

**INVESTIGATING HOW RELIGIOSITY, ETHICS, AND
OTHER FACTORS RELATE TO FUTURE ACCOUNTING
AND BUSINESS PROFESSIONALS' VIEWS ON WORK-
LIFE BALANCE**

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Abstract

Work-life balance has emerged as a major business issue due to growing interest by professionals in seeking satisfaction from non-work activities. Work-life balance is about the allocation of people's time between job, household obligations, and personal pursuits in an effort to achieve harmony between career and the other parts of life. Examination of professionals' perception of work-life balance has shown that a healthy work-life balance results in higher job satisfaction and work performance, and positively affects ethicality. This

study extends prior research on the work-life balance views of prospective accountants and other business professionals by examining factors that are associated with individual interest in achieving work-life balance such as religiosity, field of study, ethicality, and political views. Findings indicate that future accountants and business professionals place high value on work-life balance. With regard to religiosity, more religious persons expressed greater concern about work-life balance than less religious persons. A notable correlation was found between work-life balance perspectives and a person's ethicality.

INTRODUCTION

More and more, business professionals are concerned with work-life balance. This is due to a growing interest by professionals in seeking satisfaction from non-work activities. This growing interest is associated with a variety of societal changes, such as heightened interest in spiritual matters, the growing proportion of women in the workforce, and an increase in dual career couples. Work-life balance refers to the allocation of a working person's time between their job and other pursuits in an effort to achieve harmony between career and the rest of the person's life.

Striving to attain balance between work life and family life is an age-old problem. Previous research indicates that work-life balance can have a positive impact on job satisfaction and productivity, as well as being linked to ethicality. The extent to which work-life balance is a problem may vary to some degree between men and women, and according to some other demographic differences. Out of the 24 hours in a day, eight are often spent at work, and about eight are supposed to be spent sleeping. After factoring in time for commuting to work, eating meals, and personal pursuits, one can imagine that there is often

not enough time in the day to get everything done, no matter how rich or poor, young or old a person may be.

Business professionals in general, as well as those in the accounting field, have seen increasing demands on their time for work-related activities. This may be a result of the global economy attempting to climb out of the most recent recession, as well as changes that occur every day, such as new complex tax laws, changes in professional standards, and advances in technology. All of these factors force professionals to improve their skills and knowledge in order to be competitive in their ever-changing work environment. Business and accounting professionals are facing a whole new set of challenges; professionals must make decisions that prioritize different aspects of their life.

In order to attract talented individuals who will be competitive in the marketplace, business firms need to understand that there is more to offer than just a competitive salary. A thriving young workforce sounds great and some may even believe that there are no consequences to continually replacing burnt out individuals with the new hires. However, in this complex and ever-changing business environment, long-term and seasoned professionals are vital. Businesses need to create an environment to nourish and cultivate young professionals in order to retain experienced talent. The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions of future business and accounting professionals regarding work-life balance and to determine if there are certain characteristics such as field of study, ethicality, political views, or religiosity that motivate a person to place more importance on work-life balance.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To address the issue of work-life balance, this study will address the following research questions:

RQ1: Do future business professionals highly regard work-life balance when pursuing career options?

RQ2: Do future accounting professionals place more emphasis on work-life balance than other future business professionals?

RQ3: Is there a correlation between one's ethical views, one's political views, and one's spirituality (religious views) and the emphasis placed on work-life balance?

THEORETICAL AND PRIOR RESEARCH

The expression, work-life balance, has been used increasingly ever since the mid-20th century to describe the allocation of people's time between work and other areas of their life. Three substantial factors--the varying work force demographics, the increasing amount of work, and the impact of telecommunications--have led to the examination of work-life balance (Guest 2002). In regard to changing work force demographics, the rise of dual-career, dual-income families in the 1960s, as well as the increasing divorce rate and resulting single parent households, first brought the issue of work-life balance to the forefront (Burr and McGraw 2011). This pursuit of work-life balance has been described as a representation of the most fulfilling expression of human potential, meaning that by achieving work-life balance, many believe they become the most well-rounded person possible (Shaywitz 2012).

The issue of work-life balance is an international one. Around the globe, in developed and developing countries, business firms and their employees are increasingly focused on facilitating work-life balance. Examples of studies in developing countries include Mordi, Mmieh, and Ojo (2013), who analyzed manager's viewpoints on work-life balance in Nigeria, with regard to the banking sector. Sim and Bujang (2012) conducted a study in Malaysia regarding work-life balance in the hospitality industry of that country. They specifically examined moderating effects of religiosity. Koonmee, Singhapakdi, Virakul, and Lee (2010) conducted a study of human resource managers in Thailand to evaluate the ethics of institutionalization, quality of work life, and

employee job-related outcomes. The issue of ethical leadership and job satisfaction were examined in a study by Dinc; and Aydemir (2014), using a sample of employees at four private universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

How work-life balance is defined has remained essentially consistent throughout the literature. Perhaps the only measurable alteration affects the broadness of scope with which a researcher employs the term. For example, the work of Feldstead et al. (2002) defined work-life balance quite broadly, as an individual's ability to effectively juggle work-related and non-work-related activities. Presently, research has narrowed the focus of non-work-related activities, moving toward more concrete exemplars. Based upon Feldstead et al.'s detailed discussion of work-life balance, Sánchez-Vidal et al. (2012) subsumed the definition as the individual's ability to effectively comingle work with other areas of responsibility, activity, or aspiration. Finally, Jyothi and Jyothi (2012) posit that a well-rounded definition of work-life balance includes obtaining meaningful achievement in one's career whilst maintaining fulfillment with one's family, friends, and self. The definition used in this research study is therefore substantially equivalent to past iterations.

Work environments have long been under regulation, with some of the first regulations being specifically designed for women and children in industry positions. The eight hour work day was standard beginning after World War II, and soon after, companies began initiatives such as overtime and paid vacations (Fudge 2011). More recently, new working arrangements have been established such as temporary and part-time work, telecommuting, and job sharing (Smith et al. 2011). Pedersen (2010) examined the role of business managers with regard to corporate social responsibility (CSR), with regard to the duties a business firm owes to society. The idea that business firms have certain responsibilities to society relates to the idea of work-life balance, in that business firms would similarly have responsibilities to their

employees to help them achieve a better quality of life, specifically as it relates to work-life balance.

Technology has created a more advantageous work environment and has increased efficiency by allowing people to share ideas over many locations and to meet with many others through teleconferencing, smart phones, and mobile communications (Bhawani 2009). In fact, one implication of this change in the traditional workplace is that productivity may be overestimated because many worked hours may go unreported and unpaid (Eldridge and Pabilonia 2010). Coping approaches of teleworkers and their families was examined by Tietze (2002). Findings show that teleworking leads to ‘practical, social, and moral questions’ and that teleworking has an ‘ambiguous and paradoxical nature’ (p. 385). Because of this new work environment, it is becoming more difficult to distinguish between work and home life and thus the issue of work-life balance is becoming increasingly more important.

To assist employees in achieving some degree of work-life balance, many organizations allow workers to have flexible work arrangements (U.S. Department of Labor 2007). Flexible work conditions that will be examined in this study include the following (Smith et al. 2011):

- Flex-time: Under flex-time, there are specific hours in which an employee is required to be at work; however, the remaining time is up to the employee of when to work, as long as they are meeting time or task requirements.
- Telecommuting: An individual is able to work from outside the office by utilizing mobile telecommunications technology.
- Work at home options: Employees will not commute to the office and instead are able to work using telecommunication links from inside the comfort and convenience of their home.
- Part-time: Employees work fewer than 40 hours a week.

- Job-sharing: Multiple employees split the tasks of a particular position which therefore reduces the time, effort, and responsibility of each individual.

- Special summer or holiday work hours: During summer months or holidays, employees can work hours that are different from the typical workday.

Relative to the new generation of workforce candidates, called Millennials or Generation Y workers, past research suggests that almost 50% of Millennials would rather be unemployed than work a job that they do not enjoy (Mielach 2012). This could result in a high job turnover as even more Millennials indicate that they would change their job within the next five years if unhappy, in order to find their dream job. In this time of globalization, companies need to attract new talent and retain that talent to prosper long term (Saxena and Jain 2012). Enabling employees to achieve work-life balance will help attract and retain employees. Therefore, it is crucial to understand what this generation of employees wants. According to Gilber (2011), employees see the workforce as an opportunity to learn and develop and want a career that is engaging and supports a healthy well-being lifestyle.

An article in *The CPA Journal* reports that efforts to recruit students to accounting organizations requires a focus on goals, achievement, technology, innovation, and allowing Generation Yers to maintain and build personal relationships through flexible work schedules (Yeaton 2008). Smith (2010), using a large sample of marketing students, identified perspectives on work-life balance in Generation Y. Her results suggest that work-life balance is a critical factor in career decisions.

Interestingly, some research indicates that by building close relationships with coworkers, individuals are able to feel a sense of balance and extend their work relationships into their non-work time, which also effectively extends social relationships into the work place (Poppleton, Briner, and Kiefer 2008). This enhances the individual's perception of work-life balance and improves the quality of work-life for all involved. Building these

relationships with coworkers is especially important for individuals who are new to the workforce and have few other familial obligations. New entrants to the workforce also realize that it is often necessary to sacrifice work-life balance early on in their career in order to gain a better work-life balance and a more successful career in the future (Kanter 2012).

Although the issue of work-life balance affects most working individuals, it is even more prominent amongst professionals in the medical, law, business, and accounting professions. Many professional women struggle with the decision to pursue families or their career and often feel forced to pick between the two (Slotkin and Goodman 2007). Certain professions appear structured in such a way that makes it difficult for women to advance while maintaining a healthy home life. According to a study done by the AICPA, women in the accounting profession reportedly are more burnt out by their job and have greater intentions to leave a job than men. In fact, leadership programs and alternative work arrangements make all the difference between how individuals perceive their work-life balance. Women who participate in leadership or alternative work arrangements report less stress from balancing work and home life, and interestingly enough are more than twice as likely to participate in these programs as their male counterparts (AICPA 2012).

Studies have shown that the perception of flexible work arrangements varies for men and women in accounting. While many women embrace flexible work arrangements, men feel that they cannot choose to participate in flexible work arrangements, even if their company offers them, because of the stigma associated with such a decision. If a man chooses to participate in flexible work arrangements, he is perceived as weak or uncommitted to his clients and job. This stigma is a result of the unequal perception of a person's work ethic based first upon gender and second upon whether the individual chooses to participate in flexible work arrangements. Flexible work

arrangements seem to be acceptable for women but less acceptable for men (Almer and Single 2004).

In theory, achieving work-life balance is the ideal. However, sometimes when one person achieves a desired level of work-life balance, it may be at the expense of increasing another individual's workload. Such a situation may create a burden for a co-worker which may lead to resentment and hostility in the work environment (Seligson 2012). For this reason, careful consideration needs to be given to solving work-life balance issues. Communication is key and some solutions may offer more benefits than others. Employers can try to understand what motivates their employees to work and what motivates them to achieve work-life balance.

Many managers believe that the best way to motivate employees at work is through incentives, discipline, and having role models to mentor other employees. The idea of workplace motivation, also known as self-determination theory, is a relatively new way to look at the relationship between people and the work environment. Self-determination theory suggests that employees are essentially motivated from within. If a person works because a job is interesting and enjoyable, the motivation is intrinsic. Extrinsic motivation lies within employees who work only to obtain extrinsic rewards such as promotion, salary, and bonuses (Danish 2010).

Cognitive evaluation theory suggests that rewards, deadlines, and evaluations reduce intrinsic motivation. However, some external factors can help increase intrinsic motivation, such as providing employees choice and flexibility within their jobs. According to Gagné and Deci (2005), to some extent, employees can be intrinsically motivated by external factors. The theory of integrated regulation works hand-in-hand with why individuals should strike a work-life balance. If an individual's performance is only extrinsically rewarded in tasks that may not be interesting or enjoyable, a person will most likely be unhappy with his or her current job. However, by allowing employees to participate in

flexible work arrangements, managers are allowing employees to choose what they believe is important to them and thus their work is to some extent self-determined, and a greater sense of work-life balance is reached.

If employees work for an organization whose culture they can identify with, employees will find it easier to feel that their work is self-determined through integrated regulation. Even if work is not enjoyable, employees may find solace in the alignment of their beliefs with the organization's culture. According to Bradt (2012), every organization's culture is made from the same five components: behaviors, relationships, attitudes, values, and environment. A competitive advantage is created by an organization that is able to match its employees' attitudes and values with its own.

One of the primary goals of the present study is to examine factors affecting work-life balance through the prism of the current cultural climate, which gives rise to certain expectations on the part of the generation of workers currently entering the workforce. According to Ng et al. (2010), North American research studies, such as theirs, examining the expectations of Millennials with regard to their attitudes toward work-life balance, are relatively few. Their findings suggest that Millennials are highly concerned with achieving work-life balance. Specifically, this demographic is seeking a work environment which is nurturing, allows them to participate in meaningful activities (as opposed to busy work), and provides the opportunity for accelerated methods of advancement and skill development.

Personality traits of young professionals may fuel their attitudes toward achieving work-life balance. Ethicality represents one such trait; however a myriad of forces can affect a young professional's internalization of ethicality. In relation to the current climate, Jazani and Ayoobzadeh (2012) found that ethical courses increase students' awareness of ethical behavior, but only if they had been employed for more than one year. Apart from communicating Millennials' increased commitment to

volunteerism and community service over prior generations, Giacalone and Promislo (2013) bemoan sectors of the current culture that actually tend to demonize those individuals who behave ethically. Their research also demonstrates that students may regard ethical behavior as only the means to an end, that is, the increased profitability of their organization. According to these researchers, profit is considered the driving factor of engaging in ethical behavior.

The spiritual dimension of work-life balance can be traced to ancient documents. Timeless direction on keeping a proper view of money is found in the writings of Israel's wise king Solomon. He wrote the book of Ecclesiastes about 930 B.C. He said, "Those who love money will never have enough. How meaningless to think that wealth brings true happiness!" (Holy Bible, 2007a). Greed really is insatiable (cf., Soltani, 2014; Lo, 2011; Weaver, 2004). Moving forward about 1,000 years, Jesus of Nazareth said that there are more important things in life than the accumulation of wealth. He said, "Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal" (Holy Bible, 2007b). Jesus said how foolish it would be to spend a lifetime seeking material wealth at the cost of all else: "And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul?" (Holy Bible, 2007c).

An often-cited contributor to ethicality is spirituality (religiosity). Recent studies have upheld the correlation between these two traits. For example, Burton et al. (2011) found that students reporting frequent participation in religious activities were less inclined to participate in unethical behavior than students who reported less frequent participation. Brenner et al. (2012) has reproduced such findings, specifically with accounting students. Gross and Simmons (2007) identified accounting faculty as the most religious among the twenty largest disciplinary fields. Additional findings are also intriguing. Accounting students perceived themselves as entering the most ethical profession and as the most ethical of business majors. Conversely, another study

encompassing majors within other academic disciplines discovered that business majors, as viewed by their peers, were perceived as the most unethical and more tolerant of cheating (Lau and Haug 2011). Given such context, examining the interrelationships among work-life balance, religiosity, and ethicality should prove enlightening.

In a study by Hilary and Hui (2008), a link was identified between religiosity and corporate culture. The same research documented that employees are much more likely to join firms with a similar religious environment as their place of previous employment, possibly because they can personally identify with this religious environment. Religion and ethics play an interrelated role in an organization's culture. Guitian (2009) examined the integration of work and family life from a Catholic social teaching perspective. The study offers a set of normative propositions to cultivate work-family policies that provide for work-family balance. Karakas (2010) found positive benefits connected to spirituality in the workplace. Constantine, Miville, Warren, and Gainor (2006) examined the connections among religion, spirituality, and career development in African American college students. King and Williamson (2005) offered insights regarding religious expression in the workplace, religiosity, and job satisfaction.

A study conducted by Grullon, Kanatas, and Weston (2009) revealed that firms headquartered in highly religious countries were less likely to commit unethical corporate acts, indicating a linkage among corporate culture, religion, and ethics. A study by McGuire et al. (2012) found that businesses headquartered in areas with strong religious social norms generally experience lower incidences of financial reporting irregularities. Concerning the relationship between work-life balance and ethics, a national survey by the accounting firm Deloitte & Touche (2007) found that an overwhelming majority of respondents believed that employees who have a good-work life balance will behave more ethically.

The relationship between an organization's behavior and its culture, comprised of components including religion and ethics, could have interesting effects on work-life balance. As research has indicated, Generation Y's values and attitudes focus on achieving work-life balance. If people are motivated to work intrinsically by their own values, and these values indicate a stronger preference for work-life balance, aligned values would seem to benefit both the employees and the organization. The current research study will test whether political, ethical, and religious views are correlated with a person's preference for work-life balance.

SAMPLE SELECTION AND METHODOLOGY

To determine the importance of work-life balance to future business professionals, a survey of 139 business students was completed in the fall 2013. The sample was collected from a survey of students who were attending seven different classes at a public regional university or were members of the student business fraternity on campus. The sample includes freshmen, sophomores, juniors, seniors, and graduate students. Ages ranged from 18 to 57. Demographic data is presented in Exhibit 1.

The survey instrument contained 23 questions. The survey was designed using a Likert scale, with 1 representing "strongly disagree" and 5 representing "strongly agree." The first set of questions was designed to determine the extent to which future business professionals value work-life balance and consider work-life balance when choosing a job. The second set of questions was designed to examine what work arrangements (e.g. flex-time and telecommuting) were most important to the students with regard to work-life balance. The third set of questions was designed to evaluate the relationship of work-life balance perspectives to the individual's ethical, political, and religious views. The actual questionnaire is provided in the Appendix.

RESULTS

Exhibit 2 shows the mean scores of the survey questions. T-tests assuming unequal variance were utilized to determine if the students' responses to each statement were significantly different from neutral (score = 3). T-tests assuming equal variance were then utilized to see if there was a significant difference between work-life balance perspectives and the various demographic variables. As can be seen in Exhibit 2, which shows the mean scores of survey questions as well as the significance, work-life balance is very important to future accounting and business professionals.

By analyzing the results of statements one through six, work-life balance is found to be an issue that business professionals carefully consider. The first research question is: Do future business professionals highly regard work-life balance when pursuing career options? By analyzing the results of statements one through six, work-life balance is clearly an issue that future business professionals consider regarding career and job decisions. Each of these six statements achieved the highest level of significance ($p < .01$). These findings are consistent with results of prior studies by Smith (2010) concerning marketing professionals and Smith et al. (2011) concerning accountants.

Those surveyed were also asked to stipulate the importance of the following flexible work arrangements: flex-time, part-time work, job sharing, work at home options, summer or holiday hours, and telecommuting. Results of this study remained consistent with prior research (Smith et al. 2011). As in the previous study, future accounting and business professionals placed the most importance on telecommuting (average of 3.68; $t = -8.11$), flex time (average of 3.76; $t = -8.83$), and special or holiday hours (average of 3.78; $t = -8.24$). They do not feel strongly about job sharing (average of 2.94; $t = 0.59$) or part-time work (average of 2.91; $t = 0.99$). While business firms may incur an economic cost to facilitating work-life balance by providing these flexible work arrangements, the

benefits to firms in enhanced employee productivity would be expected to offset such costs.

The second research question is: Do accounting students place more emphasis on work-life balance than other future business professionals? Accounting students on average scored Statements 1, 3, 5, and 6 higher than other business majors, and results indicate that the differences were significant. Interestingly, although accounting students averaged higher on work-life balance Statements 1 to 6, an analysis of the statements regarding the various types of flexible work arrangements, Statements 7 to 12, were scored mostly higher by business students. The two exceptions were summer or holiday hours and work at home options, in which accounting students scored higher. Statement 9, regarding job-sharing, had a significant difference between accounting and business students. Accounting students do not place as high of importance on job sharing as business students (accounting student mean = 2.59; business student mean = 3.12; $t = -2.61$); however, neither group thinks that job sharing is important. The results of the t-test analysis by major are shown in Exhibit 3.

The third research question is: Is there a correlation between one's ethical views, one's political views, and one's religious values and the emphasis placed on work-life balance? In order to test the correlation between one's ethical views and the emphasis placed on work-life balance, the survey respondents were divided based on their response to Statement 15: I am an ethical person. Those who responded with 'agree' or 'strongly agree' were separated from those who answered 'neutral', 'disagree', or strongly 'disagree' and then a t-test assuming equal variance was performed. Results of this analysis are shown in Exhibit 4.

Results indicate that there was indeed a correlation between a person who considers himself or herself ethical and corresponding perspectives regarding work-life balance. For each of the first 12 statements, ethical persons had higher averages, indicating favorable responses towards consideration of work-life

balance and flexible work arrangements. There were significant differences pertaining to Statements 1 through 6, 11, and 12. Statement 1 indicated that choosing a career was affected by work-life balance. Statement 3 indicated that work-life balance was important to long-term job satisfaction. Statement 4 indicated that flexible work arrangements are important to those with children. Statement 5 indicated that a healthy work-life balance leads to better job performance. Statement 6 indicated that a healthy work-life balance leads to more ethical performance. These results affirm the Deloitte & Touche (2007) survey results linking work-life balance and ethical behavior.

To test the correlation between a person's political views and the importance the person places on work-life balance, the survey respondents were divided based on their response to Statement 17: I identify with the values of the Democratic Party. There was an expectation that there would be differences between those who answered 'neutral', 'disagree', or 'strongly disagree' and those who answered 'agree' or 'strongly agree'. The results of this analysis, shown in Exhibit 5, indicate no significant differences for most statements. The statements with significant differences were Statements 7, 8 and 9. Statement 7 is: Availability of flex-time is important. Statement 8 is: Availability of part-time work is important. Statement 9 is: Availability of job sharing is important.

To test the correlation between people's spirituality (religious views) and the importance they place on work-life balance, survey respondents were divided based on their response to Statement 21: I worship frequently (usually once a week or more). This statement was chosen as representative because it evaluates action and not perception. Those who answered the statement with 'agree' or 'strongly agree' were separated from those answering with 'disagree', 'strongly disagree', or 'neutral'. As shown in Exhibit 6, for the first six statements, means of those who are more religious are mostly higher (5 of 6) than means of those who are less religious. For example, regarding Statement 2:

‘Availability of flexible work arrangements is an important consideration in choosing an employer,’ the scores of the religious persons averaged 3.93 (5=strongly agree), while less religious persons averaged 3.70. For Statement 3: ‘Availability of flexible work arrangements is important to long-term job satisfaction,’ more religious persons averaged 4.24 and less religious averaged 4.01. Both of these differences were significant. Essentially, this suggests that more religious persons place greater value on work-life balance than less religious persons.

In addition to the three research questions of the study, an analysis was performed to determine whether there was a significant difference between the work-life balance perspectives of male and female future business professionals. Prior research indicates that female future business professionals consider using flexible work arrangements more than their male counterparts. Although this study did not find a significant difference between men and women regarding work-life balance, results show that female answers averaged higher than male answers consistently in statements one through six. When considering the actual flexible work arrangement alternatives, again, females averaged higher than males on all but one of statements seven through twelve. The one inconsistency was in regards to Statement 7, where men value flex-time more than women, but not by a significant amount. These results can be seen in Exhibit 7.

An exploratory factor analysis on the 23 survey items was conducted, the results of which are displayed in Exhibit 8. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure, which provides an indication of the appropriateness of conducting a factor analysis, indicated that the sample was viable, with a value of .69. Using varimax rotation, eight factors were identified. However, three of these factors achieved a loading of only one item, and each explained only 5% of the variance in the model. Coupled with a small sample size, and an indeterminate scree plot, the validity of so many factors is questionable. Therefore, the discussion of factors is limited to only

five, which represent a combined explanation of variance of 53.87%.

According to Exhibit 8, the convergence of items seems to best describe the factors as follows: religiosity, work flexibility, flexibility type, political view, and self-reliance. While the latent component of the first four factors seemed readily distinguishable, the fifth factor constituted somewhat of a challenge. The label of self-reliance was chosen because it appears that these items center around one's ability to work unsupervised and on one's own time. A person's ethics would no doubt enter into play given such a working environment.

Upon discerning these factors, a Cronbach's Alpha measure was calculated for each. It appears that only the first two factors, religiosity and work flexibility, provide consistency in the measurement of the latent construct (value greater than .70). However, the next two factors, flexibility type and political view, are marginally consistent, with values near .70. Overall, it appears that several strong constructs were measured with the dissemination of the survey.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study considered three research questions pertaining to work-life balance. The first research question addressed whether future accounting and business professionals highly regard work-life balance when pursuing career options. Based on prior research, the present study predicted that business professionals would strongly favor work-life balance as a factor in seeking employment. Findings of the study indicate that this indeed is the case, that future business professionals do place high value on work-life balance.

The second research question concerned whether accounting students place more emphasis on work-life balance than other future business professionals. Findings indicate that all future business professionals, including accountants, place similar high regard on work-life balance.

The third research question concerned whether there was a correlation between one's ethical, political, and religious views and the emphasis placed on work-life balance. Prior research revealed that a better work-life balance leads to more ethical decision making, and therefore it was thought that an ethical person would more highly value work-life balance. For the 'ethical' respondents, mean scores were significantly higher on 8 of the first 12 statements. The findings confirm prior research, notably the Deloitte & Touche (2007) survey that linked work-life balance and ethical behavior.

Concerning the relationship between political values and views on work-life balance, results were mixed. With regard to spirituality, more religious persons did have higher scores on most work-life balance statements (5 of 6 questions). For example, regarding Statement 2: 'Availability of flexible work arrangements is an important consideration in choosing an employer,' the scores of the more religious persons averaged 3.93 (5=strongly agree), while less religious persons averaged 3.70. In essence, this would indicate that more religious persons are more concerned about work-life balance than less religious persons.

This study finds that work-life balance is a concern for both accountants and other business professionals. The business world, especially in the accounting field, offers a variety of flexible work arrangements to support professionals in attaining work-life balance. Addressing work-life balance concerns will be vital to both recruiting and retaining business and accounting professionals. When employees are satisfied with their work-life balance, they perform their jobs better and a ripple effect is created that essentially extends into every facet of life.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

As most of the survey respondents were relatively young and thus in the early stages of their studies, there is potential for many of these respondents to switch majors before graduation, thereby confounding the results as representative of the actual

future accounting and business professionals. The study analyzes perspectives on work-life balance of 'future' accounting and business professionals. Their work-life balance perspectives are limited by their relatively small amount of actual work experience, which is an average of 4.3 years for future business professionals and 3.5 years for future accountants. In addition, the fact that work experience is not uniform but varies among respondents is also a limitation of the study. Future studies might sample currently working professionals and compare their perspectives to those in the current study. In addition, future studies might compare perspectives of people with different levels of work experience (e.g. 0-2 years, 3-5 years, etc.).

The study was limited to a sample of 139 students at one university. Future studies could expand the research by acquiring larger sample sizes and including additional universities. The impact of additional factors, such as parental or other family obligations, or how respondents characterize 'time, work, studies, and life' was beyond the scope of the current study. These factors could be evaluated in future studies. In addition, many students who were surveyed were international students. Each country has different cultures, including views of religion, ethics, and politics that could confound the study results. Future studies might evaluate differences among different cultures and nations.

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Exhibit 1

Demographic Data of Survey Respondents

	Future Business Professionals	Future Accountants
All Survey Respondents	93	46
Men	46	19
Women	47	27
Age		
18-22	51	23
Over 22	42	23
Average Age	23.4	24.8
Average Years of Work Experience	4.2	5.1

Exhibit 2

Perspectives of Future Business Professionals on Work-Life Balance

Q1	In choosing a career, I consider how my work-life balance will be affected.	4.19	-16.90 ***
Q2	A availability of flexible work arrangement is an important consideration in choosing an employer.	3.81	-10.98 ***
Q3	A availability of flexible work arrangements is important to long term job satisfaction.	4.12	-15.03 ***
Q4	A availability of flexible work arrangement is especially important to employees with children.	4.42	-20.35 ***
Q5	A healthy work life balance leads to better job performance.	4.55	-25.17 ***
Q6	A healthy work life balance leads to better ethical decision making.	4.09	-14.23 ***
	In my future job, the availability of the following flexible work arrangements will be very important to me:		
Q7	Flex-time. (There are certain hours of the day when employees must work, while the rest of the day is "flex-time" in which employees choose when to work.)	3.76	-8.83 ***
Q8	Part time work.	2.91	0.99
Q9	Job sharing. (Two employees share the same position; splitting the time and responsibility required for the job.)	2.94	0.59
Q10	Work at home options.	3.37	-4.34 ***
Q11	Special summer or holiday hours.	3.78	-8.24 ***
Q12	Telecommuting.	3.68	-8.11 ***
Q13	Within a business, the ends justify the means.	3.35	-3.59 ***
Q14	Behavior in business that is legal, is ethical.	3.26	-2.29 **
Q15	I am an ethical person.	4.23	-14.58 ***
Q16	I identify with the values of the Republican Party.	3.23	-2.15 **
Q17	I identify with the values of the Democratic Party.	2.88	1.17
Q18	Society has an obligation to give to those who cannot provide for themselves. i.e., welfare.	3.13	-1.31 *
Q19	Society has an obligation to redistribute wealth from the wealthy to the poor.	2.83	1.52 *
Q20	I am religious.	3.68	-6.38 **
Q21	I worship frequently (usually once a week or more).	3.29	-2.52 ***
Q22	People are essentially good.	3.50	-5.49 ***
Q23	The most important thing is to have faith in God.	3.59	-4.85 ***

Note 1: Scores ranged from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree; the survey included 139 students, undergraduate and graduate; T-scores indicate significantly different from neutral (3.0): *= $<.10$, **= $<.05$, ***= $<.01$.

Exhibit 3

Results of Analysis by Major (Field of Study)

Question	Major	N	Mean	Sig.
Q1	Accounting	46	4.22	
	Business	93	4.18	
	Total	139	4.19	
Q2	Accounting	46	3.70	
	Business	93	3.87	
	Total	139	3.81	
Q3	Accounting	46	4.26	*
	Business	93	4.05	
	Total	139	4.12	
Q4	Accounting	46	4.39	
	Business	93	4.44	
	Total	139	4.42	
Q5	Accounting	46	4.63	
	Business	93	4.51	
	Total	139	4.55	
Q6	Accounting	46	4.04	
	Business	93	4.12	
	Total	139	4.09	
Q7	Accounting	46	3.63	
	Business	93	3.83	
	Total	139	3.76	
Q8	Accounting	46	2.80	
	Business	93	2.97	
	Total	139	2.91	
Q9	Accounting	46	2.59	***
	Business	93	3.12	
	Total	139	2.94	
Q10	Accounting	46	3.39	
	Business	93	3.37	
	Total	139	3.37	
Q11	Accounting	46	3.83	
	Business	93	3.76	
	Total	139	3.78	

Question	Major	N	Mean	Sig.
Q12	Accounting	46	3.52	*
	Business	93	3.76	
	Total	139	3.68	
Q13	Accounting	46	2.93	***
	Business	93	3.55	
	Total	139	3.35	
Q14	Accounting	46	2.96	**
	Business	93	3.41	
	Total	139	3.26	
Q15	Accounting	46	4.39	*
	Business	93	4.15	
	Total	139	4.23	
Q16	Accounting	46	3.41	
	Business	93	3.14	
	Total	139	3.23	
Q17	Accounting	46	2.72	
	Business	93	2.96	
	Total	139	2.88	
Q18	Accounting	46	2.96	
	Business	93	3.22	
	Total	139	3.13	
Q19	Accounting	46	2.61	*
	Business	93	2.94	
	Total	139	2.83	
Q20	Accounting	46	3.85	
	Business	93	3.60	
	Total	139	3.68	
Q21	Accounting	46	3.43	
	Business	93	3.23	
	Total	139	3.29	
Q22	Accounting	46	3.63	
	Business	93	3.43	
	Total	139	3.50	
Q23	Accounting	46	3.67	
	Business	93	3.55	
	Total	139	3.59	

Note : *p<0.1, **p<.05, ***p<.01

Exhibit 4

Results of Analysis by Ethical Perspective

Question	Ethics	N	Mean	Sig.
Q1	Not Ethical	20	3.60	***
	Ethical	119	4.29	
	Total	139	4.19	
Q2	Not Ethical	20	3.55	*
	Ethical	119	3.86	
	Total	139	3.81	
Q3	Not Ethical	20	3.65	***
	Ethical	119	4.20	
	Total	139	4.12	
Q4	Not Ethical	20	4.05	**
	Ethical	119	4.49	
	Total	139	4.42	
Q5	Not Ethical	20	4.10	***
	Ethical	119	4.62	
	Total	139	4.55	
Q6	Not Ethical	20	3.85	*
	Ethical	119	4.14	
	Total	139	4.09	
Q7	Not Ethical	20	3.75	
	Ethical	119	3.76	
	Total	139	3.76	
Q8	Not Ethical	20	2.75	
	Ethical	119	2.94	
	Total	139	2.91	
Q9	Not Ethical	20	3.00	
	Ethical	119	2.93	
	Total	139	2.94	
Q10	Not Ethical	20	3.25	
	Ethical	119	3.39	
	Total	139	3.37	
Q11	Not Ethical	20	3.40	**
	Ethical	119	3.85	
	Total	139	3.78	

Question	Ethics	N	Mean	Sig.
Q12	Not Ethical	20	3.40	*
	Ethical	119	3.73	
	Total	139	3.68	
Q13	Not Ethical	20	3.25	
	Ethical	119	3.36	
	Total	139	3.35	
Q14	Not Ethical	20	3.20	
	Ethical	119	3.27	
	Total	139	3.26	
Q15	Not Ethical	20	2.30	***
	Ethical	119	4.55	
	Total	139	4.23	
Q16	Not Ethical	20	2.95	
	Ethical	119	3.28	
	Total	139	3.23	
Q17	Not Ethical	20	3.25	*
	Ethical	119	2.82	
	Total	139	2.88	
Q18	Not Ethical	20	3.05	
	Ethical	119	3.14	
	Total	139	3.13	
Q19	Not Ethical	20	2.95	
	Ethical	119	2.81	
	Total	139	2.83	
Q20	Not Ethical	20	3.50	
	Ethical	119	3.71	
	Total	139	3.68	
Q21	Not Ethical	20	3.05	
	Ethical	119	3.34	
	Total	139	3.29	
Q22	Not Ethical	20	3.45	
	Ethical	119	3.50	
	Total	139	3.50	
Q23	Not Ethical	20	3.25	
	Ethical	119	3.65	
	Total	139	3.59	

Note : *p<0.1, **p<.05, ***p<.01

Exhibit 5

Results of Analysis by Political Affiliation

Question	Political Affiliation	N	Mean	Sig.
Q1	Liberal	44	4.19	
	Conservative	95	4.20	
	Total	139	4.19	
Q2	Liberal	44	3.84	
	Conservative	95	3.75	
	Total	139	3.81	
Q3	Liberal	44	4.15	
	Conservative	95	4.07	
	Total	139	4.12	
Q4	Liberal	44	4.44	
	Conservative	95	4.39	
	Total	139	4.42	
Q5	Liberal	44	4.58	
	Conservative	95	4.48	
	Total	139	4.55	
Q6	Liberal	44	4.09	
	Conservative	95	4.11	
	Total	139	4.09	
Q7	Liberal	44	3.67	
	Conservative	95	3.95	*
	Total	139	3.76	
Q8	Liberal	44	2.82	
	Conservative	95	3.11	*
	Total	139	2.91	
Q9	Liberal	44	2.74	
	Conservative	95	3.39	***
	Total	139	2.94	
Q10	Liberal	44	3.40	
	Conservative	95	3.32	
	Total	139	3.37	
Q11	Liberal	44	3.74	
	Conservative	95	3.89	
	Total	139	3.78	

Question	Political Affiliation	N	Mean	Sig.
Q12	Liberal	44	3.65	
	Conservative	95	3.75	
	Total	139	3.68	
Q13	Liberal	44	3.28	
	Conservative	95	3.50	
	Total	139	3.35	
Q14	Liberal	44	3.09	
	Conservative	95	3.61	**
	Total	139	3.26	
Q15	Liberal	44	4.32	
	Conservative	95	4.05	*
	Total	139	4.23	
Q16	Liberal	44	3.50	
	Conservative	95	2.66	***
	Total	139	3.23	
Q17	Liberal	44	2.22	
	Conservative	95	4.30	***
	Total	139	2.88	
Q18	Liberal	44	2.95	
	Conservative	95	3.53	***
	Total	139	3.13	
Q19	Liberal	44	2.48	
	Conservative	95	3.57	***
	Total	139	2.83	
Q20	Liberal	44	3.61	
	Conservative	95	3.84	
	Total	139	3.68	
Q21	Liberal	44	3.28	
	Conservative	95	6.32	
	Total	139	3.29	
Q22	Liberal	44	3.44	
	Conservative	95	3.61	
	Total	139	3.50	
Q23	Liberal	44	3.45	
	Conservative	95	3.89	**
	Total	139	3.59	

Note : *p<0.1, **p<.05, ***p<.01

Exhibit 6

Results of Analysis by Religiosity

Question	Religiosity	N	Mean	Sig.
Q1	Not religious	71	4.11	
	Religious	68	4.28	
	Total	139	4.19	
Q2	Not religious	71	3.70	*
	Religious	68	3.93	
	Total	139	3.81	
Q3	Not religious	71	4.01	*
	Religious	68	4.24	
	Total	139	4.12	
Q4	Not religious	71	4.39	
	Religious	68	4.46	
	Total	139	4.42	
Q5	Not religious	71	4.61	
	Religious	68	4.49	
	Total	139	4.55	
Q6	Not religious	71	4.03	
	Religious	68	4.16	
	Total	139	4.09	
Q7	Not religious	71	3.70	
	Religious	68	3.82	
	Total	139	3.76	
Q8	Not religious	71	2.72	88
	Religious	68	3.12	
	Total	139	2.91	
Q9	Not religious	71	2.77	88
	Religious	68	3.12	
	Total	139	2.94	
Q10	Not religious	71	3.23	88
	Religious	68	3.53	
	Total	139	3.37	
Q11	Not religious	71	3.59	88
	Religious	68	3.99	
	Total	139	3.78	

Note: *p<0.1, **p<.05, ***p<.01

Question	Religiosity	N	Mean	Sig.
Q12	Not religious	71	3.80	*
	Religious	68	3.56	
	Total	139	3.68	
Q13	Not religious	71	3.33	
	Religious	68	3.37	
	Total	139	3.35	
Q14	Not religious	71	3.08	*
	Religious	68	3.44	
	Total	139	3.26	
Q15	Not religious	71	4.18	
	Religious	68	4.28	
	Total	139	4.23	
Q16	Not religious	71	3.00	**
	Religious	68	3.47	
	Total	139	3.23	
Q17	Not religious	71	2.83	
	Religious	68	2.93	
	Total	139	2.88	
Q18	Not religious	71	3.04	
	Religious	68	3.22	
	Total	139	3.13	
Q19	Not religious	71	2.75	
	Religious	68	2.91	
	Total	139	2.83	
Q20	Not religious	71	2.87	***
	Religious	68	4.53	
	Total	139	3.68	
Q21	Not religious	71	2.13	***
	Religious	68	4.51	
	Total	139	3.29	
Q22	Not religious	71	3.32	**
	Religious	68	3.68	
	Total	139	3.50	
Q23	Not religious	71	2.62	***
	Religious	68	4.60	
	Total	139	3.59	

Exhibit 7

Results of Analysis by Gender

Question	Gender	N	Mean	Sig.
Q1	Male	65	4.17	
	Female	74	4.22	
	Total	139	4.19	
Q2	Male	65	3.74	
	Female	74	3.88	
	Total	139	3.81	
Q3	Male	65	4.11	
	Female	74	4.14	
	Total	139	4.12	
Q4	Male	65	4.34	
	Female	74	4.50	
	Total	139	4.42	
Q5	Male	65	4.48	
	Female	74	4.61	
	Total	139	4.55	
Q6	Male	65	4.06	
	Female	74	4.12	
	Total	139	4.09	
Q7	Male	65	3.78	
	Female	74	3.74	
	Total	139	3.76	
Q8	Male	65	2.85	
	Female	74	2.97	
	Total	139	2.91	
Q9	Male	65	2.80	
	Female	74	3.07	*
	Total	139	2.94	
Q10	Male	65	3.29	
	Female	74	3.45	
	Total	139	3.37	
Q11	Male	65	3.65	
	Female	74	3.91	*
	Total	139	3.78	

Question	Gender	N	Mean	Sig.
Q12	Male	65	3.65	
	Female	74	3.72	
	Total	139	3.68	
Q13	Male	65	3.40	
	Female	74	3.30	
	Total	139	3.35	
Q14	Male	65	3.32	
	Female	74	3.20	
	Total	139	3.26	
Q15	Male	65	4.18	
	Female	74	4.27	
	Total	139	4.23	
Q16	Male	65	3.35	
	Female	74	3.12	
	Total	139	3.23	
Q17	Male	65	2.83	
	Female	74	2.92	
	Total	139	2.88	
Q18	Male	65	3.20	
	Female	74	3.07	
	Total	139	3.13	
Q19	Male	65	2.75	
	Female	74	2.89	
	Total	139	2.83	
Q20	Male	65	3.75	
	Female	74	3.62	
	Total	139	3.68	
Q21	Male	65	3.49	
	Female	74	3.12	*
	Total	139	3.29	
Q22	Male	65	3.37	
	Female	74	3.61	*
	Total	139	3.50	
Q23	Male	65	3.75	
	Female	74	3.45	
	Total	139	3.59	

Note : *p<0.1,**p<.05, ***p<.01

Exhibit 8

Summary Exploratory Factor Analysis of Survey Items (N = 139)

Item ^a	Rotated Factor Loadings (Varimax)				
	Religi- osity	Work Flexi- bility	Flexi- bility Type	Politi- cal View	Self- Reli- ance
21. I worship frequently (usually once a week or more).	.92				
23. The most important thing in my life is faith in God.	.89				
20. I am religious.	.89				
3. Availability of flexible work arrangements is important to long-term job satisfaction.		.84			
2. Availability of flexible work arrangements is an important consideration in choosing an employer.		.71			
4. Availability of flexible work arrangements is especially important to employees with children.		.70			
12. Telecommuting.			.70		
8. Part-time work.			.69		
10. Work at home options.			.65		
9. Job sharing.			.59		
11. Special summer or holiday hours.			.49		

Exhibit 8--continued

Item ^a	Religi- osity	Work Flexi- bility	Flexi- bility Type	Politi- cal View	Self- Reli- ance
17. I identify with the values of the Democratic Party.				.73	
19. Society has an obligation to redistribute wealth from the wealthy to the poor.				.71	
18. Society has an obligation to give to those who cannot provide for themselves.				.68	
16. I identify with the values of the Republican Party.				-.64 ^b	
1. In choosing a career, I consider how my work-life balance will be affected.					.76
15. I am an ethical person.					.68
5. A healthy work-life balance leads to better job performance.					.51
Eigenvalues	4.43	2.77	2.39	1.50	1.30
Percent of variance explained	19.25	12.06	10.39	6.52	5.65
Cronbach's Alpha	.91	.76	.65	.672	.578

APPENDIX: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

	What is your current position? (check one)
	<input type="checkbox"/> a. Accounting student
	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Business student, Major: _____
	Age: _____
	Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F Years of work experience: _____
	Work-life balance refers to people spending sufficient time at their jobs while also spending enough time on other pursuits, such as family, hobbies, and community involvement. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.
	Scale:
	1 = Strongly Disagree 4 = Agree
	2 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Agree
	3 = Neutral
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. In choosing a career, I consider how my work-life balance will be affected.
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Availability of flexible work arrangement is an important consideration in choosing an employer.
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Availability of flexible work arrangements is important to long term job satisfaction.
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Availability of flexible work arrangement is especially important to employees with children.
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. A healthy work life balance leads to better job performance.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. A healthy work life balance leads to better ethical decision making.
	In my future job, the availability of the following flexible work arrangements will be very important to me:
<input type="checkbox"/>	7. Flex-time. (There are certain hours of the day when employees must work, while the rest of the day is "flex-time" in which employees choose when to work.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	8. Part time work.

Appendix--continued

___ 9.	Job sharing. (Two employees share the same position; splitting the time and responsibility required for the job.)
___ 10.	Work at home options.
___ 11.	Special summer or holiday hours.
___ 12.	Telecommuting. (Employees have flexibility in where and when they work by using mobile telecommunications technology.)
	I agree or disagree with the following:
	Scale:
	1 = Strongly Disagree 4 = Agree
	2 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Agree
	3 = Neutral
___ 13.	Within a business, the ends justify the means.
___ 14.	Behavior in business that is legal, is ethical.
___ 15.	I am an ethical person.
___ 16.	I identify with the values of the Republican Party.
___ 17.	I identify with the values of the Democratic Party.
___ 18.	Society has an obligation to give to those who cannot provide for themselves. i.e., welfare.
___ 19.	Society has an obligation to redistribute wealth from the wealthy to the poor.
___ 20.	I am religious.
___ 21.	I worship frequently (usually once a week or more).
___ 22.	People are essentially good.
___ 23.	The most important thing is to have faith in God.