results of exceptional quality within strict time constraints (Thilagavathy et al., 2021). While it is a rewarding industry, it often involved long working hours, high-pressure deadlines, and a fast-paced environment, which affected the employees' work-life balance and well-being, which were crucial issues within the industry (Roopavathi, 2021). A few of the overarching concerns regarding work-life balance were long working hours–projects in VFX often required extended, which led to burnout and fatigue for the employees, High stress levels–the nature of the VFX work and client expectations with high levels of detail often led to stress. Meeting the quality standards along with the creative demand can be taxing mentally.

Fragmented and ambiguous job roles and responsibilities because of the demand for the highly specialized skills shortage and finding the right skill set can be challenging. It was important to focus on this for better efficiency and productivity of the employees. Another issue was the financial challenges, such as freelance and contract work, low entry-level salaries, overtime and unpaid hours, variable pay scales, and job insecurity. It was important to focus on this area for the employee retention, job satisfaction, motivation, and employee loyalty towards the company. All this directly and indirectly affects the physical well-being of the employees; here are some general issues and their importance.

Firstly, lack of physical activity-Work in this industry demanded long hours of sitting in front of the computer screens. As a result, various health problems, such as poor posture, back pain, reduced muscle tone, etc., led to major health consequences (Budhiraja et al., 2020). It was important to focus on this for counteracting sedentary lifestyles, improving cardiovascular health, and better weight management. Secondly, nutrition–was one of the significant concerns because of the erratic working hours, limited access to nutritious food, time constraints with limited breaks, lack of nutritional education, etc., and it was important for the high energy levels that the job demands, for sharp cognitive abilities, long-term health and well-being, and enhanced productivity and creativity. Thirdly, getting adequate sleep–most often because of long and irregular working hours, crunch times and overtime, shift timing of work, and high digital screen and blue light exposure was a general issue of not getting enough sleep.

Following was the broader overview of the literature review (Figure 2.11) that researched under physical well-being and work-life balance.

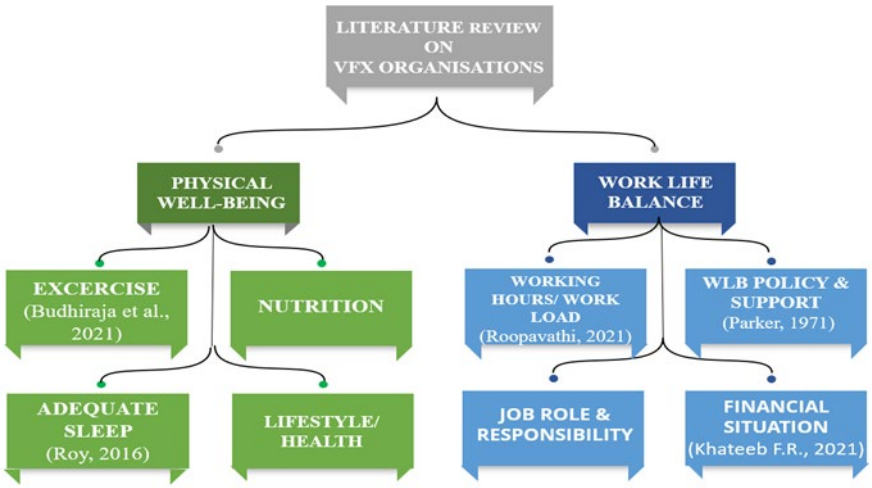

Figure 2.11 Literature review overview.

Source: Author's compilation

In contemporary times, achieving a balance between personal and work life has been progressively more difficult. Balancing work and personal life had become more demanding in today's world. This challenge had prompted organisations and human resource departments to adopt the concept of work-life balance widely. Consequently, various policies and strategies had been devised to mitigate the conflict between professional and personal life. In the domain of theory, multiple propositions had surfaced since the 1970s. Commencing with a broad yet instinctive segmentation theory, numerous other theories had emerged, encompassing the spillover theory, the compensation theory, the enrichment theory, etc. all documented within the literature (Khateeb, 2021).

c) **Previous Study on Work-Life Balance in VFX Organisations**

Research studies focused on work-life balance in VFX industries within India were limited, but various industry reports, surveys, and similar academic studies showed a consistent pattern of long working hours, tighter deadlines, and blurring the boundary, which undermined the well-being of VFX employees. Trade and union evidence showed that irregular schedules and overtime were fundamentally set in VFX workflows, with

surveys from the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE) recording long work weeks and different circumstances across facilities and domains (IATSE VFX, 2022). Trade press likewise recorded the field's developing response, observing new studios and guild initiatives categorically aimed at WLB and exhaustion prevention, such as the Visual Effects Society (VES) Health and Wellbeing Initiatives (VFX Voice, 2024). Jointly, these sources proposed WLB challenges were systemic–embedded in client-focused and driven change orders, global studio time zone alignment, and project or contract-based employment–rather than individual studios or roles (IATSE VFX 2022).

Human impacts on deadline volatility were further highlighted in the research on post-production and VFX labor. In the United Kingdom, recent regional reviews of post-production narrated "illegal or barely legal" working-hours culture, impractical timelines, and not required amount of support, underscoring how condensed schedules cascade onto editors, designers, and VFX professionals (TV Industry Human Rights Forum, 2025). Complementary practitioner narratives and longitudinal commentary within the VFX society constantly referenced *50–60-hour baseline* weeks escalating beyond *80-100 hours* during delivery, reinforcing the normalization of overwork in visual effects (Effectscorner, 2015). While not all these sources were peer-reviewed, their confluence across union, charity, and practitioner sections provided different evidence of chronic time pressure that was materially relevant to WLB in VFX (Effectscorner, 2015).

Employee-based review studies specifically on VFX industries in India were sparse, but adjacent empirical literature linked to the types of schedules that were common in VFX to measure the health risks. Occupational health research showed that long working hours and shift-based work were linked with poorer sleep, high stress levels, complaints on musculoskeletal, metabolic risk, and a higher risk of cardiovascular disease–these were

directly related to the VFX extended screen time and deadline-based routines (Caruso, 2014; Wong et al., 2022). Population-level evidence also relates reducing working hours with improved sleep and lower stress, implying that structural workload changes can benefit physical wellness (Virtanen et al., 2022). These findings supplied a transferable causal pathway–sleep deprivation, circadian misalignment, sedentary exposure or physical inactivity, and cumulative exhaustion–through which VFX work arrangements could decrease physical health, thereby leading to WLB deficits to health outcomes in this sector (Caruso, 2014).

Within VFX specifically, equity-focused research identified WLB as a salient barrier for caregivers and women. The USC Annenberg inclusion initiatives multi-method study on Women in VFX reported that nearly half 46% of respondents mentioned having difficulty managing and balancing work and family responsibilities, with additional concern about a male-dominated industry with limited flexibility in senior creative roles (USC Annenberg, 2021). Such results showed that WLB constraints intersected gendered participation and show advancement patterns in VFX; this increased attrition risk, narrowed leadership opportunities–these factors can indirectly affected sustainability and organizational capacity.

Some of the industry initiatives verified that there were some practical levers of improvement. The VES Health and Wellbeing resources and webinars foregrounded boundaries, recovery, and managing workplace stress to suit VFX workflows, indicating a shift towards classified support (VFX Voice, 2021). Trade commentary notes various studios exploring planning of workload, psychological support, and other flexible arrangements to mitigate crunch-cycle harms (VFX voice, 2024). While strict impact on assessment was scarce, these systematic efforts to align with occupational health recommendations and broader literature linking workload

management to better health and retention–promoted a credible path for the studios to change WLB principles into measurable physical wellness gains among the VFX employees (VES, 2025).

In India, the VFX part of post-production had rapidly expanded to serve the global studios in terms of global pipelines. Formal academic evaluation of WLB health linkage was limited, but international evidence-based research was highly applicable given similar project logics (tight delivery timelines, onsite/offsite collaboration and communication, and rapid change requests). Upcoming practitioner and student reports, small-scale studies on VFX deadline effects, and this specific sectoral analysis on India's post-production growth all emphasized the urgency of structural WLB interventions–from practical and realistic bid and schedule practices and ergonomic design for sleep-friendly shift patterns to getting accessing to health supports–if companies were to protect physical wellness while maintaining creative output (IJRPR, 2025; EY, 2025). This gap in the study of VFX employees in India strengthened the study further, which directly examined how WLB can be directly implemented in the Indian context and how physical health outcome were mapped (IJRPR, 2025; EY, 2025).

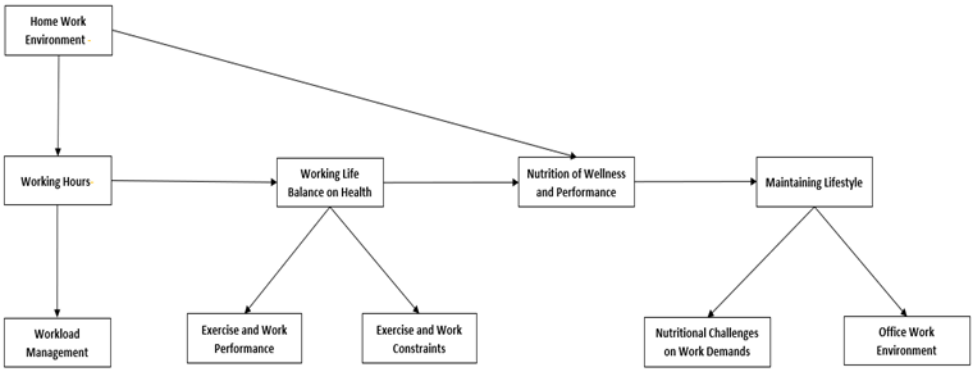

Figure 2.12 Conceptual model

The conceptual model placed work-life balance at the center of the model and primarily focused on and treated it as important for personal and organizational resources, which influenced various physical wellness outcomes among the VFX professionals both directly and indirectly.

Precisely, the model expected the path from WLBH > Exercise and work performance (e.g. regular and consistent workouts) > Nutrition and wellness performance (e.g. regular meals, frequent small healthy meals, and breaks) > Maintaining the lifestyle (e.g. sleep quality and pattern). We saw that Home-work environment > Working hours >Workload management which all of this led to the work-life balance. This positioning followed the logic that work-life balance saved employees' time and resources, which enabled positive lifestyle choices, resulting in better physical health (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007; Hobfoll, 1989). The model explicitly included work-regime variables, and there were two constructs–Working Hours (WH) and Workload Management (WM). These were the variables that can affect work-life balance harmony and integration and influence sleep and outcomes.

This currently bought in longer working hours weekly and frequent staying late to meet the global site client deliverable, which resulted in degrading the work-life balance positive side of recovery and instead increasing the negative physical outcome (Greenhaus and Allen, 2011). The model further showed how Home Work Environment (HWE) was directed towards the work-life balance, and this showed how studio-level policies and other resourcing factors (like coming up with a reasonable timeline and ergonomics) shape VFX employees in bringing in the balance between work and personal life. The conceptual model/paths were a mixed combination of direct paths (work life balance> nutritional wellness), indirect paths (workload management > work life balance) and Moderation path (home/ office Work environment>work life balance). The

graphical model had been tested using the PLS-SEM model because of the mixed constructs. In short, the model showed practically and theoretically that WLB influenced physical wellness in the VFX context through direct and indirect pathways.

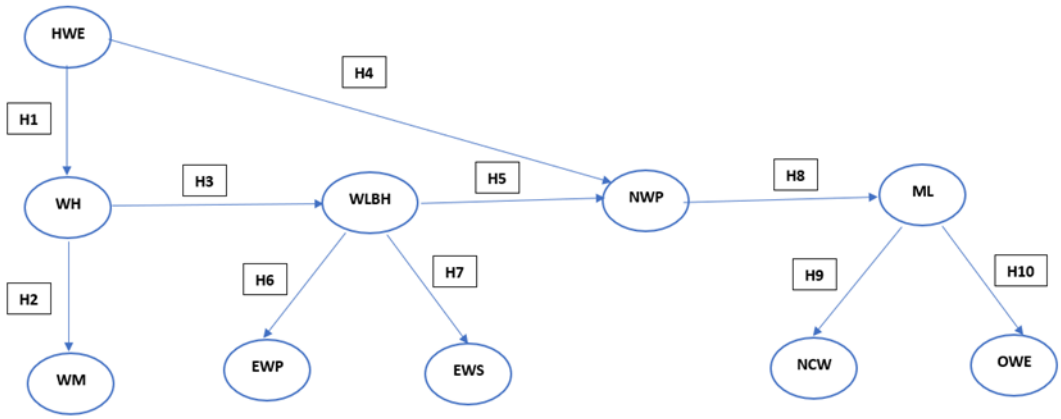

Figure 2.13 Conceptual model with hypothesis

Hypotheses Development:

The section of the study developed the hypothesis underpinning the research, based on the proposed structural model and theoretical foundation.

H1: Home Work Environment (HWE) - Working Hours (WH).

An employee's number of working hours spent on professional tasks was significantly affected by the home work environment. The boundaries between work and personal life were blurred often because of remote and flexible work, which can extend or cause irregular working hours (Bloom et al., 2015). In the VFX industry in India, where irregular working hours and irregular deadlines were common, a home work environment may either ease or worsen extended work demands. Hence, H1: Home Work Environment (HWE) had a significant effect on Working Hours (WH).

H2: Working Hours (WH)-Workload Management (WM).

Workload management challenges were strongly associated with excessive working hours. Research had shown that extended working hours reduced efficiency,

increased fatigue, and impacted task prioritization (Caruso, 2014). Within the VFX sector, where there was an intense project-based deadline, managing workload under extended hours became a critical issue. Hence, H2: Working Hours (WH) had a significant influence on Workload Management (WM).

H3: Working Hours (WH) - Working Life Balance on Health (WLBH).

Working irregular and long working hours had an adverse effect on employees' ability to balance professional and personal responsibilities, as a result harming physical health and wellness (Van der Hulst, 2003). For VFX professionals, irregular work shifts and often frequent overtime created a strain, impacting both work-life balance and overall health. Hence, H3: Working Hours (WH) had a negative impact on Working Life Balance on Health (WLBH).

H4: Home Work Environment (HWE)- Nutrition of Wellness and Performance (NWP).

An employee's home work environment was notably influenced with their nutrition and wellness performance overall. A supportive and organized home setting often permitted better meal routines and healthier choices of food, while a stressful or disorganized environment led to erratic eating practices and lower wellness outcomes (Allen et al., 2021). In the VFX industry in India, where employees faced excessive working hours and pressing deadlines, the quality of home work environment could either support or hamper wellness and nutritional practices. Hence, H4: Home Work Environment (HWE) had a significant effect on Nutrition on Wellness and Performance (NWP).

H5: Working Life Balance on Health (WLBH) - Nutrition of Wellness and Performance (NWP).

For employees to focus on proper nutrition, which was important for physical wellness and workplace performance, was important for balanced work-life arrangements. Studies showed that unhealthy eating habits and patterns often come up when there were a high workload and poor work-life balance (Nixon et al., 2011). For VFX employees, where irregular schedules were common, nutrition became an important component of wellness. Hence, H5: Working Life Balance on Health (WLBH) positively influenced Nutrition on Wellness and Performance (NWP).

H6: Working Life Balance on Health (WLBH) - Exercise and Work Performance (EWP).

Employees who maintained a balanced work-life relationship were more likely to engage in regular exercise, which enhanced their stamina, productivity, and workplace performance (Taris and Schaufeli, 2015). In the VFX industry, where it prolonged sedentary work hours were common, the positive link between physical activity and balanced health became important for sustaining performance. Hence, H6: Working Life Balance on Health (WLBH) positively influenced Exercise and Work Performance (EWP).

H7: Working Life Balance on Health (WLBH) - Exercise and Work Constraints (EWC).

Poor work-life balance was faced by employees; they experienced constraints in involving themselves in physical activities due to a lack of time, energy, or motivation. Earlier research studies stated that higher work stress directly decreased the opportunities for exercise, creating adverse outcomes (Sonnentag and Fritz, 2015). This was evident seen in the VFX work environment, where time-consuming tasks restricted personal

wellness activities. Hence, H7: Working Life Balance on Health (WLBH) negatively influenced Exercise and Work Constraints (EWC).

H8: Nutrition of Wellness and Performance (NWP) - Maintaining Lifestyle (ML)

An employee's wellness performance and nutritional habits had a significant influence on their ability to sustain a consistent and healthy lifestyle. Balanced nutrition promoted physical energy, mental focus, and overall lifestyle steadiness, especially in challenging creative industries. In the Indian VFX industry, maintaining proper nutrition helped professionals to support long working hours and manage stress effectively, contributing to a steady lifestyle routine. Hence, H8: Nutritional Challenges on Work Demands (NCW) had a significant effect on Maintaining Lifestyle (ML).

H9: Maintaining Lifestyle (ML) - Nutritional Challenges on Work Demands (NCW)

An employee's capability to maintain a balanced lifestyle significantly affected how they tackled nutritional challenges coming from work demands. A steady lifestyle supported better planning of meals and wellness habits, while erratic routines often led to poor food choices under pressure. In the VFX industry in India, where busy schedules and long working hours were common, maintaining a healthy lifestyle supported mitigate nutrition-related difficulties. Hence, H9: Maintaining Lifestyle (ML) had a significant effect on Nutritional Challenges on Work Demands (NCW).

H10: Maintaining Lifestyle (ML) - Office Work Environment (OWE)

A healthy lifestyle contributed positively to the overall work environment, improving both productivity and morale. Employees who successfully maintained wellness routines often created a healthier, more supportive work culture (Grawitch et al., 2006). In the VFX industry, various lifestyle choices such as proper rest, exercise, and nutrition contributed to a more productive and balanced office work environment. Hence,

H10: Maintaining Lifestyle (ML) positively influenced Office Work Environment (OWE).

In line with the objective of this research, a hypothesis was developed to examine the causal relationship between work-life balance and physical wellness among the VFX professionals. The model consisted of constructs such as work hours, workload management, work environment (home/office) linked to physical wellness. Research done earlier mentions that work environments that were supportive and manageable workloads were important pointers for work-life balance (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985; Haar et al., 2014). On the other hand, work-life balance was related strongly to work satisfaction, nutritional habits, and overall work performance (Frone, 2003). Based on this framework and evidence, the hypotheses listed above were formulated.

The use of PLS-SEM was specifically relevant in this research because of the client-driven project work schedules, which were dynamic, and work-life balance was followed by multiple interrelated factors and the exploratory nature of the study. PLS-SEM permitted simultaneous analysis of various dependent and independent variables, unlike traditional regression analysis, which was the reason for this apt choice in exploring the multidimensional impact of work-life balance on physical wellness (Hair et al., 2019; Sarstedt et al., 2017). This enhanced the provision of both statistical evidence and rich, contextual insights. Furthermore, this technique was more suited to the predictive research, which aligned with the objective of work-life balance linked to physical wellness.

2.4 Summary of Literature Review

Over the recent years, the VFX sector in India had seen notable expansion and influence, which had changed the landscape of the entertainment industry. This evolution had been

driven by multiple factors like a skilled artistic workforce, cost-efficient labour, and collaboration with well-known studios across the globe. Despite the industry's success, challenges still existed, particularly concerning work-life balance and physical well-being. Extended and long working hours, high stress levels with tasks and deadline pressure, a lack of sufficient hours of sleep, less physical movement because there was more screen time, which resulted in many health issues, and a poor lifestyle because of no work period, which in turn affected poor nutritious eating habits and ambiguous job roles and responsibility expectations were some of the challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic had accelerated remote work adoption in this industry, specifically emphasizing the effective team management and security of data.

Through the literature review, we had provided a comprehensive exploration of prominent theories related to work-life balance with a specific focus on Spillover, Ladder, Compensation, and many other theories, which contributed significantly to achieving work-life balance in the professional environment. These theories also showed the challenges the work-life balance brought to an individual in the various roles, especially navigating between work and personal life. The study focused on physical well-being and addressed issues around nutritional challenges, sedentary lifestyles, and inadequate sleep prevalent in the industries.

The proposed research aimed to bridge the existing gap by further exploring the relationship between physical well-being and work-life balance in the VFX industry. By segregating into various factors, determinants, and strategies that influenced this relationship, this study helped to provide a valuable contribution or insights to this field. The research aligned completely with the broader concepts of well-being and stresses the physical health aspect in the VFX professional context. As the industry continued to

evolve, deep diving and addressing these challenges between work-life balance and physical well-being became imperative.

The proposed conceptual model positioned Work-life balance on health at the center, showing it as a resource-preserving mechanism which supported healthier lifestyle choices and, as a result, better physical wellness. It showed a chain reaction of effects: WLBH supported work and exercise performance, which in turn promoted better wellness and nutrition, together these supported a healthy lifestyle. Simultaneously, work regime factors such as home *Work environment, Working hours and Workload management shape work life balance on health* and may moderate its effects on wellness outcomes. Given these interdependencies, the model was tested using PLS-SEM to adapt multiple interrelated constructs and to explore predictive relationships in the VFX context.

The literature presented herein was poised to make a valuable contribution to the theoretical frameworks and this evolving nature of research in this VFX field, which provided a foundation for future investigations. I anticipated that my research would enhance comprehension regarding the challenges of the work-life balance on employees' wellness in the VFX organisations.

CHAPTER III:

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview of the Research Problem

The research had been conducted in order to investigate the effect of work-life balance (WLB) on the physical wellness of the employees who are employed in the Visual Effects (VFX) industry in India. Due to the specifics of the VFX industry, such as schedule based on a project, the global nature of the work, uncertain deadlines, the high level of creativity, employees were especially vulnerable to resource burnout, physical overload, and lifestyle changes. The workforce in the VFX industry tended to work in tight production cycles and pipelines delivering globally, requiring prolonged hours of digital existence, quick production, and high measures of mental and physical input (Allison, 2020; Goldsmith and O'Regan, 2021). Past research had indicated that job demands of working long hours, uneven work schedules, and work pressures had a strong negative effect on the ability of employees to engage in healthy behaviours, thereby lowering chances of recovery, physical fitness and proper nutrition (Hobfoll, 1989; Bakker and Demerouti, 2007).

Nevertheless, with the current booming Indian VFX industry and increasing share of the industry in the world post-production industry, there was a dearth of empirical data to test the anabolic effect of WLB in counterbalancing the negative effects of the high job demands on physical health. The majority of research in the world regarded burnout, emotional fatigue, or productivity indicators in the context of the creative industry, yet few studies examined the physical well-being outcomes like fatigue, sleeping disturbances, musculoskeletal strain, and lifestyle deterioration, especially in the Indian setting where the organisational hierarchy and labour standards are significantly different (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2017; FICCI -EY, 2022). This pointed out a great knowledge

gap concerning how WLB can be used to improve physical health, lessen strain and promote sustainable work practices within an industry of high technological intensity and deadlines.

This chapter thus described the methodological strategy to be used to study the relationship between WLB and physical wellness. It has presented a philosophical position on which the study will be conducted, or rather the research design and justification of using a cross-sectional explanatory design, and how the theoretical constructs will be operationalised under the JD-R and COR frameworks. It also addressed the target population, strategy of sampling, instrumentation, pilot procedure, and methods of data collection that were taken to add reliability and validity. Besides, the chapter expounded on the methods of analysis employed in testing the hypothesised relationships, such as descriptive analysis, assessment of reliability and validity, and PLS-SEM modelling. The ethical issues including confidentiality, voluntary participation and anonymity of the respondents were also dealt with to achieve adherence to the principles of research integrity. Lastly, the weaknesses of the research design were also recognised to promote transparency and scientific rigour by making sure that the methodological decisions were well-acquainted with the multifaceted and dynamic character of the VFX industry.

3.2 Operationalization of Theoretical Constructs

The theoretical constructs in the study were operationalised on the basis of Job Demands Resources (JD-R) model and Conservation of Resources (COR) theory which together formed an all-inclusive explanatory platform on which to examine the effects of work-life balance (WLB) on the physical well-being of employees in the VFX industry. The job pressures in these theories such as creative pressure, irregular work schedules

and intensive production schedules gradually depleted physical, psychological and emotional resources of the employees and strained them thereby limiting their capacity to sustain healthy behavioural patterns (Hobfoll, 1989; Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). On the other hand, job and personal resources, including WLB, autonomy, organisational support and recovery opportunities, were theorised to have a protective role against these negative effects, resilience and well-being in general.

As with these theoretical underpinnings, every construct within the conceptual model of the research (presented in Chapter 2) was thoroughly operationalised, and the conceptual clarity and methodological rigour were achieved through the use of established, validated measurement scales.

Work-Life Balance Work-life balance was assessed with a set of items that were widely recognised that were based on Greenhaus and Allen (2011) and Netemeyer, Boles and McMurrian (1996) that were well scrutinised items that gained prevalence on both the organisational and cross-organisational level. These items were used to measure the level to which the employees felt that there was a balance or conflict between their work and their personal areas.

The operationalisation of Workload Management, Working Hours, and Work Environment was based on items that were specific to the demands of the VFX industry, which involves unpredictable deadlines and duration of the rendering process, client revisions, and the hybrid character of home-office work design. These variables were factored in to capture structural job demands as well as contextual resources constraints that make VFX production pipelines.

Physical Wellness was operationalised and conceptualised as a multidimensional construct and measured using indicators that reflect the levels of physical activity,

nutritional behaviour, sleep, fatigue, and musculoskeletal strain- those factors that are often affected in high-pressure digital production conditions.

The Fitness and Nutrition Practices were assessed in terms of already validated lifestyle-based items to describe the behavioural habits of employees in terms of diet, exercise, hydration and recovery habits. The measurement of all constructs was done on a five-point Likert scale, which is a format that has been adopted due to its appropriateness in measuring perceptions, attitudes, and experiences in organisations. This scale outline conformed to the analysis needs of the PLS-SEM modelling, which is best suited to multi-item Likert-type answers and generally suggested in predictive and exploratory studies (Hair et al., 2022).

The questionnaire was piloted prior to the main study being administered, and it was used to test clarity of items, ambiguous language, and verbal and contextual presence to the VFX professionals. The pilot feedback indicated that the items were a good representation of the reality of working in a highly demanded and technology-intensive industry. This series of refinements improved not only the content validity, according to which measures were relevant to the theory, but also face validity, which proved the correctness of the measures in the eyes of respondents (DeVellis, 2017).

All these methodological choices allowed making sure that the operationalisation of constructs was theory-based and empirically sound so that the researchers could accurately explore the associations between job demands, resources, WLB, and physical wellness in the context of the VFX industry.

3.3 Research Purpose and Questions

The main objective of this research was to examine the degree to which work-life balance (WLB) had an impact on the physical wellness of the staff engaged in the Indian

Visual Effects (VFX) business. Being a fast-growing area with intensive work based on projects, global production, and unpredictable demands on workload, the VFX industry presents its employees with complicated patterns of overworking, exhaustion, and varying levels of the workload. The role of WLB in relation to these job demands was thus necessary in determining the aspects that either promoted or weakened physical wellness.

In that regard, the research also sought to investigate the direct impacts of WLB on physical wellness and also to observe how organisational and environmental stress factors such as workload volume, working hours, ergonomic factors and work environments influenced the well-being of employees. Also, the research was aimed at examining the data on whether lifestyle behaviours associated with nutrition and physical exercise were mediating and moderating variables through which WLB and wellness were strengthened or weakened. These behavioural aspects were especially important in the VFX industry where protracted screen time, sedentary habits, and odd hours tended to break the healthy lifestyle habits.

The general research question to inform the inquiry was:

1) ***How does work life balance affect physical wellness amongst the employees in the Indian VFX industry?***

This is the research question that guided the process of carrying out the research since it aimed at discovering the nature and size of the correlation between WLB and physical health outcomes in a high-stress creative workplace. In order to continue the analysis, a number of *sub-research questions* were developed:

1) ***What is the impact of the working hours, workload management, and the circumstance of the working environment on the physical wellness?***

The question aimed at determining the particular organisational stressors that led to physical fatigue, sleeping problem, musculoskeletal strain and other outcomes related to wellness among VFX professionals.

2) ***Is nutrition and fitness behaviour an intermediate or moderator of the work-life balance and physical wellness relationship?***

This question was aimed at finding out whether healthy behaviours mitigated the adverse impact of job demands or enhanced the beneficial impact of WLB by studying the role of lifestyle choices.

Question: Are work-life balance practices role and age dependent in the workforce of VFX?

Given the heterogeneous character of VFX job positions, as the junior artists and the top-level supervisors, this question was designed to answer whether the differences in demographics and professions affected the access to the resources of WLB or wellness results differently.

All these research questions combined allowed conducting an in-depth exploration of structural and behavioural determinants of physical wellness in the sector. These questions were answered by the study through the combination of a quantitative modelling model (primarily Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM)) and qualitative thematic data obtained as a result of open-ended responses. Both statistical testing of a hypothesis of relationships and a deeper contextual insight into the experiences of employees was possible using this mixed-method approach, which offered a holistic view of the extent to which work-life balance determined physical wellness in the VFX industry of India.

3.4 Research Design

It had taken the form of a cross-sectional explanatory type of research to examine the impact of work-life balance (WLB) on physical wellness in employees of the Indian VFX industry. This method was chosen since it enabled the researcher to take a snapshot of employee perceptions, behaviours and wellness outcome at a single point in time which in this regard was especially suited by the nature of VFX work, which is fast paced, project-driven and geographically dispersed. The cross-sectional designs were also very appropriate in a research involving large populations under restricted time and resources, providing an effective way of obtaining empirical data on a diverse workforce (Creswell and Creswell, 2018).

It was an explanatory design since the research attempted to test hypothesised directional relationships based on explanations of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) and Conservation of Resources (COR) theories. These theories assumed that job demands like workload, working hours, and environmental factors have an impact on the well-being of employees, and resources, including WLB, have a protective effect. Explanatory research design thus permitted the research to theorize the cause-effect relationships among these constructs so that besides describing employee well-being the researcher is able to know how WLB did its work in relation to physical wellness.

The explanatory design was enhanced using a mixed-method orientation that involved quantitative and qualitative elements. The quantitative aspect enabled objective measurement of the latent construct as well as statistical testing of the conceptual model whereas the qualitative part offered detailed information of the experiences of the employees that cannot be represented using numerical data. The combination of these methodological strategies generated a more qualitative and context-driven conceptualization of working-life relationship in the VFX industry.

A) Quantitative Approach

The main approach involved a questionnaire, which was a structured and *self-scheduling web survey*. This was selected specifically because it would fit within the VFX environment where employees would often work extended and unusual hours and also be in remote or hybrid work situations that prevented *in-depth interviews*. The online platform made it easier to reach out to more states and studios with the wide range of professionals such as *artists, supervisors, production staff, and managers*.

The questionnaire comprised of standardised questions that enabled the consistent measurement of latent constructs to all respondents, therefore, assuring the reliability, comparability, and validity of the data (Bryman, 2016). The questionnaire format was based on the best practices in organisational research and made sure that the respondents had the opportunity to fill out the instrument in about *10-15 minutes*, which promoted the number of time-bounded professionals willing to participate.

In order to reduce possible biases involving self-report data especially prevalent among common method variance (CMV) several procedural remedies were included following Podsakoff et al. (2003). These included:

a) Separating construct sections to eliminate priming effects.
b) To make anonymity to the participants so that they could be honest in their responses.
c) Explaining that it is voluntary and is not penalized.
d) Not using leading or socially desirable words that could bias the responses.

These measures lowered the chances of manipulation of relationships among variables in the statistical model through measurement artefacts.

B) Qualitative Component

Despite the fact that the research was mainly quantitative, the qualitative data were also collected using optional *open-ended questions* and observations made by the researcher. It was these qualitative inputs that proved useful especially in bringing to the fore lived experiences of *stress, workflow bottlenecks, deadline surges, ergonomic problems and disruption to lifestyle* that could not be fully represented by quantitative scales. These sections were the ones utilized by the participants to give personal narratives about some of the challenges, including sleep deprivation, musculoskeletal pain, burnout, and balancing household life with work-related needs.

These qualitative stories added to the understanding of the quantitative results as they provide the details of the context and emotional shades, which strengthens the construct validity and the fact that the research reflected the complexity of the wellness experiences in VFX environments. They also supported theoretical propositions of JD-R in the way that job demands and deficit of resources were expressed in daily working activities.

C) Overall Design Integration

The general research design was rather balanced between scientific rigour and practical feasibility as it acknowledged the operational reality of the VFX industry. The design combined and collated both quantitative and qualitative data collected by surveys, making it possible to see a macro-level of organizational relationships as well as a micro-level of personal experiences. Such an inclusive methodological process enhanced the power and richness of the results, and so the study was highly appropriate to inform future organisational policies, wellness initiatives and practices in the sector.

3.5 Population and Sample

The target audience in this research was the employees in Visual Effects (VFX) studios in India. The Indian VFX industry, despite its high growth rate, was geographically concentrated on some largest production centres where most of the local and international post-production was done. The study was therefore based in the major VFX clusters found in: Kerala,Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Telangana (Hyderabad), Maharashtra.

The reasons behind the selection of these locations were that they had a concentration of the greatest number of VFX studios, post-production houses, animation units, and hybrid production facilities in India. Big cities, including *Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, and Hyderabad,* served as global outsourcing centres, theatrical movie centres, OTT centres, advertising centres, gaming centres, and virtual production centres. The focus on these hubs was to make certain that the study has sampled the experiences of employees operating in settings that are characterised by high levels of workload, multi-project pipeline and varying production demands.

To guarantee the inclusion of the broadest possible scope of the working population of the sector, a large number of VFX professionals were included in the target population. The participants were therefore:

1) Full-time employees of VFX, who usually worked on a multi-month or ongoing project.
2) Part-time employees who were engaged in specialised work or temporary work were also involved.
3) VFX artists who had been hired on a contract basis and constituted a large proportion of the flexible labour force in the industry.

4) Creative supervisors, production managers, leads, and coordinators, all supervisory and managerial.

Artists in fields, including compositors, lighting artists, rotoscope artists, FX artists, tracking artists and generalists.

The inclusion of various types of jobs (full time, part-time, contractual) and professions guaranteed the presence of the hierarchical, functional, and demographic diversity within the VFX ecosystem in the study. This was extremely important because work-life balance and bodily health might vary between junior artists who have to perform repetitive digital work and supervisors who occupy higher positions and must manage the creative work and delivery of customers.

The selected respondent sample size of 300–350 was based on the widely adopted methodological principles of Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) to indicate medium-to-large sample sizes as necessary when examining the structural equation as a predictive model and also to reliably evaluate the model as a predictor of the variables of interest (Hair et al., 2022). This range of samples was also suitable in the analysis of differences between subgroups in terms of age brackets, positions and work types, as well as the identification of significant effect sizes in the structural model. The sample size selected thus was a compromise between analytical power and the practical constraints of availing respondents in a time-sensitive and hectic industry.

Besides, the sample size also had an element of considerations of representativeness, feasibility, and anticipated response rates in a workforce that is typified by varying work schedules and unpredictable availability. The study achieved this by attacking a large and varied sample that was big enough to embrace the subtle

differences in work-life balance experiences and wellness outcomes in the varied and complex VFX labour market of India.

3.6 Participant Selection

A stratified sampling approach had been used so that the sample would capture the diversities that are given by the demographic and the professional make up of the Indian VFX workforce. Stratification was necessary since the VFX business was made up of several types of roles and age brackets, each with varying degrees of employment pressures, creativity pressures and challenges relating to wellness. The study also rearranged the sample into predetermined strata to make sure that the employees with work experiences and resource requirements, which significantly differed in several points along the production pipeline, were represented proportionally.

Strata Used in the Study:

1) Role Category

a) Management

b) Production

c) Creative Supervisors

d) Artists (in the realms of roto, compositing, lighting, FX, tracking, modelling etc.)

Role stratification facilitated the study to record differences in leadership and execution-level roles. Managers and supervisors were generally under pressure to make decisions, coordinate, and lead, artists were exposed to a long duration of screen-time, repetitive digital labor, and highly technical creative pressures. The multidimensional aspect of the work-life balance and wellness burdens was achieved by including all levels of hierarchy to ensure that the analysis represented these aspects.

2) Age Groups

i. 18–25

ii. 26–30

iii. 31–40

iv. 41–50

v. 51+

There was age stratification that embodied the generational-level differences in coping mechanism, style of living, bodily strength, and family obligations. Artists who enter the industry at a younger age tend to adapt better to the long hours without being well-structured in terms of wellness and the professionals who are older in the industry may experience more physical stress of the cumulative intensity of work or leadership responsibilities. This kind of stratification enhanced internal validity and subgroup comparability (Teddlie and Yu, 2007).

These strata made the sampling strategy provide representativeness at the career stages, demands of life-cycle, and functional roles in the workplace that amplified the analytical potential of identifying significant differences between groups based on descriptive and structural modelling methods. Participants were recruited through the use of the snowball technique.

Several recruitment channels were applied in order to obtain the maximum possible diversity and make sure that a strong participation of the professionals, geographically spread and busy with their operations, was guaranteed. The participants were reached out by:

1) LinkedIn networks of professionals, which would allow targeted communication with working professionals and employees of the studio.
2) WhatsApp and Telegram VFX groups, which were used as active artist, freelancer, and production groupings.

3) Alumni circles of such great institutions of VFX and animation, which would help reach out to and tap into fresh career professionals.
4) HR departments of major VFX companies, who helped in distribution of the survey within the companies.
5) Snowball referrals where the participants are encouraged to share the survey with their colleagues and peers.

This multi-channel practice proved to be especially competent within the VFX sector as workers tended to have sporadic working hours, work-at-home or contractual jobs in the sector. The use of both formal and informal networks enhanced the chances of accessing diverse subgroups and therefore, enhanced representativeness and decreased sampling bias.

A) Pilot Study

There was pilot study of *25-30 respondents* before the main data collection exercise. The aim of this pilot was to:

a) evaluate the understanding and interpretability of questions on the questionnaire.
b) streamline structural flow and sequencing.
c) detect unclear or industry terminologies.
d) get an overall estimation of time taken to complete.
e) get in line with VFX work realities.
f) assess initial construct validity.

Response to participants in pilot testing led to slight modification of words, better navigation between segments, and better specificity of context. The pilot helped in strengthening both face and content validity which ensured that the final instrument was well adjusted to the target population.

3.7 Instrumentation

The methodology applied in the study employed a self-administered, structured questionnaire as the main research tool, which was suitable to a cross-sectional study and suitable to the spread out, pressure situation of VFX workforce in India. Since VFX employees were usually working in unpredictable schedules and with strict deadlines to meet, online format that was self-administered was a sure way to guarantee access to it, and it did not disrupt their workflow much. The questionnaire allowed the ability to systematically measure latent constructs that were of importance to the study, but also allowed consistency in administration across respondents located in various studios and geographic areas.

The instrument had seven organized sections, which aimed at measuring a particular set of variables, which pertained to the conceptual model:

1) Demographic (Age, role, type of employment)
2) Work-Life Balance Indicators.
3) Work Environment and Supportive Factors.
4) The Working Hours and Workload Management.
5) Patterns of Fitness and Physical Activities.
6) Dietary habits and Life Style.
7) Informed Consent to Participation and Use of Data.

This design guaranteed a logical progression and minimized the respondent fatigue hence enhancing accuracy of completion and reliability. Questionnaire was also designed to ensure theoretical and empirical rigour, thus, validated scales of measurement commonly applied in organisational behaviour and health research were incorporated. These included:

a) Work-Life Balance scales, adapted on the works of Greenhaus and Allen (2011) and Netemeyer et al. (1996), scales that assessed the extent of work-personal life interference, and perceived work-personal life balance were used.
b) Physical wellness and lifestyle constructs, which were operationalised with items developed based on Joshi et al. (2015) and the related literature to reflect physical activity frequency, nutritional patterns, sleep quality, and fatigue among other wellness indicators.
c) The application of the existing scales increased construct validity and its consistency with the previous studies, as well as enabled efficient analysis with the help of PLS-SEM.

In order to enhance the quality and accuracy of the instrument, some validation processes were carried out:

1) **Content Validation**: The questionnaire was reviewed by academic experts and professionals in the industry to ascertain its alignment with theoretical constructs, as well as, relevance to VFX context.
2) **Pilot Testing**: A pilot version was administered to 25-30 VFX professionals to determine the clarity of items, logical order and average time to complete.
3) **Item Refinement**: Items that were unclear, duplicative or misinterpreted were also revised or deleted based on the pilot feedback.
4) **Deletion of Low**-Variance Items: Deleting items that had small variance in pilot responses was done in order to increase measurement sensitivity.
5) **Bias Mitigation Strategies**: The questionnaire included the assurances of anonymity and the use of neutral words and blocks of constructs to reduce the social desirability bias and common method variance.

All the answers were kept in encrypted and de-identified data files, which only the researcher could access. The process was conducted in line with the ethical standards, such as voluntary participation, the protections of informed consent, confidentiality, and the observance of the institutional requirements of safe data management.

Altogether, these steps ensured that the instrument was theoretically sound, contextually applicable, empirically good, and was appropriate in analyzing the multi-faceted relationships between work life balance and physical wellness in the VFX industry of India.

3.8 Data Collection Procedures

The study collected data using an anonymous self-administered online survey where the data collection took place on Google Forms. This approach was selected because it is practical and has the potential to reach VFX practitioners who work in studios worldwide in a wide geographic manner as well as practitioners that produce films with highly fluctuating work schedules. Since VFX production cycles were very demanding, an online method of data collection was used to allow the respondents to fill the survey at the time they found most suitable, which minimized nonresponse and maximized the representativeness of the final sample.

The questionnaire address had been sent over various formal and informal platforms to reach as many people as possible in the VFX industry. Such channels were professional networks, alumni associations, studio HR departments, and industry-specific group chats, so that the survey targeted a wide range of employees of various positions and levels of seniority, as well as various types of employment.

To achieve transparency and the morality of the study, invitation messages were sent to accompany the survey-link that clearly identified the study purpose, the voluntary

participation of the participants and categorical guarantees of confidentiality. The participants were told that the survey would last about 10-15 minutes to answer and this was felt to be right to reduce respondent burden and also minimise survey fatigue, as this would be a key consideration considering that the nature of VFX work requires a lot of time in front of the computer.

Staggered reminders were issued on different occasions to get professionals to be involved in this, as some might have missed the original invitation because of deadline crises or project peaks. These prompts were carefully planned to take place during non-working times, weekends to ensure that they do not disrupt production activities and to maximize chances of interaction with respondents who have irregular or extended working shifts.

The ethics and privacy were given priority in the survey design. None of these details was collected at any point: no personally identifiable information (names, employer, IP addresses or contact numbers) was taken. This anonymity contributed to the development of sincere and truthful answers, particularly when it came to controversial issues like workload stress, burnout, and fatigue as well as workplace well being. The process of obtaining digital informed consent was documented before the participation, and the participants had to confirm they knew the purpose of the study, their rights as respondents, and the voluntary character of their participation.

All data were safely stored in encrypted and password-protected deidentified datasets, and only the researcher could access them. These steps were used to guarantee the compliance with institutional ethical standards and enhance the validity, trustworthiness and reliability of the collected data in general.

3.9 Data Analysis

A) Quantitative Data Analysis

The quantitative analysis was done in SPSS and SmartPLS and involved:

a) **Descriptive statistics**: SD, frequencies, mean.
b) **Correlation analysis**: Reliability tests Cronbachs Alpha, Composite Reliability >0.70 (Hair et al., 2019)
c) **Convergent validity**: AVE= 0.50 and above.
d) FornnellLarcker and HTMT **discriminant validity**. PLS-SEM with SmartPLS (Hair et al., 2021) Structural modelling: PLS-SEM using SmartPLS (Hair et al., 2021) Path analysis that assesses the direct and indirect relationships.

The model was suitable since it is exploratory in nature, latent constructs, and predictive.

B) Qualitative Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was done to extract qualitative information based on open responses whose results identified:

a) recurring issues
b) stressors
c) work-life tensions
d) health-related concerns

Interpretation was also enhanced by direct and participant observations. This study has certain limitations concerning research design.

It was realized that there were a few limitations:

1) Self-reported information was subject to social desirability and recall bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

2) The design was also cross-sectional, which restricted the possibility to draw the cause and effect or trace the changes over time (Bryman, 2016).
3) Sample was restricted to the selected VFX hubs, which diminished generalisability (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).
4) The quantitative focus was a limitation on emotional and experience-related information that could be better represented through in-depth qualitative research (Silverman, 2020).
5) VFX industry is dynamic in nature, and the findings might change as technologies and work practices change (Kar & Ghosh, 2018).
6) Unmeasured variables, including the style of leadership and project cycles, can also have an effect on the outcomes of wellness and WLBs (Hair et al., 2019).
7) Work, wellness and family roles can be interpreted differently depending on different cultures (Hofstede et al., 2010).

Irrespective of such limitations, the methodology was nevertheless rigorous, feasible, and suited to the circumstances of the industry.

3.10 Conclusion

The research employed an effective and explanatory cross-sectional research study, which is a mixed-method research design to examine how work-life balance (WLB) influences physical wellness among VFX employees in India. Such an organizational structure of the study was premeditated to fit into the pacey and project-based reality of the VFX business where speedy longitudinal access to participants was often limited due to the fluctuating production cycles and patterns of the contract work. The structured questionnaire, validator scales, practising pilot testing, stratified sampling and PLS-SEM modelling ensured that the methodology was rigorous, reliable and rich. It

is these methodology aspects that allowed the study to capture subtly the interaction of workloads, working hours, fitness behavior, nutritional behaviors, ergonomic situations and the work environment in totality with WLB to quantify the outcomes of wellness. Their combination also contributed to the contextual knowledge since they cast a small bit of light on the real experiences of time-hurrying, fatigue, and disturbance in the life of workers.

The methodological choices also assisted in determining the direct and indirect paths where work-life balance served as a resource in the eradicating work strain on the individuals that supported substantial hypotheses of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) and the Conservation of Resources (COR) models. Structural model provided forecasting and explanatory power, so it was feasible to obtain a profound understanding of the elements that appear to bring considerable impact on wellness in the industry with a high degree of creativity and time pressure.

Notwithstanding the shortcomings of a cross-sectional study, self-reported techniques, and sample selection based on geographical and organisational groups of the Indian VFX sector, the research still had a substantial empirical foundation, on which the challenges of wellness in the professionals working in the VFX industry can be interpreted. Such limitations never influenced the methodological purity but rather determined the future longitudinal or mixed-method study. However, despite these shortcomings the design was well adapted and apt to this dynamic nature of the industry and could utilize the quality data even though the operations were limited.

Overall, the methodological framework used to conduct the given study demonstrated a great potential in terms of informing about organisational policies, wellness interventions and industry level strategies that would be employed to sustain healthier, more balanced, and more sustainable work practices. It should be mentioned

that since the main theme of the study was the physical wellness of the workers in the Indian VFX industry that is rapidly expanding, it is important to note that the centrality of work-life balance was at the centre of the research methodology as the study was about to create a pertinent and meaningful contribution towards theoretical and practical reforms about the workplace in the Indian VFX industry.

CHAPTER IV:

RESULTS

4.1 Research Question One

Having validated the reliability and convergence of all constructs in the earlier chapter, this section presented the outcome of the structural model analysis conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS. The aim of this analysis was to examine the correlation between work-life balance (WLB and physical wellness among the VFX employees in India. The following sections described the outcome corresponding to each research question.

RQ1 How did work-life balance influence the physical wellness of employees in the VFX industry?

In the contemporary organisational research, the relationship between work-life balance and physical wellness had gained a lot of attention, yet it assumed heightened importance within the VFX industry because of the nature of its dynamic working environment. With tight project deadlines, unpredictable schedules in production, and long working hours, it was difficult to bring in a sustainable balance between personal life and work responsibilities. As a result of this imbalance, it directly had an impact on physical wellness, bringing in tiredness, disrupting sleep patterns, musculoskeletal issues, and imbalanced nutritional practices (Sonnentag and Fritz, 2015). Work-life balance provided a supportive factor that promoted VFX professionals to sustain healthier routines. Regular physical activity, following a nutritional diet, and being able to maintain a consistent sleep pattern were possible when VFX employees brought in an effective balance between personal life and work demands (Greenhaus and Allen, 2011). These routines positively contributed to increased physical energy, reduced work stress, and reduced chances of getting illness. Contrarily, lack of work-life balance in this

industry, often because of crunch time or last-minute client revisions or deliverables increased stress levels, which as a result leads to burnout, which in turn affected physical wellness (Perlow, 2012). The cyclical nature of project-based deadlines and client dependencies from global and tight periods close to production deadlines create a work environment where long working hours became a normalized lifestyle, leading to chronic sleep deprivation and irregular eating patterns (Grugulis and Stoyanova, 2012). The uncommon demands of the VFX Industry – such as prolonged sitting, desk-based work and long screen exposure –further stressed the need for employees to have a balanced life. Inactive behavior was linked to an increased chance of health risks such as cardiovascular problems, obesity, and musculoskeletal disorders (Straker et al., 2013). Professionals who incorporated and maintained work-life balance were more capable of incorporating physical activity in their daily routine, which mitigated these health issues. Furthermore, an organized routine or schedule supports recovery processes, including rest and leisure activities, which were important for maintaining physical health and long-term employability (Demerouti et al., 2001).

Another connection that tied work-life balance to wellness was when there was psychological spillover of work into personal life. Unevenness in the balance bought down the opportunities for relaxation and physical activity while also increasing stress hormones such as cortisol, which have an effect on the cardiovascular issues and physical flexibility (Ganster and Rosen, 2013). In the post-pandemic era, where remote and hybrid working models were increasingly seen, they had shown influence on physical wellness. While remote work on one hand enhanced balance by reducing travelling time and by bringing in space for healthier routines, it blurred the boundaries between work and personal time, which led to longer screen time exposure and stress (Oakman et al., 2020). This pressure and anxiety suggested that work-life balance was not just about working a

few extra hours but bringing in structural and cultural practices that enabled employees to disconnect effectively and focus on the physical needs. Sedentary engagement with various digital tools came as a demand in the VFX industry, which increased health-related issues such as eye strain, repetitive strain injuries, and other metabolic disorders. Employees who had sufficient balance ensured they scheduled breaks, got physical activity as part of their routine, and brought in other ergonomic practices. – showing how critical work-life balance acted as a mediator between occupational risks and overall well-being.

To conclude, work-life balance applied a powerful effect on the physical wellness of VFX professionals. A balanced, well-thought-out approach supported a healthier pattern of living and reduced occupation-related stress, while on the other hand, imbalance brings in tiredness, malnutrition or poor diet, and physically-related issues or ailments. Considering the ever-dynamic nature of VFX, addressing work-life balance was not only indispensable for employees' health but also for making sure there was sustainable productivity and talent retention in the sector.

4.2 Research Question Two

RQ2 What role did work environment and workload management play in shaping the relationship between work-life balance and physical wellness?

Work environment and workload management were important components in understanding how work-life balance affected employees' physical wellness, especially in the VFX industry, where extended work hours, compressed schedules, urgent deadlines, and contracts based on the projects were the norms. A supportive work environment, whether through flexible work arrangements like a mix of hybrid or remote working or office routines/timings that were structured, provided the foundation upon

which employees can manage the competing demands of their professional and personal lives. The environment also encompassed not just physical but psychosocial aspects, which included work arrangement flexibility, the company's culture, access to supportive infrastructure, and clarity in professional boundaries. For example–the work-from-home option decreased the travelling stress, which allowed employees to give more time for self-care and family. As a result, reducing tiredness and promoting balance (Bloom et al., 2015). On the other hand, working in an office environment offered structured routines and opportunities for more collaboration; this imposed additional stress if not managed with employee well-being in mind (Kossek et al., 2011). This duality of work-from-home and office-based settings had its own distinct outcome for employees.

Workload management also acted as a moderating factor between work-life balance and physical wellness. Considerable overtime, unrealistic deadlines, and uneven distribution of tasks disrupted healthy sleep routines, increased tiredness, and decreased opportunities for exercising and bringing balance in nutrition–all these contribute to physical wellness (Caruso, 2014). The tight deadline culture in the VFX industry, where employees often worked for long hours as we near close to the delivery timeline–this accelerated the issue of health-related problems, burnout, and other musculoskeletal problems. Additionally, when employees managed their workload, sustaining healthy routines and maintaining high energy levels enhanced physical wellness (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017).

The interplay between both these factors-work environment, workload management and physical wellness was understood through the Job Demands-Resources model, which stated that demands in the high-demand job (e.g. irregular office hours, excessive overtime) led to stress, whereas adequate resources (e.g.–flexibility, equal distribution of work, supporting policies), swifter engagement, and well-being

(Demerouti et al., 2001). In a creative industry like VFX, without supportive workload management and a flexible working environment, work-life balance will be limited in bringing out tangible wellness outcomes. Both work environment and workload management not only supported employees in having effective work-life balance but also shaped the extent to which the balance improved the physical health outcomes. In the VFX industry, where creative expectations and requirements were high, managing realistic distribution of workload and a supportive working environment were important in breaking the cycle of overworking and compromised wellness. This called for the attention of the organisations to promote flexibility in working, monitor working hours, and incorporate well-being practices to bond the link stronger between WLB and physical wellness.

4.2 Summary of Findings

1) Reliability and Convergent Validity Analysis

A comprehensive reliability and validity analysis was done using SmartPLS. The PLS-SEM model was chosen due to its suitability for predictive analysis and its robustness in handling complex models with multiple constructs and indicators, even if the sample size was relatively small (Hair et al., 2017). The model was designed to test direct paths, indirect paths, and mediating relationships between work-life balance factors (such as workload, work-from-home/office environment, etc.) and physical wellness factors (such as nutrition, fitness wellness, etc.). The evaluation focused on three main indicators: Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), meeting the requirements suggested by Hair et al. (2019). The results were summarized below in the table:

Table 4.1 Reliability and Validity Statistics of Constructs

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (r...	Composite reliability (r...	Average variance extrac...
EWP	0.776	0.778	0.774	0.535
EWS	0.557	0.786	0.645	0.509
HWE	0.863	0.890	0.867	0.688
ML	0.864	0.867	0.863	0.678
NCW	0.445	0.967	0.654	0.555
NWP	0.685	0.689	0.687	0.524
OWE	0.737	0.824	0.753	0.527
WH	0.812	0.813	0.812	0.684
WM	0.533	1.006	0.715	0.612

2) Reliability Assessment / A Cronbach's Alpha

Reliability referred to the internal consistency of the measurement variables with each construct. The model reliability was initially assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. According to Hair et al. (2019), Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.70 implied good reliability, values between 0.60 and 0.70 showed moderate reliability, and values below 0.60 suggested poor reliability.

As shown in Table 4.1, the constructs EWP (0.776), HWE (0.863), ML (0.864), OWE (0.737) and WH (0.812) outperformed the threshold of 0.70, confirming strong consistency internally among their indicators. On the other hand, EWS (0.557), NCW (0.445), NWP (0.685), and WM (0.533) registered lower reliability values, signifying that these constructs may require item refinement in future model iterations.

3) Composite Reliability (CR)

Composite reliability was also calculated as a more precise measure of internal consistency. CR values greater than 0.70 were considered acceptable (Hair et al., 2019). The findings showed that EWP (0.778), EWS (0.786), HWE (0.890), ML (0.867), NCW

(0.967), OWE (0.824), WH (0.813) and WM (1.006) exceeded the threshold, confirming strong internal reliability. On the contrary, NWP (0.689) was slightly below the mark.

4) Convergent Validity / Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Convergent validity concluded the degree to which indicators of a specific construct shared a high degree of variance. This was done using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) where values above 0.50 showed adequate convergent validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The AVE values varied from 0.509 to 0.688, showing that all constructs achieved the needed level of convergence. Constructs such as HWE (0.688), ML (0.678) and WH (0.684) showed particularly strong convergent validity, confirming that the variables effectively showed the underlying latent variables.

5) Outer Loadings

Outer loadings were examined to assess indicator reliability and ensure that each observed variable significantly which contributed to its respective construct (Hair et al., 2019). The results exhibited that most items had outer loadings which is greater than 0.70 that is acceptable threshold. This indicated that they strongly represented their latent constructs. Particularly, items under EWP, HWE and ML demonstrated good loading, confirming their reliability. On the other hand, a few items such as NCW (0.282) and EWS (0.422) fell below the threshold, showing weaker representation within their constructs. Overall, outer loading results confirms that most of the indicators are reliable and valid measures of their underlying constructs.

Table 4.2 Outer Loadings

	EWP	EWS	HWE	ML	NCW	NWP
EWP1	0.759					
EWP2	0.761					
EWP3	0.670					
EWS1		0.422				
EWS2		0.916				
HWE1			0.729			
HWE2			0.983			
HWE3			0.753			
ML1				0.875		
ML2				0.760		
ML3				0.831		
NCW1					0.282	
NCW2					1.015	
NWP1						0.689

6) Discriminant Validity

Discriminant Validity was evaluated using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, which correlates the square root of the AVE of each construct with its connection with other constructs. Discriminant validity is verified when the square root of the AVE is greater than the inter-construct correlations (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The outcome indicated that the diagonal values (square roots of AVE) were greater than the corresponding correlations in their columns and rows, confirming adequate discriminant validity among the constructs. Hence, each construct in the model was distinct and calculate a unique aspect of work-life balance and physical wellness.

Table 4.3 Discriminant Validity

	EWP	EWS	HWE	ML	NCW	NWP	OWE	WH	WLBH
EWP									
EWS	0.439								
HWE	0.216	0.183							
ML	0.106	0.269	0.175						
NCW	0.570	0.965	0.191	0.354					
NWP	0.691	0.474	0.324	0.160	0.472				
OWE	0.067	0.172	0.403	0.231	0.180	0.098			
WH	0.340	0.476	0.225	0.181	0.799	0.270	0.173		
WLBH	0.248	0.237	0.229	0.200	0.204	0.357	0.026	0.290	
WM	0.073	0.310	0.146	0.742	0.440	0.192	0.376	0.204	0.116

7) Cross Loadings

Cross loadings were closely analyzed to verify discriminant validity, ensuring that each indicator loaded higher on its construct than any other construct (Hair et al., 2019). The results revealed that all items had their highest loadings on their respective latent constructs, supporting that the indicators were strongly connected with the constructs they were intended to measure. These outcomes support the discriminant validity of the measurement model, showing that the constructs are distinct and do not intersect significantly with one another.

Table 4.4 Cross Loadings

	EWP	EWS	HWE	ML	NCW	NWP	OWE	WH	WLBH	WM
EWP1	0.759	0.295	0.137	0.103	0.275	0.529	0.045	0.255	0.188	0.012
EWP2	0.761	0.253	0.147	0.091	0.281	0.454	0.030	0.191	0.189	0.057
EWP3	0.670	0.216	0.181	0.044	0.236	0.537	0.023	0.299	0.166	0.042
EWS1	0.295	0.422	0.125	-0.279	0.533	0.269	-0.171	0.339	0.093	-0.210
EWS2	0.252	0.916	0.113	0.006	0.290	0.327	-0.054	0.253	0.201	-0.003
HWE1	0.191	0.051	0.729	0.110	0.027	0.256	-0.389	0.142	0.165	0.077
HWE2	0.170	0.209	0.983	0.094	0.047	0.306	-0.329	0.238	0.239	0.052
HWE3	0.169	0.099	0.753	0.225	-0.023	0.241	-0.267	0.174	0.161	0.121
ML1	0.151	-0.011	0.139	0.875	-0.221	0.194	0.221	-0.112	0.180	0.431
ML2	0.066	-0.105	0.140	0.760	-0.229	0.101	0.176	-0.182	0.166	0.440
ML3	0.049	-0.162	0.132	0.831	-0.269	0.092	0.175	-0.154	0.150	0.527
NCW1	0.296	0.357	0.175	-0.082	0.282	0.350	-0.082	0.440	0.115	-0.053
NCW2	0.314	0.428	-0.023	-0.295	1.015	0.158	-0.124	0.414	0.103	-0.315
NWP1	0.444	0.207	0.201	0.156	0.144	0.689	0.076	0.141	0.241	0.170

Hypothesis testing results

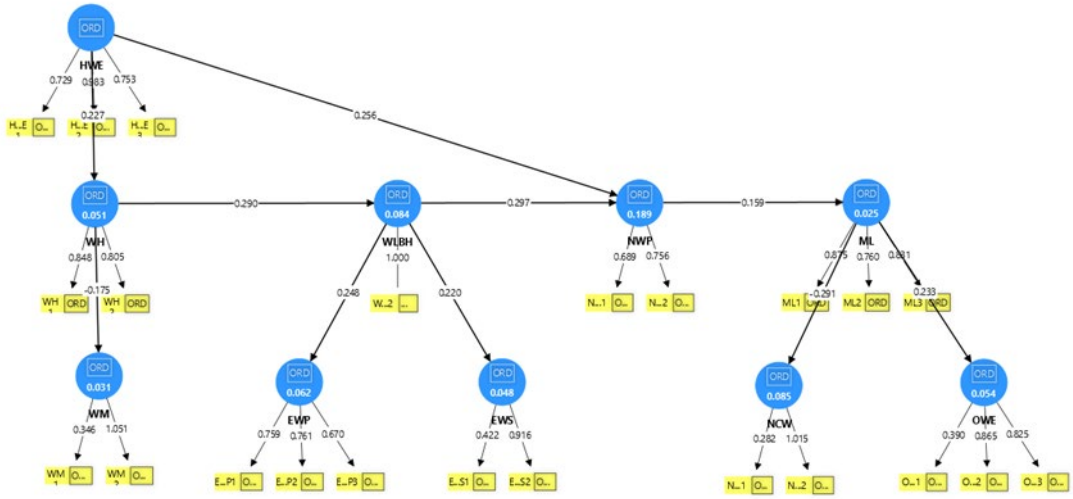

Figure 4.1 Factor Loadings, Path Coefficient (Beta Value), R-square model

Table 4.5 Path Coefficient (Beta Value), P value

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (ST...	T statistics (|O/STDE...	P values
HWE -> NWP	0.199	0.201	0.047	4.252	0.000
HWE -> WH	0.193	0.195	0.061	3.186	0.001
ML -> NCW	-0.266	-0.271	0.054	4.888	0.000
ML -> OWE	0.197	0.206	0.051	3.877	0.000
NWP -> ML	0.123	0.124	0.061	2.027	0.043
WH -> WLBH	0.262	0.265	0.047	5.591	0.000
WH -> WM	-0.159	-0.168	0.049	3.233	0.001
WLBH -> EWP	0.219	0.228	0.049	4.464	0.000
WLBH -> EWS	0.195	0.203	0.054	3.580	0.000
WLBH -> NWP	0.253	0.255	0.052	4.841	0.000

The hypothesis testing outcomes, as shown in Figure 4.1, indicates that in the model, all proposed paths were statistically significant with p-values below 0.05 and t-statistics above 1.96, showing strong support for the hypothesized relationships. The Beta value shows both strength and direction of the effects among constructs. Positive relationships such as HWE to NWP (O = 0.199, p= 0.000), WH to WLBH (O=0.262, P = 0.000) and WLBH to EWP (O=0.219, p=0.000) suggests that a good work environment and equal / balanced working hours support to improvised wellness and performance. On the other hand, ML to NCW (O=-0.266, P = 0.000) indicate a negative effect, showing that sustaining a lifestyle habit could reduce challenges related to nutrition. To summarize, the results shows that the model is robust and that the hypothesized path are supported well.

The reliability and validity assessment was done through SmartPLS through Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, Average Variance Extracted, Outer loadings, Discriminant Validity and Cross Loadings. Most of constructs exceeded the acceptable threshold of reliability. Overall, the findings validated that the indicators reliably represented their respective constructs, supporting the resilience of the measurement model for further structural analysis.

Findings from Questionnaire

The data were collected from 375 respondents working in different Indian VFX companies, providing insights into how work-life balance interacted with physical wellness and how factors in different workplaces affected this relationship. The findings were provided based on the core components outlined in the survey: work-life balance and physical wellness, work environment, workload management, fitness, and nutrition.

A) Work-Life Balance and Physical Wellness

The results emphasized and highlight the interconnection between work-life balance and physical wellness. Most respondents concurred that when work-life balance was maintained, they could follow healthier diets, go for regular fitness activities, and have a consistent sleep pattern. For instance, close to half of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that a balanced lifestyle allowed them to have a healthier eating habit and do regular physical activity. Simultaneously, over 150 respondents strongly agreed that lack of work-life balance contributed to tiredness, health issues, and other illnesses, which clearly showed it was because of lack of physical wellness and imbalance. Additionally, many also stated that when work and personal life responsibilities were aligned, it reduced stress levels and improved their overall wellness. These results confirmed that in the VFX industry, physical wellness was not only influenced by individual employees' behavior but also, to some extent, by how work responsibilities were compatible with personal life.

B) Work Environment (Work-from-home vs. Work from Office)

The findings suggested a balanced viewpoint on the work environment. Work-from-home settings were overwhelmingly seen as encouraging for flexibility, reducing travel time, and supporting employees to focus on personal wellness, relaxation, and hobbies. Many respondents mentioned that WFH helped employees to get their time

back, which otherwise would have been lost in commuting, and to be able to use this time for self-care and rest. Also, working from the office also received positive feedback from participants, specifically when it came to creating structured routines at work and bringing in more and easier collaboration among employees, which participants reported reduced stress and improved mental wellness. The data mentioned that VFX employees saw merit in both models, suggesting hybrid work structures that combined the benefits of having flexibility with structured work schedules and collaboration in the work environment.

C) Workload Management and Working Hours

Workload became known as one of the most important factors of wellness. Most of the respondents accept that excessive working hours and repeatedly working late had a direct negative effect on their health, including acute stress levels, tiredness, and not having time for personal commitments. Participants highlighted that an imbalanced distribution of work across weeks or within projects added to the instability of consistent routine, which as a result make it difficult to maintain healthy behaviors. While few employees felt their workload was evenly managed across the week, the majority reported having excessive work pressure during the peak delivery of the projects. This confirmed that the ongoing vicious cycle of the VFX nature of work, where there was a delivery period where an intense workload in production happened and there were phases where it was a calmer period. Overall, data suggested that the intensity of the workload and unpredictability were among the powerful deterrents in maintaining work-life balance and physical wellness.

D) Fitness and Physical Activity

Findings revealed that a shortage of time was a major stumbling block in maintaining a consistent routine for fitness. Many participants acknowledged that long

working hours had left them with very little energy or time to do any exercise, even though they acknowledge its benefits. A considerable number of respondents admitted the value of physical activity, which improved productivity and focus and reduced burnout. Inactive desk-based work was highlighted as a concern, with participants mentioning an increased need to consciously incorporate physical activity into their daily work routines. The findings showed a gap between action and awareness; while VFX employees understood the importance of job performance and physical activity. Work demands mostly prevented them from incorporating exercise into their routines.

E) Nutrition and Lifestyle

Nutrition had come up as another important area where work-life balance played an important role. Many respondents mentioned that when there were high demands at work, employees tended to miss or skip meals and were unable to follow a regular eating routine, which adversely affected their productivity, efficiency, and energy levels. Simultaneously, participants strongly agreed that healthy nutrition was important for handling stress, staying concentrated, and providing creative work demands, which was key and central in the VFX profession. These data showed the importance of consistency in lifestyle, highlighting that inconsistent schedules not only affected eating habits but also impacted broader performance and wellness outcomes.

4.3 Key Findings

Upon the evaluation of the questionnaire responses, several patterns had been revealed regarding the relationship between work-life balance and physical wellness among the VFX employees working in India. Key findings were structured across five main areas:

1) Work-life balance and physical wellness

Around 51.7% of respondents were in positive agreement that work-life balance directly supported physical wellness, such as diet, exercise, sleep, and stress. A further 26.8% expressed negative experiences in balancing work responsibilities and personal life, while 21.5% remained neutral with inconsistent experiences. While based on the data, most of the participants saw work-life balance as a beneficial factor, a lot of them still experienced tiredness, irregular routines, and stress, which indicated a strong interventional need for VFX work schedules.

2) Work Environment (Work-from-home vs. Work from Office)

Approximately 59.4% responded positively by agreeing and strongly agreeing that work-from-home and work-from-office models provided both wellness and balance benefits. While 23.7% remained neutral. Interestingly, less than 17% disagreed, suggesting most participants had the least negative contribution to the work environment. WFH was valued for less travel time and flexibility, while WFO was to bring in routine structure and collaboration with the teams. This suggested that a hybrid work model would provide the best outcome for the employees.

3) Workload Management

Around 65.9% reported positively that workload was an important factor that impacting wellness and balance, with 19.8% neutral and 14.4% having disagreement with long working hours and overtime as leading to stress and tiredness. The data showed that while some employees managed workload effectively, a majority portion of employees had issues and challenges such as doing long hours, overtime, and an uneven balance of work, resulting in illness and stress.

4) Fitness and Physical Activity

This section had the highest positive agreement, with 78.5% of respondents agreeing that exercise was important and played a crucial role in wellness and productivity. Only 3.5% reported negatively, showing resistance to linking fitness and wellness, while 17.9% were neutral. Despite awareness, many employees expressed sedentary work and extended work hours, which restricted them from maintaining consistent fitness routines, underscoring the gap between understanding and practice.

5) Nutrition and Lifestyle

Nutrition was strongly emphasized, with 81.4% in agreement that healthy eating supports energy, productivity, and stress, while only 3.6% disagreed, reflecting that due to demanding work schedules, maintaining healthy eating habits was a struggle. A small group of 15.1% were neutral–possibly due to irregular habits influenced by deadlines. Nutrition education, meal planning, and structured breaks helped enhance wellness in highly creative roles. Nutrition was thus seen as a cornerstone of both work-life balance and physical wellness.

4.5 Conclusion

The data and research confirmed that while work-life balance was universally acknowledged as an important role for maintaining healthy routines, the unique challenges of the VFX industry, like long working hours, unpredictable schedules, and unrealistic deadlines with creative expectations, etc., made the reality of work-life balance difficult and challenging.

In relation to Research Question One, findings demonstrated that physical wellness outcomes were directly influenced by work-life balance. Employees who reported better work-life balance had seen more sustainable healthy nutritional diets,

consistent workouts, and regular sleep patterns, which contributed to physical wellness. Incorporating these practices into employees' lives led to reduced tiredness, lower stress levels, and improved health with fewer work-related risks. On the other hand, imbalances caused by last-minute client requirements, long working hours, and shorter production timelines all led to stress, fatigue, irregular eating habits, less sleep and stress-related illness. These literature and academic studies consistently highlighted how long-term imbalances led to burnout and various musculoskeletal problems, which were already prevailing in the industry with long hours of sedentary screen time in the VFX industry.

In relation to research question two, the study emphasised the intermediatory role between workload management and work environment; both working from the office and working from home had their own advantages and disadvantages. While WFH brought in flexibility and saved time from travelling, WFO brought in a structured routine and collaboration among employees. Together from the data and findings, the adoption of hybrid models was found effective in bringing in balance between wellness and work-life boundaries. At the same time, workload management was also an important factor. Some of the employees were able to manage their workload, while the majority of the employees faced overtime, peak delivery timelines, and pressure from client expectations, which compromised healthy routines. This aligned with the Job Demands-Resource model (JD-R), which stated that without a support system and workload policies in place, work-life balance could not bring in physical wellness.

The reliability and validity assessment using PLS-SEM (SmartPLS) validated that the measurement model was generally sound and suitable for further structural analysis. Composite reliability and Cronbach's Alpha results indicated strong internal consistency for most constructs (e.g., EWP, HWE, ML, WH, OWE), while there were a few constructs (EWS, NCW, WM, NWP) that exhibited lower alpha values and may benefit

from future iterations and item refinement. Convergent validity aided (AVE>=0.50 for all constructs), with multiple constructs (HWE, ML, WH, WM) demonstrating strong AVE. Overall, the measurement model demonstrated acceptable reliability and validity for scrutinizing the relationships between work-life balance and physical wellness among VFX employees, while proposing targeted scale improvements for specific constructs.

The questionnaire findings further strengthened these sections, showing that more than half of the participants were positively associated with and agreed to work-life balance with physical wellness, while nutrition (81.4%) and fitness (78.5%) were considered highly positive among all the sections, and this was considered critical for sustaining productivity and energy in this dynamic VFX world. Although it was evident that gap was there between awareness and practice, as employees admitted the importance of nutrition and exercise, it was not consistently practically followed because of unpredictable schedules and deadlines. The findings also stated that nearly 65.9% mentioned workload management was the major barrier to sustaining wellness, emphasising that organisations needed to address the workload and working hours.

Collectively, the study showed that work-life balance was not just an individual's responsibility but also a company's policies, structure for workload management, and cultural practices, which needed to be there in the VFX industries in India. At the same time, an individual's self-care routines, such as diet, exercise, and sleep, were important; they can be sustained if every employee was supported by the organisation and their managers with fair workload distribution, recovery opportunities, and flexible work arrangements. By stating both opportunities (e.g. hybrid work arrangements, structured routines in terms of timing) and hurdles (e.g. tight deadlines, long working hours, long inactive hours of desk work), this stated that organisations should also strategise for employees' well-being. In order for the VFX industry to be sustained in the long run,

where innovation and creativity thrived, it was important to focus on the physical and mental wellness of employees. It was also important to understand that work-life balance was not just important for the employees but also for the organisation's long-term efficiency and productivity, workforce stability, and sustainability of this industry.

CHAPTER V:

DISCUSSION

5.1 Discussion of Results

This thesis set out to scrutinize the impact of work-life balance on employees' physical wellness in the VFX industry in India, an entertainment sector that had emerged as an important contributor to the universal and domestic markets. The study was inspired by the identification that while this industry in India had accelerated due to outsourcing opportunities, cost-effectiveness, and a skilled workforce pool, this growth had also heightened pressure on employees who worked under highly challenging, project-focused conditions. In spite of the increasing significance of employee well-being in organisational studies, the criss-crossing of work-life balance and physical wellness in VFX creative industries has remained unresearched, especially in VFX industry in India. The present research consequently filled an important gap by examining how work-life balance interacted with physical health results and by evaluating the role of organisational factors such as workplace environment and workload management in influencing these dynamics.

The research began by locating the VFX industry within the broader Indian entertainment and media sector, emphasising its growth through globalization, the Digital India initiative, and the arrival of multinational studios. While this expansion had improved India's reputation as a global nexus, it had also brought to light the constraints of maintaining employee well-being. Prior research showed that poor work-life balance was related to a broad range of physical health issues, including tiredness, cardiovascular stress, musculoskeletal disorders, and sleep disruption (Sharma et al., 2021). Nonetheless, research particular to VFX professionals was scarce, even though these employees were particularly vulnerable due to long working hours, erratic schedules, and the intensity of

their creative work. Given these circumstances, the thesis recognised a clear research problem: the requirement to understand how work-life balance impacted physical wellness in the Indian VFX industry and how company processes can mitigate or exacerbate this impact.

To respond to this problem, the study put together research objectives focused on four primary divisions: first, to examine the perspectives and assumptions of VFX employees regarding work-life balance; second, to determine the effects of poor work-life balance on physical wellness; third, to inspect the role of workplace environment and workload management in creating these outcomes; and fourth, to build awareness within the VFX industry about the significance of balance and wellness. These objectives were supported by research questions that explored the particular challenges faced by VFX professionals, the plan of action adopted for self-care, the health effects of imbalance, and the ways in which organisational aspects influenced these relationships.

The research employed a quantitative methodology, utilizing a systematic questionnaire conducted with 375 respondents across various VFX companies in India. The questionnaire was outlined to capture data across five areas: work-life balance and physical wellness, work environment, workload management; fitness, and nutrition. The outline ensured a complete approach that not only gauged employee perception but also discovered patterns across key areas of wellness. The data were examined using descriptive statistics and thematic categorization, facilitating the identification of both trends and specific challenges.

The findings confirmed a close interrelationship between work-life balance and physical wellness. Over half of the respondents (51.7%) agreed that sustaining balance supported a balanced diet, regular physical activity, and a consistent sleep schedule, while a further 26.8% reported negative experiences of imbalance such as tiredness,

strain, and illness. These outcomes showed that balance was not just a luxury but a basic requirement for maintaining physical health in the VFX industry. The findings also proved that employees who were in charge will be more aligned personally and professionally with responsibilities and had reported less stress levels and improved overall wellness, reiterating theoretical insights from previous research.

The research also disclosed nuanced insights about the workplace environment. Working from home was seen as beneficial for reducing travel time and providing flexibility for self-care; at the same time, it also carried the risks of blurring boundaries and increasing levels of screen exposure. On the contrary, working from the office offered employees a proper routine and opportunities for collaboration for employees but added travelling stress. Roughly 59.4% of respondents supported both models, proposing hybrid work structures that combined the benefits of both, which was flexibility with collaboration; this provided the most balanced results.

Workload management came up as one of the most important factors in supporting wellness. Approximately 65.9% of respondents stated that the intensity of workload, overtime, and uneven distribution of tasks had a bad impact on their health, contributing to tiredness, lack of sleep and exercise. This strengthened the view that organisational processes, rather than individual behaviors alone, were dominant in shaping wellness results. Employees underlined that while coping strategies helped, structured workload planning was needed to maintain balance.

Nutrition and fitness were also median to the findings. While 78.5% of respondents acknowledged that regular fitness activity boosted productivity and reduced exhaustion, many confessed that working long hours and sedentary work restricted their ability to sustain fitness routines. At the same time, 81.4% conceded that healthy nutrition enhanced energy, managed stress, and supported creativity, but demanding workloads

frequently led to skipping meals and irregular eating habits. These findings showed an important gap between practicality and awareness, underlining the requirement for fundamental support from the companies to enable wellness-focused living.

The conclusions taken from these findings had both practical and theoretical importance. Theoretically, the research expanded the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model to the VFX industry, showing how needs such as working long hours and tight project deadlines drained physical resources, while adaptable environments and supportive workload management heighten wellness. Essentially, the study expanded this model by spotlighting physical wellness behaviors–balanced diet, sleep, and exercise–as contemplators of well-being and balance. The overall approach supported the scholarly literature by incorporating physical health into discussions that had traditionally emphasisded psychological outcomes.

Practically, the study showed pressing areas for companies and organisational intervention. Flexible working models, equitable distribution of tasks, wellness initiatives that included nutrition and fitness, and empowering leadership practices came up as key strategies for refining employees' health. The research also mentioned that industry policymakers should consider laws and regulations to protect creative professionals from malpractice and support sustainable employee standards in the industry. By highlighting the physical factors of wellness, the research showed practical insights that go beyond individual coping to structured reforms.

The research also made a methodological contribution through the development of a structured questionnaire that captured various factors of balance and wellness. This tool not only helped in collecting comprehensive data but also provided a template for future studies in creative industries. Additionally, this research came up with one of the

first large-scale datasets on VFX professionals in India, contributing testimonial evidence to an under-researched area.

In contemplating its limitations, the study accepted its reliance on self-reported data, which can be subject to bias, and its cross-sectional blueprint, which seized the snapshot in time but cannot be considered for the changes happening across the project cycles. The focus on selected Indian states also drawn as a limitation for the generalizability of findings across the entire Indian industry. These counterfeits provided avenues for future research, including mixed-method frameworks, longitudinal and comparative studies across different states, and deeper investigation of companies' leadership and culture.

Overall, this thesis fosters knowledge by explaining that work-life balance had a direct and significant impact on physical wellness among VFX employees in India. It displays that balance affecting not only stress and mental well-being but also balanced diet, fitness, and sleep, as a result providing an overall view of employee well-being. It showed the pivotal role of workplace environment and workload management while also spotlighting nutrition and lifestyle as indispensable yet frequently overlooked components. By merging factual evidence with a theoretical framework, the research expanded academic discourse and provided practical insights for companies and policymakers. Eventually, the research reinforced that maintaining employee wellness was not only important for individual health but also for long-term productivity, creativity, and competitiveness in the VFX industry in India.

CHAPTER VI:

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary

This thesis made several important contributions to knowledge by studying the intersection of work-life balance and physical wellness within the VFX industry in India. There had been varied studies in service and corporate sectors about the relationship between WLB and physical wellness, but very little academic attention had been paid to creative or project-based industries such as visual effects in the Indian context. The originality of this research lay in showing the gap through questionnaire investigation on how work-life balance influenced physical wellness and in contributing how organisational factors such as workload management and workplace environment bring this relationship. This study not only gave theoretical understanding but also provided some practical insights that can guide employees and companies.

One of the most important benefactions of this research was the contextualization of work-life balance within the Indian VFX industry, which operated under distinctive structural and cultural conditions. Unlike conventional corporate sectors with standard working hours and foreseeable work cycles, the visual effects industry was described as having an unpredictable workload, client-driven revisions, demands for global outsourcing, and a long timeline of intensive project delivery. Earlier researchers had hardly considered how these factors impacted physical wellness, like diet, exercise, and sleep in the VFX industry in India. Within this context, this thesis deepened the knowledge of the VFX sector and specifically reshaped the meaning and experience of work-life balance. This highlighted that in creative project-based industries, balance was not just about time management, but it involved going through rigorous production work cycles, recouping from work stress, and sustaining in unpredictable environments.

This thesis also contributed to understanding by merging physical wellness into the conversation on work-life balance, which has frequently underscored emotional and psychological dimensions. While studies in workplace behavior have typically scrutinised stress, exhaustion, work fulfillment, and psychological detachment, the direct effect of work-life balance on physical health outcomes had been understudied. This research enlarged the scope by focusing clearly on physical wellness factors such as nutrition, sleep routine, regular exercise, and musculoskeletal health. The findings showed that work-life imbalance not only brings in psychological stress but also led to physical health consequences, including chronic fatigue, interrupted sleep, irregular eating habits, and lower fitness levels. By foregrounding physical wellness, the research highlighted the interconnectedness of physical and mental health in bringing overall well-being, providing a broader perspective than what is there in existing literature.

Another significant contribution was the factual evidence brought up through the questionnaire survey of 375 VFX professionals across different states across India. This dataset was one of the first of its kind to capture data systematically through the experiences of VFX employees of India, providing insights across breadth and depth. The questionnaire was designed to consist of key aspects such as work-life balance, work environment, workload management, fitness, and nutrition, which gave a comprehensive understanding of how these factors interacted with each other. The findings provided quantified evidence–for example, over 65% of participants look at workload management as a major factor of wellness, while more than 78% acknowledged the importance of fitness and over 80% highlighted the importance of nutrition. Such data not only enhanced the academic discourse with measurable facts but also provided baseline information for future research in this field.

This research further provided theoretical development by executing and extending the Job Demands Resources (JD-R) model to the VFX industry context. The JD-R model constitutes that high demand in a job (such as excessive working hours, intense workload, and crunched deadlines) led to stress, while access to work resources (such as flexibility, company support, and equal distribution of work across weeks) supported well-being and engagement. By placing the findings in the model framework, the research showed how the model can be adjusted to account for the particular attributes of creative, project-driven companies. For instance, the findings showed that hybrid workplace environments can give out resources that reduced travelling stress and assist self-care, while prolonged work hours during tight deadlines illustrated demand that weakens energy and compromises wellness. The addition of the JD-R framework supported the theory of refinement, and emphasised its applicability beyond unconventional corporate contexts.

In addition to this, the research advanced knowledge by providing a dual role of work environment for contributing to wellness and balance. The research findings showed that both working from home and working from the office had their own benefits and constraints, which showed that neither work environment was sufficient alone. The subtle insight moves beyond the simplistic form and goes with the argument for hybrid models, which takes the strength of both environments. The research, as a result, contributed to contemporary debates on how the future of work unfolds, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, as it paved the evidence-based perspective on how home and office environments influenced balance and wellness.

An additional contribution lay in exploring workload management as an important mediator between wellness and balance. Although workload had been considered as a factor for employees' well-being, this thesis showed it is particularly outstanding in the

VFX industry, where tasks were allocated unevenly across the week for employees and intense peaks of work were faced by employees. The findings that the intensity of the workload was seen by nearly two-thirds of the respondents as a main barrier to wellness emphasize the centrality of project planning and resource allocation in influencing outcomes. This contribution was important because it brings in the shift in the conversation from individual adaptive strategies to the Organisation's structure, highlighting the systematic workload optimization that was necessary for sustaining wellness and balance.

The research also provided by highlighting nutrition and lifestyle factors as a fundamental components of work-life balance in the context of VFX. In wellness research, while exercise and sleep were often considered, nutrition had been somewhat overlooked. This study showed that irregular eating habits, skipping meals, and not having a balanced nutritional diet were directly linked to workload imbalance and intensity, with over 80% of participants recognising the importance of nutrition for maintaining creativity and managing stress levels. By including nutrition into the analysis, the thesis enhanced the conceptualization of physical wellness and supported a more complete framework for examining employees' health.

Beyond these factual and theoretical benefactions, the study also made a systematic contribution by showing the value of a thematically structured questionnaires, which captured many levels of wellness and work-life balance. The design of the survey tool, spanning balance, environment, workload, fitness, and nutrition, put forward a framework for future research across other creative industries. This comprehensive approach avoids the limitation of narrow instruments, which focus generally on time and psychological stress, supporting employee experience with a more rounded picture.

The novelty of this research also lay in its cultural and geographical focus. While global research had examined work-life balance in Western creative companies, much less was known about how these factors unfolded in the Indian context, where India was becoming a global hub for outsourcing VFX work. The study supported culture-specific insights on how Indian VFX professionals work on the balanced, showing the interaction of global work demands with local work cultures. This cultural support was important for international scholarship, providing a comparative perspective that enhanced global debates on creative wellness and labour.

Finally, the study supported the knowledge by providing practical awareness that bridges the gap between application and theory. By showing the importance of hybrid work models, workload management structure, wellness initiatives, and supportive company's culture, the study provided recommendations to employees and studios. These insights were not only a theoretical contribution but also had practical relevance for sustaining the industry and improving the employees' lives.

Overall, the thesis made a distinctive contribution to the knowledge in many ways. It explored work-life balance in the unique environment of the VFX industry, integrating physical wellness, providing one of the largest datasets on Indian VFX professionals, and stretching theoretical frameworks such as JD-R into the creative industries. It showed the important role of hybrid work models, nutrition, and workload while at the same time providing cultural insights. By focusing on the under-researched area, the research extended the boundaries of existing knowledge and supports a foundation for future research, practice, and policy. Its offering highlights the necessity of looking at work-life balance as not just an individual issue but also a cultural, structural, and company's essential with a direct impact on creativity, wellness, and the company's sustainability.

6.2 Implications

There were significant implications that the results of this study carried for employees, organisations, corporate stakeholders, policymakers, and future research. By explaining the close relationship between work-life balance and physical wellness in the VFX industry, the research highlighted that physical wellness outcomes are not only falling on the individual alone but were also influenced by well-ordered factors such as the company's culture, distribution of workload, and workplace environment.

At the individual employee's level, the findings showed both constraints and opportunities faced by the VFX employees. The majority of the respondents (51.7%) agreed and strongly agreed that sustained work-life balance provides a balanced diet, regular workouts, and a consistent sleep schedule. The study showed that greater physical flexibility and reduced stress levels were with those employees who achieved work-life balance. Nevertheless, 26.8% reported negative experiences, mentioning tiredness and illness due to imbalance. The implication was that while many employees acknowledged the importance of maintaining work-life balance routines, often most of them did not have the structural support to maintain them. Individuals must take strategic actions themselves proactively, such as scheduling breaks in their calendar, setting boundaries for when they will be available and not, and recommending wellness resources. Yet, the findings clearly showed systemic barriers such as unpredictable deadlines and intense workload cycles that cannot be compensated alone through personal strategies alone.

The implications for companies and managers were specifically severe. Based on the data, 65.9% of participants mentioned that their wellness was strongly affected by the workload management, with many mentioning excessive hours of staying late and uneven distribution of work, which led to stress, tiredness, and missing personal time. The findings suggested that without intervention in the allocation of workload, even the most

motivated employee in the company had an issue maintaining a healthy routine. Hence, it was important for company leaders to consider wellness in the management of the project, providing a realistic schedule and timeline, manageable task allocation across the week, and keeping checking on employees if they were putting in excessive hours. On the other hand, cultural change was essential–for example - the normal norm of "being busy all the time" was generally seen as a sign of commitment, which eventually resulted in burnout. The research findings showed the argument for showing creativity and efficiency, rather than putting in long hours, as key performance metrics for employees.

The work environment or workplace also had a crucial implication. Around 59.4% of participants responded positively to working from the office and working from home in different ways. WFH had its benefits of less travel time and having more personal time for self-care and family. While WFO had opportunities for collaboration in person, which reduced mental stress, and also provided structured routines to employees. Only 17% had put across disagreement with either model, suggesting hybrid models would be most beneficial for the best outcome. The implication for the company was that they should purposefully design a hybrid model that combined the benefits of both, combining flexibility with structure while also setting clear boundaries to prevent overextension in a remote setting of work.

The data on fitness and physical activity highlighted for companies another set of implications. A striking 78.5% of participants were in agreement that doing regular exercise promote productivity, reduced stress and burnout, and maintained physical wellness. Yet, most of them admitted that working for long hours and doing desk-based inactive work restricted their ability to do physical exercise. To bridge the space between practice and awareness shows the need for companies to bring in workplace environments that actively encouraged physical activity. There had to be various

initiatives such as ergonomic office setups, structured wellness breaks, and giving discounted rates for employees on fitness programs, which translated awareness into practice, mending the gap shown by the data.

Nutrition had surfaced as the foundation of wellness, with 81.4% of the participants confirming that balanced diet habits improved creativity, energy, and stress management. In spite of this awareness, employees mentioned that hectic, overwhelming schedules often led to skipping meals and irregular eating habits, inversely affecting productivity and physical health. The implication was that VFX companies should encourage healthy and timely eating habits and structurally enabling them – for example, blocking time for adequate breaks, offering healthier food choices in canteens, and building educational wellness sessions for employees.

Another important implication was found at the industry level. Indian VFX professionals had more pressure because of the reliance on cost-effective labour. Yet the findings showed that this model risked becoming unsustainable if wellness was neglected. For instance, 65.9% stated that stress related to the workload led to the existence of burnout, which as a result reduced the creative quality at work and increased attrition rates. It was important for industries to keep a benchmark on the wellness quality standards, ensuring a basic level of condition of wellness and balance was maintained across all studios. Encouraging and implementing this will not only protect employees but also bring in a reputation for India to be considered as a sustainable outsourcing hub. Besides, in an employment market where earlier-career professionals prioritize wellness, companies that bring in employee-friendly practices in the future would have a competitive edge in retaining and attracting talent.

Findings also suggested implications for corporate policymakers. In creative industries where work was project-based, many employees were left vulnerable because

of the absence of standardized labour protection tailored to the VFX industry. Policymakers can come up by implementing overtime regulations, compulsory recovery time, and various initiatives for the wellness programs. In order to align strategies for growth with sustainable workforce practices, it was crucial to incorporate a framework into national initiatives such as Digital India. This was specifically important given the high percentage of the employees (>50%) who linked productivity to wellness-a measure that policymakers' involvement would benefit both economically and socially.

From the studies and research perspective, the findings emphasised b adding value by expanding the scope of work-life balance to include physical wellness. While cognitive effects had been studied widely, this thesis showed that diet, sleep, and exercise were all equal determinants in maintaining productivity and creativity in high-pressure environments. The questionnaire evidence showed that 78.5% who see the role of physical activity and 81.4% who focused on nutrition provided a base for future studies to see how physical factors interact with the company's demands. Theoretical models could be further refined through longitudinal and industry research, capturing unique creative project-based industries like VFX.

Findings of societal implications should not be left aside. Lack of work-life balance contributed to less national productivity and higher healthcare expenses, resulting in poor quality of life. Especially in a VFX sector where India is looking for global leadership, it became a matter of India-wide competitiveness for the well-being of creative professionals. Owing to the fact that more than half of the participant directly linked work-life balance to physical wellness, which is a broader social value of supporting the workplace. Looking into these issues would support maintaining economic growth while at the same time matching with the global goals around work and well-being.

Overall, the research's implications were multidimensional and interconnected. Employees must implement proactive wellness practices, but companies had to provide the cultural and structural support required for the practices to be maintained. Company stakeholders should set standards to ensure longevity, policymakers should bring in labour protection laws tailored to creative industries, and academic research must capture various physical factors of wellness.

6.3 Recommendations for Future Research

The present research had supported new insights into the relationship between work-life balance and physical wellness in the VFX industry in India. It had shown how various factors like workload management, working hours, physical activity, and nutrition intersected with professional and personal life to shape productivity, efficiency, and overall health outcomes. However, with all the research and questionnaire studies, the data opened up as many paths for inquiry as it addressed, and this called for continued investigation considering the complexity of the subject matter. Recommendations for future research, therefore, should focus on expanding, broadening, and contextualising the understanding of this important relationship in different ways that can inform policy, practice, and scholarly discourse.

One of the foremost recommendations for further studies would be adopting longitudinal research designs. This research, like that of many other companies, employed a cross-sectional approach, taking in the experiences and perceptions of VFX professionals at a certain point in time. While this method helped in capturing valuable information on the current state of work-life balance and physical wellness, it did not tell how this evolved over a period of time, especially in the creative industry, like VFX, where there were an ongoing demand of workload, shifting global requirements, and

project-based contracts for the employees. Longitudinal studies could trace back employees' health and balance across different project cycles because that offers a more dynamic view of how periods during the crunch time, relative calmness, and transition between projects influenced wellness. Such studies also allow scholars to further examine causal relationships in a stronger way, as scholars could identify not only the correlations but also the sequencing of events as well as the outcomes. For example, a longitudinal approach could explore whether prolonged imbalance during one production cycle chronically affected health later in a career. Alternatively, it could explore if structured recovery periods did reduced long-term risks.

Future research should also consider approaches with mixed methods that combine data that were qualitative and quantitative. While such quantitative surveys can effectively recognize the trends, percentages, and also correlations, they may not fully capture the more subtle experiences of professionals who emotionally and physically strain in order to balance creatively with more demanding schedules. Interviews that were Qualitative and in-depth, studies that were ethnographic, or else focus groups could illuminate all of the lived realities that exist behind the statistics, and also these methods would offer rich descriptions of just how employees perceived as well as responded to imbalance. Interviews, for example, could reveal the coping strategies individuals used and the sacrifices they made in personal domains, along with the meanings they attached to wellness in the context of creative labour, while surveys indicated that over 65% of respondents experience stress due to workload. These perceptions could help refine interventions, and doing that would make interventions more aligned with employee needs. Employee expectations would also better align with these interventions.

Comparative studies across creative industries and geographies were another critical area for future research. The VFX industry, known for its creative intensity and

project-based model, shared attributes with some creative industries such as animation, gaming, advertising, and film production. Comparative studies help to understand which was common with VFX and other creative fields. This will help to bring in theoretical generalisability. At the same time, cross-cultural studies that compared India VFX to global counterparts in hubs like Canada, the United States, or Singapore could have shown how cultural attitudes towards work, family, and wellness influenced each other and outcomes. For example, cultural values on collectivism, hierarchy, or dedication may bring in change to which employees long working hours as a professional norm and prioritised wellness. Such research would also help us to understand the differences in labour regulations, company culture, and supporting policies from governments on the work-life balance and physical wellness.

Another aspect to be examined was the role of the company's leadership practices and its culture. It was seen in this thesis that workload management and workplace environment bring in the impact. It was crucial to see how leadership styles, attitudes of leaders in managerial roles, and organisational values affected employee wellness, which was still yet to be explored. Research could investigate how company leaders promoted wellness and how this reduced stress and brings in improved balance, and what organisational policies were in place to promote this. Studies can also see how practical it was between formal wellness initiatives and the actual experience of the employees; this showed the gap between policies stated vs. actual ground reality. Exploring these areas not only brings in theoretical knowledge but also brings in actionable guidance for individuals and companies to create supportive structures.

The impact of technological advancements was a further area to be explored, as this sector was rapidly shaped by artificial intelligence, virtual production, machine learning, and real-time rendering technologies. While these innovations might bring in

efficiency and get work done faster, this could remove the boundary between work and family–as the expectation was to get the work done faster. Future research should evaluate how this technological advancement brought in advantages and disadvantages to the employees. Longitudinal studies can help to understand if automation was increased the workload pressure or getting employees to focus on new areas of creative responsibility, with consequences for physical wellness. Remote and office working models had increased from the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. While the research had shown positive sides of both working from the office and working from home, further research needed to be done on how long-term impact was on wellness in hybrid models. We need to examine if hybrid working models were bringing in sustainability, balance, and wellness or if they were introducing new inequality, such as differences in visibility, career advancement, or other collaboration opportunities.

Deeper examination needs to be done on diversity and demographic differences. The current study did examined how a person's gender, family status, marital status, and career stage influenced their experience of work-life balance and wellness. Future research can explore if women in the VFX industry had greater challenges with work and family responsibilities or if younger professionals can work for long working hours as they adapted easily but face difficulty maintaining wellness in the long run. Looking at various stages of job roles between a junior artist and a department supervisor balancing work and wellness could provide specific recommendations made for them.

Overall, to summarize, the recommendation for future research highlighted the requirement to move beyond personal-focused studies, static, longitudinal, and mixed-method models, cross-sectional and comparative analysis, studying the leadership and company's culture, looking at the technology and hybrid working model intersect, and paying close focus on demographics, which are all areas that need further inquiry. By

focusing on these areas, not just the scholars can build up a comprehensive understanding of how work-life balance and physical wellness interact in the VFX industry.

6.4 Conclusion

The fundamental purpose of this thesis was to investigate the impact of work-life balance on employees' physical wellness within the VFX industry in India, a sector that had swiftly developed to become an important component of the worldwide entertainment industry. By centering on the convergence of work demands and personal well-being, this research has made it clear how cultural, structural, and company processes shaped employees' reality experience in a highly creative, project-driven environment. The findings showed that work-life balance was not solely an abstract concept but a determining factor influencing physical health outcomes, company stability, and competitiveness in the industry. Through a merger of conceptual framing, survey analysis, and insights, this study had shown both the opportunities and constraints faced by VFX professionals, while also planning for improved practices, enabling policies, and future academic work.

One of the central conclusions to emerge from this work was that work-life balance applied a significant effect on physical wellness in the VFX industry. Employees regularly reported that the potential to maintain balance between work and personal life was closely tied to a balanced diet, regular sleep routines, and the ability to engage in physical activity. On the contrary, imbalance brought in a high level of stress, tiredness, irregular eating habits, disruption in sleep, and musculoskeletal strain. These findings confirmed previous research that associates balance with reduced stress and improved wellness (Greenhaus and Allen, 2011; Sonnentag and Fritz, 2015), while expanding it to the sector described by global outsourcing, ongoing project deadlines, and client-driven

revisions. Thereby, this thesis emphasised within VFX that balance was not about working for a few hours but about taking control of unpredictable production cycles, managing intensity, and providing recovery opportunities.

Another important conclusion connected to the dual role of the workplace environment in forming wellness results. Working from home came up as a facilitator of flexibility, reduced traveling time, and more options for self-care; at the same time, it also risked blurring boundaries, long hours of screen time, and prolonged sedentary routines. Working from the office, on the other hand, gave structure, teamwork, and a clearer separation between professional and personal life, but this frequently came with travelling stress and rigid schedules. These two contrasting experiences were ultimately pointed towards the hybrid work models that gave the benefit of both work environments by blending structure and flexibility, aligning with contemporary debates about the future of work (Bloom et al., 2015). In industries like VFX, where creativity flourished on collaboration but physical wellness needed independence, a hybrid work structure was seen to provide the most viable path forward.

Workload management was shown as one of the most definitive factors of wellness. Respondents strongly indicated that working overtime, regularly exceeding hours, and uneven distribution of tasks had adverse effects on both mental and physical health. These findings showed the structural pressures of industries that are project driven, where tight delivery timelines were normalized and project deadlines often dictated the rhythm of daily life. At the same time, there were some employees who managed their workload efficiently; most of them reported a high level of stress and fewer opportunities for any physical exercise, having a balanced diet, and timely rest during the peak production times. This goes in line with the Job Demands Resources (JD-R) model (Demerouti et al., 2001), which stated that when there was a high demand, it

depleted energy and contributed to stress and strain unless there were sufficient resources to supported it. The proof from this study suggested that without regular changes to the distribution of workload, attempts to improve wellness would remain limited.

The research also stressed the unacknowledged role of nutrition in maintaining physical wellness and professional performance. Many participants reported that an overload of work and unpredictable schedules most often led to skipping meals or poor nutritional diet practices, which as a result led to reduced efficiency, energy, and productivity. Simultaneously, the vast majority acknowledged that a balanced diet is essential for coping with stress and sustaining creativity. These findings broadened the range of wellness by integrating nutrition as an important factor, alongside sleep and physical exercise, in examining how health was being influenced by balance. For the VFX industry, where creativity and focus were most important, ensuring access to a sustaining diet was not only crucial for employee welfare but also for the company's success.

A main conclusion that mattered was to broaden the structural and cultural aspects of the VFX industry in the Indian context. As a universal outsourcing hub, Indian studios were quite often subject to global client demands, unpredictable project timelines, and labour practices that were cost-driven. These interactions exacerbate the challenges of wellness and balance, often positioning employees where extended working hours and compromised health are normalised. So far, the findings also pointed to the direction of flexibility and adaptability among VFX professionals; most of them actively looked out for strategies to reduce stress and sustain healthier routines in spite of these pressures. This proposed that while systematic reforms were required, individual and company culture played an important role in influencing wellness results.

From a theory standpoint, this research supported extending current frameworks such as the JD-R model to the project-driven creative VFX context. The findings confirmed that the demands such as extended hours, erratic schedules, and sedentary work exhausted physical and mental resources, while resources such as flexibility, nurturing environment, and predefined workload enhances wellness. Nevertheless, the study also expanded the model by stressing the mediating role of physical wellness behaviours – such as diet, exercise, and sleep–in translating balance into positive results. This finding suggested that work-life balance was not just the frame of mind but a practical facilitator of healthier lifestyles, thereby enhancing theoretical understanding of balance and wellness.

At the analytical level, the thesis supported with valuable contribution by applying a thematically well-structured questionnaire managed to 375 respondents across various Indian states. This outline enabled a complete exploration of themes such as balance, work environment, workload, exercise, and balanced diet, showing one of the first large datasets on VFX professionals in India. The capacity to quantify experiences across various dimensions while also translating underlying analysis has created an overall understanding of the research problem. This approach not only progressed methodological revolution but also sets up a foundation for future studies to be built upon.

The suggestion of these conclusions goes beyond scholastic theory to the practical and policy arena. For companies, this finding underscored the requirement to design policies that supported hybrid work models, even work distribution, and wellness initiatives, which comprise fitness and nutrition. For industry stakeholders and policymakers, the findings showed the cruciality of creating a guideline that is sector-wide that discouraged unfair practices and supported maintaining a healthy work culture.

For employees, the study boosted the value of practicing self-care and setting limits in maintaining long-term wellness. Jointly, these conclusions promoted a shift from viewing wellness as an individual responsibility to identifying it as a structured and pressing corporate need.

Despite its offerings, the study accepted certain limitations, including its reliance on self-declared information, the cross-sectional nature of the survey, and the focus on specific states in India. These components limited the generalisation of the findings and proposed that future studies should engage longitudinal and mixed-method designs, spread across a wider geographic scope, and include qualitative awareness to capture the nuanced facts of creative work. However, the closure drawn here is supported by a firm foundation for future studies.

Finally, this thesis concluded that the impact of work-life balance on employees' physical wellness in the VFX industry in India was sincere, complex, and inseparable from the expansive organisational and employee perspectives. Balance directly developed employees' ability to sustain a balanced diet, regular exercise, consistent sleep, and flexibility against work stress. Yet balance itself was dependent upon workplace environment, workload management, and industry standards, showing the interdependence of individual, company, and sectoral factors. Dealing with these challenges was not only important for employees' health but also important for maintaining creativity, competitiveness, and productivity in the industry where India plays central in the global role of entertainment. By highlighting the physical wellness factors alongside psychological factors, this research supported a more comprehensive understanding of work-life balance and its implications, supporting both scholarly knowledge and continuous efforts to make healthier, more resilient work environment.

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APPENDIX A

SURVEY COVER LETTER

Evaluation of the Impact of Work-Life Balance on Employees' Physical Wellness on VFX Employees in India

Dear Participant,

This study aims to understand how work-life balance impacts employees' physical wellness, focusing on VFX employees in India.

I would be grateful if you can spare some time to complete this questionnaire. This is simple and easy to complete with the multiple-choice options.

The response that you fill in will be completely kept confidential.

Thank you for your time and support in advance.

Best regards,
Rochel Robert
DBA student

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT

Project – Impact of Work-Life Balance on Employee's Physical Wellness – A Study on VFX Employees

PURPOSE

The purpose of the study is to fulfill a partial requirement of a doctoral degree being studied by the researcher. This study aims to understand the impact of work-life balance on employees' physical wellness among VFX employees in India.

PROCEDURES

Various employees from different companies in India would be participating in questionnaires, discussions, and face-to-face interviews. The discussion/interview is expected to take approximately 60–90 minutes of your time.

POSSIBLE RISKS

You may feel upset or unpleasant with any of the questions outlined in the research. You may refuse to answer or skip any questions or stop participating anytime you feel uncomfortable.

BENEFITS

You could get potential benefits from implementing some of the suggestions or solutions that may come out of this research, which could help in your corporate day-to-day life, which can result in leading a better-balanced life.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information obtained in this study is kept strictly confidential. Any information provided by you that is not identified as research data is kept confidential. Your name and other personal identifiers are not collected during any of the data collection processes. Only authorized persons have access to the data collected, and information collected from participants from various sources is used to complete the research study. No reference is made in the oral or written report that can link any participant to the study.

RIGHT AS A VOLUNTEER

Participation in this research is purely voluntary. If you wish not to participate or stop during the participation, you are completely free to do so. If you have any questions regarding this research, you are free to contact the researcher.

PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT

I voluntarily consent to participate in this research.

I, the undersigned, confirm the understanding of the above agreement.

APPENDIX C

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Table B.1 – Overview of data collection

Design Study	Explanatory, cross-sectional questionnaire survey using SmartPLS-SEM for analysis
Target Audience	Indian VFX professionals (management, managers, supervisors, creative, production staff, artists)
Geographic area	Major VFX city hubs–Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Hyderabad
Mode	Self-managed online questionnaire (laptop/mobile)
Platform	The survey tool is highly secure (e.g.–Google Forms/Microsoft Forms) with an anonymous link–no login required.
Language	English (industry standard)
Time window	Pilot for 3 weeks, main survey for 11-12 weeks with follow-up reminders.
Estimated duration	10-15 minutes per respondent
Target sample size	N = 300-350

Table B.2 – Sampling and Recruitment

Eligibility of participation	Working professionals (full-time/contract) in the VFX industry in India.
Non-eligibility	Non-VFX professionals, interns under 18 years of age, and respondents outside India.

Recruitment Channel	LinkedIn, WhatsApp, alumni groups, studio HR, and snowball referrals.
Nonresponsive follow-up	Staggered reminders, reaching out, and posting off working hours and on weekends for quickly filling in.

Table B.3 – Constructs

Construct (CODE)	# items	Response format	Sample item
Work-Life Balance and Physical Wellness	5	5-point Likert (1 – strongly disagree and 5 – strongly agree)	Lack of work-life balance leads to increased physical health issues (e.g.-fatigue, illness).
Work Environment related to Work-Life Balance	6	5-point Likert (1 – strongly disagree and 5 – strongly agree)	Working from home improves my flexibility to manage work and personal life.
Workload management linked to Working Hours	4	5-point Likert (1 – strongly disagree and 5 – strongly agree)	I feel my workload is evenly distributed throughout the workweek.
Fitness linked with Physical Wellness	5	5-point Likert (1 – strongly disagree and 5 – strongly agree)	Exercise improves my focus and productivity at work.
Nutrition linked to Lifestyle and Exercise	4	5-point Likert (1 – strongly disagree and 5 – strongly agree)	My nutritional habits positively influence my energy levels for work and exercise.

Work-Life Balance and Physical Wellness are interlinked.	
ML	Maintaining Lifestyle
WLBH	Work-Life Balance on Health
Work Environment related to Work Life Balance	
HWE	Home Work Environment
OWE	Office Work Environment
Workload linked to Work Environment and Working Hours	
WH	Working Hours
WM	Workload Management
Exercise linked with Physical Wellness	
EWS	Exercise and Work Constraints
EWP	Exercise and Work Performance
Nutrition linked to Lifestyle and Exercise	
NWP	Nutrition on Wellness and Performance
NCW	Nutritional Challenges on Work Demands

Table B.4 – Pilot Testing

Pilot Sample Size	Less than 30 VFX professionals across roles
Checks	Clarity in questions, timing, missingness
Revisions	Reordering the sections, combining, and rephrasing questions

Table B.5 – Ethics and Procedures

Consent	Digital informed consent form at the end of the survey.
Anonymous and Privacy	No names, no company information, or any personal info collected
Risk	Very little discomfort from reflecting on health and work-life balance
Ethics approval	The institutional supervisor reviewed and approved the study.
Right to Withdraw	Communication to withdraw at any point; partial responses are not recorded if final consent is not provided.
Data Storage	Encrypted drive and access limited to institutional authorities.

APPENDIX D:

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Importance of Work-Life Balance and Physical Wellness in VFX Employees

This questionnaire is not done from any organization's point of view but purely to understand the importance from your point of view. Please give a sincere and honest response; this is purely categorized into Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree.

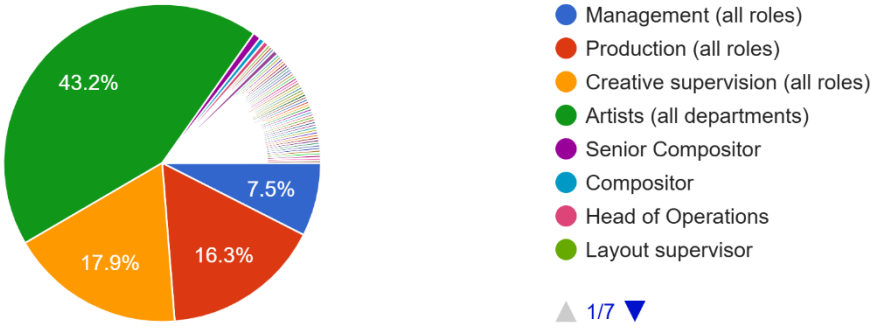
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Work life balance and Physical wellness are interlinked					
I can maintain a healthy diet due to balanced work life balance					
My work life balance allows me to engage in regular physical activity					
My work schedule allows me to maintain a healthy sleep routine					
Lack of work life balance leads to increased physical health issues (eg - Fatigue, illness)					
I experience less stress and better physical wellness when my work and personal life are balanced					
Work environment related to Work life balance	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
Work from home improves my flexibility to manage work and personal life					
Work from home reduces commuting stress, enhancing work life balance					
Work from home helps in focus on personal hobbies and self care alongside my job					
Working in office environment positively impacts my ability to separate work and personal life					
Work from Office enables better collaboration reducing stress related to work					
Work from office creates a structured routine, improving mental wellness					
Workload Management linked to Working hours	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
Regularly working overtime impacts my physical health					
Long working hours contribute to stress and fatigue in my daily life					
I feel my workload is evenly distributed throughout the workweek					
I am able to manage my workload in a way that allows time for personal or family commitments					
Fitness linked with Physical Wellness	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
Lack of time due to work prevents me from maintaining a consistent workout					
Sedentary work increases the need for me to incorporate exercise into my day					
Exercise improves my focus and productivty at work					
Physical activity reduces the risk of burnout at work					
Exercise improved overall physical health enabling me to meet job demands					
Nutrition linked to Lifestyle and Exercise	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
My nutritional habits positively influence my energy levels for work and exercise					
I believe good nutrition is crucial for managing stress and creative work demands					
Skipping meals or irregular eating pattern affects my lifestyle and exercise consistently					
Work demands make it hard to maintain diet and exercise, affecting my productivity					

APPENDIX E

INDIVIDUAL RESPONDENT RESULTS

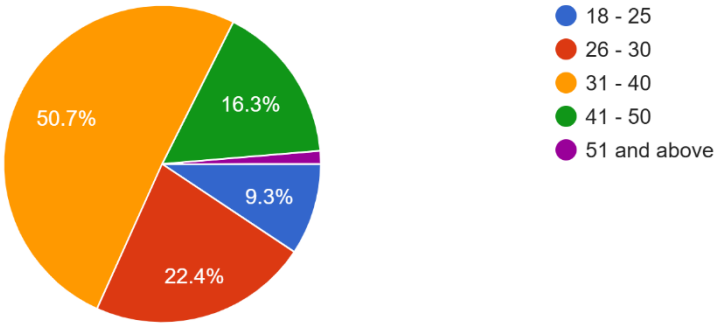
Current Job title/ Role

375 responses



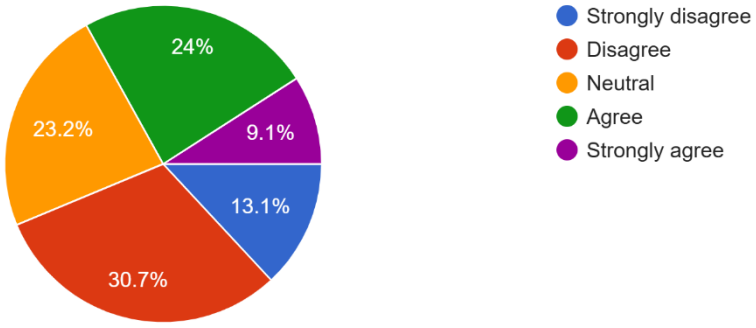
Age group

375 responses



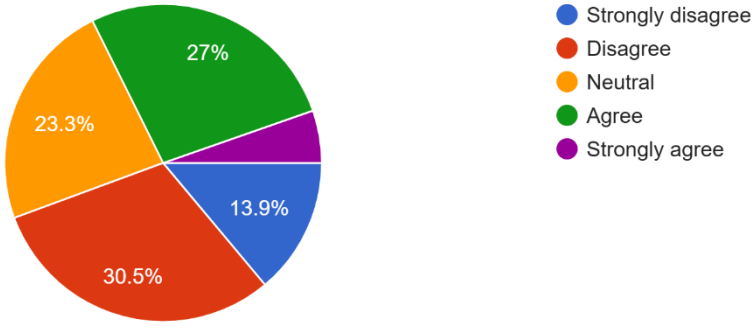
My work life balance allows me to engage in regular physical activity

375 responses



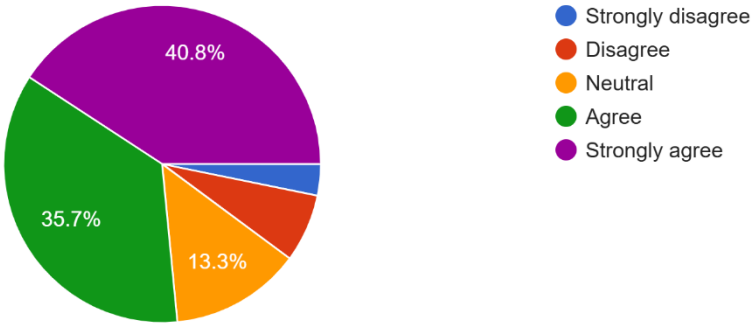
My work schedule allows me to maintain a healthy sleep routine

374 responses



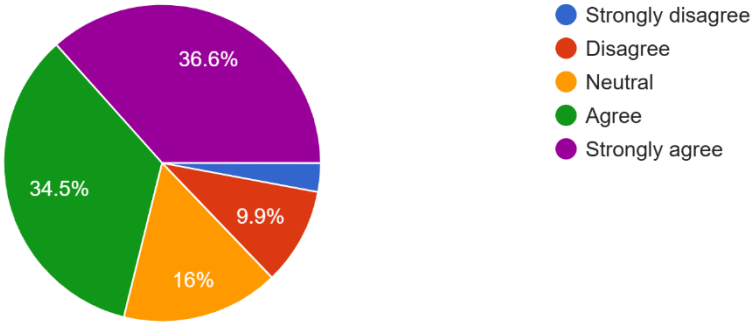
I experience less stress and better physical wellness when my work and personal life are balanced

375 responses



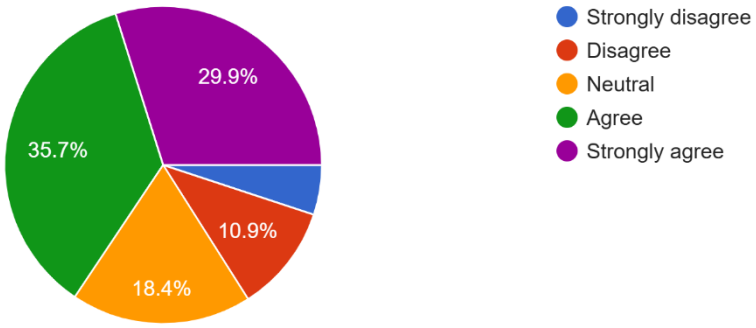
Work from Home improves my flexibility to manage work and personal life

374 responses



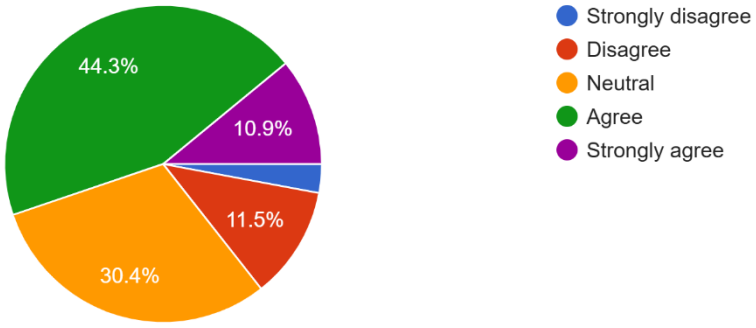
Work from home helps in focus on personal hobbies and self care alongside my job

375 responses



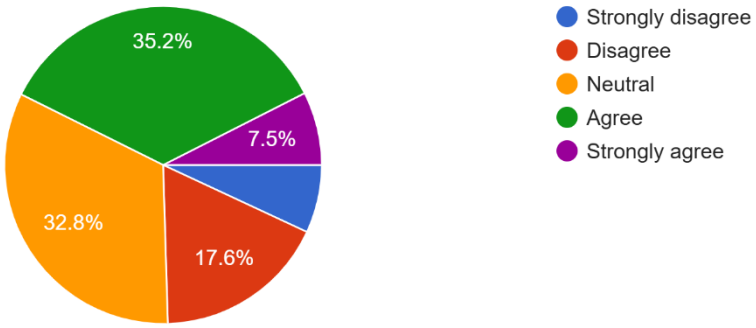
Working in office environment positively impacts my ability to separate work and personal life

375 responses



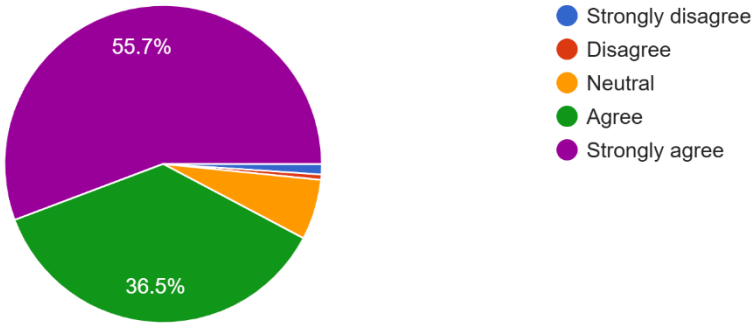
Work from office creates a structured routine, improving mental wellness

375 responses



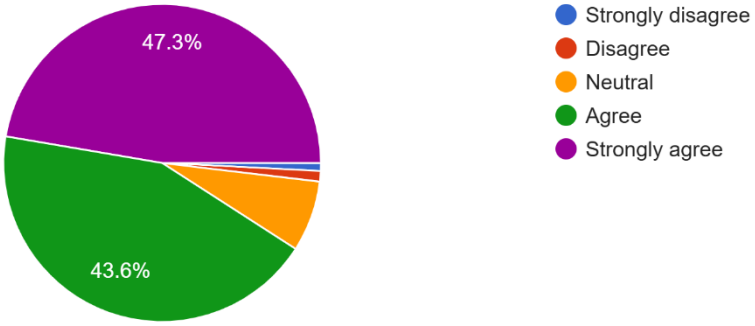
Regularly working overtime impacts my physical health

375 responses



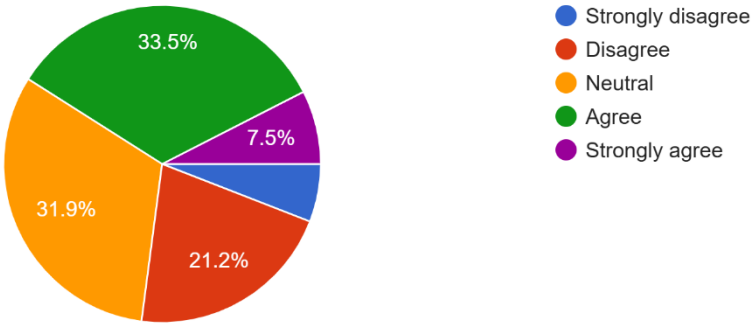
Long working hours contribute to stress and fatigue in my daily life

374 responses



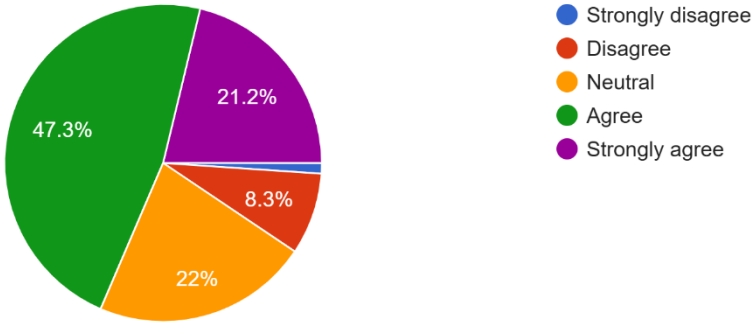
I feel my workload is evenly distributed throughout the workweek

373 responses



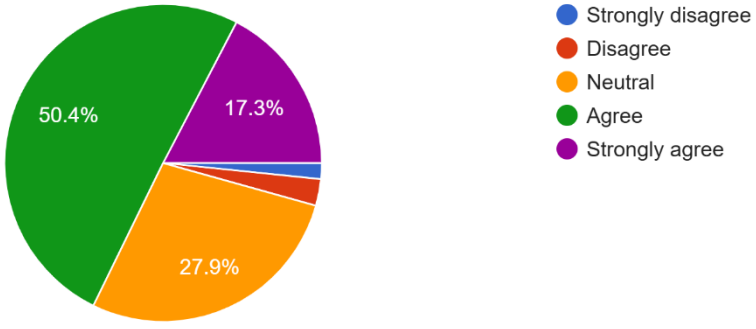
Lack of time due to work prevents me from maintaining a consistent workout

372 responses



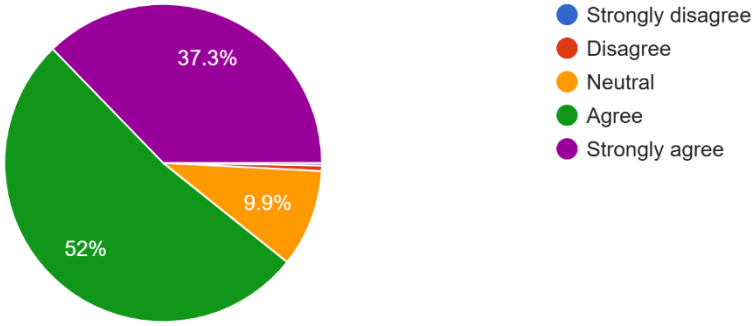
Sedentary work increases the need for me to incorporate exercise into my day

369 responses



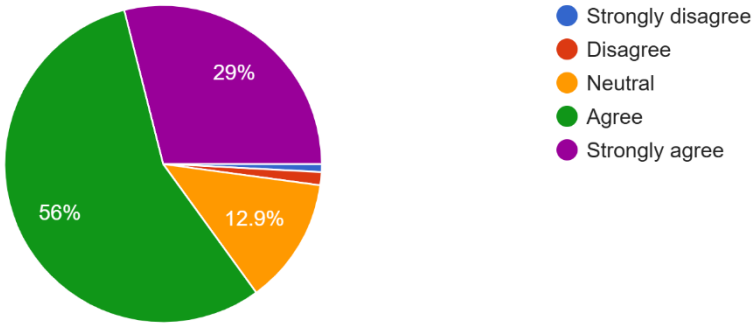
Exercise improves my focus and productivty at work

373 responses



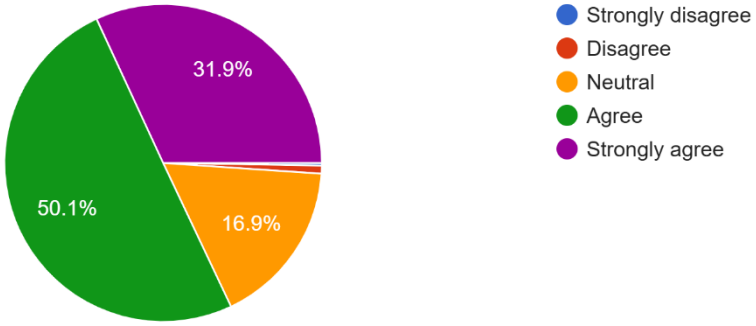
Physical activity reduces the risk of burnout at work

373 responses



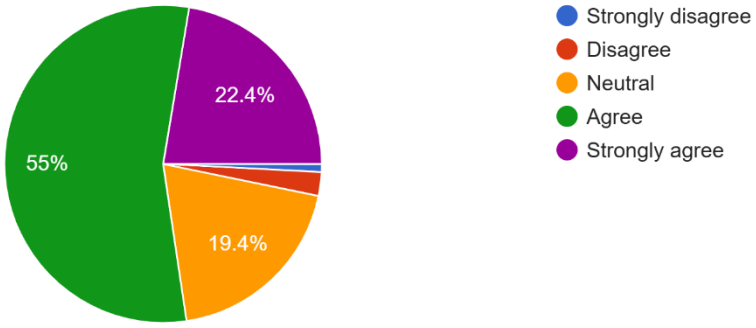
Exercise improved overall physical health enabling me to meet job demands

373 responses



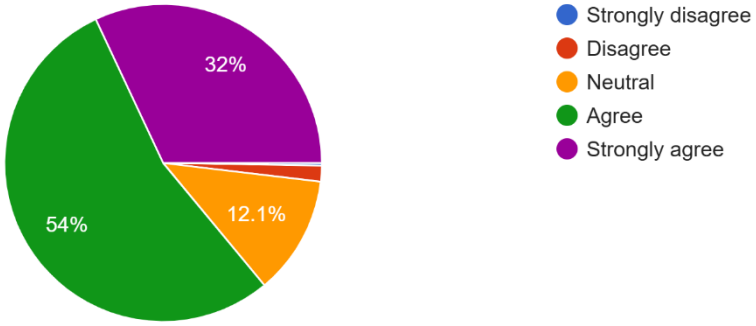
My nutritional habits positively influence my energy levels for work and exercise

371 responses



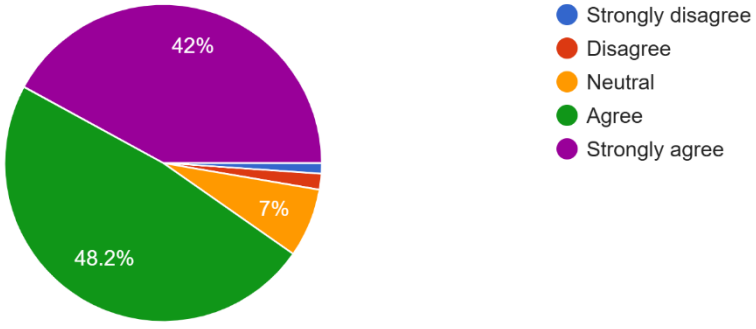
I believe good nutrition is crucial for managing stress and creative work demands

372 responses



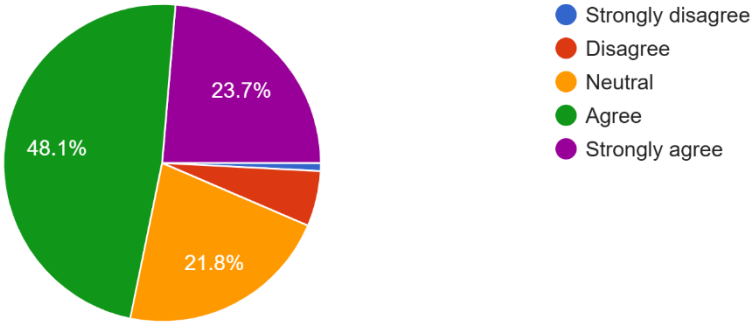
Skipping meals or irregular eating pattern affects my lifestyle and exercise consistently

371 responses

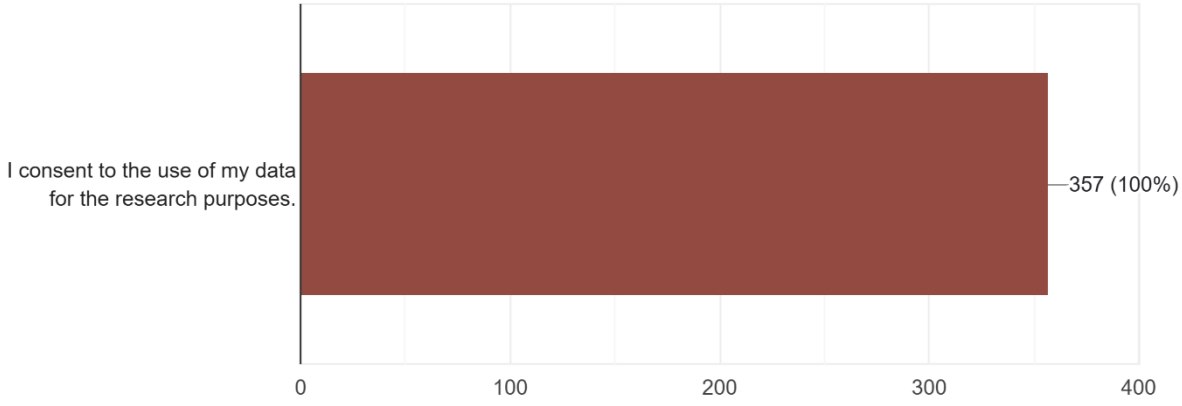


Work demands make it hard to maintain diet and exercise, affecting my productivity

372 responses



357 responses



APPENDIX F

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE SHARING AFTER THIS STUDY

Working on this research journey for the past three years has not only helped me to know more about the academic understanding, but it has also helped change my perspective on work-life balance and its impact on physical wellness. Doing various research and interacting with various VFX employees, I have understood the core challenges they face and how they work towards it in their careers.

One of the key realizations from my study was how VFX employees put in long working hours and go through tight deadlines and constant changes that creative and technical demands require. Most of the people that I interacted with, across various ranks of positions in the industry, struggle with maintaining work-life balance and personal well-being. This resonated to some extent with me too.

One of the key takeaways from my research was understanding how physical wellness takes a backseat when there is a high demand for work pressures. Many employees were facing issues with stress, back pain, eye strain, lack of sleep, and sleep disturbances, which I too sometimes encounter when being too engrossed in work. It is very important that one must create structured wellness plans, plus organisations should encourage more employees to take regular breaks and have reasonable work schedules.

Beyond the findings I have done from the professional side, this research has helped me to focus on my work-life balance and integrate more wellness into my routine. As much as the nature of work demands more, I have become more conscious in setting

up boundaries where possible, including physical wellness activity during my day into the routine and understanding when I am about to get into burnout before it escalates further. I understood that it was not only the responsibility of the organisations to put in initiatives and wellness programs but also each employee's responsibility to incorporate wellness activity into their day-to-day routine schedule.

To conclude, this research has been eye-opening on the academic and on the personal side. Along with the findings of my research and with my own experience, this research is not more about statistics and numbers, but it is about the people. This has enriched me with the knowledge to contribute and help employees and advocate for healthier practices in the VFX industries. Moving forward, I hope my research will further serve as discussions and actions to prioritize productivity and well-being in the creative industries.