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An examination of the work-life interface of management consultants in South Africa

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An Examination of the Work-Life Interface of Management Consultants in South Africa

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A research report submitted to the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Engineering.

Johannesburg 2021

DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master's degree in Engineering Management at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. This research report has not been submitted before for any degree or examination to any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.



Rheshim Kuverjee	.
(Name)	*(Signature)*

23	day of	November	2021
(Day)		*(Month)*	*(Year)*

ABSTRACT

This research examined the work-life interface of management consultants in South Africa and the consequent impact on their quality of life and work-life balance. The purpose of the study was to develop mitigation strategies to improve employees' work-life balance, thereby improving the organisation's efficiency.

A quantitative, descriptive research design was adopted, leveraging a unique framework to assess the work-life balance of management consultants. The framework comprised of a *Roof Span* representing *Overall Work-life Balance* and three *Floors – Work-life, Personal-life and Family-life* – representing the domains of work-life balance.

The *Overall Work-life Balance* domain indicated that most consultants are dissatisfied with their work-life balance and cannot manage their stress during the week. The *Work-life* domain found that consultants spend on average 69 hours per week on work-related activities. These extended hours negatively impact the consultants' quality of life and impede the firm's organisational performance. Across the *Personal-life* domain, consultants spend insufficient time on sleep and regularly attend to work-related activities during their personal time. Within the *Family-life* domain, consultants dedicate a portion of their day towards family-related activities but seldomly take up any firm flexibility programmes.

The researcher recommends consulting firms adopt identified mitigation strategies, which provide consultants with time to improve their work-life balance, resulting in an improvement in the firm's organisational efficiency. The immediate mitigation strategies that can be implemented include providing predicate time off to employees, ensuring adequate resourcing on projects to manage workload, managing project scope upfront and improving accessibility of leave days to employees.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research report, firstly, to my parents, Naresh and Radha Kuverjee, for their unwavering support, love and guidance throughout my Master's journey. My brothers, Virag and Akhil Kuverjee, for continuously motivating me to complete this research report. Lastly, I would like to dedicate this document to my partner, Neha, for her love and support while working full-time to complete this research report. Thank you all for your endless love, support, sacrifices, and guidance. Without all of you, this research report would not have been possible.

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Firstly, I would like to express gratitude to my fantastic superstar of a supervisor, Lorrainne Doherty, for her guidance and support throughout the development of this research report. She has demystified the grey areas for me and certainly provided the necessary steer to complete this research report.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents **Page**

DECLARATION i
ABSTRACT ii
DEDICATION iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS iv
LIST OF FIGURES viii
LIST OF TABLES xi
LIST OF ACRONYMS xiii

PREFACE 1

1 INTRODUCTION 2

1.1 Research Background 2
1.2 Problem Statement 5
1.2.1 Research problem overview 5
1.2.2 Working hours in management consulting firms 6
1.3 Critical Research Question 9
1.4 Objectives 9
1.5 Summary of Research Method 10
1.6 Limitations of the Research 12
1.7 Outline of Chapters 13

2 LITERATURE REVIEW 15

2.1 Overview of Research in the Consulting Industry 15
2.2 The Need for Work-Life Balance in Consulting Firms 17
2.3 An Overview of Work-Life Conflict 18
2.3.1 Causes of work-life conflict 19
2.3.2 Impact of work-life conflict 20
2.4 Defining Work-Life Balance 21
2.5 Examining Work-Life Balance 22
2.6 Quality of Life Parameters 23
2.6.1 Work-life domain 23
2.6.2 Personal-life domain 25
2.6.3 Family-life domain 27

3 RESEARCH METHODS 29

3.1 Research Design 29

3.2 Research Sample 32
3.3 Data Interpretation and Analysis 34
3.3.1 Process to assess the impact on Work-life Balance and Quality of Life 34
3.3.2 Process to develop mitigation strategies 40
3.4 Research Instrumentation 42

4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS 44

5 RESULTS AND RESEARCH INSIGHTS 45

5.1 Roof span - Overall Work-life Balance 45
5.2 First Floor - Work-life 49
5.2.1 Room 1 - Consulting Role and Function 49
5.2.2 Room 2 - Work Time 60
5.3 Second Floor - Personal-life 68
5.3.1 Room 3 - Health 68
5.3.2 Room 4 - Personal Time 77
5.4 Third Floor - Family-life 84
5.4.1 Room 5 - Family Time 84

6 MITIGATION STRATEGIES 91

6.1 Mitigation Strategies from Research Insights 91
6.1.1 Mitigation strategies from research insights: Consulting Role and Function 92
6.1.2 Mitigation strategies from research insights: Work Time 94
6.1.3 Mitigation strategies from research insights: Health 95
6.1.4 Mitigation strategies from research insights: Personal Time 96
6.1.5 Mitigation strategies from research insights: Family Time 97
6.2 Mitigation Strategies from the Questionnaire 98
6.2.1 Consultant's mitigation strategies: Overall Work-life Balance 99
6.2.2 Consultant's mitigation strategies: Consulting Role and Function 100
6.2.3 Consultant's mitigation strategies: Work Time 101
6.2.4 Consultant's mitigation strategies: Personal Time 102

7 CONCLUSION 103

7.1 Conclusion: Roof span - Overall Work-life Balance 103
7.2 Conclusion: Room 1 - Consulting Role and Function 103
7.3 Conclusion: Room 2 - Work Time 104
7.4 Conclusion: Room 3 - Health 104

7.5 Conclusion: Room 4 - Personal Time 104
7.6 Conclusion: Room 5 - Family Time 105
7.7 Conclusion: Impact on Work-life Balance and Quality of Life 105
7.8 Conclusion: Mitigation Strategies 106
7.8.1 Conclusion: mitigation strategies for Roof span - Overall Work-life Balance 107
7.8.2 Conclusion: mitigation strategies for Room 1 - Consulting Role and Function 107
7.8.3 Conclusion: mitigation strategies for Room 2 - Work Time 108
7.8.4 Conclusion: mitigation strategies for Room 3 - Health 108
7.8.5 Conclusion: mitigation strategies for Room 4 - Personal Time ... 109
7.8.6 Conclusion: mitigation strategies for Room 5 - Family Time 109

8 RECOMMENDATIONS 110

8.1 Recommendations for Consulting Firms 110
8.2 Recommendations for Future Research 112

REFERENCES 114

APPENDIX A: ETHICS DOCUMENTS 136
APPENDIX B: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE 140
APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES 143
APPENDIX D: QUESTIONNAIRE RECOMMENDATIONS 153
APPENDIX E: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS 154
APPENDIX F: VARIABLE FREQUENCIES 155
APPENDIX G: CORRELATION OUTPUT 159

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure **Page**

Figure 1.1: Working hours in consulting firms 7
Figure 1.2: Introduction - framework of reference for the research 10
Figure 1.3: Mitigation strategy development process 11
Figure 3.1: Framework of reference for research 30
Figure 3.2: Gender and age frequencies of the research sample 33
Figure 3.3: Tenure frequencies of the research sample 33
Figure 3.4: Framework of reference - assessment process 34
Figure 3.5: Summary of the purpose, inputs, and outputs of the assessment areas 35
Figure 3.6: Example of outputs of the 'As-is' Domain State assessment area 36
Figure 3.7: Example of outputs of the Domain Interface with Work-life Balance assessment area 39
Figure 3.8: Illustration of the process followed to determine the Impact on Work-life Balance & Quality of Life 40
Figure 3.9: Mitigation strategy development process from research insights 41
Figure 3.10: Mitigation strategy development process from the consultants' recommendations 42
Figure 5.1: Framework of reference with the research focus on the Roof span – Overall Work-life Balance 45
Figure 5.2: Satisfaction with Work-life Balance 46
Figure 5.3: Ability to manage stress 47
Figure 5.4: Correlations among Work-life Balance and stress 48
Figure 5.5: Framework of reference with the research focus on the First Floor – Work-life 49
Figure 5.6: Average total weekly hours spent in the Consulting Role and Function domain 51
Figure 5.7: Average daily hours worked in core consulting activities 51

Figure 5.8: Client-facing activities 52
Figure 5.9: Individual consulting activities 53
Figure 5.10: Internal team meetings 53
Figure 5.11: Average weekly hours worked on ancillary consulting activities 54
Figure 5.12: Training and development activities 55
Figure 5.13: Firm-building activities 55
Figure 5.14: Mentoring, coaching and feedback activities 56
Figure 5.15: Correlation among Consulting Role and Function variables and Satisfaction with Work-Life Balance 57
Figure 5.16: Sum of the average hours worked during the week and weekend 61
Figure 5.17: Average daily hours spent on Work Time variables 62
Figure 5.18: Hours worked during the week 62
Figure 5.19: Hours worked during the weekend 63
Figure 5.20: Commuting to work 64
Figure 5.21: Breaks at work 64
Figure 5.22: Correlation among Work Time variables and Satisfaction with Work-Life Balance 65
Figure 5.23: Framework of reference with the research focus on the Second Floor – Personal-life 68
Figure 5.24: Average daily hours spent on Health activities 69
Figure 5.25: Hours of sleep 70
Figure 5.26: Physical health activities 71
Figure 5.27: Mental health activities 72
Figure 5.28: Assistance to improve mental and/or physical health 73
Figure 5.29: Health practitioners used 73
Figure 5.30: Correlations among Health variables and Satisfaction with Work-life Balance 74
Figure 5.32: Average daily hours spent on Personal Time activities 78
Figure 5.33: Personal recreation time 78
Figure 5.34: Attending to work in personal time 79

Figure 5.35: Leave days taken per year 80
Figure 5.36: Correlation among Personal Time variables and Satisfaction with Work-life Balance 80
Figure 5.37: Framework of reference with the research focus on the Third Floor – Family-life 84
Figure 5.38: Average daily hours spent on Family Time variables 85
Figure 5.39: Assisting in family/household activities 86
Figure 5.40: Family recreation time 87
Figure 5.41: Flexibility programmes taken 87
Figure 5.42: Flexibility programmes used by consultants 88
Figure 5.43: Correlation among Family Time variables and Satisfaction with Work-life Balance 89
Figure 6.1: Process to develop mitigation strategies from research insights 91
Figure 7.1: Key for mitigation strategies 107

LIST OF TABLES

Table **Page**

Table 2.1: Overview of research in consulting 16
Table 3.1: Variables assessed in the research questionnaire 31
Table 3.2: Shapiro-Wilk test for normality results 37
Table 3.3: Research tools 43
Table 5.1: Overall Work-life Balance variables 46
Table 5.2: Consulting Role and Function variables 50
Table 5.3: Work Time variables 61
Table 5.4: Health variables 69
Table 5.5: Personal Time variables 77
Table 5.6: Family Time variables 84
Table 6.1: Room 1 mitigation strategies for Consulting Role and Function research insights 92
Table 6.2: Room 2 mitigation strategy for the Work Time research insight 94
Table 6.3: Room 3 mitigation strategies for Health research insights 95
Table 6.4: Room 4 mitigation strategies for Personal Time research insights 96
Table 6.5: Room 5 mitigation strategy for the Family Time research insight 97
Table 6.6: Roof span consultant mitigation strategies - Overall Work-life Balance responses 99
Table 6.7: Room 1 consultant mitigation strategies - Consulting Role and Function responses 100
Table 6.8: Room 2 consultant mitigation strategies - Work Time responses 101
Table 6.9: Room 4 consultant mitigation strategies - Personal Time responses 102
Table 7.1: Consolidated Impact on Work-life Balance and Quality of Life 105

Table 7.2: Roof span mitigation strategies – Overall Work-life Balance 107
Table 7.3: Room 1 mitigation strategies - Consulting Role and Function 108
Table 7.4: Room 2 mitigation strategies - Work Time 108
Table 7.5: Room 3 mitigation strategies - Health 109
Table 7.6: Room 4 mitigation strategies - Personal Time 109
Table 7.7: Room 5 mitigation strategies - Family Time 109

LIST OF ACRONYMS

Acronym	Explanation
ILO	International Labour Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
WLB	Work-life Balance
WLC	Work-life Conflict
QL	Quality of Life
ICT	Information, Communication and Technology
WLI	Work-life Interface
WFI	Work-family Interface
IT	Information Technology
WFC	Work-family Conflict
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
WHO	World Health Organisation
HREC	Human Resource Ethics Clearance

PREFACE

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 rendered a large proportion of the global and local workforce unable to travel to work to contain the spread of the virus (Vyas and Butakhieo, 2021). South Africa, like many countries, was placed under a national lockdown resulting in many employees working remotely during this period (SANews.gov, 2020). Management consulting, like any other industry, was impacted by the pandemic. Beroe Inc. (2020) estimated nearly 80% of consultants were working remotely during national lockdowns, drastically reducing travel time.

The current research regarding management consultants in South Africa was intended to be conducted under traditional working conditions. However, employees at the selected firm worked under remote conditions, with only leadership required to be present at the client site. Given these operating conditions, the reader must note the limited context of South African working conditions within the study.

A global study on remote working during the pandemic (DeFilippis *et al.*, 2020) indicated the average workday increased by 48.5 minutes, driven by an increase in the number of emails sent and virtual meetings scheduled. Additionally, the study identified that remote workdays blur the boundaries between work and life as employees started sending more emails after business hours, lengthening the workday.

When reading the study, the reader should be cognisant of the potential impact of remote working conditions as the study results were gathered under these operating conditions. However, the COVID-19 pandemic presented the unique opportunity to examine the work-life interface of management consultants working under remote conditions, which applies to local and global management consulting firms.

1 INTRODUCTION

The research examines the work-life interface of management consultants in South Africa. This chapter provides the context of the research problem through the background discussing work-life issues in South Africa and the management consulting industry and the current research gaps. The researcher then expands on the problem statement by providing an overview of the conflict experienced by management consultants due to the long hours worked.

This chapter discusses the critical research question, objectives of the examination and a summary of the research method applied. The researcher outlines the limitations of the research, which also serves as the scope of the research report. Lastly, the researcher provides a preview of the organisation of the remainder of the research report.

1.1 Research Background

A recent study has shown that South Africa is ranked eighth in the longest working hours in the world (Feenstra, Inklaar and Timmer, 2017). Data from the International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2019) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2019) indicated that South Africa's mean weekly hours worked per employed person was 43 hours. In South Africa, 18% of the population work more than 48 hours per week, which is 7% more than the OECD (2019) average of 11%.

The OECD (2019) benchmark of 40 countries indicated that South Africa ranked 36 on employees working exceedingly long hours. The OECD (2019) also indicated that South Africa has some of the worst Work-Life Balance (WLB) statistics globally, ranking 31 out of 40 countries assessed. The OECD (2019) WLB indicator revealed that South Africa's WLB score decreased by an average annual rate of 0.5% since 2005.

Research into work-life issues has been growing due to advances in technology and globalisation, which have been linked to an increase in Work-Life Conflict (WLC) and stress for employees (Eby *et al.*, 2005; Greenhaus and ten Brummelhuis, 2013). The increase in global competitiveness has placed immense pressure on employees to become more flexible and work longer hours (Major, Turner and Fletcher, 2006). The increasing prevalence of WLC has consequently resulted in an overall decrease in employees' Quality of Life (QL) (Nigade and Bhola, 2016).

The use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) has enabled employees to work 24/7, thus creating an "always-on" organisational culture (Major and Germano, 2006). The use of ICTs has led to an increase in work hours and work intensification and has consequently eroded employees' personal and family time (Ciolfi and Lockley, 2018). The increased usage of ICTs has blurred the interface between work and private life (Field and Chan, 2018). The lack of boundaries between work and 'life' has impacted individuals' WLB (Field and Chan, 2018).

Work-Life Interface (WLI) is the intersection between an individual's work and personal life (Edwards and Rothbard, 2000). There are various aspects of an individual's life, which intersect with work, such as family, leisure, and health. The interface between work and life can be bi-directional; work can intersect with the private life and vice versa (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985; Frone, Russell and Cooper, 1992; Higgins, Duxbury and Irving, 1992). The interface can be adverse, leading to WLC or beneficial, leading to work-life enrichment (Greenhaus and Allen, 2011).

The harmonisation of an individual's work and private life domains has been a much-debated topic amongst researchers (McMillan, Morris and Atchley, 2011). However, there has been little attention devoted to the relationship between the work and private life domain (Huffman *et al.*, 2013). There is a lack of commonly established research on the intersection between work

and life (Pitt-Catsouphes and Matz-Costa, 2008). WLC currently has no prevailing framework or perspective, which is universally established (Pitt-Catsouphes and Matz-Costa, 2008).

An industry that would appear to be ready for study in the area of WLI is management consulting. Management consulting is a profession notorious for its long hours, heavy workload, travel requirements and is regarded as a stressful profession (Meriläinen *et al.*, 2004; Consulting Magazine, 2010). Additionally, consulting firms are known to design and market many flexibility policies to improve employees' WLB (Benko and Weisberg, 2007; Perlow, 2012; Reid, 2015). However, scholars have found that management consultants do not appear to take up these policies, even though such arrangements may alleviate WLC (Allen, 2001; Glass (2006); Wharton, Chivers and Blair-Loy, 2008; Kellogg, 2011; Wynn and Rao, 2020).

Management consultants are also expected to be readily available to both their organisation and their clients (Meriläinen *et al.*, 2004), which results in WLC and interferes with their WLI. Given these prominent features within a management consulting environment and the high stress experienced, the management consulting industry presents an extreme case to examine the WLI of employees.

There are three research gaps within WLI and the consulting industry, which the researcher has identified. First, existing research focuses primarily on the work-family interface (WFI) (Sirgy and Lee, 2018). The current research examines the interface between work-life, family-life, and the personal-life domains. Second, existing research does not explore the WLB of management consultants and the associated impact of the long working hours within their various life domains. This research identifies the impact of long work hours on the WLB of management consultants. Third, there is limited research conducted in the management consulting industry in South

Africa. The current research provides greater insight into the management consulting industry in South Africa.

1.2 Problem Statement

Management consultants experience significant WLC due to the long hours as part of their day-to-day activities. The WLC experienced by the consultants' impacts both the employees' WLB and the organisation's performance. The purpose of this study was to examine the hours spent by management consultants in their work and non-work activities and develop mitigation strategies to improve employees' WLB, thereby improving the organisation's efficiency.

1.2.1 Research problem overview

The long work hours experienced by management consultants, coupled with a lack of uptake of WLB policies, have increased the prevalence of WLC. This increase in WLC has led to a substantial amount of stress experienced by the consultants. The stress experienced by the consultants is mutually detrimental to themselves and to the firm as it does not contribute to organisational efficiency.

Like any other organisation, a consulting firm needs to be as efficient as possible to remain competitive in the industry. To improve organisational efficiency and enable better WLB for management consultants, consulting firms can develop targeted mitigation strategies based on an examination of the WLI to ensure an acceptable QL for their employees.

WLB mitigation strategies are defined as interventions in the work environment that enhance workers' autonomy in the process of coordinating and integrating work and non-work aspects of their lives (Kundu, 2013). In a nutshell, WLB strategies are initiatives offered by organisations to assist

employees to manage the demands of work and their personal life (Mccarthy, Darcy and Grady, 2010).

Organisations that improve WLB for their employees have realised an increase in organisational efficiency and reduced absenteeism, lateness, and staff turnover rates (Ford, Heinen and Langkamer, 2007). Additionally, organisations also reported higher employee loyalty and commitment, improved productivity and enhanced organisational image (Thompson and Prottas, 2006; Ford, Heinen and Langkamer, 2007).

1.2.2 Working hours in management consulting firms

Across the management consulting industry, extremely long work hours, overwork and extensive travel form part of a typical workweek (McCracken, 2000; Perlow, 2012; Reid, 2015; Wynn, 2018). The profession is notorious for high work time demands, which impede WLB (Vault Consulting Editors, 2002; Hewlett and Luce, 2007; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012). A management consultant may typically work between 50 to 80 hours per week (ConsultingFact, 2018).

The researcher draws on two studies, which evaluated the working hours of management consultants; the first by Consultancy (2017) and the second by Perlow and Porter (2009).

The survey results by Consultancy (2017) revealed that 77% of management consultants working in the top market management consulting firms work 9.3 hours more per week compared with agreed contracted hours. The study found differences in working hours between management consulting firms, gender, rank, and tenure, as indicated in **Figure 1.1.1**. The results indicated that junior consultants work longer hours compared with senior consultants. However, working hours appeared to increase from manager level upward. Women appeared to work fewer hours compared with men, approximately one hour less per week. The difference in working

hours between men and women increased at the senior manager and director positions to between two to four hours per week. Male consultants at the director and partner positions appeared to work more than 12 hours more per week compared with contractually agreed hours.

Within strategy consulting firms, 100% of management consultants indicated they work more than 20 hours of overtime per week. An essential finding of the survey was that consultants with a longer tenure at their firms work fewer overtime hours a week relative to junior consultants.

Perlow and Porter's (2009) study confirms these findings in a survey of employees working in the professional service industry (management consultants, investment bankers, accountants, lawyers, Information Technology (IT), and the like). The survey revealed that 94% of the 1000 participants interviewed indicated they work more than 50 hours per week. Approximately half of the survey group reported working more than 65 hours per week.

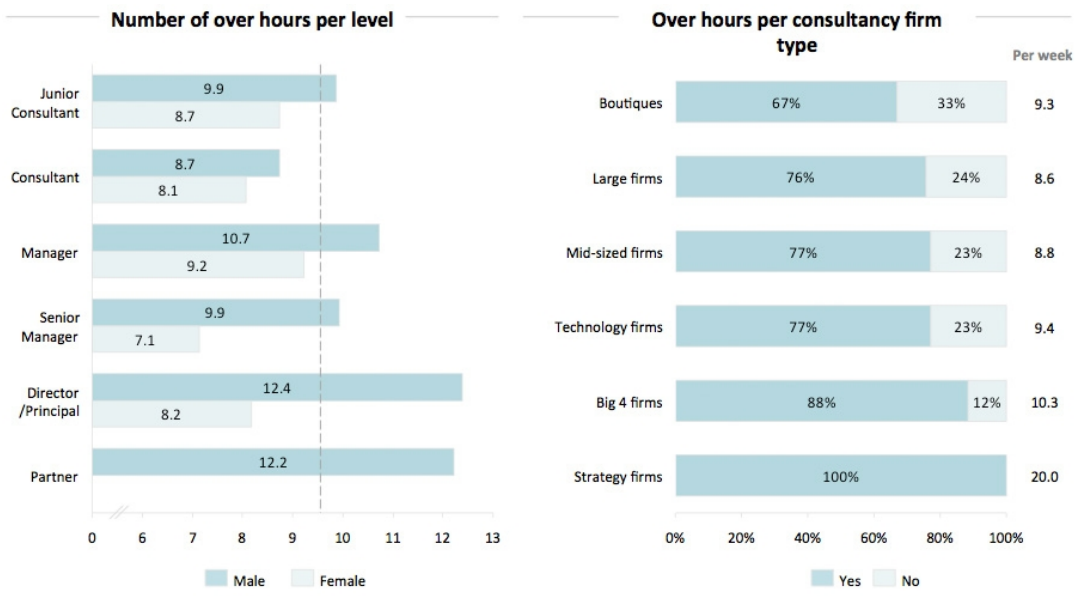


Figure 1.1: Working hours in consulting firms (Consultancy, 2017)

The long working hours have resulted in a significant amount of stress and WLC experienced by management consultants (Meriläinen *et al.*, 2004; Perlow and Porter, 2009; Wynn and Rao, 2020). The leading causes of stress experienced by consultants can be attributed to the limited time given to process projects, the pressure to perform, fulfilling client demands, the team dynamics, the nature of the consulting engagement, multiple deadlines and the volume of workload (Mühlhaus and Bouwmeester, 2016). Mühlhaus and Bouwmeester (2016) found these work stressors are interrelated.

WLC is a common problem faced in organisations, which has negative consequences for both the employee and employer. Negative stress experienced due to WLC is detrimental to an organisation's performance (Beauregard and Henry, 2009).

The significant WLC experienced by management consultants due to the long hours worked results in compromised employee performance, thus impacting their ability to efficiently deliver work to the firm and their clients (Beauregard and Henry, 2009). This inefficiency in performance results in a decrease in a firm's financial performance, increasing firm-related costs and reducing potential revenue due to the impacted performance.

Industrial engineer Allen Morgenstern (1930), the creator of the work simplification programme, coined the term "Work smarter, not harder" (Giordano, 2020). Applying the term to this context, WLB mitigation strategies can improve employees' WLB and ensure they work smarter and not harder. Therefore, to overcome the compromised performance due to WLC, firms can implement WLB mitigation strategies. By being more proficient in their work, consultants would be able to incorporate smarter ways of working.

Taking the above into account, the current research examines the WLI of management consultants to identify the nature of WLC experienced by employees in such firms and to develop mitigation strategies that can be used to address and promote WLB within the firm. The purpose of developing mitigation strategies is to ensure management consulting firms overcome inefficiencies and compromised performance due to WLC. By implementing the WLB mitigation strategies, management consulting firms can ensure employees work smarter and not harder.

1.3 Critical Research Question

The report answered the following critical research question:
What mitigation strategies can management consulting firms in South Africa use to improve employees' WLB and achieve a more desirable QL?

The following sub-questions assisted the researcher in answering the above critical research question:

- What is the impact of excessive work hours on employees' WLI and how does it affect management consultants' QL and WLB?

1.4 Objectives

The objectives of this research were to:

- Assess the impact of excessive work hours on the WLI and the consequent impact on management consultants' QL and WLB.
- Develop mitigation strategies management consulting firms in South Africa can use to improve employees' WLB and ensure an acceptable QL.

1.5 Summary of Research Method

The research applied a quantitative, positivist approach in its methodology, utilising a research questionnaire distributed to management consultants in a select firm in South Africa. The research design was based on a descriptive study. To achieve the objectives, the researcher applied two processes – the first to assess the impact of long work hours on WLB and QL and the second to develop mitigation strategies to improve WLB. The first objective was achieved through the framework of reference shown in **Figure 1.2**. The research questionnaire and results were structured according to the framework. The *Roof span* and *Floors* in the framework represent the domains of WLB explored in the report. Each *Room* in the framework was assessed as per the assessment areas A, B and C to the right of the framework.

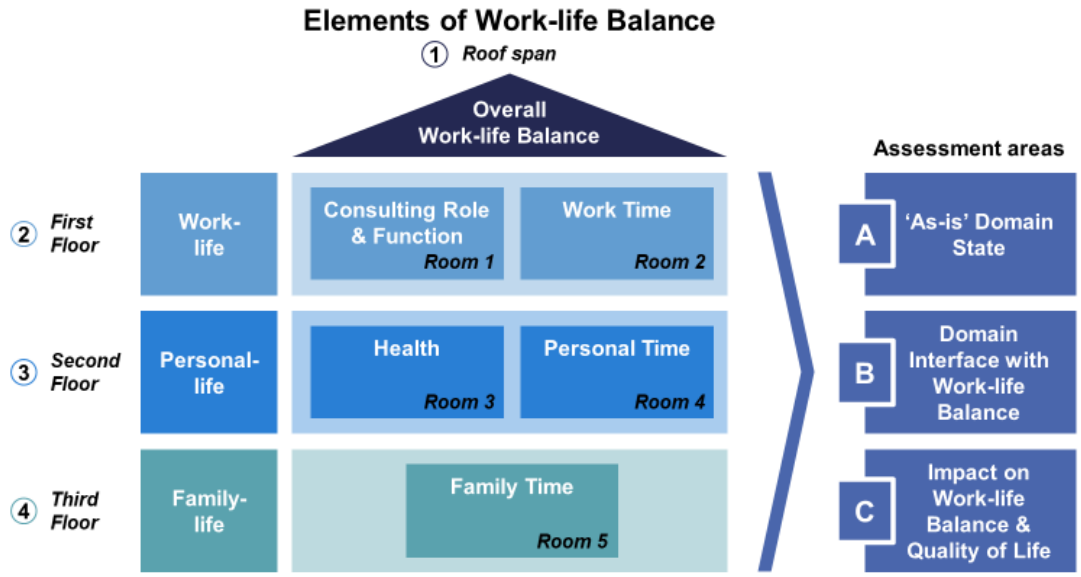


Figure 1.2: Introduction - framework of reference for the research

A brief description of the purpose and outcome of each assessment area is as follows:

A. The **'As-is' Domain State** provided a visual representation of the descriptive statistics and frequencies based on the survey results across

each research variable. Using the raw survey data as input, the researcher calculated basic descriptive statistics (mean, median, mode and standard deviation) using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) research tool.

B. The **Domain interface with Work-life Balance** determined correlations among research variables as per the framework and satisfaction with Work-life Balance. All research variables were correlated using Kendall's Tau correlation in SPSS.

C. **Impact on Work-life Balance & Quality of Life** was determined through research insights developed by leveraging the mean and frequencies in 'Assessment area A', correlations from 'Assessment area B' and incorporating relevant studies identified in the literature review.

To achieve the second objective of developing mitigation strategies to improve WLB, the researcher focused on two areas shown in **Figure 1.3**.

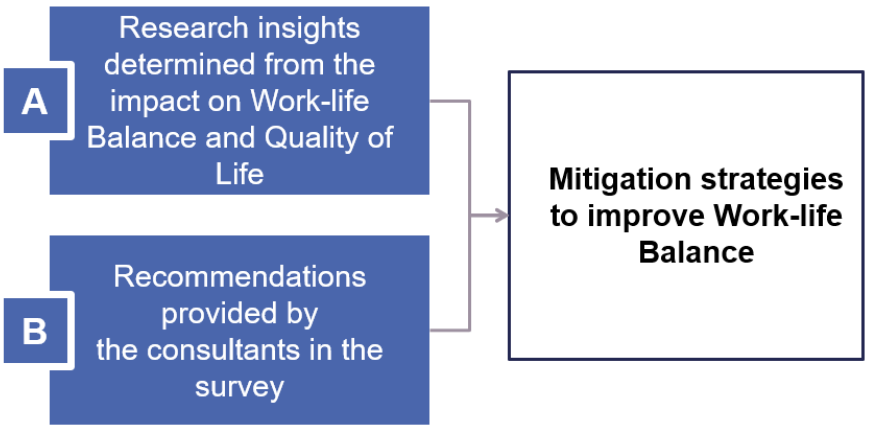


Figure 1.3: Mitigation strategy development process

A brief description of each area to develop mitigation strategies is outlined below:

A. Research insights determined from the impact on WLB and QL from 'Assessment area C' were used as input to develop mitigation strategies.

B. Recommendations provided by the consultants in the survey were grouped by theme and then used to develop mitigation strategies.

1.6 Limitations of the Research

As with many studies, the design and methodology of the current research is subject to limitations, of which the researcher identified four areas:

1. Sample size and selection.
2. Instruments and methods of data collection.
3. Limited previous research on the topic.
4. Exogenous influence.

1. Sample size and selection:

- The study only received 29 responses; therefore, the study was limited by sample size to generate a more statistically significant result.
- This study was only conducted at one management consulting firm in South Africa and may be subject to the specific firm's relevant projects and working conditions.
- This study's focus was targeted at management consultants in general; however, there may be differences when comparing the impact of WLB and QL against tenure, gender, rank, and age. The comparison between tenure, gender, rank, and age is also subject to sufficient sample size within each group.

2. Instruments and methods of data collection:

- The research tool required the management consultants to answer the questions across various rating scales (e.g., sleeping between 5 to 6 hours per day or 6 to 7 hours per day). However, these ranges are wide and present a directional view. The results may have a higher degree of accuracy if the consultants input specific information into the survey tool (e.g., sleeping 6.5 hours per day).
- The study was subject to the views of the management consultants; therefore, the results were reliant on their honest inputs within the survey.

- The survey was quantitative and could be further enhanced by conducting a qualitative survey to assess the management consultant's views on the impact of excessive working hours on WLB and QL.

3. Limited previous research on the topic:

- As discussed within the literature review, there is limited research conducted on the WLB of management consultants globally. Additionally, the researcher only identified one previously published study of management consultants in South Africa. Therefore, there are limited studies against which to compare results from a local and global context.

4. Exogenous influence:

- The research was intended to be conducted under normal circumstances where management consultants worked in the office or the respective client sites. However, the research was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa, which may have skewed the research results. The data and results of this study were based on consultants working under remote conditions; therefore, the results inadvertently serve as a work-from-home study of management consultants in South Africa.

1.7 Outline of Chapters

The main body of the research report consists of eight chapters, excluding references and appendices. A brief overview of the organisation of the remainder of the research report is as follows:

- **Chapter 1: Introduction** – introduces the research report with all supporting information such as the problem statement, critical research question and objectives. This chapter includes a summary of the research method applied and the limitation of the current research.

- **Chapter 2: Literature review** – a resume of history around the topic of research, which includes an overview of research in the consulting industry, the need for WLB in consulting firms and literature on the causes and impact of WLC. This chapter further details the definition of WLB along with the proposed parameters to measure WLB in this study.
- **Chapter 3: Research methods** – discusses the method procedure of the current research. This chapter discusses the salient points to the research procedure, including the research design, research sample, data interpretation and analysis, the process to develop mitigation strategies and research instruments used in the study.
- **Chapter 4: Ethical considerations** – elaborates on the formal permission and consent required, adherence to confidentiality, privacy and distribution and acknowledgement of plagiarism, falsification, and fabrication.
- **Chapter 5: Results and research insights** – discusses the results obtained from the survey, elaborates on the correlation between variables and WLB and assesses the impact of WLB and QL of each variable.
- **Chapter 6: Mitigation strategies** – identifies the mitigation strategies determined from the research insights and questionnaire to improve WLB and improve organisational efficiency.
- **Chapter 7: Conclusion** – summarises the critical points identified from the results and mitigation strategies.
- **Chapter 8: Recommendations** – outlines recommendations consulting firms can use to implement the mitigation strategies. Additionally, the researcher provides recommendations for future research based on findings in this study.
- **References**
- **Appendices**

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of the literature review was to relate the literature to the research objective of assessing the impact of excessive work hours on WLB and QL. The researcher provides an overview of research within the consulting industry and the gap this study seeks to fill. The literature review builds upon the identified problem of WLC experienced by management consultants and the need to address it through WLB. The review then expands on WLC by identifying the typical causes and the associated impact on both the firm and employee.

With the need to establish WLB to counter WLC, the researcher defines WLB and its characteristics. The researcher then elaborates by examining WLB through QL parameters within the domains of WLB defined, which are *Work-life, Personal-life* and *Family-life*. The literature review explores potential QL parameters across each domain and relevant subdomains used to examine the WLB of management consultants.

2.1 Overview of Research in the Consulting Industry

A client typically contracts a management consultant to leverage industry expertise and technical knowledge to solve significant organisational problems, create value, develop strategies, find enhanced ways of working and thereby, improve an organisation's financial and operational health (Cerruti, Tavoletti and Grieco, 2019; Human Resources MBA, 2020).

Management consultants' duties vary per industry, as does the nature of client engagements (Human Resources MBA, 2020). Management consultants will engage with all levels of the client's hierarchy, from entry-level employees to C-suite executives (Human Resources MBA, 2020). Typical duties found in any client engagement would be to: conduct extensive research and analysis, interview the client team, run focus groups, facilitate client workshops, prepare business proposals and

presentations, develop an implementation plan and manage client programmes (Prospects, 2020). The typical nature of the work of management consultants is recognised as demanding, given the magnitude of business problems they are required to solve (Prospects, 2020).

The researcher draws on a systematic review conducted by Cerruti, Tavoletti and Grieco (2019) to explore the existing research in the consulting industry. A summary of the research themes and domains explored is illustrated in **Table 2.1**.

Table 2.1: Overview of research in consulting (Cerruti, Tavoletti and Grieco, 2019)

Research themes	**Domains explored**
Drivers of consulting success	• Skills of a consultant • Human resource management • Innovation and knowledge management • Perceptions of success
Role of a management consulting firm	• Consulting firms as change agents • Consulting firms as uncertainty agents • Consulting firms as fashion setters
Client consultant relationship	• Characteristics of the client to consultant relationship • Outcomes of the client to consultant relationship • Management of the client to consultant relationship

The review indicates limited research conducted on WLB in management consulting (Cerruti, Tavoletti and Grieco, 2019). Further research indicates that researchers have explored work-life issues (Meriläinen *et al.*, 2004; Whittle, 2008; Perlow and Porter, 2009; Mühlhaus and Bouwmeester, 2016; Noury, Gand and Sardas, 2017; Wynn and Rao, 2020). The current research on work-life issues in management consulting is limited to qualitative investigations around work stress due to the nature of consulting.

There are, however, limited quantitative investigations on WLB within the consulting industry.

Additionally, there has only been one publication of the management consulting industry in South Africa (Oosthuizen, 2003), which presents a research gap in the local context. The countries which currently dominate management consulting research are the United Kingdom (UK), Australia, Sweden, the United States of America (USA) and the Netherlands (Cerruti, Tavoletti and Grieco, 2019).

2.2 The Need for Work-Life Balance in Consulting Firms

As previously discussed in Chapter 1, management consulting is a profession notorious for excessively long working hours (Vault Consulting Editors, 2002; Hewlett and Luce, 2007; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012). Excessive work hours have consistently been linked to challenges in balancing one's work and personal life (Moen and Yu, 2000; Tausig and Fenwick, 2001; Batt and Valcour, 2003). A study that combined the results of various researchers on WLB found that weekly hours of work was an integral determinant of an individual's WLB (Dex and Bond, 2005). Employees who work excessive hours experience numerous negative mental, physical, and social effects (Dex and Bond, 2005). Significant effects include stress, lack of free time, poor WLB and health risks (Strauss, 2016; Hsu *et al.*, 2019).

Further to this, management consulting firms offer some of the best workplace flexibility policies to reduce workload and accommodate employees' personal lives (McCracken, 2000; Perlow, 2012; Perlow and Kelly, 2014). Some of these policies include paid leave and sabbaticals, parental leave, decreased travel, remote working, free days-off between projects and part-time work (Benko and Weisberg, 2007; Perlow, 2012).

A study by Wynn and Rao (2020) of 50 management consultants who live and work in San Francisco, Atlanta and Washington DC in the USA found that although management consulting firms offer numerous flexible working policies, the consultants do not use them. Wynn and Rao (2020) found that management consultants preferred the liberty of managing their WLB rather than using company policies. Additionally, the study revealed management consultants routinely made family sacrifices, suffered from health problems and had poor relationships due to their busy schedules (Wynn and Rao, 2020).

The long work hours experienced by management consultants ultimately lead to WLC (Wynn and Rao, 2020). Furthermore, the lack of uptake of these universal flexibility policies to improve WLB indicates there is a need to consider the specifics of the broader activities of a consultant's work when designing organisational responses to WLB demands. There is a need to examine the broader factors, which potentially play an important role in enabling or constraining a consultant's WLB.

2.3 An Overview of Work-Life Conflict

As identified above, management consultants experience significant WLC due to the nature of the industry and profession. Various terms describe the conflict between individuals' WLB in relation to their work and non-work domains, such as WLC or Work-Family Conflict (WFC). For this research, the researcher has considered both terms within the context of the literature. The term WLC is used in contradiction with WLB (Gamage, 2013). WLC refers to the experiences of conflict between an individual's work and life domains (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985).

Voydanoff (2005, p.827) defined WLC as "A form of inter-role conflict in which the demands of work and life roles are incompatible in some respect, so the participation in one role is more difficult because of participation in the other role."

The challenge with research on WLC is that all forms of non-work conflict are grouped within the work-family measure (Wilson and Baumann, 2015). The research on WFC is focused on excessive work demands and its adverse outcomes on one's family (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985; Walumbwa *et al.*, 2004). WLC is seen as an extension to WFC, highlighting that the work-related role may interfere with an individual's personal-related role and interests (Kossek, 2016). Therefore, WLC experienced by the management consultants impacts their WLB by not only affecting their family-related role but also affecting their personal lives.

2.3.1 Causes of work-life conflict

Studies that have investigated the causes of WLC have pointed to the conflict arising from both work and family domains (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985; Walumbwa *et al.*, 2004). The focus of this research is, however, on the work-related causes of WLC for management consultants. Within the work domain, the typical causes of WLC are hours spent at work (Moen and Yu, 2000; Tausig and Fenwick, 2001; Batt and Valcour, 2003), work-related travel (DeFrank, Konopaske and Ivancevich, 2000; Mayerhofer *et al.*, 2004), time spent working on weekends (Beltagy *et al.*, 2018; Sato, Kuroda and Owan, 2020) and work demands related to an individual's role and function (Van Rijswijk *et al.*, 2004; Hughes and Parkes, 2007).

An emerging cause of WLC within the work domain is the time spent on ICT devices for work purposes, such as working on a laptop or addressing emails after work hours (Chesley, 2005; Barley, Meyerson and Grodal, 2011). ICT usage in the workplace has been associated with information overload, workplace interruption, high levels of connectedness to the workplace, increased work pressure and most notably, a blur between work-life boundaries (Chesley, 2005; Leonardi, Treem and Jackson, 2010; Fonner and Roloff, 2012; Mazmanian, Orlikowski and Yates, 2013; Rice *et al.*, 2017; Huijer, 2019). Using ICTs have been shown to increase the volume of work employees undertake in a day and blur spatial and temporal

boundaries, which have made it more challenging to separate work and non-work activities (Chesley, 2005; Barley, Meyerson and Grodal, 2011).

Perlow and Porter's (2009) study of management consultants found respondents spent between 20 and 25 hours in the week monitoring emails outside of the office. The respondents also indicated they frequently responded to emails within an hour of receiving a message from a colleague or the client (Perlow and Porter, 2009). Therefore, management consultants experience WLC not only from long working hours, work-related travel and demands of the consulting role and function but also by attending to work-related activities during their personal time (Perlow and Porter, 2009).

2.3.2 Impact of work-life conflict

WLC is a common problem faced in organisations, which has negative consequences for both the employee and employer (Giga and Hoel, 2003; Beauregard and Henry, 2009). Negative stress experienced because of WLC is detrimental to both the employee and an organisation's performance (Giga and Hoel, 2003; Beauregard and Henry, 2009). WLC has become a priority for organisations to address since it has been shown to have a negative impact on employees' physical health, psychological well-being, job satisfaction and productivity (Allen *et al.*, 2000; Felstead *et al.*, 2002; Bellavia and Frone, 2005; Kaiser *et al.*, 2011).

For an organisation to be efficient, it requires employees to perform optimally in a workday. However, stress experienced through WLC is seen to be detrimental to employees' performance (Kazmi, Amjad and Khan, 2008). Researchers have found that employees who experienced WLC due to work-related causes reported decreased performance at home and decreased life satisfaction (Allen *et al.*, 2000; Rotondo, Kincaid and Carlson, 2003). WLC leads to many organisational consequences for the employer, such as low performance, high turnover rates of staff, irregular employee attendance, low levels of employee commitment to the organisation, and

increased work dissatisfaction of employees (Willis, O'Connor and Smith, 2008; Saroj and Nazia, 2009).

The impact of WLC on the organisation and the employee is becoming challenging to navigate. Management consulting firms need to address this conflict experienced by their staff if organisational efficiencies are to be met by developing targeted interventions to achieve WLB.

2.4 Defining Work-Life Balance

The need to address conflict through WLB is present for management consultants. To further elaborate on this concept of WLB, the researcher draws upon a proverb noted in Simpson and Speake's (2009) documentation of proverbs, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." Whilst this researcher accepts the proverb has been widely interpreted, he chooses to see the core message as the lack of balance between work and personal time results in an overall boring individual. Therefore, individuals should strive towards a balance between work and non-work activities to ensure an exciting life.

WLB has become a relevant topic worldwide and across various industries, as it has a significant influence on all aspects of an individual's life (Ashwini and Kumaraswamy, 2012). There appears to be a lack of consensus among scholars due to the plethora of research on WLB with authors generating various definitions, determinants, consequences and theoretical approaches (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985; Danna and Griffin, 1999; Allen *et al.*, 2000; Edwards and Rothbard, 2000; Frone, 2003; Korabik, Lero and Whitehead, 2008).

Greenhaus and Allen (2011) have said the definition of WLB has evolved from a lack of time management to an idea of effectiveness and fulfilment within one's working environment and various life domains. Literature points to certain commonalities in the definition of WLB, which all view balance as

a universal evaluation of the WFI (Wayne *et al.*, 2017). This balance should also be consistent with their values (Hirschi, Shockley and Zacher, 2019).

Wilson and Baumann (2015) have suggested that WLB should encompass three domains, namely, work-life, personal-life, and family-life, as opposed to evaluating multiple aspects in the personal-life domain. By separating the three domains rather than having them as work and non-work, it allows the researcher to contextualise each element in terms of the unique domain demands and to consider the emphasis an individual may place on a particular domain at a given time. Therefore, WLB is not defined by equality of work-life, family-life and personal-life (Wayne *et al.*, 2017) but rather a desired equitable balance between each domain, dependent on an individual's life and career progression.

In summary, balance is a universal evaluation of various life interfaces and has subjective and objective components to its measurement. Regardless of how one perceives their WLB, it should be noted the aim is to maintain an equitable balance of one's work, personal and family life spheres. These definitions show that WLI should encompass the work, personal and family domains when examining management consultants.

2.5 Examining Work-Life Balance

Examining WLB has been challenging in research due to the lack of consensus on a definition and parameters. Previous research on WLB has covered many variables and contexts and has demonstrated a variety of results (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985; Danna and Griffin, 1999; Allen *et al.*, 2000; Edwards and Rothbard, 2000; Frone, 2003; Korabik, Lero and Whitehead, 2008). However, WLB has been considered an indicator of QL (Gornick and Meyers, 2005). Greenhaus, Collins and Shaw (2003) examined the relationship between WFB and QL and found the two concepts were related under certain conditions. These conditions include substantial time involvement and satisfaction across work and family roles

(Greenhaus, Collins and Shaw, 2003). Within the context of this research, in examining work, family, and personal life spheres, QL variables can be used as an indicator of WLB.

Barcaccia *et al.* (2013) state that QL includes many dimensions, such as physical health, mental well-being, independence, family, education, financial health, optimism, employment, social relationships, housing, and the local environment. Revicki *et al.* (2000) indicate that QL incorporates a range of human experiences related to an individual's overall well-being. With the QL identified as an indicator of WLB, the researcher explored the parameters applicable to this study.

2.6 Quality of Life Parameters

Using the definition of WLB, the researcher expands on the concept of equitable balance between *Work-life*, *Personal-life* and *Family-life* and identifies relevant QL parameters within each domain.

2.6.1 Work-life domain

The most consistently identified predictor of WLC is excessive working hours (Frone, Russell and Cooper, 1992; Bellavia and Frone, 2005). Fu and Shaffer (2001) identify specific work stressors related to higher levels of WFC. These stressors include work demand or overload, work-role conflict, work-role ambiguity, job dissatisfaction and job insecurity (Fu and Shaffer, 2001). Within an individual's role and job function, there are additional aspects that contribute to WLC, which are typically specific to the nature of the industry and profession (Batt and Valcour, 2003). Based on the broad classification of the *Work-life* domain, the researcher has segmented the domain into two subdomains the *Role and Function* of the job and *Work Time* spent on work-related activities.

Consulting Role and Function

The *Consulting Role and Function* subdomain include categories, which are specific to management consultants. The drivers of long consulting hours are the length of the project, type of project, leadership attention, project management, client politics, management close to promotion, work and travel arrangements to the client (StrategyCase, 2020).

A management consultant's typical role and function elements can be categorised into two main areas: the first being the core consulting activities and the second ancillary consulting activities (Ellwood, n.d.; ManagementConsulted, 2019; StrategyCase, 2020).

The core consulting activities identified were:

- Client-facing activities – conducting presentations, workshops and focus groups.
- Individual consulting activities – reporting, developing Excel models, creating PowerPoint presentations, and documenting work.
- Internal team meetings – collaborating internally to provide updates to leadership or get subject matter guidance on relevant client work.

The ancillary consulting activities identified were:

- Training and development – formal and informal training that contributes to upskilling and developing current capabilities.
- Firm-building activities – activities that contribute to the firm's development, such as marketing, recruiting, and developing intellectual capital to use for future projects.
- Mentoring, coaching and feedback activities – mentors and managers providing necessary guidance and feedback to mentees.

Work Time

As mentioned in the causes of WLC section, the main variables within the work-related domain are the hours spent working, working on weekends and work-related travel. An additional cause identified within the *Work Time* subdomain is the lack of breaks employees take during work hours (Randolph, 2016).

In summary, the identified QL parameters considered within the *Work Time* subdomain are:

- Hours worked during the week.
- Hours worked during the weekend.
- Commuting to work.
- Breaks taken at work.

2.6.2 Personal-life domain

Barcaccia *et al.* (2013) have noted QL includes factors that relate to an individual's health (physical and mental) and how individuals spend time in activities that contribute to their personal well-being. Therefore, the researcher has segmented the *Personal-life* into two subdomains *Health* and *Personal Time*.

Health

The *Health* subdomain is associated with both physical and mental health. It has been observed that WLC can be associated with poor mental and physical health and impaired well-being, including higher levels of stress, less physical exercise, poor sleep quality, poor diet and a higher likelihood of engaging in alcohol-related activities (Allen *et al.*, 2000; Bellavia and Frone, 2005; Williams *et al.*, 2006; Brough, O'Driscoll and Kalliath, 2007; White *et al.*, 2007).

Individuals who face significant WLC may seek outside assistance to help facilitate their physical and mental health (BetterHealth, 2020). The professions that help improve the physical and mental condition and QL include physical therapists, general practitioners, chiropractors, and psychologists (Mind.org, 2017; PTHealth, 2018; Laird, 2019; Legg and Krans, 2020).

Based on the above impacts of WLC, the researcher has identified the following QL parameters applicable to the *Health* subdomain:

- Hours of sleep.
- Physical health activities.
- Mental health activities.
- Assistance for health.

Personal Time

As part of role theory, if there is too much time spent in a work role, there may not be enough time spent in one's personal role (Ashforth, Kreiner and Fugate, 2000). Therefore, *Personal Time* includes all areas where individuals can spend time on recreation, hobbies and interests and time for relaxation and self-reflection (IONOS, 2019). For working professionals, a significant contributor to WLB is the leave days taken during the year to assist with rest and relaxation (Epel *et al.*, 2016).

An additional consideration identified in the causes of WLC is work-related ICT usage, particularly for management consultants. ICTs provide services and information 24/7, enabling individuals to connect with others at any time in the day and anywhere in the world (Blackburn and Rayner, 2019).

ICT devices enable a world of hyper-connectedness, where employees find it difficult to actively disconnect from work. The difficulty in disconnecting has led to a trend known as the "always-on culture" (Blackburn and Rayner, 2019).

Research has indicated the always-on culture can affect an individual's well-being through increased work-home interface (Derks *et al.*, 2015). Hackston and Blackburn (2016) have shown that email usage during holidays, evenings, and early mornings has been linked to increased stress. Quinones, Griffiths and Kakabadse (2016) found that continuous internet usage had resulted in workaholism which increases productivity and engagement but causes tension between WLB.

Based on the above, *Personal Time* QL considerations for this study include:

- Personal recreation time.
- Attending to work in personal time (through ICT usage).
- Leave days taken per year.

2.6.3 Family-life domain

The *Family-life* domain is related to the time spent with their families and the impact which work has on this time. Therefore, the *Family-life* domain is related to *Family Time*.

Within *Family Time*, long working hours have been associated with increased family-related absenteeism and tardiness, lower family satisfaction, decreased performance in the family role and increased parenting overload (Bellavia and Frone, 2005). The factors related to the interface between work and family include childcare and household chores, time involvement with one's family, marital tensions, attending to family needs and attending family-related events (Bellavia and Frone, 2005; Blessing, 2013).

With the reduction in *Family Time,* many organisations have implemented flexibility policies that help employees manage their personal and family time (Busick, 2015). Employees may take up policies that allow for a more

flexible schedule or, more broadly, referred to as schedule control (Busick, 2015). Schedule control usually takes the form of flexibility policies to reduce workload and accommodate employees' personal lives (Busick, 2015).
Within the *Family Time* domain, an individual may take up family-related flexibility policies to reduce WLC. For management consultants, these include paid leaves and sabbaticals, parental leave, decreased travel, remote working, free days off between projects and part-time work (Benko and Weisberg, 2007; Perlow, 2012).

Research has shown that employees who had more control over their schedules reported more time to spend with their families and decreased WLC (Kelly, Moen and Tranby, 2011).

Taking the above into consideration, the researcher has identified QL parameters applicable to the *Family Time* domain, which are:

- Assisting in family/household activities.
- Family recreation time.
- Flexibility programmes taken.

3 RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Research Design

The current research on examining the WLI of management consultants in South Africa was positioned in the positivist paradigm. In positivist studies, the researcher is limited to data collection and interpretation in an objective manner (Dudovskiy, 2016). In positivist research, the findings are regarded as observable and quantifiable, which lead to statistical and interpretive analysis (Dudovskiy, 2016; Nel, 2016).

Dudovskiy (2016) adds, “In positivism studies, the researcher is independent of the study, and there are no provisions for human interests within the study” (para. 4). Therefore, Nel (2016) states, “The positivist paradigm systematises the knowledge generation process with the help of quantification, which is essential to enhance the description of parameters and the judgement of the relationship among them” (para. 5).

The research used a quantitative, positivist approach in its methodology. Bhawna and Gobind (2015, p.49) noted, “Quantitative research is the systematic empirical investigation of observable phenomena via statistical, mathematical, or computational techniques.” The positivist method chosen ensured the scientific research method produced quantifiable answers, which were then interpreted objectively. The results produced through this scientific method were neutral, unbiased and technical and could thus be universalised to all historical and cultural contexts (Nel, 2016).

The design of this research was a descriptive study. The purpose of the descriptive study was to examine the WLI of management consultants in South Africa and develop mitigation strategies to improve employees’ WLB, thereby improving the organisation’s efficiency.

The objectives of the descriptive study were to:

- Assess the impact of excessive work hours on the WLI and the consequent impact on management consultants' QL and WLB.
- Develop mitigation strategies management consulting firms in South Africa can use to improve employees' WLB and ensure an acceptable QL.

To achieve the research objectives, the researcher developed a conceptual framework illustrated in **Figure 3.1**. The conceptual framework was the template for this research. For this reason, the research questionnaire was structured according to the domains and QL parameters identified in the literature review, namely, *Overall Work-life Balance, Work-life, Personal-life and Family-life* as shown by the *Roof span* and *Floors* in **Figure 3.1**.

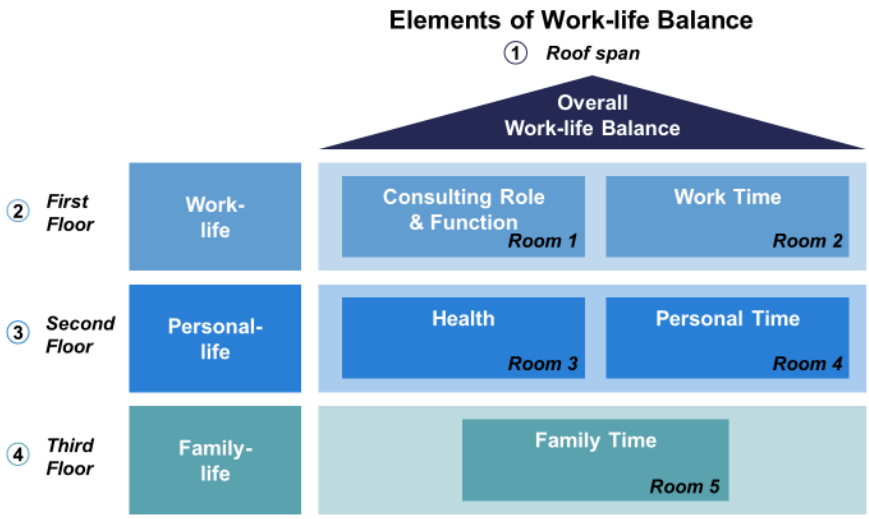


Figure 3.1: Framework of reference for research

The research questionnaire assessed the 22 QL variables identified in the literature review corresponding to the associated domains and subdomains. A summary table of the variables assessed in the questionnaire is shown in **Table 3.1**.

Table 3.1: Variables assessed in the research questionnaire

Domain	Subdomain	#	Variable
Overall Work-life Balance		1.	Satisfaction with work-life balance
		2.	Ability to manage stress
Work-life	*Consulting Role and Function*		**Core consulting activities**
		3.	Client-facing activities
		4.	Individual consulting activities
		5.	Internal team meetings
			Ancillary consulting activities
		6.	Training and development
		7.	Firm-building activities
		8.	Mentoring, coaching and feedback
	Work Time	9.	Hours worked during the week
		10.	Hours worked during the weekend
		11.	Commuting to work
		12.	Breaks at work
Personal-life	*Health*	13.	Hours of sleep
		14.	Physical health activities
		15.	Mental health activities
		16.	Assistance for health
	Personal Time	17.	Personal recreation time
		18.	Attending to work in personal time
		19.	Leave days taken per year
Family-life	*Family Time*	20.	Assisting in family/household activities
		21.	Family recreation time
		22.	Flexibility programmes taken

The research questionnaire included a purposive sample population within the management consulting industry to ensure a valid estimate of a generalised relationship between WLB domains. The questionnaire was developed and disseminated via email within the selected consulting firm. All the data was collected in the SurveyMonkey research tool, organised in Microsoft Excel and analysed using the SPSS research tool.

This chapter elaborates further on the research sample, data interpretation and analysis to achieve the research objectives and research instruments to carry out the examination.

3.2 Research Sample

The required sample for the current research embraced management consultants from a multi-national consulting firm in Johannesburg, South Africa. The consulting firm is referred to as Firm X going forward. Firm X had 39 full-time consultants employed in the South African office at the time of research. The population sample was less than 100, so the researcher distributed the survey to all the firm's consultants. The research applied a non-probabilistic sample selection method with a purposive sampling technique. This sampling technique meant the study only focused on surveying management consultants employed by Firm X. Hence the research sample did not include managerial support staff, such as human resource staff, office clerks, and marketing employees.

In total, the survey gathered 29 complete responses from Firm X, from a total sample size of 39 consultants, resulting in a 74% response rate. The research survey was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic and was therefore subject to survey fatigue, as many other studies were undertaken during the period (Patel *et al.*, 2020). Based on reviewed literature and previous studies conducted in the management consulting industry with a similar methodology, the smallest acceptable sample size was between 20 to 30 participants (Wengraf, 2001; Meriläinen *et al.*, 2004; Guest, Bunce and Johnson, 2006; Mühlhaus and Bouwmeester, 2016). Therefore, the sample size for the study was sufficient.

The characteristics of the sample included gender, age, and tenure in the management consulting industry in Firm X. The gender and age descriptive statistics of the sample is illustrated in **Figure 3.2**. 66% of the sample were male, and 34% were female. The majority of the survey respondents were less than 30 years old, with 42% of respondents between 26 to 30 years and 24% between 21 to 25 years old. A minor 10% of respondents were older than 41 years, with 3% between 41 to 45 years old and 7% between 45 to 50 years.

The tenure of the respondents is shown in **Figure 3.3**. Most respondents surveyed had less than 5 years of experience in the consulting industry, with 24% with 3 to 5 years, 31% with 1 to 3 years and 28% with less than 1 year of experience. Only 7% of respondents had greater than 15 years of experience within the industry.

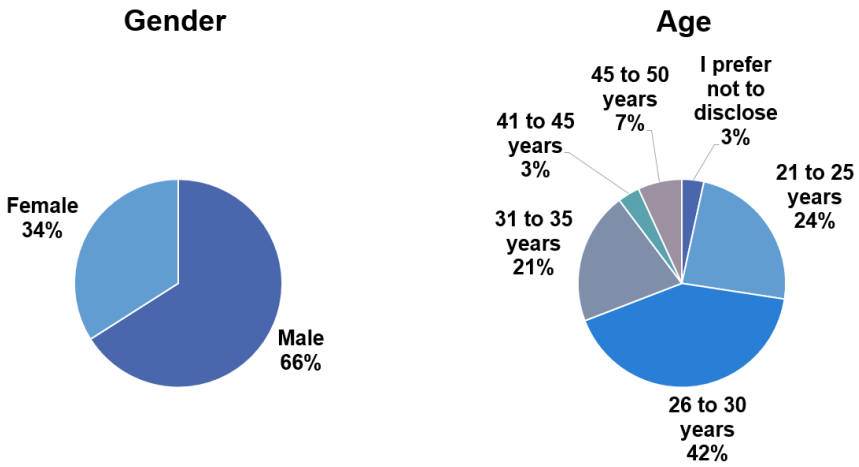


Figure 3.2: Gender and age frequencies of the research sample

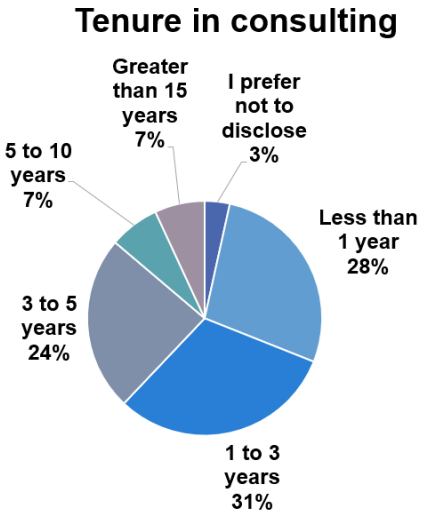


Figure 3.3: Tenure frequencies of the research sample

3.3 Data Interpretation and Analysis

The researcher addressed the research objectives by following two discrete processes, detailed in this section. The first process involved examining the three 'Assessment areas' to determine the impact on WLB and QL. The second process involved using the research outputs of the first process and survey findings to develop mitigation strategies to improve WLB and QL.

3.3.1 Process to assess the impact on Work-life Balance and Quality of Life

The first process focused on addressing the first research objective of assessing the impact of long work hours on the WLI and the consequent impact on the consultants' WLB and QL. This process involved three assessment areas, as depicted in **Figure 3.4**.

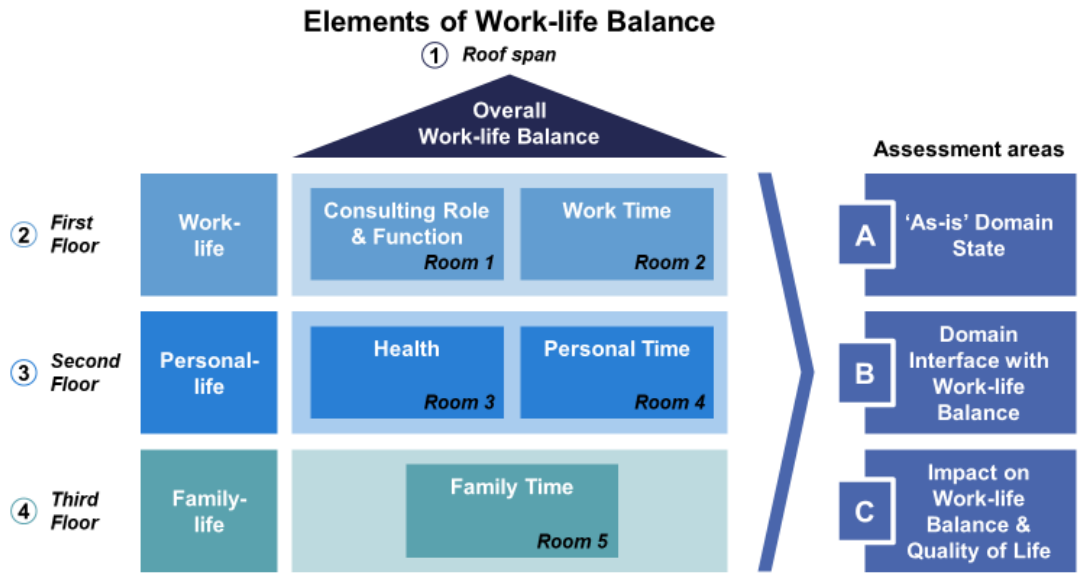


Figure 3.4: Framework of reference - assessment process

The report results were structured using the framework of references and the three assessment areas in **Figure 3.4**. Hence, each variable noted in **Table 3.1** with its corresponding element within the framework of reference followed the three assessment areas. For example, *First Floor, Work-life –*

Room 1, Consulting Role and Function – Variable 5. Internal team meetings assessed the following:

A. 'As-is' Domain State

B. Domain Interface with Work-life Balance

C. Impact on Work-life Balance and Quality of Life

Figure 3.5 provides a summary of the purpose of each assessment area, along with the key inputs used and the outputs produced. Further detail on each assessment area is provided in this chapter.

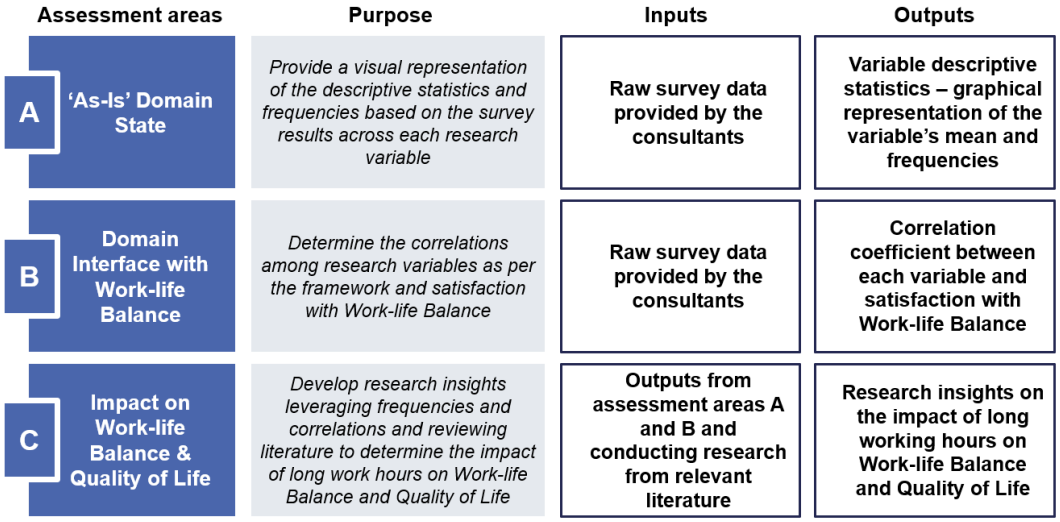


Figure 3.5: Summary of the purpose, inputs, and outputs of the assessment areas

A. 'As-is' Domain State

The purpose of this assessment was to provide a visual representation of the descriptive statistics and frequencies based on the survey results across each research variable. Using the raw survey data as input, the researcher calculated basic descriptive statistics (mean, median, mode and standard deviation) using the SPSS research tool. The only relevant statistic used in the results was the mean of each variable. The mean was represented in a waterfall diagram, which sums up the means of each variable within the respective domain of the framework (e.g., the sum of the average hours worked in the week and weekend).

Further to this, the researcher determined the frequencies of each variable based on the survey responses using the SPSS research tool. The percentage of frequencies were represented in a pie chart.

An example of the waterfall diagrams and pie charts used for this assessment area is shown in **Figure 3.6**.

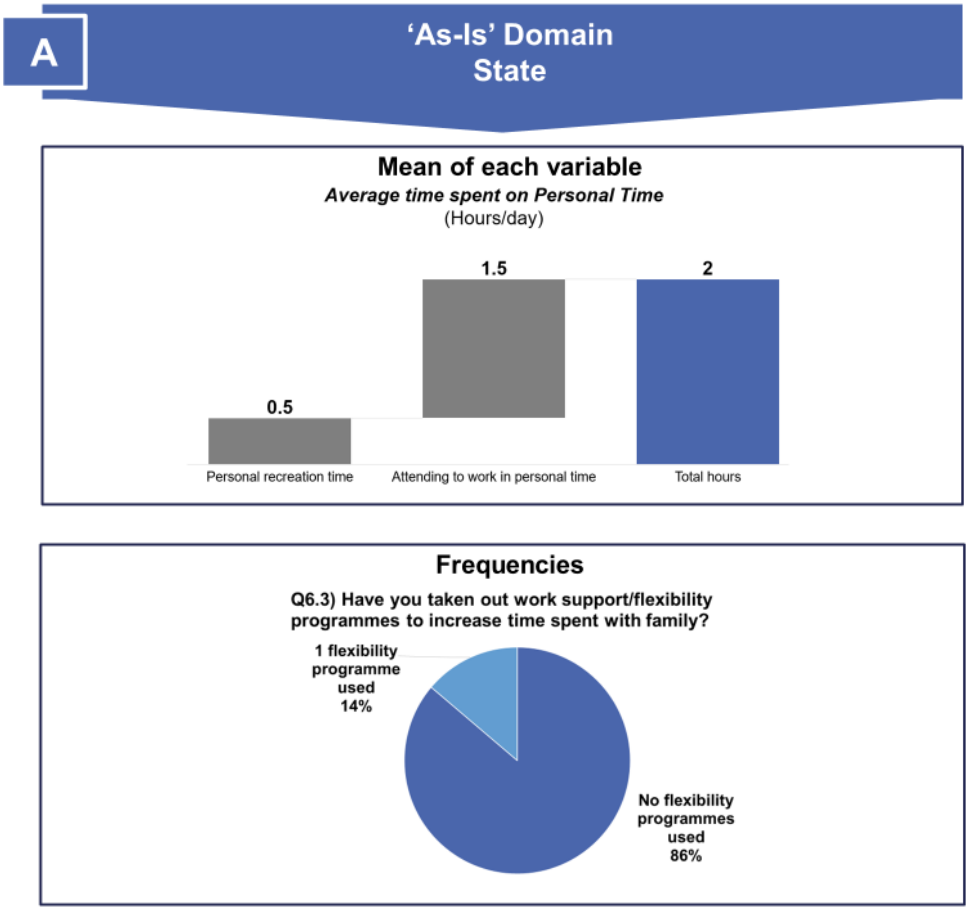


Figure 3.6: Example of outputs of the 'As-is' Domain State assessment area

The raw survey data (**Appendix C**), descriptive statistics (**Appendix E**) and frequencies (**Appendix F**) of each variable can be viewed in the Appendices.

B. Domain Interface with Work-life Balance

This assessment area aimed to determine the correlations among research variables as per the framework and satisfaction with Work-life Balance. The correlations allowed the researcher to determine the WLI between variables. Correlation is a bivariate analysis used to measure the strength of association between two variables. To measure correlation among variables, the researcher assessed three potential types of correlation – Pearson's correlation, Kendall's Tau and Spearman's rank.

Pearson's correlation is the most widely used correlation statistic in research but requires assumptions to be met before applying it (Statistics Solutions, n.d.). The primary assumption is both variables need to be normally distributed (parametric) (Magiya, 2019). To determine normality, the researcher applied the Shapiro-Wilk test, given the sample size was less than 50 participants (Geert, n.d.; Laerd Statistics, n.d.). The Shapiro-Wilk test is frequently used to test for normality in frequency statistics, rejecting the null hypothesis if the statistical significance 'P-value' is less than 0.05. In other words, if the output of the Shapiro-Wilk test is less than 0.05, the data is not normally distributed (Geert, n.d.; Laerd Statistics, n.d.). The researcher conducted the Shapiro-Wilk test in SPSS and determined none of the variables were normally distributed. The result of the test for normality is shown in **Table 3.2**.

Table 3.2: Shapiro-Wilk test for normality results

#	**Variable**	**Shapiro-Wilk significance (P-value)**
1.	Satisfaction with work-life balance	0.001
2.	Ability to manage stress	0.000
3.	Client-facing activities	0.000
4.	Individual consulting activities	0.000
5.	Internal team meetings	0.000
6.	Training and development	0.000
7.	Firm-building activities	0.000
8.	Mentoring, coaching and feedback	0.000
9.	Hours worked during the week	0.000

Table 3.2: Shapiro-Wilk test for normality results (continued)

#	Variable	Shapiro-Wilk significance (P-value)
10.	Hours worked during the weekend	0.000
11.	Commuting to work	0.000
12.	Breaks at work	0.015
13.	Hours of sleep	0.000
14.	Physical health activities	0.000
15.	Mental health activities	0.001
16.	Assistance for health	0.000
17.	Personal recreation time	0.001
18.	Attending to work in personal time	0.000
19.	Leave days taken per year	0.002
20.	Assisting in family/household activities	0.000
21.	Family recreation time	0.000
22.	Flexibility programmes taken	0.008

Given the test failed for normality, alternative correlations were investigated. Kendall's Tau and Spearman's rank (non-parametric) are alternatives to Pearson's correlation (parametric) when the data has failed the normality assumption. The research determined that Kendall Tau's and Spearman's rank are similar; however, Kendall's Tau is more applicable in smaller sample sizes (Statistics Solutions, n.d.). Given the sample size is less than 50, the researcher applied Kendall's Tau correlation.

To apply the Kendall's Tau correlation, the data needed to be measured on an ordinal or continuous scale and must be monotonically related (Magiya, 2019). The data collected from the survey was continuous (e.g., the number of hours worked in a given day) and was also monotonically related. Therefore, both assumptions were satisfied to use Kendall's Tau correlation.

Using SPSS, the researcher calculated Kendall's Tau correlation coefficient among research variables and the satisfaction with Work-life Balance to determine the WLI. Using the output from SPSS and Cohen's standard, the research plotted the correlations among variables on a radar diagram shown in **Figure 3.7**. The SPSS Kendall's Tau output was interpreted using Cohen's (1992) standard. Correlation coefficients between 0.10 and 0.29

represent a small association, coefficients between 0.30 and 0.49 represent a medium association, and coefficients of .50 and above represent a significant association or relationship.

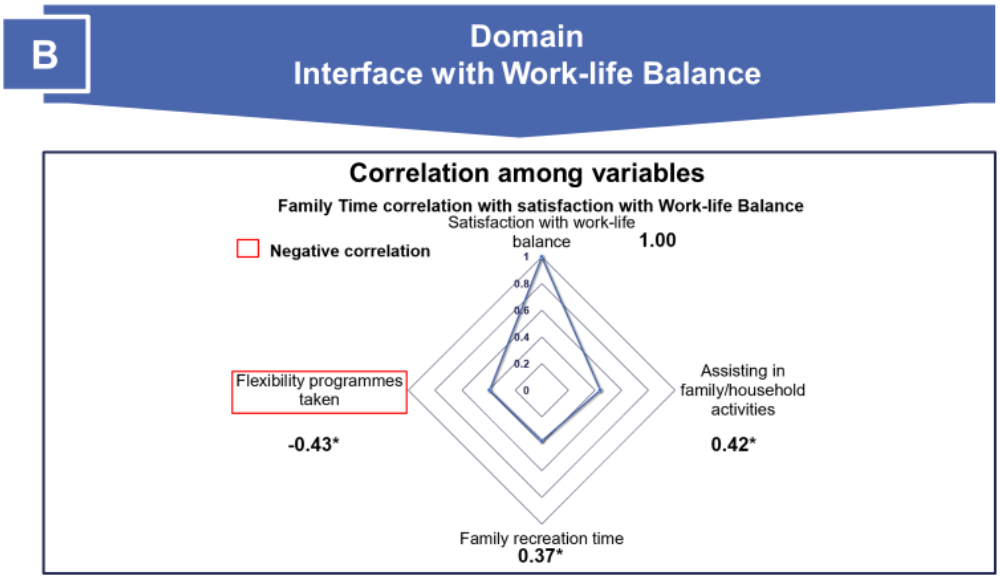


Figure 3.7: Example of outputs of the Domain Interface with Work-life Balance assessment area

The correlation coefficients among variables in the survey can be viewed in **Appendix G**.

C. Impact on Work-life balance and Quality of Life

The purpose of this assessment area was to develop research insights by leveraging the mean and frequencies in 'Assessment area A', correlations from 'Assessment area B' and incorporating relevant studies identified in the literature review to determine the impact of long work hours on WLB and QL.

The research insights were derived from the research results, highlighting a key point for concern regarding WLB and QL. An example of such an insight is the insufficient time spent on sleep per day based on the sample average of 6 hours of sleep. Once the insight was identified, research was conducted to determine the impact of the insight on the consultant's WLB and QL.

Continuing with the example above, the lack of sleep has been shown to cause physical health issues such as heart disease, obesity and result in mental health deterioration.

A visual representation of the process followed within this research area is shown in **Figure 3.8**.

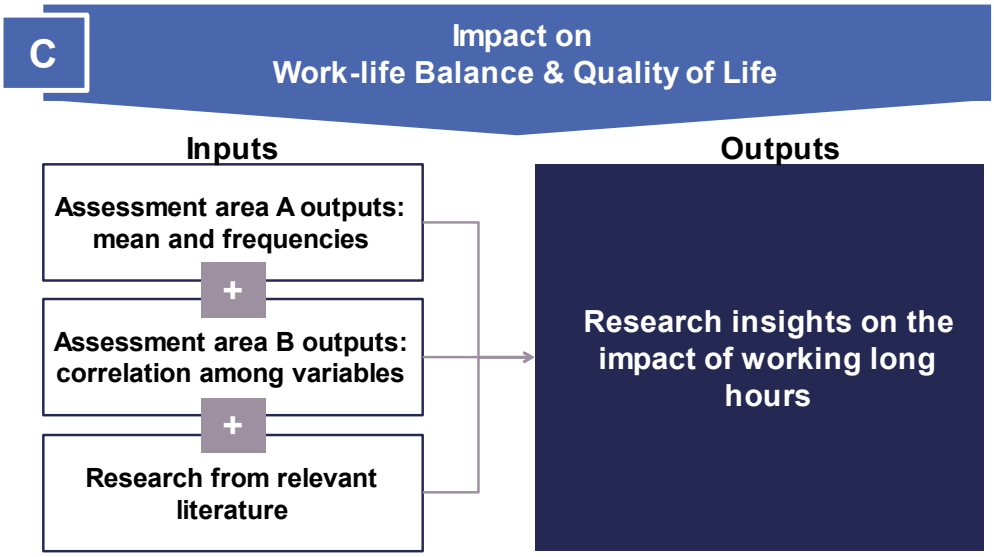


Figure 3.8: Illustration of the process followed to determine the Impact on Work-life Balance & Quality of Life

3.3.2 Process to develop mitigation strategies

The second research objective was to develop mitigation strategies, which management consulting firms can adopt to ensure an acceptable WLB and QL. The purpose of developing mitigation strategies was to promote WLB for management consultants and help consulting firms improve their organisational efficiency. The researcher developed mitigation strategies using information across two areas:

A. Research insights determined from the impact on WLB and QL.
B. Recommendations provided by the consultants in the survey.

A. Research insights determined from the impact on WLB and QL

The researcher developed mitigation strategies based on the outputs (research insights) identified from 'Assessment area C – Impact on Work-life Balance & Quality of Life', as illustrated in **Figure 3.9**. Each *Room* of the framework contained various research insights on how the consultant's WLB is impacted due to long work hours. The researcher's mitigation strategies were supported and confirmed by previous studies.

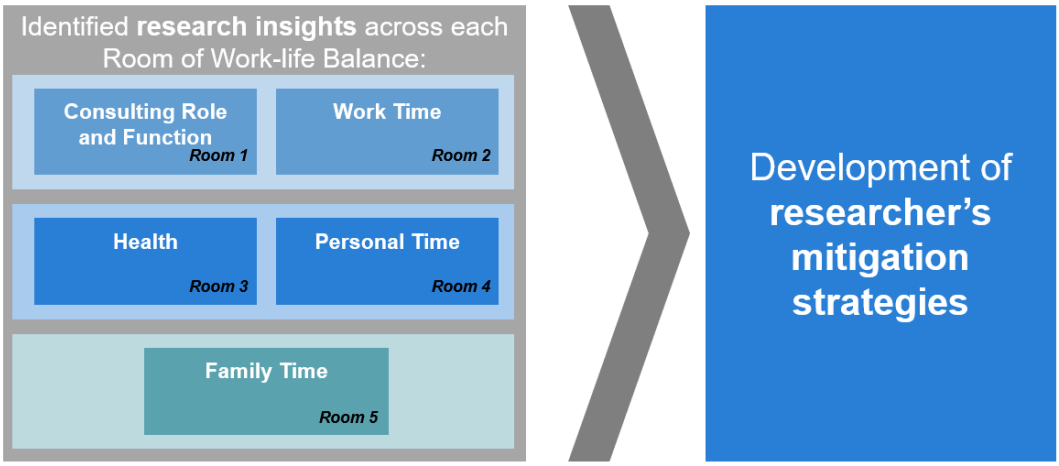


Figure 3.9: Mitigation strategy development process from research insights

B. Recommendations provided by the consultants in the survey

The researcher provided an open-ended question at the end of the survey to gather the consultants' views on how they think the firm can improve overall WLB for employees. The researcher grouped similar responses provided by the consultants to develop the overarching mitigation strategy. A visual representation of the above process is illustrated in **Figure 3.10**.

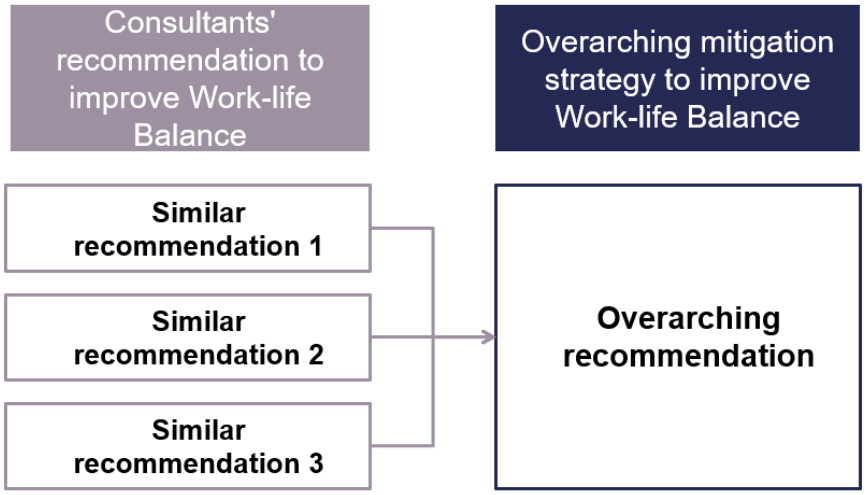


Figure 3.10: Mitigation strategy development process from the consultants' recommendations

3.4 Research Instrumentation

As mentioned in the research design, the questionnaire was structured according to the framework shown in **Figure 3.1**. The questionnaire consisted of 23 questions, which were representative of the research framework. The questionnaire collected data using a combination of single-entry rating scales and a single open-ended question. The questionnaire used for the research is laid out in **Appendix B**.

The questionnaire was designed on the online survey platform SurveyMonkey and distributed via Microsoft Outlook (email) to the consultants. The data was then collected on SurveyMonkey and organised in Microsoft Excel. Once the data was organised in Microsoft Excel, it was then analysed in SPSS software as outlined in the "Data analysis and Interpretation" section. Once analysed, the researcher used Microsoft PowerPoint to create the relevant graphs to populate and visually depict the results. The various tools used for the study are summarised in **Table 3.3**.

Table 3.3: Research tools

Tool / Platform	**Purpose**
SurveyMonkey	Questionnaire design and development. Data collection using rating scales and a single open-ended question.
Microsoft Outlook	Distribute questionnaire via email to the consultants.
Microsoft Excel	Organise questionnaire data.
SPSS	Analyse and interpret questionnaire data.
Microsoft PowerPoint	Develop relevant graphs to depict research results visually.

4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher required permission from Firm X before conducting the research. The researcher also required ethics clearance from the University's ethics committee by way of a formal ethics application. Ethics clearance was granted by the Human Research Ethics Clearance (HREC) department and recorded as **MIAEC 111/20**. The relevant ethics application documents are provided in **Appendix A**. The ethics clearance application covered the following:

Formal permission and consent:

- Consent was obtained from Firm X for the use of data and information for investigation purposes in fulfilment of the M.Sc. degree.
- The instrumentation (online questionnaire) used to collect the data was approved by the HREC.
- Formal consent was obtained from participants via the online survey.

Confidentiality, privacy, and distribution

- Participants were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity throughout the research process.
- Firm X information was guaranteed confidentiality, with the results only being used for research purposes.
- The survey respondents were not forced to participate in the study and were not offered any financial incentives.

Plagiarism, falsification, and fabrication

- All sources consulted for the research were acknowledged and referenced.
- All information provided in the research study was genuine and not fabricated.

5 RESULTS AND RESEARCH INSIGHTS

The results and associated data interpretation are structured according to the framework illustrated in **Figure 3.1**. Therefore, the following subsection is structured according to the elements in the framework that relate to the domains identified in the literature review: *Overall Work-life Balance, Work-life*, *Personal-life,* and *Family-life*. As per the data analysis and interpretation section, each element was assessed according to the assessment areas noted in **Figure 3.4**, A) 'As-is' Domain State, B) Domain Interface with Work-life Balance, C) Impact on Work-life Balance and Quality of Life.

5.1 Roof span - Overall Work-life Balance

The first element of the framework assessed was the *Roof span - Overall Work-life Balance* domain as indicated in **Figure 5.1** below.

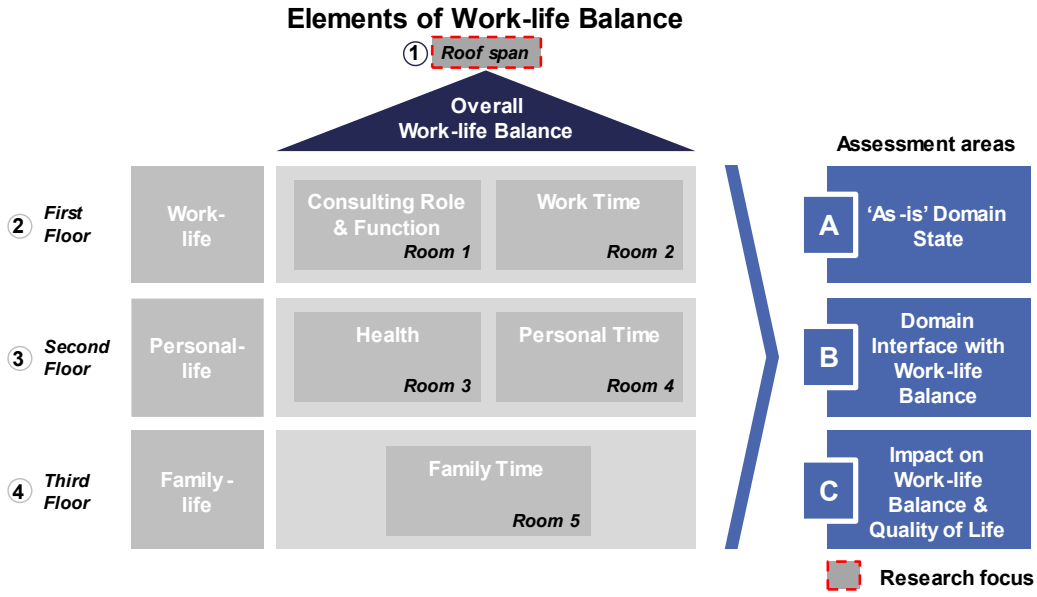


Figure 5.1: Framework of reference with the research focus on the Roof span – Overall Work-life Balance

A. 'As-is' Domain State: *Roof span - Overall Work-life Balance*

The two variables assessed within the *Overall Work-life Balance* domain included the consultants' overall satisfaction with WLB and their ability to manage stress, as indicated in **Table 5.1**.

Table 5.1: Overall Work-life Balance variables

Domain	Subdomain	#	Variable
Overall Work-life Balance		1.	Satisfaction with work-life balance
		2.	Ability to manage stress

Variable 1: Satisfaction with Work-life balance

Overall, the majority of consultants were dissatisfied with their WLB. The results indicated 76% of consultants disagree with being satisfied with their WLB and only 14% are satisfied with their WLB. Based on the frequency of responses shown in **Figure 5.2**, 38% of consultants strongly disagree with being satisfied with their WLB and 38% disagree.

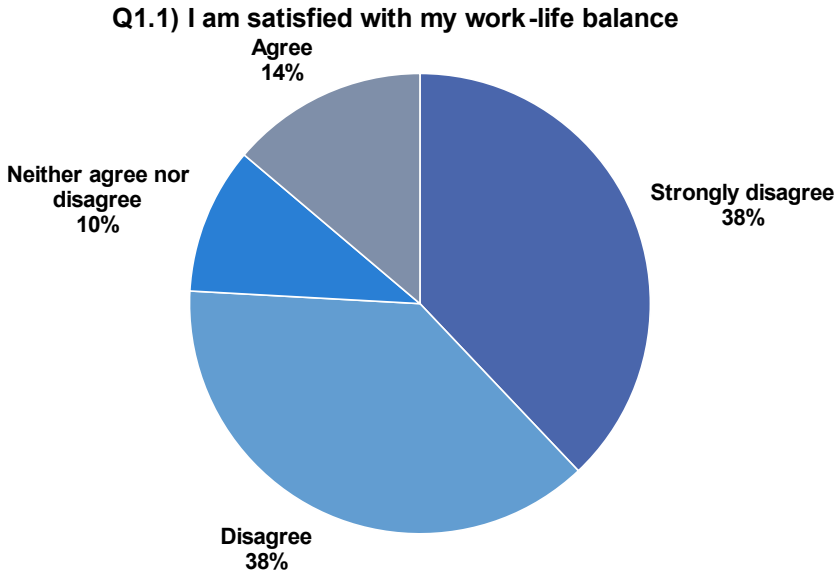


Figure 5.2: Satisfaction with Work-life Balance

Variable 2: Ability to manage stress

A total of 52% of consultants felt they could not manage their stress during the week, whereas only 27% could manage their stress. The frequencies in **Figure 5.3** indicate 31% of consultants disagree and 21% strongly disagree with being able to manage stress. The survey revealed only 24% of respondents agree and 3% strongly agree with being able to manage their stress during the week.

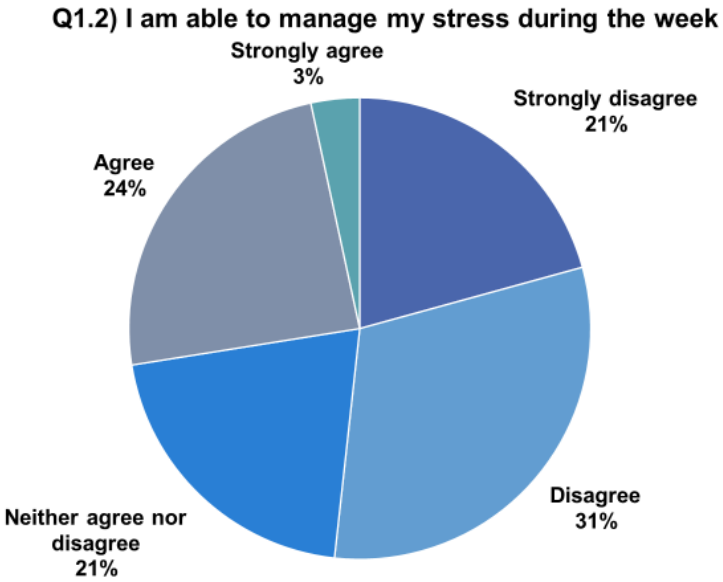
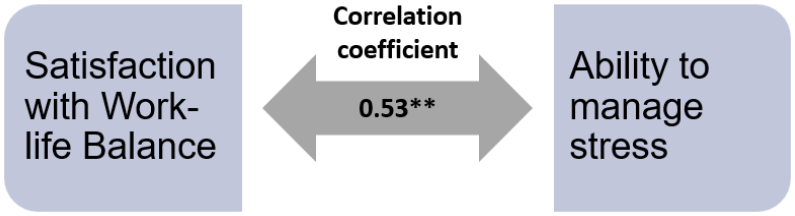


Figure 5.3: Ability to manage stress

B. Domain Interface with Work-life Balance: *Roof span - Overall Work-life Balance*

The researcher determined the correlation between the WLB domain variables, as shown in **Figure 5.4**. The correlation coefficient of 0.53 indicates a relationship between an individual's satisfaction with WLB and his/her ability to manage stress during the week.



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

N = 29

Figure 5.4: Correlations among Work-life Balance and stress

C. Impact on Work-life Balance and Quality of Life: *Roof span - Overall Work-life Balance*

This research indicates signs of conflict with an urgent need to redress it in the form of WLB. WLB is a significant challenge for management consulting firms to navigate. The results indicated 76% of consultants are dissatisfied with their WLB. The lack of employee WLB ultimately affects the consulting firm's ability to operate optimally throughout the year and affects the organisation's output. The drivers for the lack of WLB are discussed in the following chapters.

Although most consultants are dissatisfied with their WLB, there is a higher degree of consultants who can manage their stress during the week. The survey indicated 52% of respondents felt they could not manage their stress during the week. In contrast with satisfaction with WLB, there were 27% who agreed with being able to manage stress, compared with 14% of consultants who agreed with being satisfied with their WLB.

Consulting firms can adopt interventions targeted to improve the ability to manage stress during the week and simultaneously improve their employees' WLB. The researcher found the ability to manage stress was correlated with the consultant's satisfaction with WLB by a coefficient of 0.53. Numerous studies have confirmed that stress and WLC are correlated, necessitating interventions to achieve WLB (Bell, Rajendran and Theiler, 2012; Hsu *et al.*, 2019).

5.2 First Floor - Work-life

The second element of the framework analysed was the *First Floor - Work-life,* as shown in **Figure 5.5**. The *Work-life* domain has two subdomains to analyse; the first is *Room 1 - Consulting Role and Function* and the second *Room 2 - Work Time*. A consultant's work time is influenced by his/her role and function; therefore, it was the first element assessed.

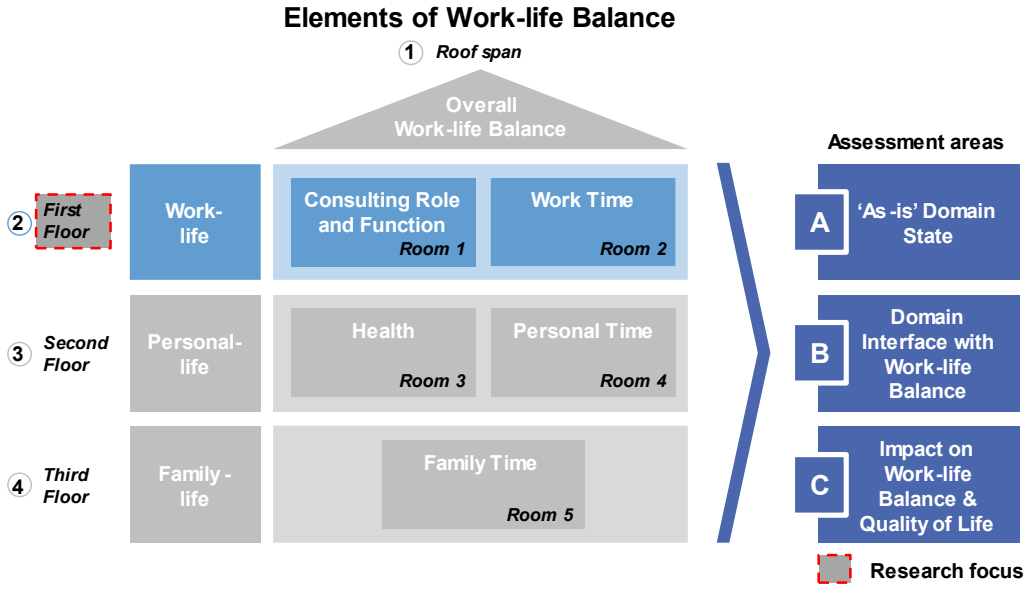


Figure 5.5: Framework of reference with the research focus on the First Floor – Work-life

5.2.1 Room 1 - Consulting Role and Function

The second element of WLB assessed was *Room 1 - Consulting Role and Function* subdomain of the *Work-life* domain shown in **Figure 5.5**. This subdomain aimed to understand the hours spent by consultants on their core and ancillary activities**.** By understanding a consultant's role and function, the researcher understood the main drivers influencing a consultant's typical work hours.

A. 'As-is' Domain State: *Room 1 - Consulting Role and Function*

The *Consulting Role and Function* subdomain consisted of two main groups - core consulting and ancillary consulting activities. The two groups of activities with associated variables are indicated in **Table 5.2**.

Table 5.2: Consulting Role and Function variables

Domain	Subdomain	#	Variable
Work-life	*Consulting Role and Function*		**Core consulting activities**
		3.	Client-facing activities
		4.	Individual consulting activities
		5.	Internal team meetings
			Ancillary consulting activities
		6.	Training and development
		7.	Firm-building activities
		8.	Mentoring, coaching and feedback

The average total hours spent across each group is illustrated in **Figure 5.6** below. A consultant is expected to work extremely long hours during the week. The survey indicated on average, the consultants spend 64.5 hours per week on consulting-related activities. On average, the consultants spend 62 hours per week on core consulting activities and 2.5 hours per week on ancillary activities.

The researcher expands on the breakdown of these activities by first examining the core consulting activities and then ancillary consulting activities.

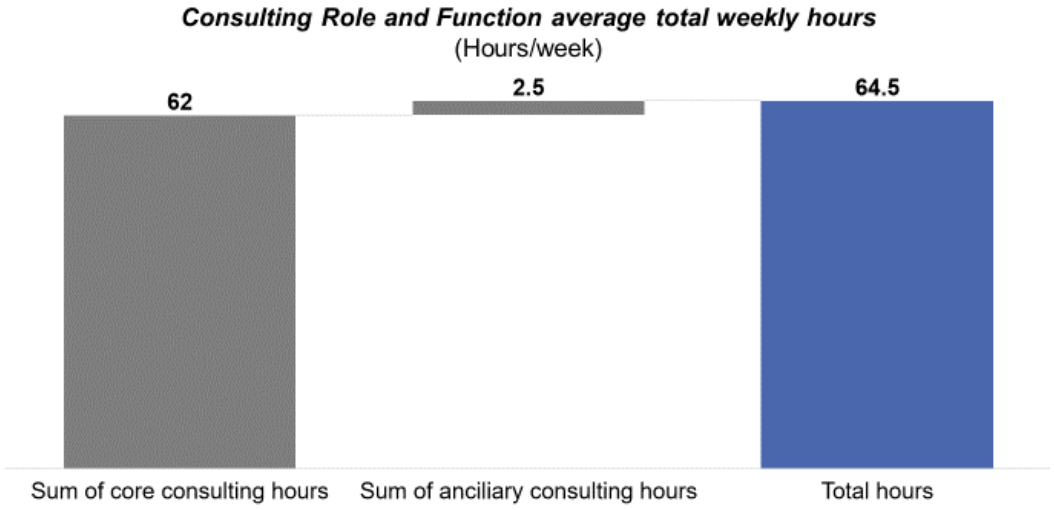


Figure 5.6: Average total weekly hours spent in the Consulting Role and Function domain

Consulting Role and Function - Core consulting activities

The first three variables assessed, which form part of a consultant's core activities, were client-facing activities, individual consulting activities and internal team meetings. A breakdown of the average time spent per day on each of these variables is illustrated in **Figure 5.7**. The average total time spent on core consulting activities sum up to 12 hours per day.

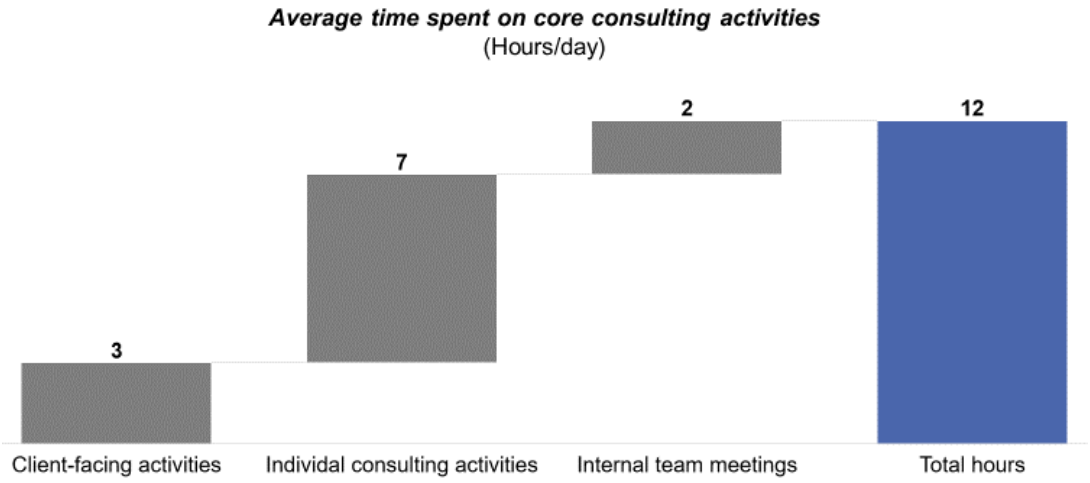


Figure 5.7: Average daily hours worked in core consulting activities

Variable 3: Client-facing activities

A majority of consultants spend a considerable amount of time engaging clients in a typical workday. The survey indicated 72% of consultants spend between 2 to 6 hours per day engaging with the client. 48% of respondents spend 2 to 4 hours each day, as indicated in **Figure 5.8**. The second highest frequency noted was 24% of consultants spend between 4 to 6 hours per day on client-facing activities.

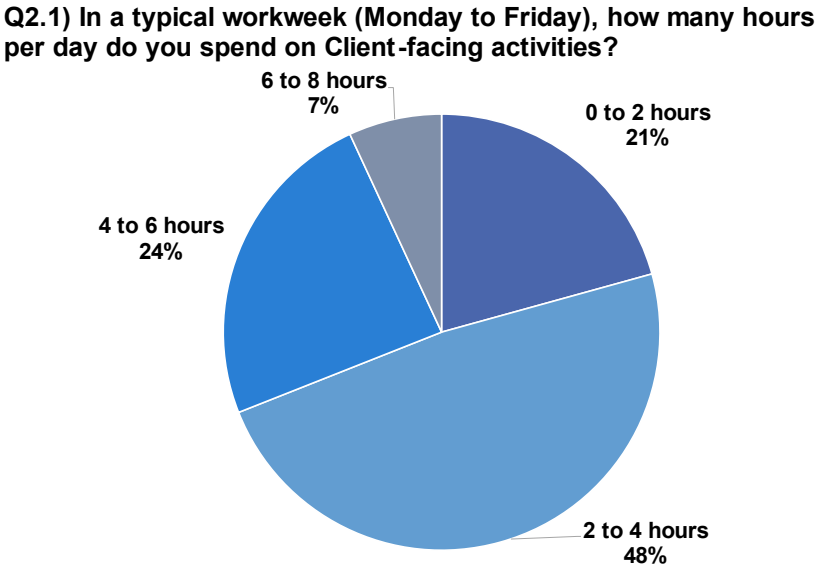


Figure 5.8: Client-facing activities

Variable 4: Individual consulting activities

A total of 73% of consultants spend longer than 6 hours per day on individual consulting activities. The survey indicated 38% of respondents spend more than 8 hours per day on individual consulting activities, as illustrated in **Figure 5.9**. The subsequent highest frequency was 35% of respondents spend 6 to 8 hours per day on individual consulting activities.

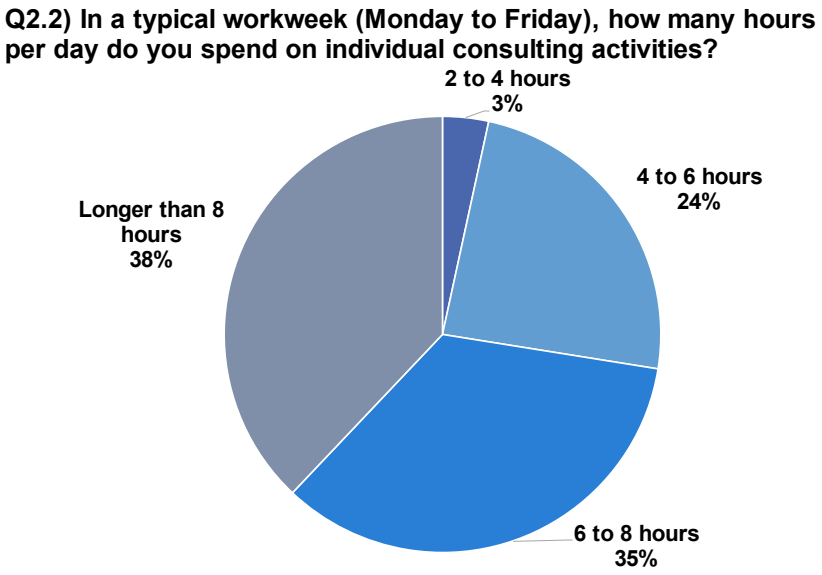


Figure 5.9: Individual consulting activities

Variable 5: Internal team meetings

Internal team meetings form a minor part of a consultant's core activities. The survey indicated 65% of consultants spend 1 to 3 hours per day collaborating in internal team meetings. The results indicated in **Figure 5.10** indicate 48% of respondents spend 1 to 2 hours per day on internal team meetings and 17% spend 2 to 3 hours per day on internal team meetings.

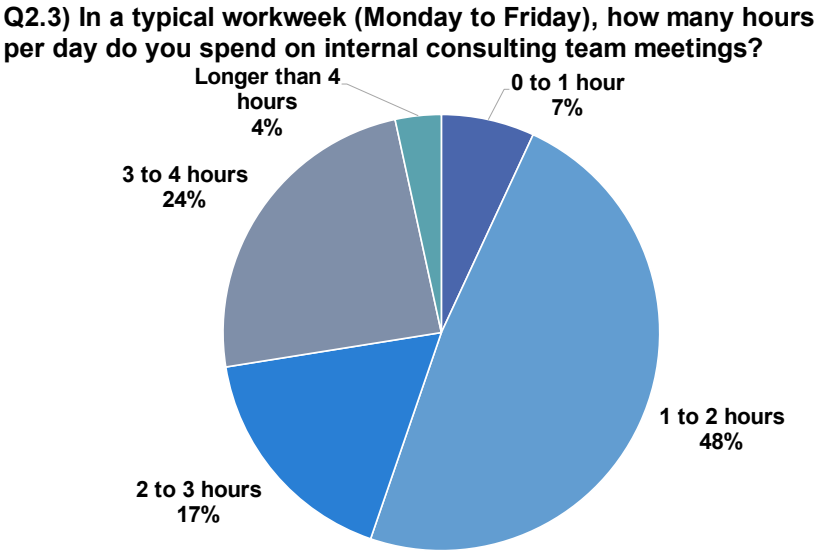


Figure 5.10: Internal team meetings

***Consulting Role and Function* - Ancillary consulting activities**

The ancillary activities include time spent on training and development, firm-building activities (e.g., marketing, recruitment, outreach programmes), mentoring, coaching, and feedback. A breakdown of the average time spent per day on each of these variables is illustrated in **Figure 5.11**. The average total time weekly spent on ancillary consulting activities sum to 2.5 hours per week.

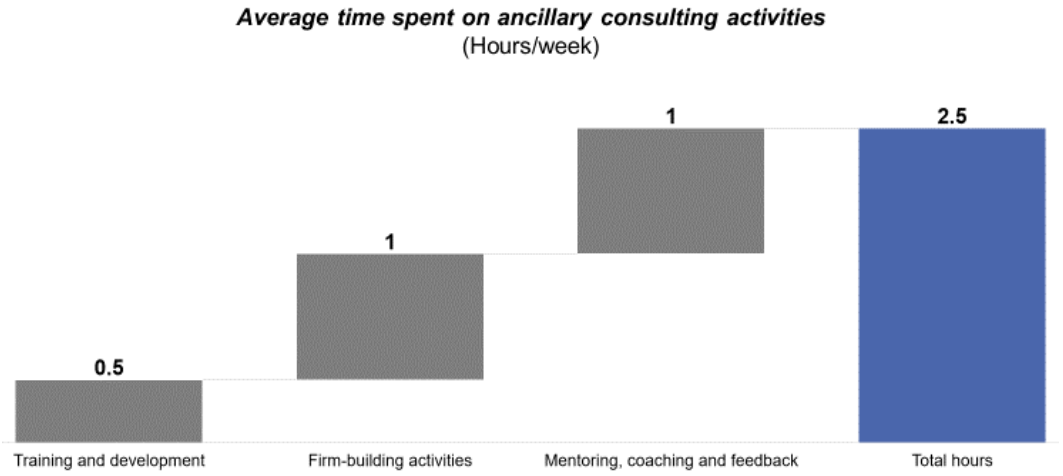


Figure 5.11: Average weekly hours worked on ancillary consulting activities

Variable 6: Training and development activities

Training and development activities are not the primary focus for consultants during the week. The results in **Figure 5.12** indicate only 41% of consultants spend time training, with the majority of 59% not dedicating any time to these activities during the week. From the distribution, in **Figure 5.12,** the researcher observed 24% spend less than 0.5 hours, 14% spend 0.5 to 1 hour, and the remaining 3% spend 1.5 to 2 hours per week on training activities.

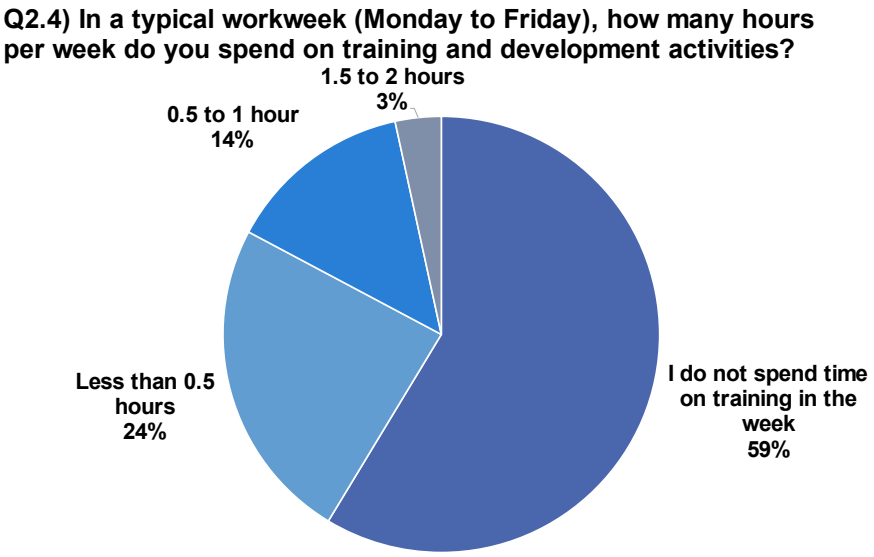


Figure 5.12: Training and development activities

Variable 7: Firm-building activities

Firm-building activities form the bulk of time spent on ancillary consulting activities. The results indicate 59% of consultants spend 0.5 to 1.5 hours per week on firm-building activities. **Figure 5.13** indicates 31% of consultants spend 1 to 1.5 hours and 28% spend between 0.5 to 1 hour per week on firm-building activities.

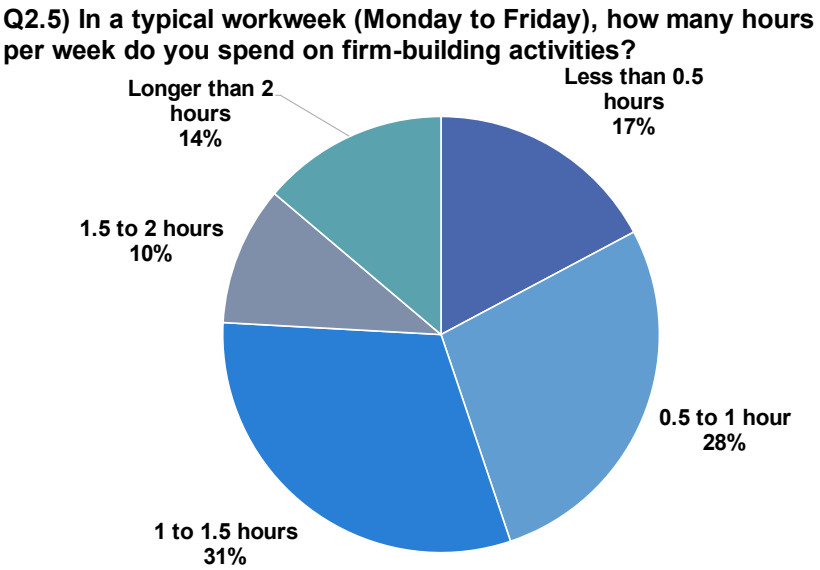


Figure 5.13: Firm-building activities

Variable 8: Mentoring, coaching and feedback

Mentoring, coaching and feedback activities do not form a significant part of a consultant's weekly activities but are regarded as necessary. The survey indicated 76% of consultants spend less than 1 hour per week on mentoring, coaching and feedback activities. **Figure 5.14** indicates 38% of consultants spend less than 0.5 hours per week and 38% of respondents spend between 0.5 to 1 hour per week on mentoring, coaching and feedback activities.

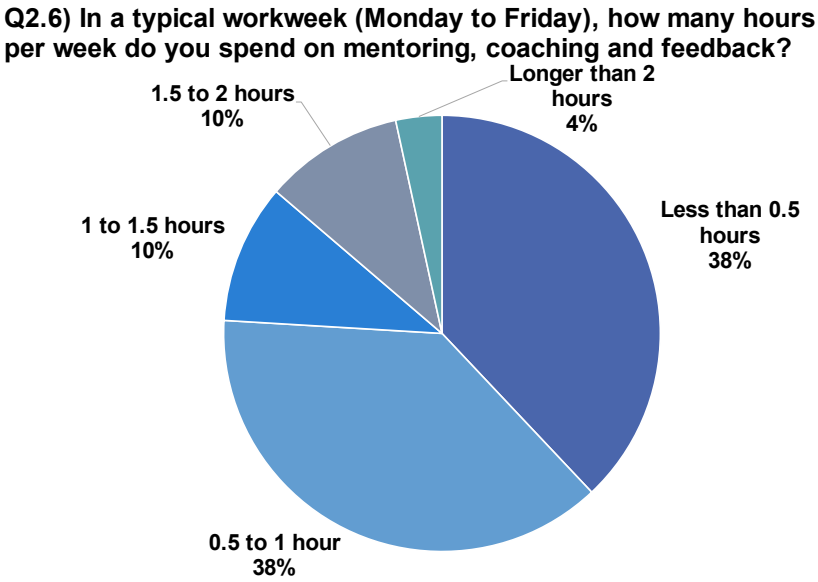


Figure 5.14: Mentoring, coaching and feedback activities

B. Domain Interface with Work-life Balance: *Room 1 - Consulting Role and Function*

The *Room 1 - Consulting Role and Function* variables were correlated with the satisfaction with the WLB variable, as shown in **Figure 5.15**. The results indicated no significant correlation among these variables.

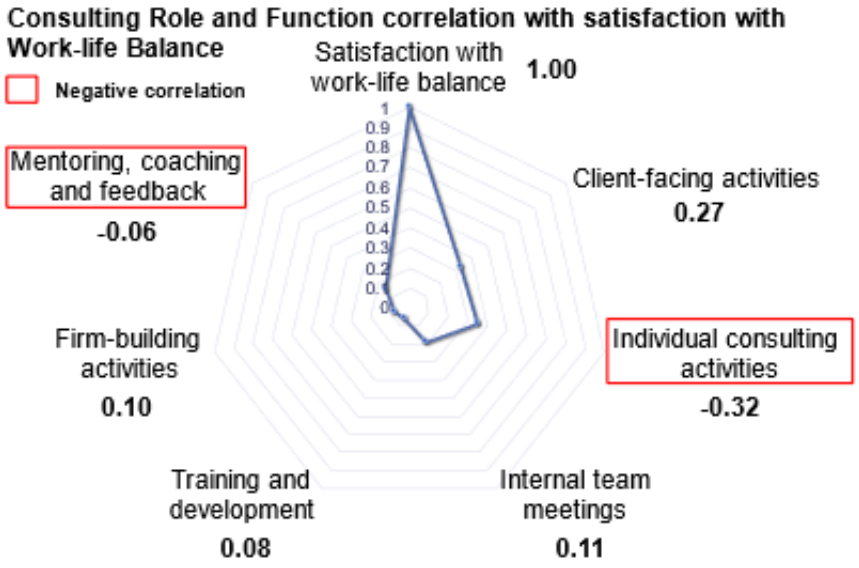


Figure 5.15: Correlation among Consulting Role and Function variables and Satisfaction with Work-Life Balance

C. Impact on Work-life Balance and Quality of Life: *Room 1 - Consulting Role and Function*

Based on the results within *Room 1 - Consulting Role and Function* subdomain, the researcher identified five insights that impact the consultants' WLB and QL, which are detailed below:

1. Excessive total hours worked on core and ancillary consulting activities.
2. Significant time spent in engaging the client and in internal meetings.
3. The need for multi-tasking between core and ancillary consulting activities.
4. Lack of time spent in training and development activities.
5. Usage of time spent in mentoring, coaching and feedback activities.

Research Insight 1: *Room 1 - Consulting Role and Function*

The first insight was the excessive total number of hours the consultants work during the week. The survey indicated that, on average, the consultants spend 64.5 hours per week on consulting-related activities, with the majority of the time dedicated to core consulting activities.

As per the literature review, working excessive hours during the week is the most consistent predictor of WLC. Excessive work hours have consistently been linked to challenges in WLB (Moen and Yu, 2000; Tausig and Fenwick, 2001; Batt and Valcour, 2003). Significant effects include stress, poor WLB and health risks (Strauss, 2016; Hsu *et al.*, 2019). Various researchers have found highly stressful jobs and quantitative workloads are associated with poor health (Bauer *et al.*, 2009; Bannai and Tamakoshi, 2014), poor QL, and low levels of occupational well-being (Maruyama and Morimoto, 1996; Siltaloppi, Kinnunen and Feldt, 2009; Li *et al.*, 2015). The high stress and poor health experienced consequently impact employee productivity and performance, affecting the organisation's performance.

Research Insight 2: *Room 1 - Consulting Role and Function*

The second insight identified was a significant time spent engaging the client and in internal meetings. On average, consultants spend a total of 5 hours per day in meetings. Of these 5 hours, 3 hours are spent engaging with the client and 2 hours on internal team meetings. The survey indicated 72% of consultants spend between 2 to 6 hours per day engaging with the client. Additionally, 65% of consultants spend 1 to 3 hours per day collaborating in internal team meetings. This phenomenon is not only present in consulting, as research has shown that meetings have increased in frequency in length and frequency over the past 50 years (Perlow, Gconstance and Eun, 2017).

Time spent in meetings has been shown to reduce employee productivity, focus and engagement in the workplace (Perlow, Gconstance and Eun, 2017). Further to this, Perlow, Gconstance and Eun (2017) noted that meetings interrupt employees' ability to focus without distraction on a cognitively demanding task. The interrupted thinking results in employees spending longer hours at work and working on weekends. Additionally, Allen et al. (2012) also indicated that excessive meetings reduce employee happiness and lower overall job satisfaction. The disruption in employee

focus impacts employee productivity and therefore affects organisational efficiency.

Research Insight 3: *Room 1 - Consulting Role and Function*

The third insight was the need for multi-tasking between the core and consulting activities. On average, the consultants spend 62 hours per week on core consulting activities and 2 hours per week on ancillary activities. Although the ancillary components make up a small portion of the consultant's weekly hours, they may interfere with WLB due to the dual focus on activities. This dual focus or multi-tasking of activities has been linked to a degradation in WLB (Chhabria, 2019). Multi-tasking has been shown to reduce employee productivity (Mark, Gonzalez and Harris, 2005) and cause stress, anxiety and depression (Chhabria, 2019). The consequent reduction in productivity and mental health impacts affects organisational efficiency, thus requiring the need to reduce the prevalence of multi-tasking.

Research Insight 4: *Room 1 - Consulting Role and Function*

The fourth insight was the lack of time spent on training and development activities during the week. Only 41% of consultants spend time training, with the majority of 59% not dedicating any time to these activities during the week. The mean hours per week for training and development activities was 0.5 hours. A lack of training and development results in unhappy, unsatisfied employees, reduced productivity and increased staff turnover as training is perceived to lead to promotional opportunities/senior appointments within the firm (Marinelli, 2018; Amo, 2019).

Research indicates training and development activities improve employee retention, increases workforce engagement and improve productivity (Shigenobu and Ikeda, 2009; Maimuna and Dr.Rashad, 2013; Sal and Raja, 2016). The lack of time spent on training and development results in

potential lost time for employees to enhance their skills, which translates to an opportunity cost of forgone improvement in organisational efficiency.

Research Insight 5: *Room 1 - Consulting Role and Function*
The fifth insight was the time spent in mentoring, coaching and feedback activities. The survey indicated 76% of consultants spend less than 1 hour per week on mentoring, coaching and feedback activities. Mentoring, coaching, and feedback activities are essential as they provide consultants with the needed guidance and direction to progress with their careers. These activities typically include senior leadership guidance around personal and professional development, highlighting its importance for incorporating WLB into the consultant's lives.

Research indicates that mentoring and coaching activities result in a host of professional benefits such as rapid advancement, higher salaries, more significant organisational commitment, stronger identity and higher job and career satisfaction (Kammeyer-Mueller and Judge, 2008). Additionally, mentoring and coaching activities have provided personal benefits such as improved physical health and self-esteem, ease of work-life integration and more vital relational skills. Without mentoring and coaching activities, these benefits would be forgone. Research also indicates limited mentorship can result in reduced employee retention and commitment (Scandura, 1998).

5.2.2 Room 2 - Work Time

The second subdomain of the *Work-life* domain is *Room 2 - Work Time* subdomain, as indicated in **Figure 5.5**. The purpose of *Room 2 - Work Time* was to assess the number of hours management consultants spend on work-related activities during the week and weekend, including time spent commuting to work and the number of breaks they take during a workday.

A. 'As-is' Domain State: *Room 2 - Work Time*

The *Work Time* subdomain included four variables: hours worked during the week, hours worked during the weekend, commuting to work, and breaks at work. The abovementioned variables are shown in **Table 5.3**.

Table 5.3: Work Time variables

Domain	Subdomain	#	Variable
	Work Time	9.	Hours worked during the week
		10.	Hours worked during the weekend
		11.	Commuting to work
		12.	Breaks at work

The interesting statistic identified was management consultants work excessive hours during both the week and the weekend. The sum of the total hours worked during a week and weekend was 69 hours. The average total hours the consultants work during the week was 63 hours and 6 hours during the weekend, as illustrated in **Figure 5.16**.

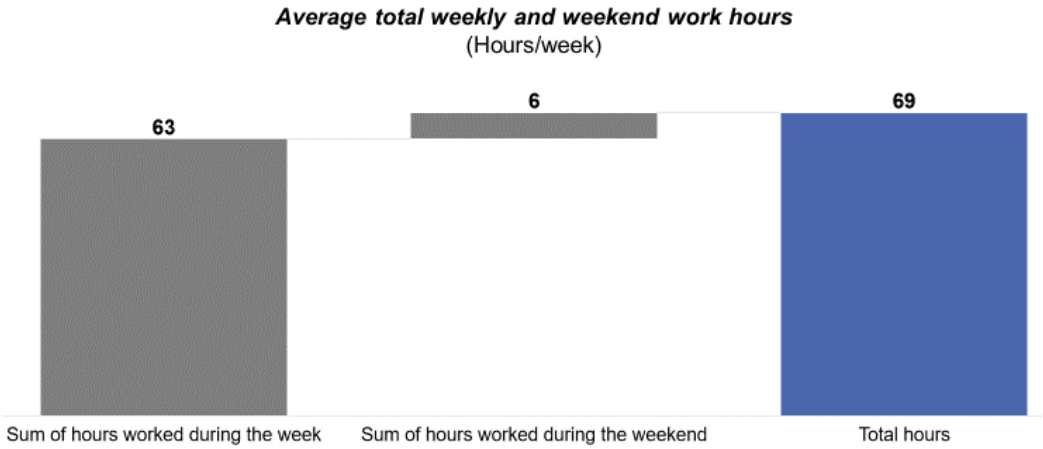


Figure 5.16: Sum of the average hours worked during the week and weekend

The weekly hours were derived from the daily hours worked during the week and the weekend. The average hours worked per day for each variable within the *Work Time sub*domain is shown in **Figure 5.17** below. A deeper examination of weekly and weekend hours is discussed below.

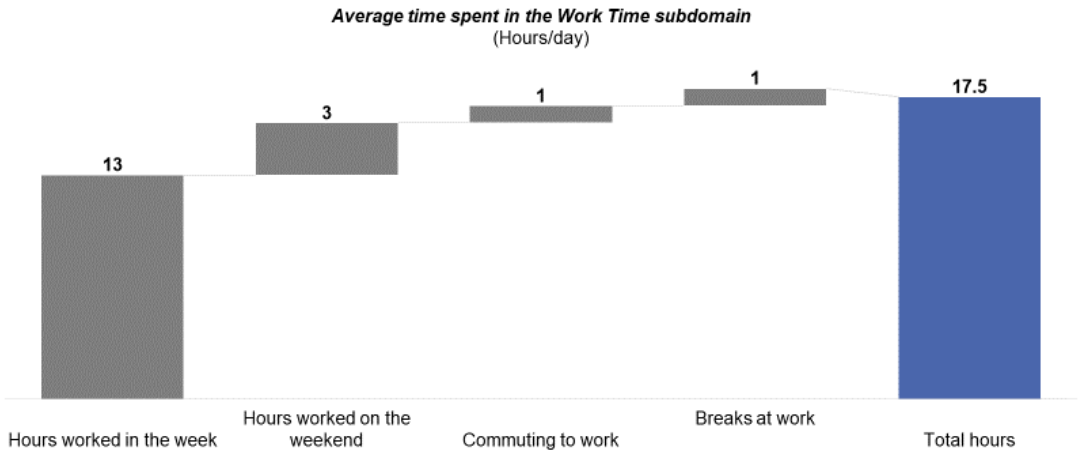


Figure 5.17: Average daily hours spent on Work Time variables

Variable 9: Hours worked during the week

Consultants work extraordinarily long hours during a typical workweek. As mentioned above, the total weekly hours worked per week was 63 hours. The survey indicated 69% of consultants work longer than 12 hours per day during the week. Based on the survey results, 35% of consultants work longer than 14 hours per day and 34% work between 12 to 14 hours per day during the week, as illustrated in **Figure 5.18**.

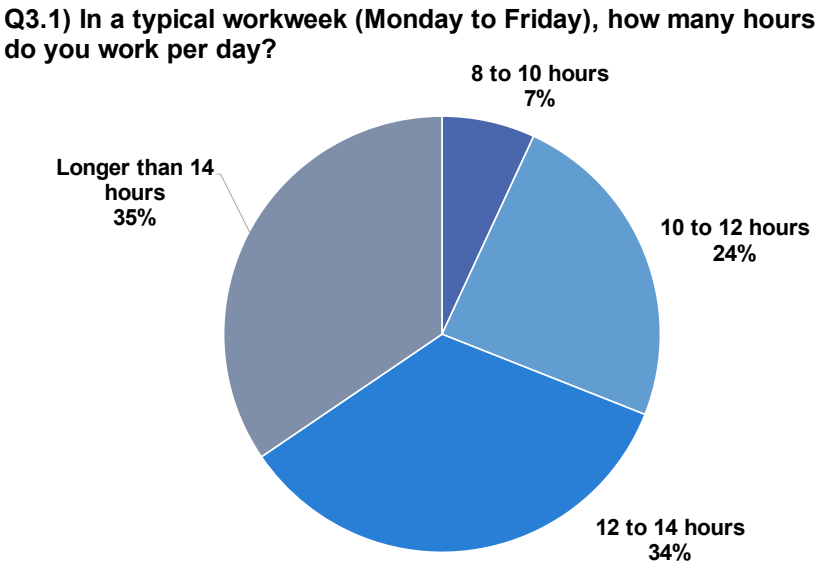


Figure 5.18: Hours worked during the week

Variable 10: Hours worked during the weekend

Consultants compound the extreme weekly hours by working on weekends. On average, the consultants worked 6 hours throughout a typical weekend, as determined above. The survey revealed 86% of consultants work on weekends, of which 72% work between 0 to 6 hours per day and 14% work longer than 6 hours per day, as indicated by **Figure 5.19**. The results indicate 24% of respondents were within the 0 to 2 hours, 2 to 4 hours, and 4 to 6 hours segments worked per day. Additionally, 10% spend 6 to 8 hours per day, and 4% spend longer than 8 hours per day attending to work during the weekend.

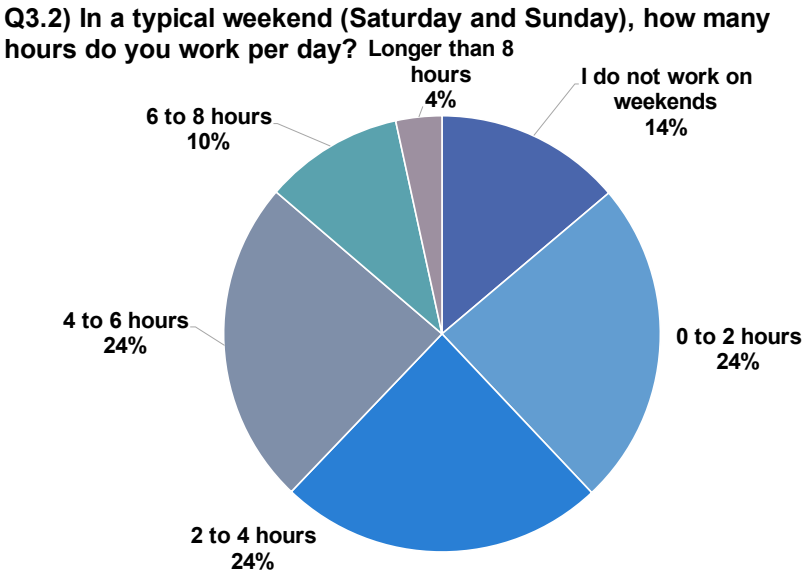


Figure 5.19: Hours worked during the weekend

Variable 11: Commuting to work

Time spent commuting to work does not form a significant part of the consultant's workday. The results indicate 76% of consultants spend less than 1 hour per day commuting to work. **Figure 5.20** indicates 52% of consultants spend less than 0.5 hours per day and 24% spend 0.5 to 1 hour per day commuting to work.

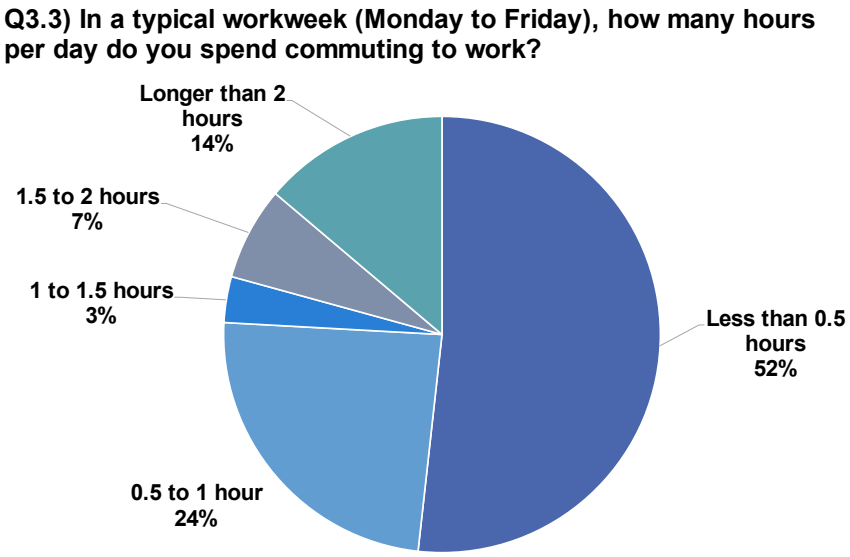


Figure 5.20: Commuting to work

Variable 12: Breaks at work

Consultants do not take sufficient breaks during a workday. The results indicate 87% of consultants spend less than 1 hour per day taking breaks. Of this majority, 45% spend between 0.5 to 1 hour and 42% spent less than 0.5 hours per day taking breaks, as indicated in **Figure 5.21**.

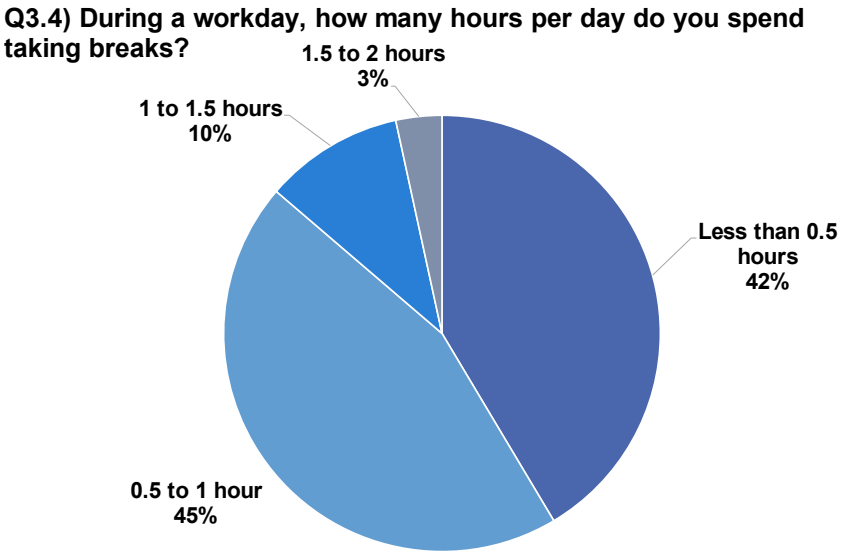
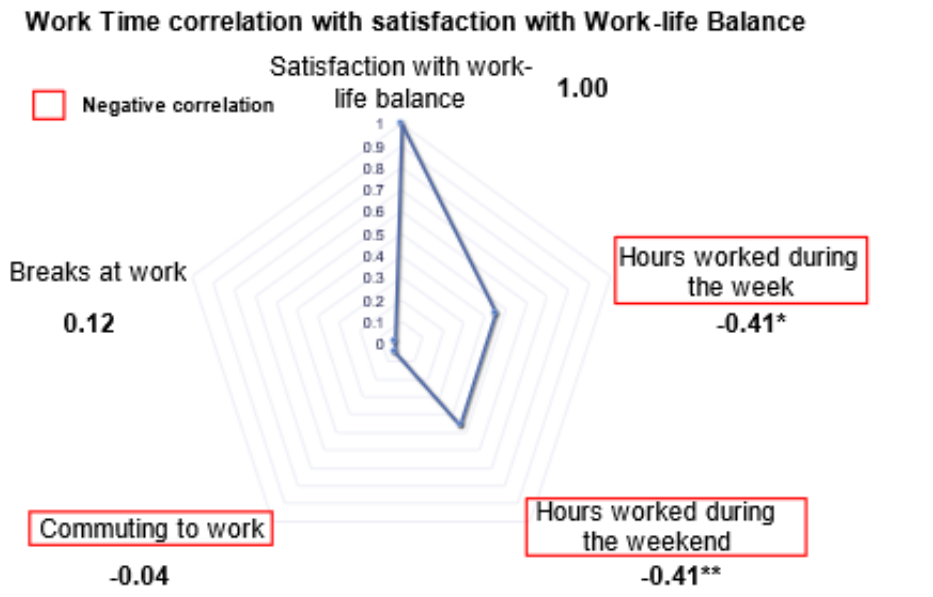


Figure 5.21: Breaks at work

B. Domain Interface with Work-life Balance: *Room 2 - Work Time*

The interface between the *Work Time* subdomain and satisfaction with WLB is illustrated in **Figure 5.22** below.



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

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

N = 29

Figure 5.22: Correlation among Work Time variables and Satisfaction with Work-Life Balance

The notable correlations identified were between the hours worked during the week and hours worked during the weekend and satisfaction with WLB. Hours worked during the week was negatively correlated with WLB with a coefficient of -0.41. Hours worked during the weekend was also negatively correlated with satisfaction with WLB with a coefficient of -0.41.

C. Impact on Work-life Balance and Quality of Life: *Room 2 - Work Time*

The researcher identified three insights based on the results of the *Work Time* subdomain. These three insights are as follows:

1. Excessive hours worked during the week and weekend.
2. Reduction in commute time may be resulting in additional hours worked in the week.

3. Insufficient breaks taken during a workday.

Research insight 1: *Room 2 - Work Time*

The first insight identified was excessive work hours during the week and weekend. However, the *Work Time* subdomain results indicate consultants also work on weekends, with the total hours worked during a week and weekend being 69 hours. During the week, 69% of consultants indicated they work longer than 12 hours per day. Consultants compound the extreme weekly hours by working on weekends. The survey revealed 86% of consultants work on weekends.

These extended hours worked in the week and weekend are extremely concerning as working long hours during the week will affect one's mental, physical, and social impacts. Over and above this, the extreme work hours will compound the consultants' stress levels, further impacting their QL. As noted in the *Consulting Role and Function* subdomain, working long hours results in reduced WLB, increased stress, poor health, reduced QL and low levels of occupational well-being, which negatively impacts organisational efficiency. Additionally, research has shown that working on weekends results in mental health deterioration, leading to increased burnout (Sato, Kuroda and Owan, 2020). Working on weekends deprives workers of respite time and time with friends and family (Beltagy *et al.*, 2018; Sato, Kuroda and Owan, 2020). The consequent weekend work further degrades employees' WLB, thus further impacting the consulting firm's performance.

As per the literature review, excessive hours worked during the week is the most consistent predictor of WLC. A similar phenomenon was noted in this study. The results indicated a negative relationship between the satisfaction with WLB, hours worked during the week and weekend with correlation coefficients of -0.41 each. These findings reinforce the researcher's problem statement, further necessitating interventions to decrease the prevalence of WLC experienced by management consultants.

Research insight 2: *Room 2 - Work Time*

The second insight is the reduction in commute times that may be resulting in a potential increase in work hours. The time spent commuting to work was not a significant part of the consultant's typical workday. The results indicate 76% of consultants spend less than 1 hour per day commuting to work. The potential explanation for the low commute time is that Firm X required most consultants to work remotely except for senior leadership to work at their respective client sites. This low commute time may suggest that consultants have more hours during their day to spend within their *Personal-life* and *Family-life* domains to improve their WLB. However, the freed-up time may also suggest that consultants may be using this time for work.

Research of 1300 US-based knowledge workers revealed a 41 minute per day decline in commute time due to COVID-19 (Kun *et al.*, 2020). Employees who were managed found time for personal activities, whereas managers worked longer hours and spent more time in meetings. For managers, the increase in work hours more than offset the loss in commute time.

Additionally, a study by Harvard and New York University economists found that people working from home spend around 48 minutes more time per day connected to their offices (DeFilippis *et al.*, 2020). However, further research is required to examine the impact of remote working on management consultants.

Research insight 3: *Room 2 - Work Time*

The third insight identified was consultants do not take sufficient breaks during a workday. The survey revealed 87% of consultants spend less than 1 hour a day taking breaks during a workday. The average time spent on breaks was 1 hour per day. Research has shown that a lack of breaks during a workday can reduce productivity, mental fatigue and an increase in stress

(Kohll, 2018). For an organisation to operate optimally, the leadership and management should ensure employees take sufficient breaks during the day.

5.3 Second Floor - Personal-life

The third element of the framework assessed the *Second Flood - Personal-life*, which encompassed two subdomains, namely *Room 3 - Health* and *Room 4 - Personal Time,* as indicated in **Figure 5.23**. The purpose of this domain was to assess the number of hours management consultants spend related to personal activities beneficial for WLB. The *Health* subdomain is elaborated on first; after that, the researcher explores the *Personal Time* variables.

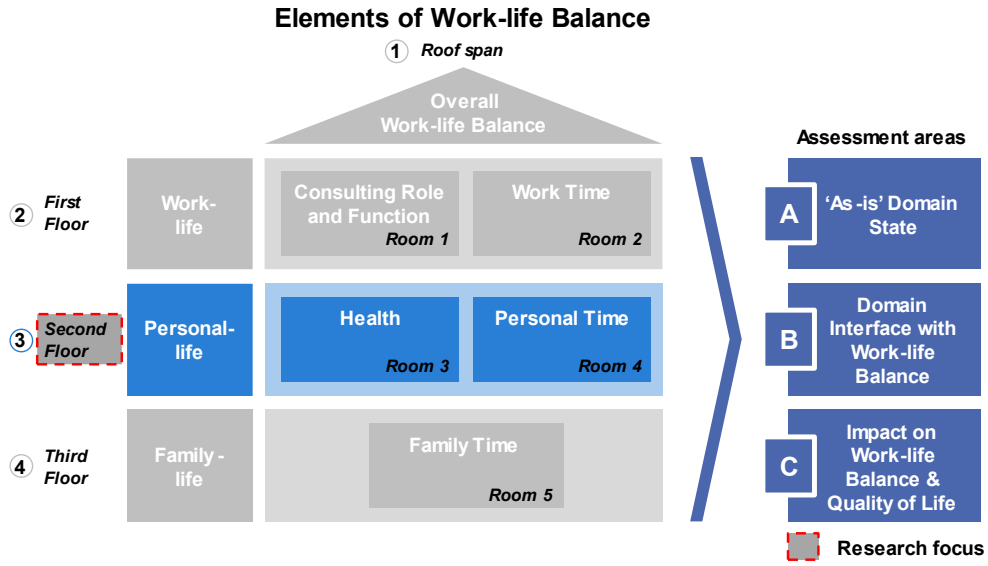


Figure 5.23: Framework of reference with the research focus on the Second Floor – Personal-life

5.3.1 Room 3 - Health

The researcher explored *Room 3 - Health* subdomain, illustrated in **Figure 5.23**. The purpose of *Room 3 - Health* subdomain was to assess how much time management consultants dedicated to factors that contribute to their

physical, mental, and emotional health, such as sleep, physical exercise, mental health activities, and any support required to improve these factors.

A. 'As-is' Domain State: *Room 3 - Health*

The *Health* subdomain factored in four variables: hours of sleep, time spent on physical health activities, mental health activities, and any assistance currently used to improve physical and/or mental health. These variables are shown in **Table 5.4** below.

Table 5.4: Health variables

Domain	Subdomain	#	Variable
Personal-life	*Health*	13.	Hours of sleep
		14.	Physical health activities
		15.	Mental health activities
		16.	Assistance for health

The average daily hours spent on *Health* activities are illustrated in **Figure 5.24**. On average, management consultants spend 7 hours of their day on *Health*-related activities, with 6 hours spent on sleep and 0.5 hours each on physical health and mental health activities. The researcher explores each of these elements in further detail below.

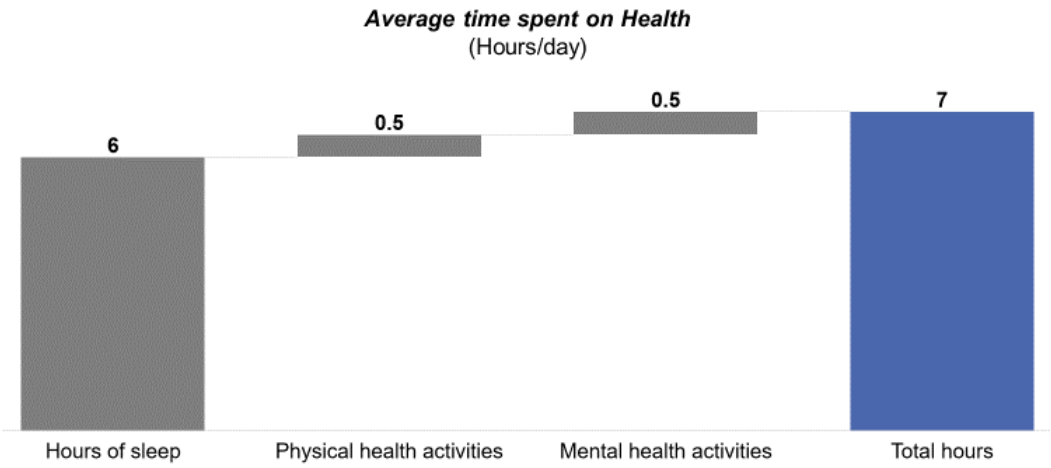


Figure 5.24: Average daily hours spent on Health activities

Variable 13: Hours of sleep

The majority of consultants are not getting sufficient sleep per day. On average, the respondents only sleep 6 hours per day, as mentioned above in **Figure 5.24**. The results indicate 80% of consultants sleep between 5 to 7 hours per day. **Figure 5.25** indicates 42% of consultants sleep between 5 to 6 hours per day, followed by 38% sleeping between 6 to 7 hours per day. From the sample, only 18% of consultants get more than 7 hours of sleep per day.

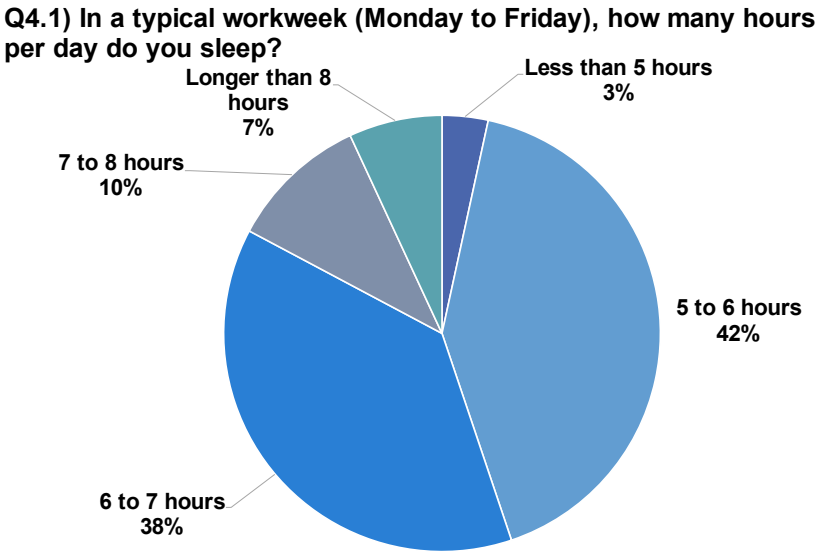


Figure 5.25: Hours of sleep

Variable 14: Physical health activities

Consultants carve out time in their day for physical health activities. The results indicate 86% of consultants spend less than 1 hour per day on physical health activities. **Figure 5.26** indicates 52% of consultants spend less than 0.5 hours per day on physical health activities, followed by 35% who spend between 0.5 to 1 hour per day. The survey indicated a minor 10% who do not participate in physical health activities during the week.

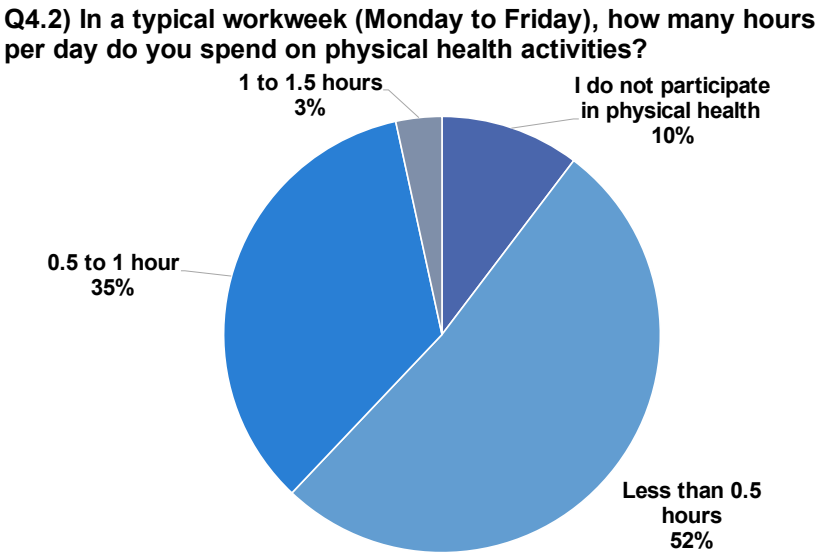


Figure 5.26: Physical health activities

Variable 15: Mental health activities

Most consultants spend time on mental health activities, but a significant portion does not dedicate time to these activities. The results indicate only 52% of consultants spend time on mental health activities per day. 35% of consultants spend less than 0.5 hours per day, and 17% spend between 0.5 to 1 hour per day on mental health activities. The remaining 48% of consultants do not participate in mental health activities, as illustrated in **Figure 5.27**.

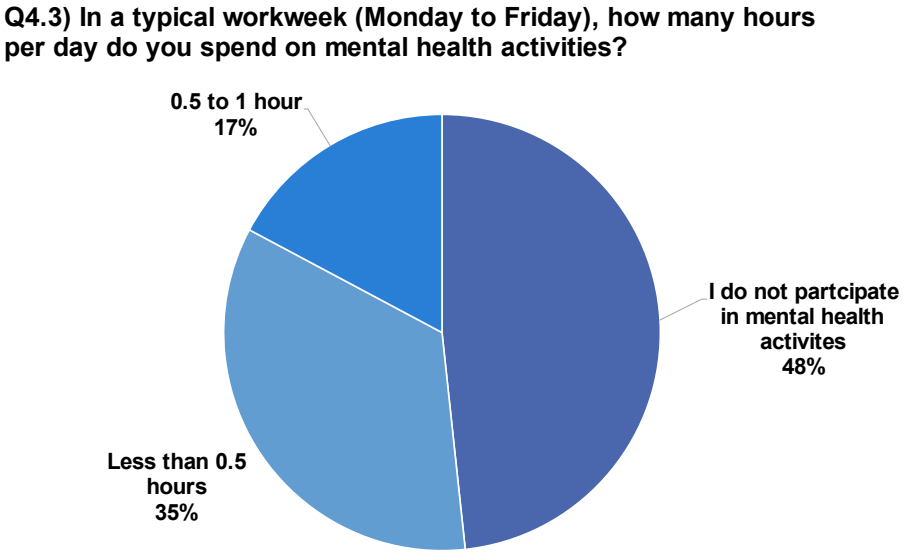


Figure 5.27: Mental health activities

Variable 16: Assistance for health

The majority of consultants seek assistance to improve their physical and/or mental health, but a substantial share of respondents does not seek support. The results indicate 52% of consultants seek assistance from one or more health practitioners to improve their physical and/or mental health, whereas 48% of consultants do not seek assistance to improve their physical and/or mental health, as indicated in **Figure 5.28**. Further, 35% use one health practitioner and the remaining 17% use two practitioners.

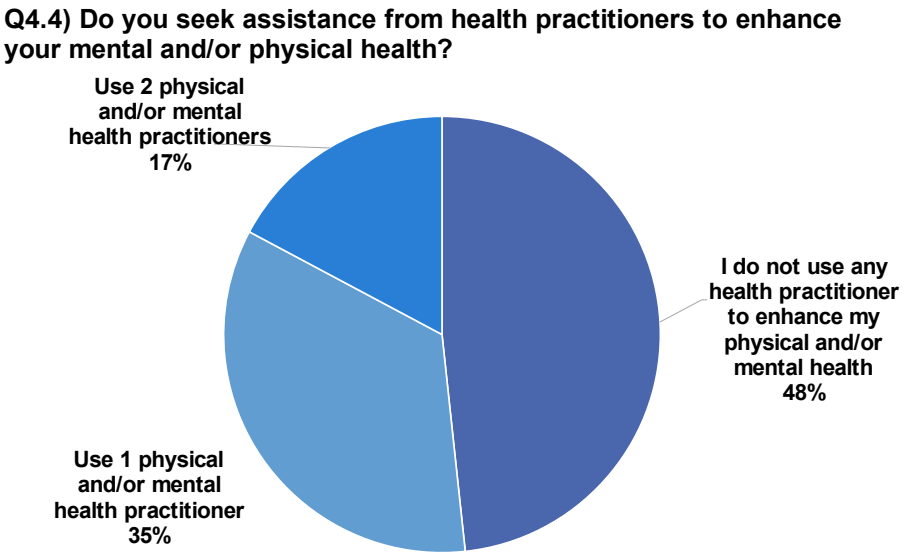


Figure 5.28: Assistance to improve mental and/or physical health

Further detail is shown in **Figure 5.29**, which illustrates the various health practitioners consultants used. The popular health practitioners sought by consultants for assistance to improve their physical and/or mental health include physical therapists and mental health practitioners, with 13% of responses each. It should be noted the total frequency of 32 in **Figure 5.28** is larger than the sample of 29 as consultants selected more than one health practitioner.

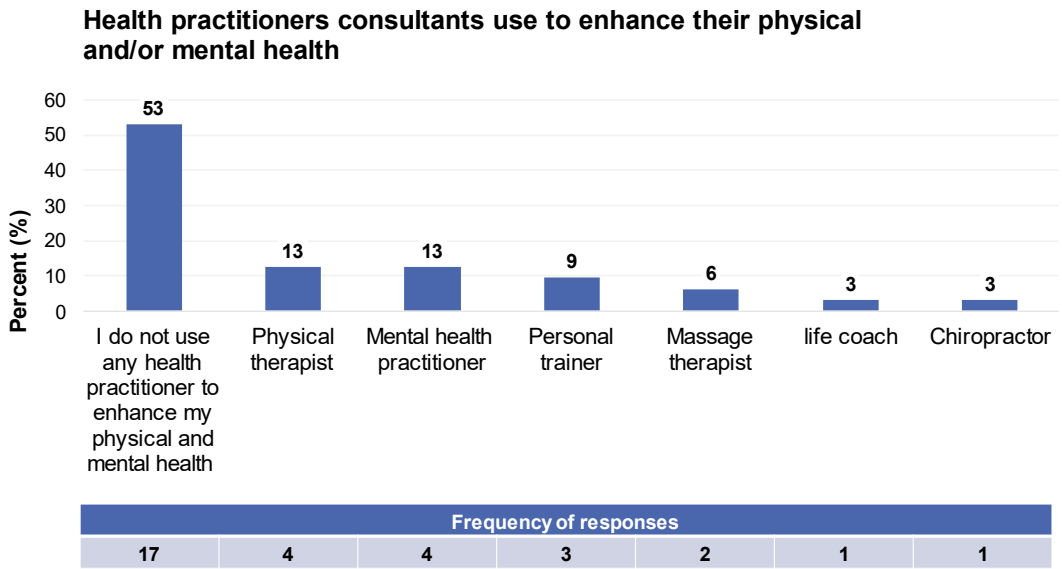
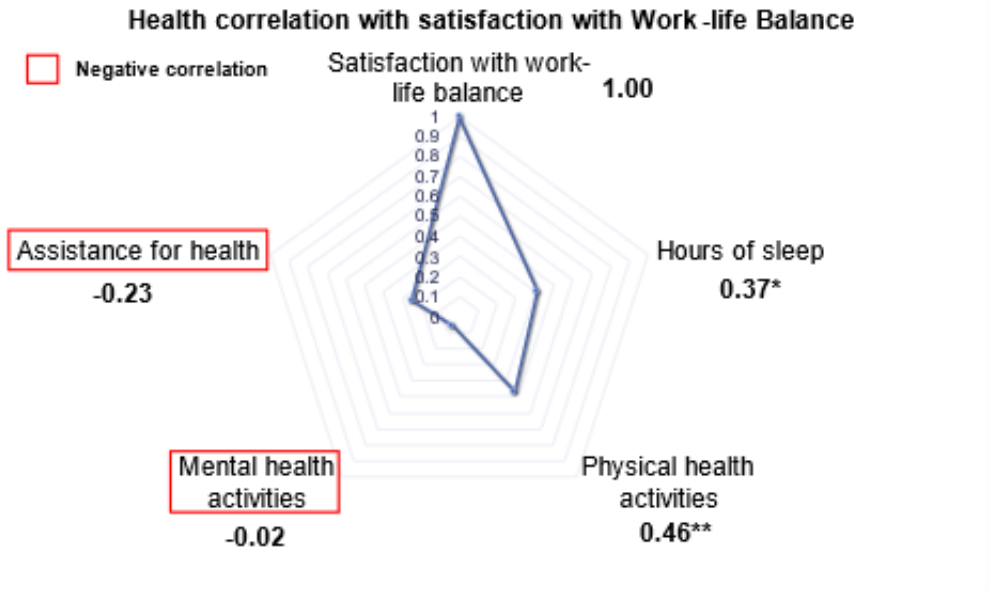


Figure 5.29: Health practitioners used

B. Domain Interface with Work-life Balance: *Room 3 - Health*

The interface between the *Health* variables revealed two relationships related to satisfaction with WLB, as shown in **Figure 5.30**. The first between hours of sleep with a coefficient of 0.37 and the second between physical health activities with a coefficient of 0.46. These relationships suggest those who get more hours of sleep and spend more time participating in physical health activities are more satisfied with their WLB.



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

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

N = 29

Figure 5.30: Correlations among Health variables and Satisfaction with Work-life Balance

C. Impact on Work-life Balance and Quality of Life: *Room 3 - Health*

The researcher identified four key insights derived from the survey results of the *Health* subdomain. These key insights are as follows:

1. Insufficient time spent on sleep per day.
2. Physical health activities are taken up but can be improved.
3. Mental health activities are practised, with room for improvement.
4. Further support may be required to improve physical and/or mental health.

Research insight 1: *Room 3 - Health*

The first insight identified is consultants do not spend enough time on sleep per day. The results indicate 80% of consultants sleep between 5 to 7 hours per day. Consultants in the sample were only getting on average 6 hours of sleep per day. Research into the recommended amount of sleep for a healthy adult recommends at least 7 or more hours per night for individuals aged 18 to 60 years (Watson *et al.*, 2015). Substantial research indicates that a lack of sleep can lead to health issues such as heart disease, obesity, dementia, diabetes and cancer (Walker, 2017). A lack of sleep has also been shown to impact mental health and directly impact workplace performance (Jenkins and Dallenbach, 1924; Walker, 2017). Therefore, a lack of sleep translates to suboptimal employee performance, which affects the organisation's performance.

Furthermore, the results indicated that sleep was directly correlated to satisfaction with WLB with a coefficient of 0.37. Sleep can be highly beneficial to maintaining an optimal WLB and QL (Gangwisch, 2014). Getting an adequate amount of sleep has been shown to improve productivity and concentration, lower weight gain, improved athletic performance, lower risk of heart disease, improve mental cognitive functioning, a reduction in stress and the ability to maintain a robust immune system (Fletcher and Weatherspoon, 2019). Organisations must ensure their employees get an adequate amount of sleep to allow for optimal work performance.

Research insight 2: *Room 3 - Health*

The second insight identified in the survey was that consultants dedicate a portion of their day towards physical health activities, but this can be improved. The results indicate 86% of consultants spend less than 1 hour per day on physical health activities. However, 10% of consultants do not spend any time on physical health activities during the week. According to the WHO, Adults aged 18 to 64 years should do at least 150 - 300 minutes

of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity per week (WHO, 2020), which equates to between 30 to 60 minutes per day between Monday to Friday.

The unique relationship between physical health activities was the correlation to satisfaction with WLB with a coefficient of 0.46. The relationship further reinforces the notion that physical health activities are a key enabler in achieving WLB, as noted by Clayton *et al.* (2015), who found that exercise helps with WLB. If organisations can ensure consultants get an adequate amount of physical activity, it will increase employee health and productivity, thus improving organisational efficiency.

Research insight 3: *Room 3 - Health*

The third insight is that mental health activities are practised, with room for improvement as they are not as widely adopted relative to physical health activities. The survey revealed only 52% of consultants practice mental health activities during the day, whereas 48% do not participate in these activities. The lack of time spent on mental health activities may indicate these activities are not regarded as beneficial, compared with sleep and physical health activities.

A lack of time spent on mental health activities has been shown to impede WLB, impact individuals' QL and negatively impact work performance. Insufficient time spent on mental health activities is likely to result in higher instances of mental health issues such as stress, depression, anxiety and irritability (Rider University, n.d.; CENTERFORPR, 2018). Poor mental health has also been associated with physical inactivity and poor dietary habits (Rider University, n.d.). A lack of time spent on mental health has been shown to degrade personal and professional relationships (Ahmed, 2020). Lastly, a lack of time spent on mental health has been shown to reduce productivity and invariably results in a lower motivation to work (Rider University, n.d.), impacting an organisation's performance.

Research insight 4: *Room 3 - Health*

The fourth insight identified was that further support might be required to improve physical and/or mental health. The results indicate 52% of consultants seek assistance from one or more health practitioners to improve their physical and/or mental health. In contrast, 48% of consultants do not seek assistance to improve their physical and/or mental health. Interventions may provide available support and assistance to the consultants to improve their physical and mental well-being.

5.3.2 Room 4 - Personal Time

The second area of the *Personal-life* domain is the *Room 4 - Personal Time* subdomain illustrated in **Figure 5.23**. The purpose of the *Personal Time* subdomain was to assess how much time consultants place towards their personal lives, how work encroaches on their personal time and how many leave days they take during the year.

A. 'As-is' Domain State: *Room 4 - Personal Time*

Personal Time consisted of three variables: personal recreation time, attending to work in personal time, and the number of leave days taken in the year. These variables are illustrated in **Table 5.5** below.

Table 5.5: Personal Time variables

Domain	Subdomain	#	Variable
Personal-life	*Personal Time*	17.	Personal recreation time
		18.	Attending to work in personal time
		19.	Leave days taken per year

The average daily hours spent on *Personal Time* activities are illustrated in **Figure 5.32**. On average, management consultants spend 0.5 hours per day on personal recreation activities and 1.5 hours attending to work during their personal time. The researcher explores each of these elements in further detail below.

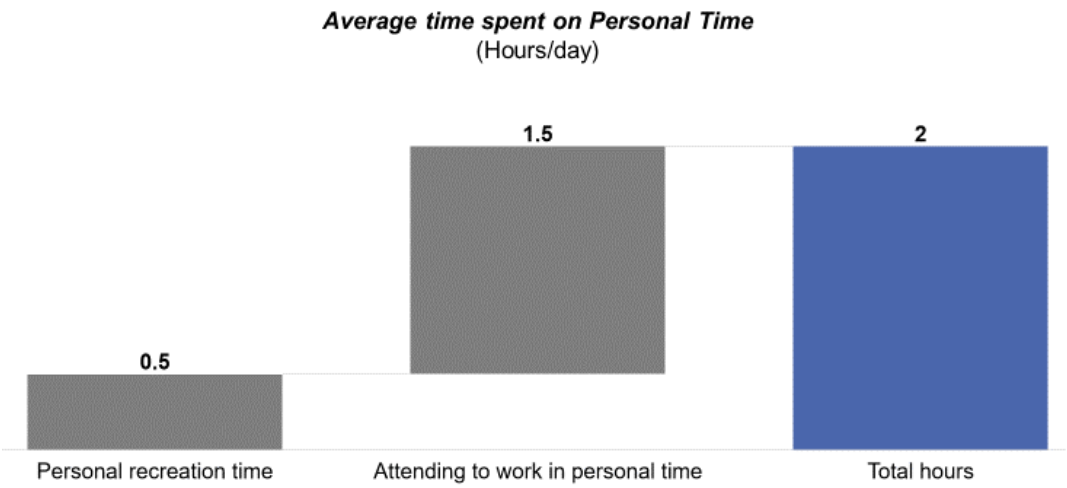


Figure 5.31: Average daily hours spent on Personal Time activities

Variable 17: Personal recreation time

Consultants do not dedicate a large portion of their day towards leisure and recreational activities. The results indicate 87% of consultants spend less than 1 hour a day on leisure and recreational activities. Of the 87%, 42% spend less than 0.5 hours, and 45% spend between 0.5 to 1 hour a day on personal recreation activities, as depicted in **Figure 5.33**.

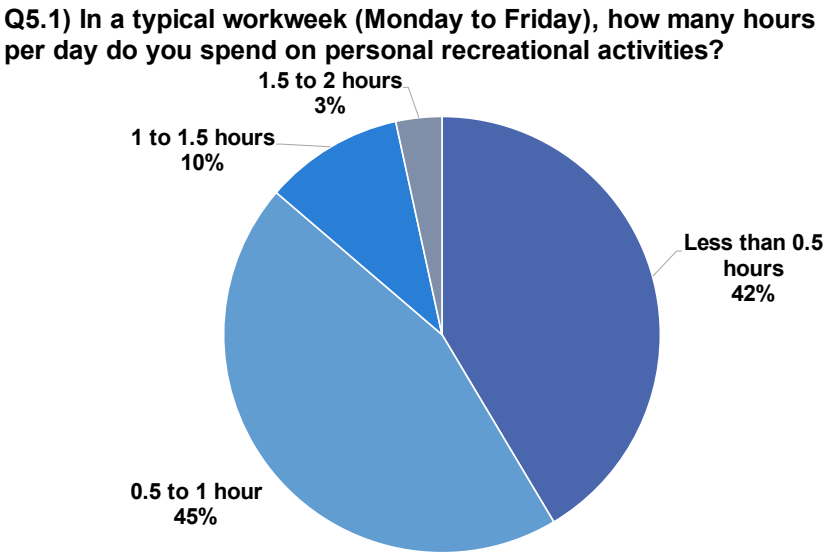


Figure 5.32: Personal recreation time

Variable 18: Attending to work in personal time

The majority of consultants find it difficult to disconnect from work during their personal time actively. The results indicate 72% of consultants spend between 1 to 2 hours per day attending to work-related activities during their personal time. The results shown in **Figure 5.34** indicate 38% of consultants spend longer than 2 hours per day, 17% spend between 1.5 to 2 hours, and 17% spend 1 to 1.5 hours per day attending to work-related activities during their personal time. A minor 7% indicated they do not attend to work-related activities during their personal time.

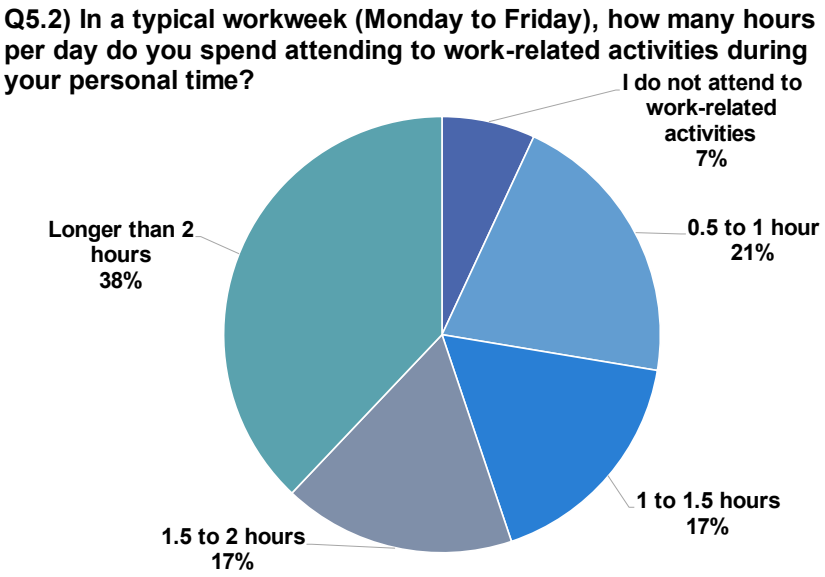


Figure 5.33: Attending to work in personal time

Variable 19: Leave days taken per year

The majority of consultants in the study do not maximise their allocated amount of leave days per year. Firm X allocates a maximum of 22 annual leave days per year, whereas the mean days taken per year in the study is 15 days, as indicated in **Figure 5.35.** The survey results indicate a polarised view, where the two highest frequencies were towards the ends of the rating scale. The highest frequency in this variable was 38% of consultants who took more than 18 leave days per year, and the second-highest was 27% who indicated they take less than 12 days per year.

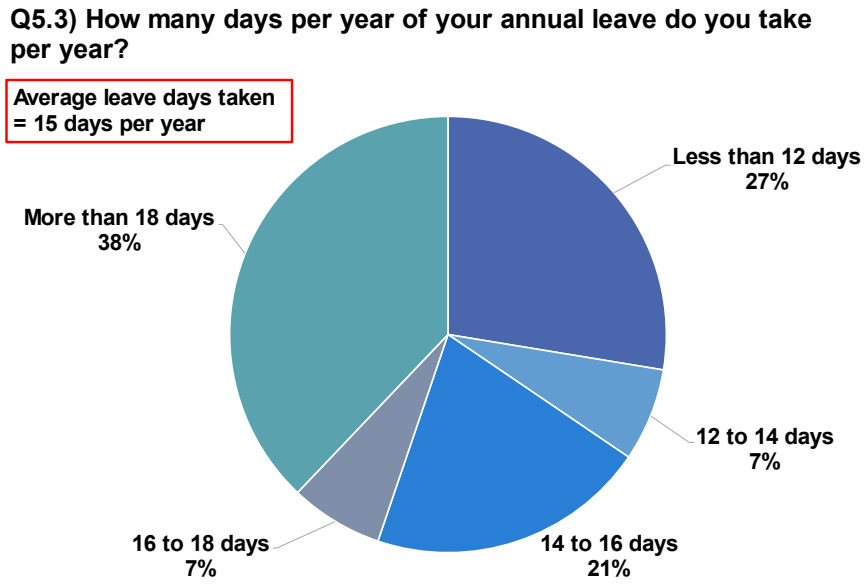


Figure 5.34: Leave days taken per year

B. Domain Interface with Work-life Balance: *Room 4 - Personal Time*

The *Personal Time* variables were correlated with the satisfaction with WLB variable, as shown in **Figure 5.36**. The results indicated no significant correlation among these variables.

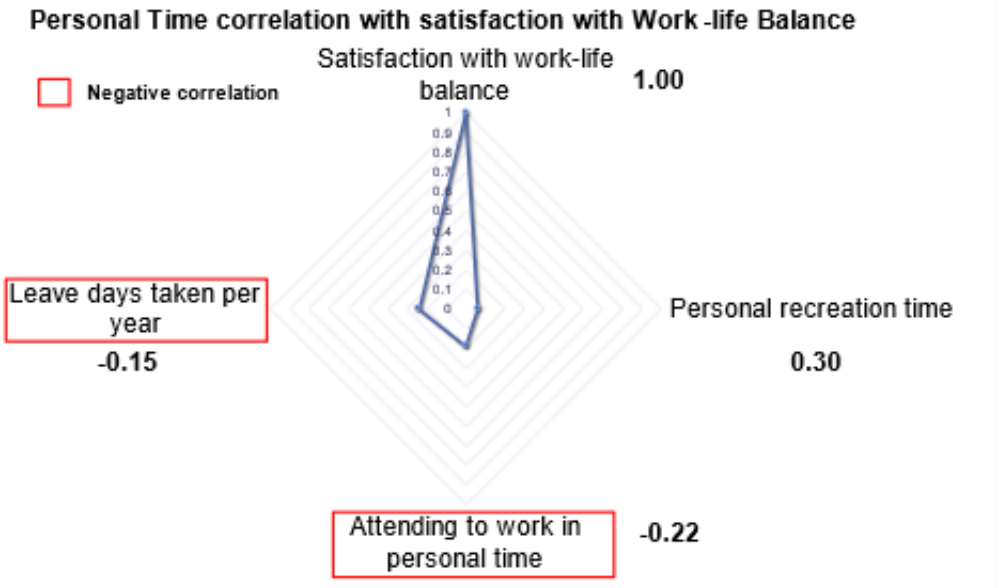


Figure 5.35: Correlation among Personal Time variables and Satisfaction with Work-life Balance

C. Impact on Work-life Balance and Quality of Life: *Room 4 - Personal Time*

The researcher identified three insights based on the *Personal Time* subdomain results, which directly impact the consultant's WLB and QL. These three insights are as follows:

1. Personal recreation time is present but not a major feature.
2. Consultants are "always-on".
3. Annual leave days are not maximised during the year.

Research insight 1: *Room 4 - Personal Time*

The first insight is that personal recreation time is present in consultants' lives, although not a significant feature of a typical workday. The survey results indicate 87% of consultants spend less than 1 hour per day on personal recreation time. The mean hours spent on personal recreation activities was 0.5 hours per day. A lack of time spent on personal recreational activities have been shown to impact personal relationships, as individuals have less time to spend with friends and family (Maddox, 2020).

Personal recreation time is said to improve one's QL by partaking in pleasurable activities which reduce stress and improve general life satisfaction (Brits, 2019). Research has demonstrated that leisure time resulted in physical and emotional benefits (Zawadzki, Smyth and Costigan, 2015). When individuals engaged in leisure activities, they reported improved mood, less stress and exhibited a lower heart rate than when they were not engaging in leisure activity (Zawadzki, Smyth and Costigan, 2015). Within this study, the consultants may not be spending sufficient time in personal recreational activities to reduce stress and develop relationships. The lack of time spent in these activities results in foregone time and an opportunity cost to the organisation of forgone leisure time benefits.

Research insight 2: *Room 4 - Personal Time*

The second insight is consultants are “always-on” and may find it difficult to actively disconnect from work during their personal time. The results indicate 72% of consultants spend between 1 to 2 hours per day attending to work-related activities during their personal time.

Blackburn and Rayner (2019) conducted an assessment to determine the impact of an “always-on” culture on employees. The research found that individuals who had access to work emails or answered phone calls outside the usual work hours reported higher levels of WLC and stress. The same individuals also reported mental exhaustion and increased compulsive checking of their phones compared with those who did not have such access. Additionally, employees who indicated high levels of distraction also reported lower levels of focus. However, those who had access also reported higher levels of work engagement, increased job satisfaction, rapid responses, and flexibility.

ICTs in the workplace have been associated with information overload, workplace interruption, high levels of connectedness to the workplace, increase in work pressure and most notably, a blur between work-life boundaries (Chesley, 2005; Leonardi, Treem and Jackson, 2010; Fonner and Roloff, 2012; Mazmanian, Orlikowski and Yates, 2013; Rice *et al.*, 2017; Huijer, 2019). Using ICTs has been shown to increase the volume of work employees undertake in a day and blur spatial and temporal boundaries, making it more challenging to separate work and non-work activities (Chesley, 2005; Barley, Meyerson and Grodal, 2011).

Management consulting firms should manage and monitor employee ICT usage outside of work hours to reduce the negative impacts of WLC while maintaining its benefits, such as work engagement and flexibility.

Research insight 3: *Room 4 - Personal Time*

The third insight is consultants take annual leave during the year; however, these days are not maximised. The views were polarised, with 38% indicating they took more than 18 days per year and the second-highest frequency of 27% indicating they took less than 12 days per year. Firm X offers consultants 22 days of annual leave per year, which is concerning considering the mean leave days taken per year was 15 days. Research shows that individuals who do not take their leave in the year are subject to increased stress, burnout and fatigue (Epel *et al.*, 2016).

Employers should encourage employees to take their leave throughout the year to counteract these adverse mental health effects. By doing so, consulting firms will promote a culture of taking leave and improve the overall organisation's efficiency.

5.4 Third Floor - Family-life

The fourth element of the framework assessed the *Third Floor - Family-life*, which only included *Room 5 - Family Time* as illustrated in **Figure 5.37**. The purpose of this domain was to assess the hours the consultants spend attending to family-related activities.

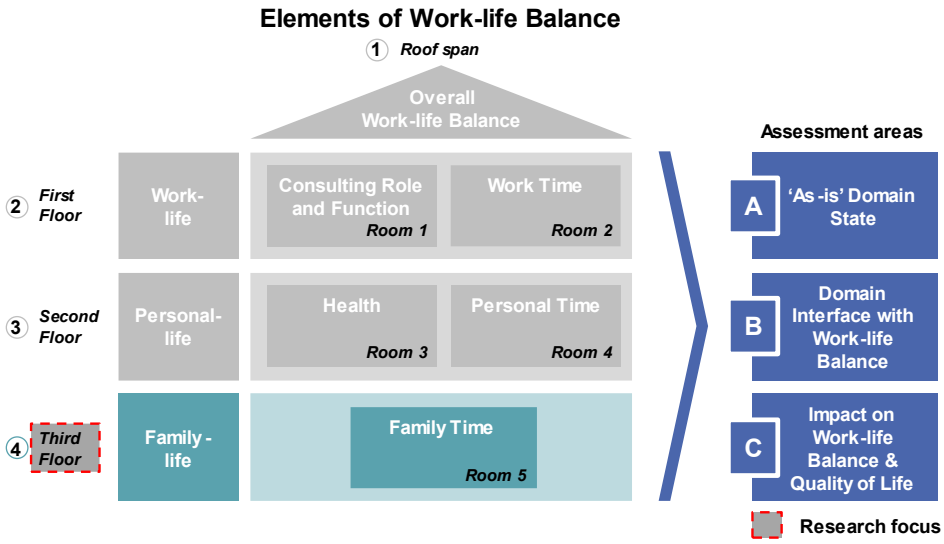


Figure 5.36: Framework of reference with the research focus on the Third Floor – Family-life

5.4.1 Room 5 - Family Time

A. 'As-is' Domain State: *Room 5 - Family Time*

Family-Time consisted of three variables: time spent assisting in family/household activities, time spent on family recreation time, and flexibility programmes to improve WLB. These variables are shown in **Table 5.6** below.

Table 5.6: Family Time variables

Domain	Subdomain	#	Variable
Family-life	*Family Time*	20.	Assisting in family/household activities
		21.	Family recreation time
		22.	Flexibility programmes taken

The average daily hours spent on *Family Time* activities are illustrated in **Figure 5.38**. In total, management consultants spend on average 2 hours per day on family-related activities. Further analysis indicates management consultants spend on average 1 hour per day assisting in family/household activities and 1 hour on family recreation time. The researcher explores each of these elements in further detail below.

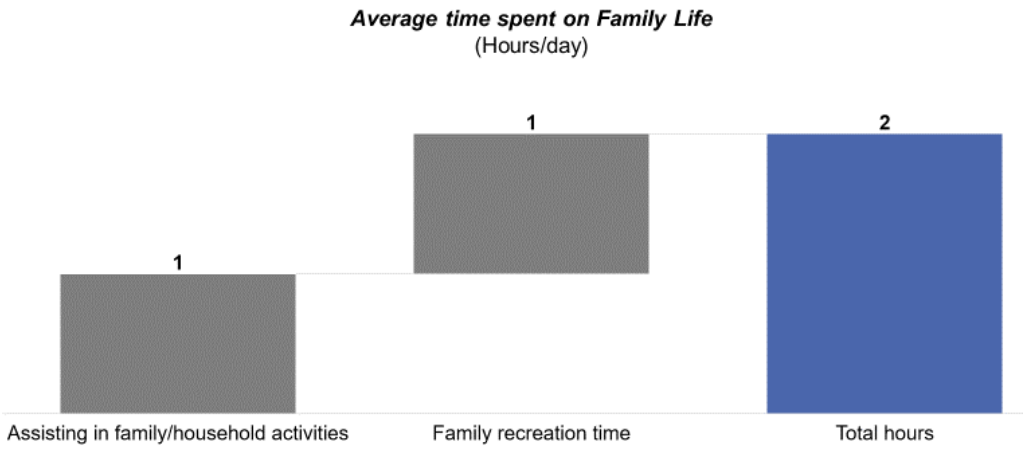


Figure 5.37: Average daily hours spent on Family Time variables

Variable 20: Assisting in family/household activities

The majority of consultants spend time assisting with family or household-related activities. The results indicate 72% of consultants dedicate time to assisting with family-related activities. **Figure 5.39** shows 55% of consultants typically spend between 0.5 to 1 hour per day, 14% spend 1 to 1.5 hours, and 3% spend 1.5 to 2 hours per day assisting with family or household-related activities. The second highest frequency noted was 28% of consultants do not assist with family or household-related activities during the week.

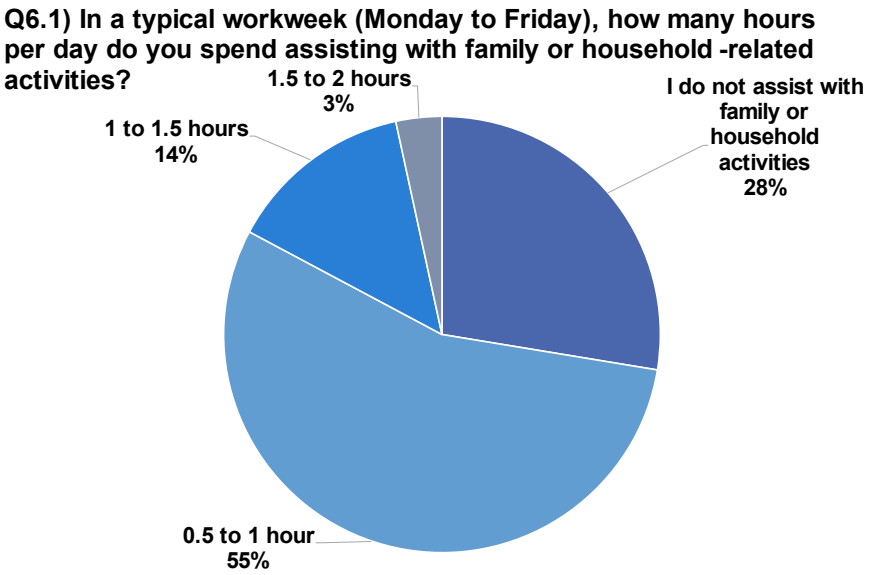


Figure 5.38: Assisting in family/household activities

Variable 21: Family recreation time

The majority of consultants spend recreation time with their families. The results indicate 79% of consultants dedicate recreational time with their families. As indicated in **Figure 5.40**, 58% of consultants typically spend 0.5 to 1 hour, 14% spend 1 to 1.5 hours, and 7% spend 1.5 to 2 hours per day on family-recreation time. The subsequent highest frequency noted was 21% of consultants who did not spend time on recreational activities with their families.

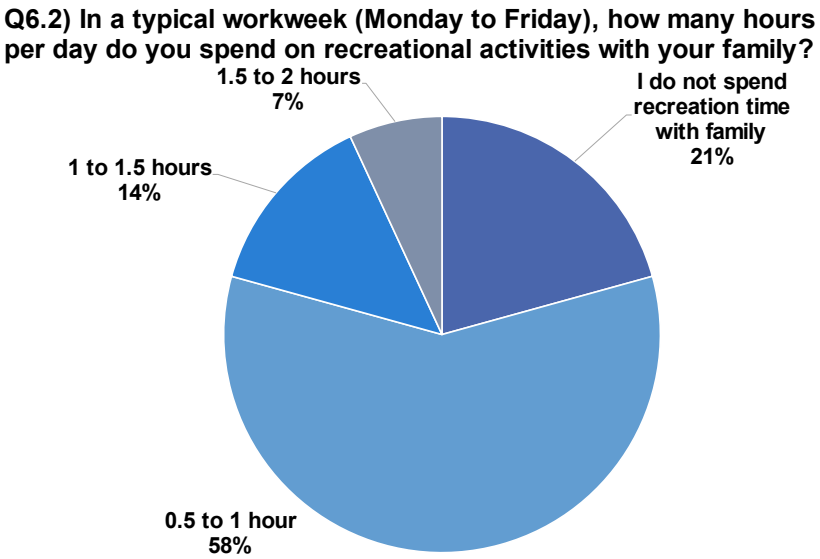


Figure 5.39: Family recreation time

Variable 22: Flexibility programmes taken

The majority of consultants do not take up flexibility programmes to increase their time spent with family. **Figure 5.41** shows 86% of consultants do not take up any flexibility programmes. The remaining 14% of respondents only took up one flexibility programme.

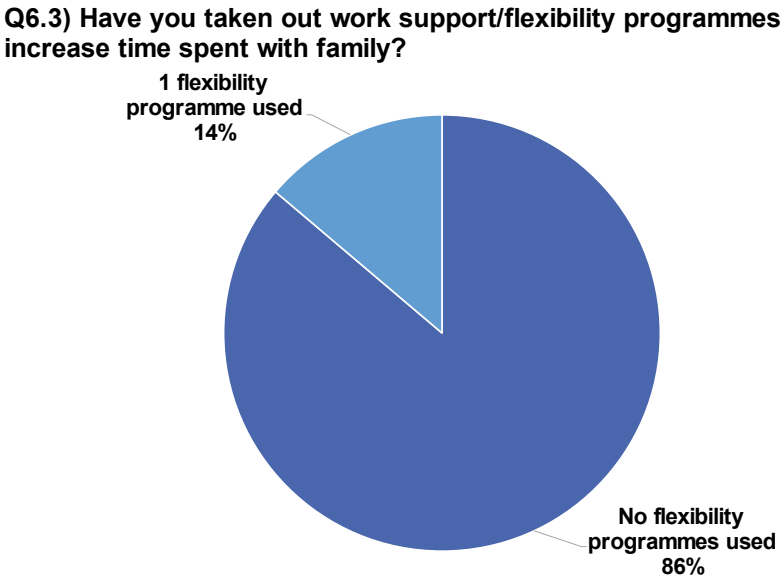


Figure 5.40: Flexibility programmes taken

A breakdown of the flexibility programmes taken up is shown in **Figure 5.42**. Of the 14% who have taken up flexibility programmes, 10% of the sample took leaves of absence/sabbaticals, and 4% of the sample took up a shortened workweek (i.e., working four days a week).

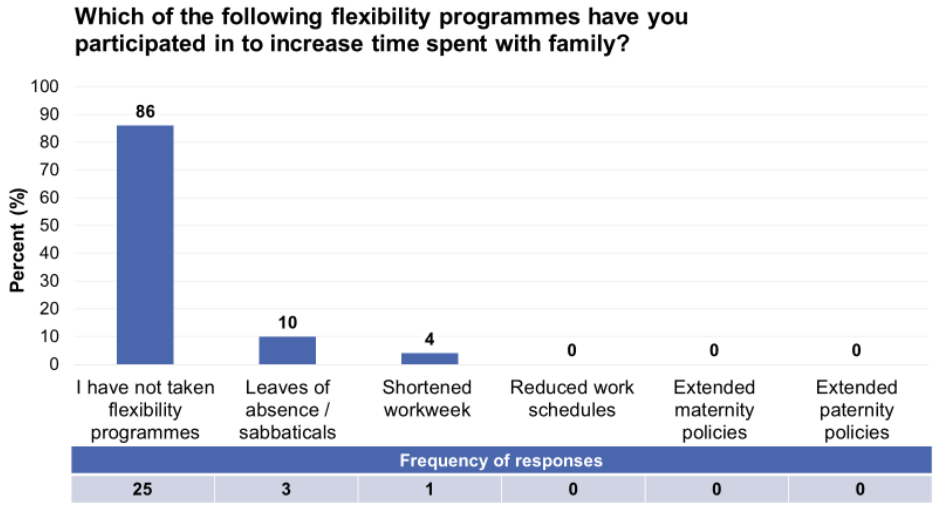
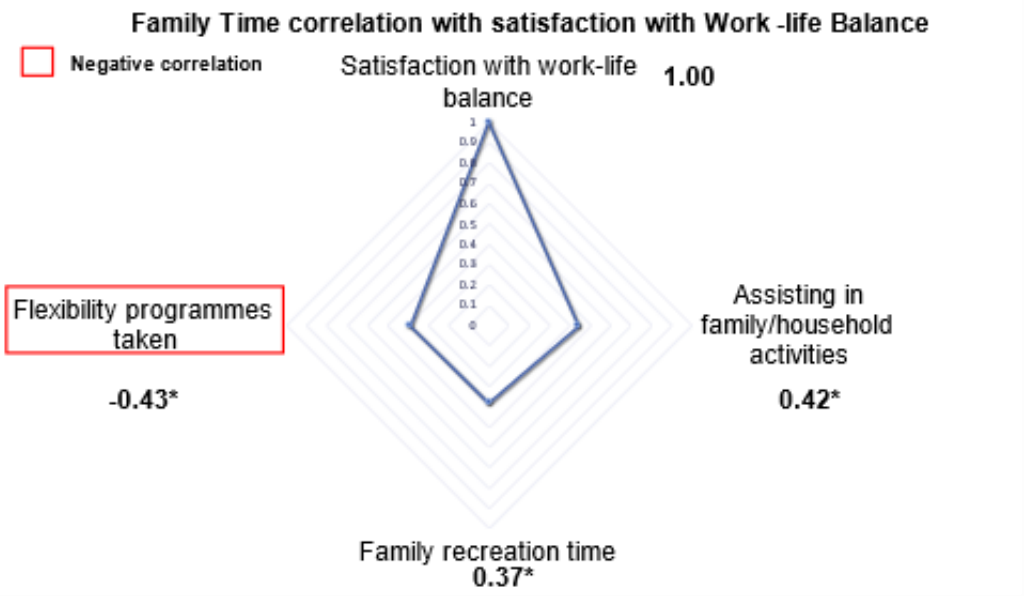


Figure 5.41: Flexibility programmes used by consultants

B. Domain Interface with Work-life Balance: *Room 5 - Family Time*

The *Family Time* variables were correlated with the satisfaction with the WLB variable, as shown in **Figure 5.43**. All *Family Time* variables were correlated to satisfaction with WLB. Assisting in family/house activities and family recreation time was correlated with 0.42 and 0.37, respectively. Taking up flexibility programmes and satisfaction with WLB was negatively correlated with a coefficient of -0.43.



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

N = 29

Figure 5.42: Correlation among Family Time variables and Satisfaction with Work-life Balance

C. Impact on Work-life Balance and Quality of Life: *Room 5 - Family Time*

The researcher identified two key insights derived from the survey results of the *Family-life* domain. These key insights have a direct impact on WLB and QL and are as follows:

1. Allocated time is spent with family but is not a major feature.
2. Limited use of flexibility programmes.

Research insight 1: *Room 5 - Family Time*

The first insight identified was that most consultants dedicate time with their families, but this time is not a significant feature in a typical workday. The results indicate 73% of consultants dedicate time to assisting with family-related activities, and 79% of consultants dedicate recreational time with their families. The average total time spent with families was 2 hours per day.

A lack of time spent with family has been associated with increased family-related absenteeism and tardiness, lower family satisfaction, decreased performance in the family role and increased parenting overload (Bellavia and Frone, 2005). Time spent assisting in family-related activities and family recreation time is essential to maintain a well-balanced family relationship. Blessing (2013) highlights the importance of attending family events, attending to household responsibilities, and spending recreational time with family to improve communication, health, and well-being. Firms must ensure consultants spend adequate time with their families to enhance their family-related role experience, leading to a positive uplift in their work-related role through work-life enrichment.

The survey revealed positive correlations between time assisting with family activities and satisfaction with WLB with a coefficient of 0.42. Family recreation time was also correlated to the satisfaction with WLB with a coefficient of 0.37.

Research insight 2: *Room 5 - Family Time*

The second insight identified was the limited use of flexibility programmes to help bring more time for families and improve WLB. The results indicated 86% of consultants had not used any flexibility programmes. This result is consistent with Wynn and Rao's (2020) research, which found consulting firms typically develop elaborate flexibility programmes. However, these programmes are hardly ever adopted due to flexibility stigma.

Flexibility programmes were also found to be negatively correlated to satisfaction with WLB with coefficients -0.43. This relationship indicates that these programmes may be essential to improving satisfaction with WLB. Consulting firms need to proactively ensure consultants take up these programmes by fostering a culture of accepting these programmes. By encouraging consultants to take up these programmes, firms realise the organisational performance benefits.

6 MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Having identified critical insights from the survey data, the researcher developed mitigation strategies management consulting firms can use to improve employees' WLB. WLB mitigation strategies are initiatives offered by firms, which enhance employees' autonomy in the process of coordinating and integrating their work, personal and family lives. The mitigation strategies aimed to improve the consulting firm's organisational efficiency by improving employees' WLB. By implementing the mitigation strategies, organisations will see an improvement in employee productivity, reduce employee absenteeism, improve staff retention, and increase employee commitment.

The researcher developed mitigation strategies across two areas, the first through the research insights across the various elements of WLB and the second from recommendations provided by the consultants in the survey.

6.1 Mitigation Strategies from Research Insights

The first set of mitigation strategies were determined from the research insights identified in the previous chapter. As depicted in **Figure 6.1**, the researcher used the research insights across each *Room* of the framework of reference to develop mitigation strategies.

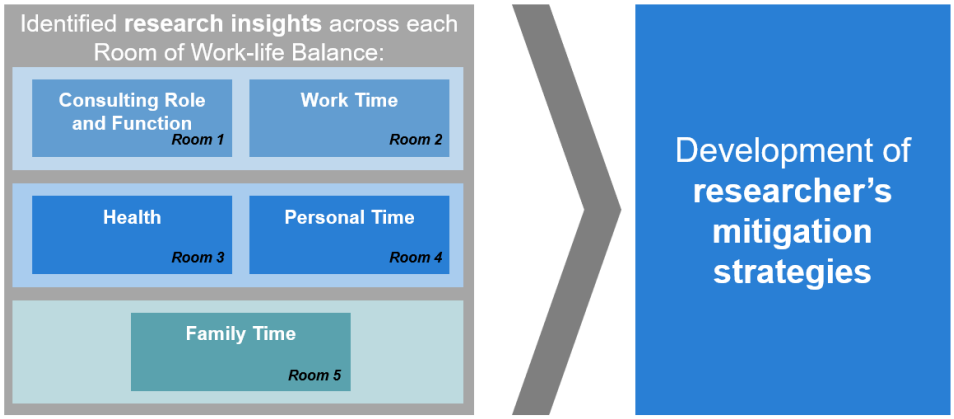


Figure 6.1: Process to develop mitigation strategies from research insights

6.1.1 Mitigation strategies from research insights: Consulting Role and Function

The researcher developed five corresponding mitigation strategies from *Room 1 - Consulting Role and Function* subdomain research insights. The mitigation strategies developed by the researcher and corresponding research insights are detailed in **Table 6.1**. These strategies are as follows:

1. Provide predictable time off to employees and discourage weekend work to reduce total hours worked during the week and weekend.
2. Conduct a systematic change to reduce meeting time, involving a robust change management programme.
3. Reduce total open projects, ensure sufficient project planning, and prioritise work to reduce multi-tasking.
4. Encourage employees to partake in training and development activities driven by leadership.
5. Leverage mentoring, coaching and feedback time to raise work-life issues between mentors and mentees.

Table 6.1: Room 1 mitigation strategies for Consulting Role and Function research insights

#	Research insight	Mitigation strategy
1.	Excessive total hours worked in core and ancillary consulting activities.	Provide predictable time off to employees and discourage weekend work to reduce total hours worked during the week and weekend. Providing predictable time off includes: • Imposing strict mechanisms for taking days and nights off. • Encouraging collaborative discussions on WLB. • Promoting experimentation on different working methods. • Insisting on top-level support. The strategy concurs with research undertaken by Fisher (2018) and Perlow and Porter (2009).

Table 6.1: Room 1 mitigation strategies for Consulting Role and Function research insights (continued)

#	Research insight	Mitigation strategy
2.	Significant time spent in engaging the Client and in internal meetings.	Conduct a systematic change to reduce meeting time, involving a robust change management programme. A systematic change to reduce meeting time involves: • Collecting impressions from each member to get a clearer view of how meetings are affecting the group. • Interpreting impressions together by gathering all employees to digest the feedback and analyse what is working and what is not. • Choosing a group goal for improving meetings that feel personally relevant and motivating to the employees. • Setting milestones and proactively monitoring the progress. • Regularly checking in to see how people feel about the meetings they attend and about their work process more generally. The mitigation strategy is supported and confirmed by Perlow, Gconstance and Eun (2017).
3.	The need for multi-tasking between core and ancillary consulting activities.	Reduce total open projects, ensure sufficient project planning, and prioritise work to reduce multi-tasking. The strategy concurs with research undertaken by Gupta (2012).
4.	Lack of time spent in training and development activities.	Encourage employees to partake in training and development activities driven by leadership. Improving employee engagement in training and development can be achieved by: • Making employee training and development part of the company culture. • Considering alternative methods of delivery of employee training and development programmes. • Leaders driving training and development activities. The strategy concurs with research undertaken by Williams (2019).

Table 6.1: Room 1 mitigation strategies for Consulting Role and Function research insights (continued)

#	Research insight	Mitigation strategy
5.	Usage of time spent in mentoring, coaching and feedback activities.	Leverage mentoring, coaching and feedback time to raise work-life issues between mentors and mentees. Firms should teach supervisors to support their staff's work-life issues by: • Providing emotional support and acknowledging employees have responsibilities outside of work. • Providing structuring support by working with employees to resolve scheduling conflicts. • Modelling healthy behaviour, e.g., showing it is acceptable to attend important family functions during work hours. • Partnering with other managers to strategically address work-life issues. The strategy concurs with research undertaken by Kossek and Hammer (2008).

6.1.2 Mitigation strategies from research insights: Work Time

The researcher developed one mitigation strategy from *Room 2 - Work Time* subdomain research insights. The mitigation strategy developed by the researcher and corresponding research insight is detailed in **Table 6.2**. This strategy is as follows:

1. Managers to encourage employees to take breaks during the day.

Table 6.2: Room 2 mitigation strategy for the Work Time research insight

#	Research insight	Mitigation strategy
1.	Insufficient breaks taken during a workday. (research insight 3 *Work Time*)	Managers to encourage employees to take breaks during the day. Employers can encourage employees to step away from their desks and mentally disengage from challenging tasks every few hours. The strategy concurs with research undertaken by Peart (2019).

6.1.3 Mitigation strategies from research insights: Health

The researcher developed four corresponding mitigation strategies from *Room 3 - Health* subdomain research insights. The mitigation strategies developed by the researcher and corresponding research insights are detailed in **Table 6.3**. These strategies are as follows:

1. Educate employees and managers on the importance of sleep and implement sleep policies.
2. Implement policies that promote physical health in the workplace.
3. Proactively engage with staff on mental health issues through training, check-ins, and regular pulse surveys.
4. Implement an employer-sponsored employee wellness programme to improve well-being and health.

Table 6.3: Room 3 mitigation strategies for Health research insights

#	Research insight	Mitigation strategy
1.	Insufficient time spent on sleep per day.	Educate employees and managers on the importance of sleep and implement sleep policies. The strategy concurs with research undertaken by Fryer (2006).
2.	Physical health activities are taken up but can be improved.	Implement policies that promote physical health in the workplace. These written policies can include: • Introducing short activity breaks to reduce sedentary behaviour. • Incorporating flexi-time programmes to incorporate physical activity during work hours. The strategy concurs with research undertaken by Ablah *et al.* (2019).
3.	Mental health activities are practised, with room for improvement.	Proactively engage with staff on mental health issues through training, check-ins, and regular pulse surveys. In this way, organisational leaders can support employees' mental health, as confirmed by Greenwood and Krol (2020).
4.	Further support may be required to improve physical and/or mental health.	Implement an employer-sponsored employee wellness programme to improve well-being and health. The wellness programmes include benefits such as gym reimbursements, health coaching, free healthy food, health fairs and health education (Wellable, n.d.).

6.1.4 Mitigation strategies from research insights: Personal Time

The researcher developed four corresponding mitigation strategies from *Room 4 - Personal Time* subdomain research insights. The mitigation strategies developed by the researcher and corresponding research insights are detailed in **Table 6.4**. These strategies are as follows:

1. Implement ICT policies that allow employees to actively 'switch off' from work, preventing communication after hours.
2. Engage employees to foster a culture of taking leave and potentially incentivise them to take leave.

Table 6.4: Room 4 mitigation strategies for Personal Time research insights

#	Research insight	Mitigation strategy
1.	Consultants are "Always on." (research insight 2 *Personal Time*)	Implement ICT policies that allow employees to actively 'switch off' from work, preventing communication after hours. Organisations can help employees manage the always-on culture by adopting three fundamental principles, which are as follows: • Cultivate a workplace culture that allows employees to switch off from work in their free time by setting guidelines and educating managers about the importance of switching off after work. • Set out clear expectations about technology usage inside and outside work by setting a company policy for using email, phones and working outside of working hours. • Ensure the behaviour expected of employees to embed a culture of 'switching off' flows from leadership. These principles were confirmed with research undertaken by Blackburn and Rayner (2019).

Table 6.4: Room 4 mitigation strategies for Personal Time research insights (continued)

#	Research insight	Mitigation strategy
2.	Annual leave days are not maximised during the year. (research insight 3 *Personal Time*)	Engage employees to foster a culture of taking leave and potentially incentivise them to take leave. Employers can encourage employees to take their annual leave by adopting the following three strategies: • Educate employees on the importance of taking their annual leave. • Cultivate a culture where employees feel it is acceptable to take their annual leave. • Offer tangible incentives for employees to book their holidays, such as travel booking upgrades. The strategy concurs with research undertaken by Unsworth (2019).

6.1.5 Mitigation strategies from research insights: Family Time

The researcher developed one corresponding mitigation strategy from *Room 5 - Family Time* subdomain research insights. The mitigation strategy developed by the researcher and the corresponding research insight is detailed in **Table 6.5**. These strategies are as follows:

1. Encourage employees to adopt flexibility programmes by training supervisors and cultivating a supportive company culture of flexibility programmes.

Table 6.5: Room 5 mitigation strategy for the Family Time research insight

#	Research insight	Mitigation strategy
1.	Limited use of flexibility programmes. (research insight 2 *Family Time*)	Encourage employees to adopt flexibility programmes by training supervisors and cultivating a supportive company culture of flexibility programmes. The researcher recommends two strategies: • Organisations can train supervisors on how to provide their teams with performance, family, and personal support. • Establish a company culture that supports workers who take flexibility programmes. The strategy concurs with research undertaken by Russo and Morandin (2019).

6.2 Mitigation Strategies from the Questionnaire

The researcher posed a question to gather the consultants' input regarding how they think the firm can improve overall WLB for employees. The researcher grouped similar responses to determine the overarching mitigation strategy and its associated fit within the framework of reference.

Through the above process, the researcher developed 10 overarching strategies, which can be used to improve employees' WLB. The 10 mitigation strategies were only applicable to the *Roof Span, Room 1, Room 2* and *Room 4* of the research framework. These strategies are as follows:

Roof Span - Overall Work-life Balance interventions:

1. Incentivise leadership on employee satisfaction.
2. Define the culture and boundaries of WLB in the firm in terms of what is expected from employees.
3. Ensure proactive firm engagement with employees regarding work-life issues to improve work-life integration.
4. Leadership to demonstrate WLB practices for employees to follow.

Room 1 - Consulting Role and Function interventions:

5. Ensure adequate resources on projects to manage employee workload.
6. Align on project scope upfront to better manage Client expectations in terms of project timelines and deliverables.

Room 2 - Work Time interventions:

7. Set out a typical workday structure to establish work starting and closing hours.
8. Implement work-time policies to reduce working long hours during the week and prevent weekend work.

Room 4 - Personal Time:

9. Improve accessibly to leave and encourage employees to take their allocated leave days.
10. Provide additional leave days to employees.

The corresponding survey responses for each overarching mitigation strategy are detailed below.

6.2.1 Consultant's mitigation strategies: Overall Work-life Balance

The following consulting responses indicated in **Table 6.6** apply to the *Roof span - Overall Work-life Balance* domain. These strategies are centred around leadership's role in driving WLB within the firm and can affect all other domains (*Work-life*, *Personal-life* and *Family-life*).

Table 6.6: Roof span consultant mitigation strategies - Overall Work-life Balance responses

#	Mitigation strategy	Consultant's responses
1.	Incentivise leadership on employee satisfaction.	• Incentivise partners on employee satisfaction. Projects with low overall scores are not eligible for bonus payments.
2.	Define the culture and boundaries of WLB in the firm in terms of what is expected from employees.	• Define the culture and boundaries for work-life balance for the office, i.e., what is reasonable, what is expected and what are the exceptions. • Aligning as leadership on what the firm's priorities are.
3.	Ensure proactive firm engagement with employees regarding work-life issues to improve work-life integration.	• Assist the consultants in understanding their own rhythms and working with them to improve work-life integration. • Make the effort to understand exactly how much time consultants are putting into their work. • The firm needs to listen to feedback - don't do a workshop to hear what we have to say, and then use that to "tick the box" but do nothing with the feedback.

Table 6.6: Roof span consultant mitigation strategies - Overall Work-life Balance responses (continued)

#	Mitigation strategy	Consultant's responses
4.	Leadership to demonstrate WLB practices for employees to follow.	• Practice what they preach.

6.2.2 Consultant's mitigation strategies: Consulting Role and Function

The *Room 1 - Consulting Role and Function* mitigations strategies are provided in **Table 6.7**.

Table 6.7: Room 1 consultant mitigation strategies - Consulting Role and Function responses

#	Mitigation strategy	Consultant's responses
5.	Ensure adequate resources on projects to manage employee workload.	• More resources [and] increased retention of consultant resources. • Increasing staffing on projects to reduce employee workload. • Staff more people on each project. • Staffing projects correctly, with adequate resources. • Add more resources to difficult or tightly timed projects. • Adequate resourcing and scheduling, especially to account for the complexities of working completely remotely.

Table 6.7: Room 1 consultant mitigation strategies - Consulting Role and Function responses (continued)

#	Mitigation strategy	Consultant's responses
6.	Align on project scope upfront to better manage client expectations in terms of project timelines and deliverables.	• Manage scope and client expectations. • Reduced and realistic project scoping and timelines. • Create more realistic client expectations on what is achievable given the time and resources available. • Better scoping of projects upfront. • Align (internally and with clients) right in the beginning of engagements on the expected deliverables to avoid rework as much as possible. • Manage client expectations better. • Ensuring alignment with clients on project scope and deliverables prior to deploying a team and initiating work. • Better pushback at the top with the client - balancing what the client actually needs vs what they say they want.

6.2.3 Consultant's mitigation strategies: Work Time

The *Room 2 - Work Time* mitigation strategies are provided in **Table 6.8**.

Table 6.8: Room 2 consultant mitigation strategies - Work Time responses

#	Mitigation strategy	Consultant's responses
7.	Set out a typical workday structure to establish work starting and closing hours.	• Limit the start time to 9am, days are starting earlier and earlier. • Opportunity to add structure to a typical workday, by setting a "Start of Day" time, Close out, etc. and allocating and protecting an hour per day for personal time while on a project. • Compulsory cut-off time every day.
8.	Implement work-time policies to reduce working long hours during the week and preventing weekend work.	• Mandating personal time during the week and weekends. • Allow for ring-fenced personal time which is respected by all.

6.2.4 Consultant's mitigation strategies: Personal Time

The *Room 4 - Personal Time* mitigations strategies are provided in **Table 6.9**.

Table 6.9: Room 4 consultant mitigation strategies - Personal Time responses

#	Mitigation strategy	Consultant's responses
9.	Improve accessibly to leave and encourage employees to take their allocated leave days.	• Encouraging employees to take leave not only outside of project time. • Also improve leave structures in some way (i.e., create room for a consultant to be able to take leave more readily). • Being able to take normal leave is questionable to increase family time.
10.	Provide additional leave days to employees.	• Increasing annual leave allocations. • Granting more leave/paid time off to consultants and forcing people to utilise it.

7 CONCLUSION

The study aimed to examine the WLI of management consultants in South Africa and develop mitigation strategies to improve employees' WLB, thereby improving the organisation's efficiency. The researcher developed mitigation strategies consulting firms can adopt to improve WLB for their employees and ensure they achieve a more desirable QL.

To support the development of these mitigation strategies, the researcher set out to:

- Assess the impact of excessive work hours on the WLI and the consequent impact on management consultants' QL and WLB.
- Develop mitigation strategies management consulting firms in South Africa can use to improve employees' WLB and ensure an acceptable QL.

7.1 Conclusion: Roof span - Overall Work-life Balance

Based on a quantitative analysis of the work and non-work activities of management consultants in South Africa, it can be concluded that consultants experience significant WLC with an urgent need to redress it in the form of WLB. The WLC experienced by employees is detrimental to the consulting firm's operational efficiency.

The *Overall Work-life Balance* domain indicated that most consultants disagreed with being satisfied with their WLB and could not manage their stress during the week, indicating the need for consulting firms to adopt targeted mitigation strategies to improve WLB.

7.2 Conclusion: Room 1 - Consulting Role and Function

It can be concluded the role of a consultant is very demanding, requiring extensive work hours during the week and weekend, which involves

extended team and client engagements and the need to multitask frequently. As a result of these long work hours, consultants tend to avoid critical activities to ensure WLB, such as training and development, leading to potentially lost time to improve employee performance.

7.3 Conclusion: Room 2 - Work Time

Consultants spend on average 69 hours per week working during the workweek and on weekends, highlighting the need to provide time off for consultants. Further impacting the WLB of management consultants is the lack of breaks taken during a workday, which compounds existing stress and fatigue.

7.4 Conclusion: Room 3 - Health

Due to the excessive workload, consultants do not dedicate enough time to sleep, which undermines the efforts to improve the consultant's overall health. Additionally, the results indicated just 50% of consultants seek assistance from one or more health practitioners to improve their physical and/or mental health, which shows that consultants may require further support to improve their overall health.

7.5 Conclusion: Room 4 - Personal Time

Most consultants indicated they attend to work-related activities during their personal time as they are always connected to their work through ICT devices. Further to this, consultants experience a blur in work-life boundaries between their work and personal lives by being constantly connected to work. Lastly, consultants do not maximise their annual leave during the year, indicating potential lost time to recover and spend on personal relationships.

7.6 Conclusion: Room 5 - Family Time

Consultants dedicate a portion of their day towards family-related activities but seldomly take up any firm flexibility programmes to increase time spent with their families or improve their WLB. The lack of uptake of flexibility programmes highlights the need for employers to make a conscious effort to ensure these programmes are adopted.

7.7 Conclusion: Impact on Work-life Balance and Quality of Life

The researcher explored the consequent impact on management consultants' WLB and QL due to excessive work hours from research insights. The research results concur with those in developed countries and are not geo-specific to South Africa, as the study was conducted during a lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the identified results on the impact on WLB and QL apply to global management consulting firms. A summary of the six consolidated impacts on WLB and QL is detailed in **Table 7.1** and are as follows:

Table 7.1: Consolidated Impact on Work-life Balance and Quality of Life

#	Theme	Impact on WLB and QL
1.	**Impacted physical and mental health**	• Poor physical health due to physical inactivity and physical exhaustion with an increased risk of long-term health diseases (e.g., hypertension). • Mental health deterioration resulting in burnout, increased stress, anxiety, and an increased risk of depression.
2.	**Reduced work performance**	• Low levels of occupational well-being. • Reduction in employee productivity, focus and engagement in the workplace.
3.	**Decreased employee happiness**	• Reduction in overall employee happiness and lower job satisfaction. • Higher potential for staff turnover.

Table 7.1: Consolidated Impact on Work-life Balance and Quality of Life (continued)

#	Theme	Impact on WLB and QL
4.	**Relationship impact**	• Degradation in personal and professional relationships.
5.	**Foregone personal and family time**	• Foregone *Personal-life* and *Family-life* benefits include reduced stress, improved overall physical and mental health, increased productivity, and decreased absenteeism.
6.	**Blur in work-life boundaries**	• Increasingly challenging to achieve WLB due to being constantly connected to work through ICT devices.

Table 7.1 indicates that WLC is prevalent among management consultants bringing detrimental consequences for the firm and its employees. The WLC experience by employees leads to a reduction in the consulting firm's overall performance and organisational efficiency. This reduction in organisational efficiency is applicable globally across management consulting firms regardless of geography, as WLC represents a global problem for consultants.

7.8 Conclusion: Mitigation Strategies

To overcome the WLC experienced by the consultants and improve the consulting firm's organisational efficiency, the researcher developed WLB mitigation strategies firms can implement. The researcher developed 23 mitigation strategies - 13 from the research insights and 10 from the consultants' recommendations in the questionnaire. Management consulting firms can adopt the proposed mitigation strategies to improve their organisational efficiency by improving employees' WLB. By implementing the mitigation strategies, organisations will see an improvement in employee productivity, reduce employee absenteeism, improve staff retention, and increase employee commitment.

The researcher's mitigation strategies, like the results, can be applied to global consulting firms as they are confirmed and supported by research undertaken in developed countries.

The researcher colour-coded the mitigation strategies. Those developed from the research insights are shown in red, and those developed from the consultant's recommendations are shown in blue, as demonstrated in **Figure 7.1**.



Figure 7.1: Key for mitigation strategies

7.8.1 Conclusion: mitigation strategies for Roof span - Overall Work-life Balance

Four mitigation strategies were developed in the *Roof span* of the framework - *Overall Work-life Balance* domain. The strategies are shown in **Table 7.2**.

Table 7.2: Roof span mitigation strategies – Overall Work-life Balance

#	Mitigation strategy
1.	Incentivise leadership on employee satisfaction.
2.	Define the culture and boundaries of WLB in the firm in terms of what is expected from employees.
3.	Ensure proactive firm engagement with employees regarding work-life issues to improve work-life integration.
4.	Leadership to demonstrate WLB practices for employees to follow.

7.8.2 Conclusion: mitigation strategies for Room 1 - Consulting Role and Function

Seven mitigation strategies were developed in *Room 1* of the framework - Consulting *Role and Function* subdomain. The strategies are shown in **Table 7.3**.

Table 7.3: Room 1 mitigation strategies - Consulting Role and Function

#	Mitigation strategy
1.	Provide predictable time off to employees and discourage weekend work to reduce total hours worked during the week and weekend.
2.	Conduct a systematic change to reduce meeting time, involving a robust change management programme.
3.	Reduce total open projects, ensure sufficient project planning, and prioritise work to reduce multitasking.
4.	Encourage employees to partake in training and development activities driven by leadership.
5.	Leverage mentoring, coaching and feedback time to raise work-life issues between mentors and mentees.
6.	Ensure adequate resources on projects to manage employee workload.
7.	Align on project scope upfront to better manage client expectations in terms of project timelines and deliverables.

7.8.3 Conclusion: mitigation strategies for Room 2 - Work Time

Three mitigation strategies were developed in *Room 2* of the framework - *Work Time* subdomain. The strategies are shown in **Table 7.4**.

Table 7.4: Room 2 mitigation strategies - Work Time

#	Mitigation strategy
1.	Managers to encourage employees to take breaks during the day.
2.	Set out a typical workday structure to establish work starting and closing hours.
3.	Implement work-time policies to reduce working long hours during the week and prevent weekend work.

7.8.4 Conclusion: mitigation strategies for Room 3 - Health

Three mitigation strategies were developed in *Room 3* of the framework - *Health* subdomain. The strategies are shown in **Table 7.5**.

Table 7.5: Room 3 mitigation strategies - Health

#	Mitigation strategy
1.	Educate employees and managers on the importance of sleep and implement sleep policies.
2.	Implement policies that promote physical health in the workplace.
3.	Proactively engage with staff on mental health issues through training, check-ins, and regular pulse surveys.
4.	Implement an employer-sponsored employee wellness programme to improve well-being and health.

7.8.5 Conclusion: mitigation strategies for Room 4 - Personal Time

Four mitigation strategies were developed in *Room 4* of the framework - *Personal Time* subdomain. The strategies are shown in **Table 7.6**.

Table 7.6: Room 4 mitigation strategies - Personal Time

#	Mitigation strategy
1.	Implement ICT policies that allow employees to actively "switch off" from work, preventing communication after hours.
2.	Engage employees to foster a culture of taking leave and potentially incentivise them to take leave.
3.	Improve accessibly to leave and encourage employees to take their allocated leave days.
4.	Provide additional leave days to employees.

7.8.6 Conclusion: mitigation strategies for Room 5 - Family Time

One mitigation strategy was developed in *Room 5* of the framework - *Family Time* subdomain. The strategy is shown in **Table 7.7**.

Table 7.7: Room 5 mitigation strategies - Family Time

#	Mitigation strategy
1.	Encourage employees to adopt flexibility programmes by training supervisors and cultivating a supportive company culture of flexibility programmes.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Recommendations for Consulting Firms

The survey results indicated that consultants experience significant WLC due to excessive work hours, with an urgent need to address this through WLB. In this regard, Firm X needs to recognise that the long hours experienced by the consultants negatively impacts the employees' QL and hinder the firm's operational efficiency. Thus, the researcher recommends Firm X implement the WLB mitigation strategies identified to restore WLB for the consultants.

The researcher recognises that all mitigation strategies cannot be implemented immediately and need to be prioritised. In this light, the researcher proposes that Firm X implement the mitigation strategies across two categories – *short-term realisation* and *long-term improvement*.

Short-term realisation represents the mitigation strategies, which can be implemented immediately to improve WLB for employees and subsequently improve the company's operational efficiency. A non-exhaustive list of the potential *short-term realisation* mitigation strategies include:

- Providing predictable time off to employees and discouraging weekend work.
- Ensuring adequate resources on projects to manage employee workload.
- Aligning on the project scope upfront to better manage client expectations in terms of project timelines and deliverables.
- Setting out a typical workday structure to establish work starting and closing hours.
- Improving accessibly to leave and encouraging employees to take their allocated leave days.
- Providing additional leave days to employees.

Long-term improvement mitigation strategies represent the future initiatives, which require considerable time and collaboration between employees and the firm's leadership to enable the WLB benefits. Potential, non-exhaustive long-term improvement strategies that can be implemented include:

- Defining the culture and boundaries of WLB in the firm in terms of what is expected from employees.
- Ensuring proactive firm engagement with employees regarding work-life issues to improve work-life integration.
- Leveraging mentoring, coaching and feedback time to raise work-life issues between mentors and mentees.
- Implementing work-time policies to reduce working long hours during the week and preventing weekend work.
- Implementing ICT policies that allow employees to actively "switch off" from work, preventing communication after hours.

Consulting firms need to recognise that for a WLB optimisation programme to be successful, it requires a significant effort to manage and involves an ongoing, collaborative effort between the firm's employees and the leadership team. In addition, the proposed WLB mitigation strategies will need to be monitored and tracked to ensure the benefits are realised.

It should be noted, the research results and mitigation strategies in this study were not geo-specific to South Africa due to the consultants working remotely, as were many countries during the COVID-19 pandemic. The problems of WLB identified in this study align with those faced globally by management consultants. Additionally, the results and mitigation strategies developed by the researcher concurred with previous research undertaken in developed countries, highlighting their importance to global management consulting firms. Therefore, these mitigation strategies can be applied globally to consulting firms and potentially other demanding industries, such as investment banking.

8.2 Recommendations for Future Research

Through the study, the researcher identified key findings which may require further research and are detailed as follows:

- Future studies can examine the impact of implementing the proposed mitigation strategies on a consulting firm's organisational efficiency and performance. The study can pilot the implementation of select WLB mitigation strategies and determine the resulting net profit impact by examining the cost reduction and revenue upliftment.
- The current study was general to all consultants at the selected firm in South Africa. However, there may be differences when factoring in tenure, gender, rank and age across management consultants. Therefore, future research can look at comparing WLB across these factors.
- The current study was positioned as a quantitative assessment of WLB. Future studies can assess the qualitative and quantitative impact of excessive work hours on the WLB of management consultants and how it affects organisational efficiency.
- The researcher conducted the study during the COVID-19 period, where many consultants were expected to work remotely due to South Africa's lockdown restrictions. When the COVID-19 pandemic has passed, a longitudinal study can be conducted to replicate this study and compare future studies' results against the current results.
- A research insight identified was more than 50% of consultants spend less than 30 minutes commuting to work due to remote working. The researcher hypothesised the reduction in commute time might have translated to an increase in hours worked. The hypothesis was driven by an article by Kun *et al.* (2020), who identified the reduction in commute time has translated to an increase in work time for managers. Future research can examine the impact of remote work on WLB and determine whether the hypothesis is true for management consultants.

- Expanding on the intricacies of working remotely during COVID-19, numerous articles have suggested that post-COVID-19 work may move towards a hybrid work model, which involves working a few days in the office and the remainder working remotely (Ro, 2020; Blenford, 2021; Faragher, 2021; Thomas, 2021). Future studies can examine the impact of a hybrid work model on WLB for management consultants and its impact on organisational efficiency.

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APPENDIX A: ETHICS DOCUMENTS

ONLINE COVER LETTER

Dear Participant,

I am a part-time MSc. student in the School of Mechanical, Industrial and Aeronautical Engineering at the University of the Witwatersrand, with student number 807487.

As part of my studies, I am conducting research on the work-life interface of management consultants in South Africa under the supervision of Lorrainne Doherty.

I would like to ask you to kindly assist in this research by completing a short online questionnaire. The questionnaire will take no longer than 10 minutes of your time.

The questionnaire aims to gain some insight into what mitigation strategies can management consulting firms in South Africa use to improve employees' work-life balance and achieve a more desirable quality of life.

Data collected from the questionnaire will help me determine the hours spent by management consultants in both their work and non-work activities. The data would determine where excessive hours are spent or areas where there is insufficient time spent. With these identified areas, I plan to develop targeted interventions for a consulting firm to optimise work hours and decrease work-life conflict. These interventions would benefit both the firm and the consultants by improving the overall work-life balance among employees, thereby improving the organisation's efficiency.

Although your response is of the utmost importance to my research, your participation in this survey is entirely voluntary. Confidentiality and anonymity of participants is guaranteed in any resulting research reports or publications. Information provided by you remains confidential and will be reported in summary format only.

Please note that by submitting the completed questionnaire your agreement to participate in the research is assumed.

Kindly complete questionnaire online www.surveymonkey before **30 November 2020.**

If you have any concerns or complaints regarding the ethical procedures of this study, you are welcome to contact my research supervisor, Lorrainne Doherty telephonically at 082 897 8213 or email lorrainne.doherty@wits.ac.za.

Should you have any queries or comments regarding this survey, you are welcome to contact me telephonically at 061 230 4321 or email rheshk@gmail.com.

Kind regards,

Rheshim Kuverjee
University of the Witwatersrand
Johannesburg, South Africa
Private Bag 3, WITS 2050, South Africa
Tel: (0)11 717 1000

Supervisor: Lorrainne Doherty
Tel: 082 897 8213
Email: lorrainne.doherty@wits.ac.za

PARTICIPANT CONSENT

* 1. By clicking on the "Agree" button you are indicating that you have read the above information, you voluntarily agree to participate in the study and you understand that the submission will be regarded as informed consent 0

☐ Agree

Participant #	Participant response
1.	Agree
2.	Agree
3.	Agree
4.	Agree
5.	Agree
6.	Agree
7.	Agree
8.	Agree
9.	Agree
10.	Agree
11.	Agree
12.	Agree
13.	Agree
14.	Agree
15.	Agree
16.	Agree
17.	Agree
18.	Agree
19.	Agree
20.	Agree
21.	Agree
22.	Agree
23.	Agree
24.	Agree
25.	Agree
26.	Agree
27.	Agree
28.	Agree
29.	Agree

COMPANY PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Ethics clearance was granted by the HREC and was recorded as **MIAEC 111/20**. In the application, consent was obtained from Firm X to use data and information for investigation purposes, with the condition that the company's name be kept confidential. The company permission letter is illustrated below; however, all information pertaining to the company's name and details were removed to maintain company confidentiality.

Confidential

1 October 2020

To whom it may concern

I Confidential as the appropriate person with the required authority give permission for student 807487 to use company data and equipment as appropriate for the use of the student in order to complete his research project report for the course MECN7018.

I request that the company's name be kept confidential and that the company be referred to as "Company X" or similar as appropriate.

If there are any queries, concerns or requests regarding the above, then please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Confidential

Removed to maintain company confidentiality

Removed to maintain company confidentiality

Supervisor: Lorrainne Doherty
Tel: 082 897 8213
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Confidential

ETHICS CLEARANCE APPROVAL

Gmail rheshim kuverjee <rheshk@gmail.com>

Ethics Clearance for Kuverjee Rheshim

Bruno Emwanu <Bruno.Emwanu@wits.ac.za> Fri, Oct 30, 2020 at 6:38 PM
To: rheshim kuverjee <rheshk@gmail.com>, Rheshim Kuverjee <807487@students.wits.ac.za>

Dear Rheshim,

I am pleased to inform you that your ethics application for the MSc Eng (50/50) research report has been successful, and has been ratified by the HREC Non-medical. The clearance number is MIAEC 111/20. Please use this number for future reference on the same matter.

Regards,

Dr. Emwanu

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APPENDIX B: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Overall Work-life Balance

#	Variable	Question	Rating scale / inputs				
1.	Satisfaction with work-life balance	1.1. I am satisfied with my work-life balance	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
2.	Ability to manage stress	1.2. I am able to manage my stress during the week	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

Work-life – Consulting Role and Function

#	Variable	Question	Rating scale / inputs				
3.	Client-facing activities	1.1 In a typical workweek (Monday to Friday), how many hours per day do you spend on Client-facing activities?	0 to 2 hours	2 to 4 hours	4 to 6 hours	6 to 8 hours	Longer than 8 hours
4.	Individual consulting activities	1.2 In a typical workweek (Monday to Friday), how many hours per day do you spend on individual consulting activities?	0 to 2 hours	2 to 4 hours	4 to 6 hours	6 to 8 hours	Longer than 8 hours
5.	Internal team meetings	1.3 In a typical workweek (Monday to Friday), how many hours per day do you spend internal consulting team meetings?	0 to 1 hour	1 to 2 hours	2 to 3 hours	3 to 4 hours	Longer than 4 hours
6.	Training and development	1.4 In a typical workweek (Monday to Friday), how many hours per week do you spend on training and development activities?	I do not spend time on training in the week	Less than 0.5 hours	0.5 to 1 hour	1 to 1.5 hours	1.5 to 2 hours
7.	Firm-building activities	1.5 In a typical workweek (Monday to Friday), how many hours per week do you spend on additional firm-related activities?	Less than 0.5 hours	0.5 to 1 hour	1 to 1.5 hours	1.5 to 2 hours	Longer than 2 hours
8.	Mentoring, coaching and feedback	1.6 In a typical workweek (Monday to Friday), how many hours per week do you spend on mentoring, coaching and feedback?	Less than 0.5 hours	0.5 to 1 hour	1 to 1.5 hours	1.5 to 2 hours	Longer than 2 hours

Work-life – Work Time

#	Variable	Question	Rating scale / inputs				
9.	Hours worked during the week	2.1 In a typical workweek (Monday to Friday), how many hours do you work per day?	6 to 8 hours	8 to 10 hours	10 to 12 hours	12 to 14 hours	Longer than 14 hours
10.	Hours worked during the weekend	2.2 In a typical weekend (Saturday and Sunday), how many hours do you work per day?	0 to 2 hours	2 to 4 hours	4 to 6 hours	6 to 8 hours	Longer than 8 hours
11.	Commuting to work	2.3 In a typical workweek (Monday to Friday), how many hours per day do you spend commuting to work?	Less than 0.5 hours	0.5 to 1 hour	1 to 1.5 hours	1.5 to 2 hours	Longer than 2 hours
12.	Breaks at work	2.4 During a workday, how many hours per day do you spend taking breaks?	Less than 0.5 hours	0.5 to 1 hour	1 to 1.5 hours	1.5 to 2 hours	Longer than 2 hours

Personal-life – Health

#	Variable	Question	Rating scale / inputs				
13.	Hours of sleep	3.1 In a typical workweek (Monday to Friday), how many hours per day do you sleep?	Less than 5 hours	5 to 6 hours	6 to 7 hours	7 to 8 hours	Longer than 8 hours
14.	Physical health activities	3.2 In a typical workweek (Monday to Friday), how many hours per day do you spend on physical health activities?	I do not participate in physical health activities	Less than 0.5 hours	0.5 to 1 hour	1 to 1.5 hours	1.5 to 2 hours
15.	Mental health activities	3.3 In a typical workweek (Monday to Friday), how many hours per day do you spend on mental health activities?	I do not participate in mental health activities	Less than 0.5 hours	0.5 to 1 hour	1 to 1.5 hours	1.5 to 2 hours

#	Variable	Question	Rating scale / inputs					
16.	Assistance for health	3.4 Do you seek assistance from health practitioners to enhance your mental and/or physical health?	I do not use any health practitioners to improve my physical and mental health	Physical therapist	Personal trainer	Chiropractor	Mental health practitioner	Other (Please indicate your physical health and/or mental health practitioner)

Personal-life – Personal Time

#	Variable	Question	Rating scale / inputs				
17.	Personal recreation time	1.1 In a typical workweek (Monday to Friday), how many hours per day do you spend on leisure and recreational activities?	Less than 0.5 hours	0.5 to 1 hour	1 to 1.5 hours	1.5 to 2 hours	Longer than 2 hours
18.	Attending to work in personal time	1.2 In a typical workweek (Monday to Friday), how many hours per day do you spend attending to work-related activities during your personal time?	I do not attend to work-related activities	0.5 to 1 hour	1 to 1.5 hours	1.5 to 2 hours	Longer than 2 hours
19.	Leave days taken per year	1.3 How many days per year of your annual leave do you take per year?	Less than 12 days	12 to 14 days	14 to 16 days	16 to 18 days	More than 18 days

Family-life – Family Time

#	Variable	Question	Rating scale / inputs				
20.	Assisting in family/household activities	2.1 In a typical workweek (Monday to Friday), how many hours per day do you spend assisting with family or household-related activities?	I do not assist with family or household activities	0.5 to 1 hour	1 to 1.5 hours	1.5 to 2 hours	Longer than 2 hours
21.	Family recreation time	2.2 In a typical workweek (Monday to Friday), how many hours per day do you spend on recreational activities with your family?	I do not spend recreational time with family	0.5 to 1 hour	1 to 1.5 hours	1.5 to 2 hours	Longer than 2 hours

#	Variable	Question	Rating scale / inputs					
22.	Flexibility programmes taken	2.3 Have you taken out work support/flexibility programmes to increase time spent with family?	Shortened workweek	Reduced work schedules	Leave of absence / sabbaticals	Extended maternity policies	Extended paternity policies	I have not taken flexibility programmes

General

#	Variable	Question	Rating scale / inputs
N/A	Consultant recommendations	3. How do you think the firm can improve their employees' overall work-life balance? (Optional)	*Open-ended question; participants to input their response*

APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

Overall Work-life Balance

Participant #	Gender	Age	Years of consulting experience	Q1.1 Satisfaction with work-life balance	Q1.2 Ability to manage stress
1.	Female	26 to 30	1 to 3 years	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree
2.	Female	31 to 35	5 to 10 years	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree
3.	Female	31 to 35	3 to 5 years	Strongly disagree	Disagree
4.	Male	26 to 30	3 to 5 years	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree
5.	Female	21 to 25	1 to 3 years	Disagree	Agree
6.	Male	21 to 25	Less than 1 year	Strongly disagree	Disagree
7.	Male	21 to 25	Less than 1 year	Disagree	Disagree
8.	Male	I prefer not to disclose	I prefer not to disclose	Disagree	Agree
9.	Male	31 to 35	Less than 1 year	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree
10.	Female	26 to 30	1 to 3 years	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree
11.	Female	21 to 25	Less than 1 year	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree
12.	Female	26 to 30	1 to 3 years	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree
13.	Male	46 to 50	Greater than 15 years	Agree	Agree
14.	Male	31 to 35	1 to 3 years	Strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree
15.	Male	21 to 25	3 to 5 years	Disagree	Agree
16.	Male	26 to 30	1 to 3 years	Disagree	Strongly disagree
17.	Male	26 to 30	3 to 5 years	Disagree	Disagree
18.	Female	26 to 30	3 to 5 years	Strongly disagree	Disagree
19.	Male	21 to 25	1 to 3 years	Disagree	Disagree
20.	Female	26 to 30	3 to 5 years	Disagree	Disagree
21.	Female	31 to 35	Less than 1 year	Agree	Agree
22.	Male	26 to 30	1 to 3 years	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree
23.	Male	26 to 30	Less than 1 year	Disagree	Strongly agree
24.	Male	26 to 30	3 to 5 years	Strongly disagree	Disagree
25.	Male	41 to 45	Less than 1 year	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
26.	Male	31 to 35	1 to 3 years	Strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree
27.	Male	21 to 25	Less than 1 year	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree
28.	Male	46 to 50	Greater than 15 years	Agree	Agree
29.	Male	26 to 30	5 to 10 years	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree

Work-life – Consulting Role and Function

Participant #	Q2.1 Client-facing activities	Q2.2 Individual consulting activities	Q2.3 Internal team meetings	Q2.4 Training and development	Q2.5 Firm-building activities	Q2.6 Mentoring, coaching and feedback
1.	6 to 8 hours per day	Longer than 8 hours per day	3 to 4 hours per day	I do not spend time on training and development activities during the week	0.5 to 1 hours per week	Less than 0.5 hours per week
2.	4 to 6 hours per day	4 to 6 hours per day	0 to 1 hour per day	I do not spend time on training and development activities during the week	0.5 to 1 hours per week	1.5 to 2 hours per week
3.	2 to 4 hours per day	4 to 6 hours per day	Longer than 4 hours per day	I do not spend time on training and development activities during the week	1 hour to 1.5 hours per week	1 hour to 1.5 hours per week
4.	2 to 4 hours per day	Longer than 8 hours per day	2 to 3 hours per day	I do not spend time on training and development activities during the week	1 hour to 1.5 hours per week	0.5 to 1 hours per week
5.	2 to 4 hours per day	Longer than 8 hours per day	3 to 4 hours per day	I do not spend time on training and development activities during the week	0.5 to 1 hours per week	0.5 to 1 hours per week
6.	2 to 4 hours per day	Longer than 8 hours per day	1 to 2 hours per day	I do not spend time on training and development activities during the week	1 hour to 1.5 hours per week	0.5 to 1 hours per week
7.	0 to 2 hours per day	Longer than 8 hours per day	1 to 2 hours per day	I do not spend time on training and development activities during the week	1 hour to 1.5 hours per week	0.5 to 1 hours per week
8.	4 to 6 hours per day	6 to 8 hours per day	3 to 4 hours per day	1.5 to 2 hours per week	Longer than 2 hours per week	1.5 to 2 hours per week
9.	2 to 4 hours per day	Longer than 8 hours per day	2 to 3 hours per day	I do not spend time on training and development activities during the week	0.5 to 1 hours per week	Less than 0.5 hours per week
10.	2 to 4 hours per day	4 to 6 hours per day	1 to 2 hours per day	I do not spend time on training and development activities during the week	Less than 0.5 hours per week	Less than 0.5 hours per week
11.	0 to 2 hours per day	6 to 8 hours per day	1 to 2 hours per day	I do not spend time on training and development activities during the week	1.5 hours to 2 hours per week	0.5 to 1 hours per week
12.	2 to 4 hours per day	Longer than 8 hours per day	2 to 3 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per week	Longer than 2 hours per week	Less than 0.5 hours per week
13.	4 to 6 hours per day	4 to 6 hours per day	3 to 4 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per week	1.5 hours to 2 hours per week	1 hour to 1.5 hours per week

Participant #	Q2.1 Client-facing activities	Q2.2 Individual consulting activities	Q2.3 Internal team meetings	Q2.4 Training and development	Q2.5 Firm-building activities	Q2.6 Mentoring, coaching and feedback
14.	0 to 2 hours per day	Longer than 8 hours per day	1 to 2 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per week	1 hour to 1.5 hours per week	Longer than 2 hours per week
15.	2 to 4 hours per day	4 to 6 hours per day	1 to 2 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per week	1 hour to 1.5 hours per week	0.5 to 1 hours per week
16.	2 to 4 hours per day	Longer than 8 hours per day	1 to 2 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per week	Less than 0.5 hours per week	Less than 0.5 hours per week
17.	2 to 4 hours per day	6 to 8 hours per day	3 to 4 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per week	Longer than 2 hours per week	0.5 to 1 hours per week
18.	4 to 6 hours per day	4 to 6 hours per day	3 to 4 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per week	Longer than 2 hours per week	0.5 to 1 hours per week
19.	2 to 4 hours per day	6 to 8 hours per day	1 to 2 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per week	Less than 0.5 hours per week	Less than 0.5 hours per week
20.	2 to 4 hours per day	6 to 8 hours per day	1 to 2 hours per day	I do not spend time on training and development activities during the week	Less than 0.5 hours per week	Less than 0.5 hours per week
21.	4 to 6 hours per day	6 to 8 hours per day	2 to 3 hours per day	I do not spend time on training and development activities during the week	1 hour to 1.5 hours per week	Less than 0.5 hours per week
22.	4 to 6 hours per day	6 to 8 hours per day	1 to 2 hours per day	I do not spend time on training and development activities during the week	1 hour to 1.5 hours per week	0.5 to 1 hours per week
23.	2 to 4 hours per day	6 to 8 hours per day	1 to 2 hours per day	I do not spend time on training and development activities during the week	0.5 to 1 hours per week	Less than 0.5 hours per week
24.	0 to 2 hours per day	6 to 8 hours per day	2 to 3 hours per day	I do not spend time on training and development activities during the week	Less than 0.5 hours per week	Less than 0.5 hours per week
25.	6 to 8 hours per day	4 to 6 hours per day	1 to 2 hours per day	I do not spend time on training and development activities during the week	1.5 hours to 2 hours per week	1 hour to 1.5 hours per week
26.	0 to 2 hours per day	Longer than 8 hours per day	1 to 2 hours per day	I do not spend time on training and development activities during the week	1 hour to 1.5 hours per week	Less than 0.5 hours per week
27.	0 to 2 hours per day	6 to 8 hours per day	1 to 2 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per week	0.5 to 1 hours per week	0.5 to 1 hours per week
28.	4 to 6 hours per day	2 to 4 hours per day	3 to 4 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per week	0.5 to 1 hours per week	0.5 to 1 hours per week
29.	2 to 4 hours per day	Longer than 8 hours per day	0 to 1 hour per day	Less than 0.5 hours per week	0.5 to 1 hours per week	1.5 to 2 hours per week

Work-life – Work Time

Participant #	Q3.1 Hours worked during the week	Q3.2 Hours worked during the weekend	Q3.3 Commuting to work	Q3.4 Breaks at work
1.	10 to 12 hours per day	0 to 2 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hour per day	1 to 1.5 hours per day
2.	12 to 14 hours per day	0 to 2 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hour per day	0 to 0.5 hours per day
3.	Longer than 14 hours per day	4 to 6 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hour per day	0 to 0.5 hours per day
4.	12 to 14 hours per day	6 to 8 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hour per day	0 to 0.5 hours per day
5.	Longer than 14 hours per day	4 to 6 hours per day	Longer than 2 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
6.	Longer than 14 hours per day	4 to 6 hours per day	0 to 0.5 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
7.	10 to 12 hours per day	I do not work on weekends	Longer than 2 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
8.	8 to 10 hours per day	0 to 2 hours per day	0 to 0.5 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
9.	Longer than 14 hours per day	2 to 4 hours per day	0 to 0.5 hours per day	0 to 0.5 hours per day
10.	10 to 12 hours per day	2 to 4 hours per day	0 to 0.5 hours per day	0 to 0.5 hours per day
11.	8 to 10 hours per day	I do not work on weekends	0 to 0.5 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
12.	Longer than 14 hours per day	4 to 6 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hour per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
13.	10 to 12 hours per day	4 to 6 hours per day	Longer than 2 hours per day	0 to 0.5 hours per day
14.	Longer than 14 hours per day	2 to 4 hours per day	Longer than 2 hours per day	1.5 to 2 hours per day
15.	10 to 12 hours per day	0 to 2 hours per day	0 to 0.5 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
16.	Longer than 14 hours per day	I do not work on weekends	0 to 0.5 hours per day	0 to 0.5 hours per day
17.	12 to 14 hours per day	4 to 6 hours per day	1 to 1.5 hours per day	0 to 0.5 hours per day
18.	12 to 14 hours per day	6 to 8 hours per day	1.5 to 2 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
19.	Longer than 14 hours per day	6 to 8 hours per day	0 to 0.5 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
20.	12 to 14 hours per day	2 to 4 hours per day	0 to 0.5 hours per day	0 to 0.5 hours per day
21.	12 to 14 hours per day	0 to 2 hours per day	0 to 0.5 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
22.	12 to 14 hours per day	4 to 6 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hour per day	0 to 0.5 hours per day
23.	Longer than 14 hours per day	0 to 2 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hour per day	0 to 0.5 hours per day
24.	10 to 12 hours per day	2 to 4 hours per day	0 to 0.5 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
25.	12 to 14 hours per day	2 to 4 hours per day	1.5 to 2 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
26.	12 to 14 hours per day	2 to 4 hours per day	0 to 0.5 hours per day	1 to 1.5 hours per day
27.	10 to 12 hours per day	I do not work on weekends	0 to 0.5 hours per day	1 to 1.5 hours per day
28.	12 to 14 hours per day	0 to 2 hours per day	0 to 0.5 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
29.	Longer than 14 hours per day	Longer than 8 hours per day	0 to 0.5 hours per day	0 to 0.5 hours per day

Personal-life – Health

Participant #	Q4.1 Hours of sleep	Q4.2 Physical health activities	Q4.3 Mental health activities
1.	Longer than 8 hours per day	1 to 1.5 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per day
2.	5 to 6 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hour per day
3.	Less than 5 hours per day	I do not participate in physical health activities	I do not participate in mental health activities
4.	6 to 7 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per day
5.	5 to 6 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per day	I do not participate in mental health activities
6.	6 to 7 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day	I do not participate in mental health activities
7.	5 to 6 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day	I do not participate in mental health activities
8.	Longer than 8 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hour per day
9.	6 to 7 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per day
10.	6 to 7 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per day	I do not participate in mental health activities
11.	6 to 7 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per day
12.	5 to 6 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day	I do not participate in mental health activities
13.	7 to 8 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hour per day
14.	5 to 6 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per day
15.	6 to 7 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per day
16.	7 to 8 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per day
17.	7 to 8 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per day
18.	5 to 6 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per day
19.	6 to 7 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per day	I do not participate in mental health activities
20.	5 to 6 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per day	I do not participate in mental health activities
21.	6 to 7 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day	I do not participate in mental health activities
22.	5 to 6 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per day	I do not participate in mental health activities
23.	5 to 6 hours per day	I do not participate in physical health activities	I do not participate in mental health activities
24.	6 to 7 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per day	I do not participate in mental health activities
25.	5 to 6 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day	I do not participate in mental health activities
26.	5 to 6 hours per day	I do not participate in physical health activities	0.5 to 1 hour per day
27.	6 to 7 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per day	I do not participate in mental health activities
28.	6 to 7 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hour per day
29.	5 to 6 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per day	Less than 0.5 hours per day

Q4.4 Assistance for health						
Participant #	I do not use any health practitioners to improve my physical and mental health	Physical therapist	Personal trainer	Chiropractor	Mental health practitioner	Other (Please indicate your physical health and/or mental health practitioner)
1.	I do not use any health practitioner to enhance my physical and mental health					
2.			Personal trainer		Mental health practitioner	
3.	I do not use any health practitioner to enhance my physical and mental health					
4.					Mental health practitioner	
5.			Personal trainer			
6.		Physical therapist				
7.	I do not use any health practitioner to enhance my physical and mental health					
8.						Massage therapist
9.		Physical therapist		Chiropractor		
10.	I do not use any health practitioner to enhance my physical and mental health					
11.	I do not use any health practitioner to enhance my physical and mental health					
12.	I do not use any health practitioner to enhance my physical and mental health					
13.	I do not use any health practitioner to enhance my physical and mental health					
14.	I do not use any health practitioner to enhance my physical and mental health					
15.	I do not use any health practitioner to enhance my physical and mental health					

Q4.4 Assistance for health						
Participant #	I do not use any health practitioners to improve my physical and mental health	Physical therapist	Personal trainer	Chiropractor	Mental health practitioner	Other (Please indicate your physical health and/or mental health practitioner)
16.	I do not use any health practitioner to enhance my physical and mental health					
17.					Mental health practitioner	
18.		Physical therapist				Massage therapist
19.	I do not use any health practitioner to enhance my physical and mental health					
20.		Physical therapist				
21.			Personal trainer			
22.	I do not use any health practitioner to enhance my physical and mental health					
23.	I do not use any health practitioner to enhance my physical and mental health					
24.	I do not use any health practitioner to enhance my physical and mental health					
25.	I do not use any health practitioner to enhance my physical and mental health					
26.	I do not use any health practitioner to enhance my physical and mental health					
27.	I do not use any health practitioner to enhance my physical and mental health					
28.						life coach
29.					Mental health practitioner	

Personal-life – Personal Time

Participant #	Q5.1 Personal recreation time	Q5.2 Attending to work in personal time	Q5.3 Leave days taken per year
1.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	Longer than 2 hours per day	14 to 16 days per year
2.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	Longer than 2 hours per day	12 to 14 days per year
3.	Less than 0.5 hours per day	Longer than 2 hours per day	Less than 12 days per year
4.	Less than 0.5 hours per day	Longer than 2 hours per day	14 to 16 days per year
5.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	Longer than 2 hours per day	Less than 12 days per year
6.	Less than 0.5 hours per day	1 to 1.5 hours per day	14 to 16 days per year
7.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	1 to 1.5 hours per day	Less than 12 days per year
8.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day	More than 18 days per year
9.	1 hour to 1.5 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day	Less than 12 days per year
10.	Less than 0.5 hours per day	1.5 to 2 hours per day	Less than 12 days per year
11.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day	Less than 12 days per year
12.	Less than 0.5 hours per day	1.5 to 2 hours per day	16 to 18 days per year
13.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	1.5 to 2 hours per day	14 to 16 days per year
14.	Less than 0.5 hours per day	Longer than 2 hours per day	More than 18 days per year
15.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day	More than 18 days per year
16.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	1 to 1.5 hours per day	More than 18 days per year
17.	Less than 0.5 hours per day	Longer than 2 hours per day	Less than 12 days per year
18.	Less than 0.5 hours per day	Longer than 2 hours per day	More than 18 days per year
19.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day	More than 18 days per year
20.	1 hour to 1.5 hours per day	1 to 1.5 hours per day	14 to 16 days per year
21.	Less than 0.5 hours per day	1.5 to 2 hours per day	14 to 16 days per year
22.	Less than 0.5 hours per day	1 to 1.5 hours per day	More than 18 days per year
23.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	Longer than 2 hours per day	More than 18 days per year
24.	Less than 0.5 hours per day	I do not attend to work-related activities during my personal time	16 to 18 days per year
25.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	Longer than 2 hours per day	Less than 12 days per year
26.	1.5 to 2 hours per day	1.5 to 2 hours per day	More than 18 days per year
27.	1 hour to 1.5 hours per day	I do not attend to work-related activities during my personal time	More than 18 days per year
28.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day	12 to 14 days per year
29.	Less than 0.5 hours per day	Longer than 2 hours per day	More than 18 days per year

Family-life – Family Time

Participant #	Q6.1 Assisting in family/ household activities	Q6.2 Family recreation time
1.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	1 to 1.5 hours per day
2.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	1.5 to 2 hours per day
3.	I do not assist with family or household-related activities	0.5 to 1 hours per day
4.	I do not assist with family or household-related activities	I do not spend time on leisure and recreational activities with family
5.	I do not assist with family or household-related activities	0.5 to 1 hours per day
6.	I do not assist with family or household-related activities	0.5 to 1 hours per day
7.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	I do not spend time on leisure and recreational activities with family
8.	1 to 1.5 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
9.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
10.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
11.	1 to 1.5 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
12.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
13.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
14.	I do not assist with family or household-related activities	I do not spend time on leisure and recreational activities with family
15.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
16.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
17.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
18.	1 to 1.5 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
19.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
20.	1.5 to 2 hours per day	1 to 1.5 hours per day
21.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	1 to 1.5 hours per day
22.	I do not assist with family or household-related activities	0.5 to 1 hours per day
23.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
24.	I do not assist with family or household-related activities	I do not spend time on leisure and recreational activities with family
25.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	I do not spend time on leisure and recreational activities with family
26.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	0.5 to 1 hours per day
27.	0.5 to 1 hours per day	1 to 1.5 hours per day
28.	1 to 1.5 hours per day	1.5 to 2 hours per day
29.	I do not assist with family or household-related activities	I do not spend time on leisure and recreational activities with family

Q6.3 Flexibility programmes taken						
Participant #	Shortened workweek	Reduced work schedules	Leave of absence / sabbaticals	Extended maternity policies	Extended paternity policies	I have not taken flexibility programmes
1.						None of the above
2.						None of the above
3.						None of the above
4.			Leaves of absence / sabbaticals			
5.						None of the above
6.	Shortened workweek					
7.						None of the above
8.						None of the above
9.						None of the above
10.						None of the above
11.						None of the above
12.						None of the above
13.						None of the above
14.						None of the above
15.						None of the above
16.						None of the above
17.						None of the above
18.			Leaves of absence / sabbaticals			
19.						None of the above
20.						None of the above
21.						None of the above
22.						None of the above
23.						None of the above
24.						None of the above
25.						None of the above
26.						None of the above
27.						None of the above
28.						None of the above
29.			Leaves of absence/sabbaticals			

APPENDIX D: QUESTIONNAIRE RECOMMENDATIONS

Q7 Recommendations to improve work-life balance	
Participant #	**Participant response**
1.	*No response*
2.	More resources Increased retention of consultant resources
3.	Manage scope and client expectation. Limit the start time to 9, days are starting earlier and earlier
4.	Reduced and realistic project scoping and timelines Mandating personal time during the week and weekends Increasing staffing on projects to reduce employee workload Aligning as leadership on what the firm's priorities are Increasing annual leave allocations Encouraging employees to take leave not only outside of project time
5.	Define the culture and boundaries for work-life balance for the Office, i.e. what is reasonable, what is expected and what are the exceptions. Allow for ring-fenced personal time which is respected by all
6.	*No response*
7.	Create more realistic client expectations on what is achievable given the time and resources available. Also improve leave structures in some way (i.e. create room for a consultant to be able to take leave more readily)
8.	*No response*
9.	Better scoping of projects upfront. Adequate resourcing and scheduling, especially to account for the complexities of working completely remotely
10.	None of these have been presented as real options on the current project. Being able to take normal leave is questionable increase family time
11.	*No response*
12.	Align (internally and with clients) right in the beginning of engagements on the expected deliverables to avoid rework as much as possible. Make the effort to understand exactly how much time consultants are putting into their work.
13.	*No response*
14.	Manage client expectations better. Practice what they preach. Staff more people on each project.
15.	*No response*
16.	Opportunity to add structure to a typical work day, by setting s "Start of Day" time, Close out etc. and allocating and protecting an hour per day for personal time while on a project
17.	*No response*
18.	The firm needs to listen to feedback - don't do a workshop to hear what we have to say, and then use that to "tick the box" but do nothing with the feedback.
19.	the second one and last one don't really work (work options)
20.	- Ensuring alignment with clients on project scope and deliverables prior to deploying a team and initiating work - Staffing projects correctly, with adequate resources - Granting more leave / paid time off to consultants, and forcing people to utilise it
21.	*No response*
22.	*No response*
23.	*No response*
24.	Incentivise partners on Employee satisfaction. Projects with low overall score's are not eligible for bonus payments.
25.	*No response*
26.	Compulsory cut-off time every day
27.	Add more resources to difficult or tightly timed projects.
28.	Assist the consultants in understanding their own rhythms and working with them to improve work-life integration.
29.	Better pushback at the top with the client - balancing what the client actually needs vs what they say the want

APPENDIX E: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

#	Variable	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation
1.	Satisfaction with work-life balance	2.00 (Disagree)	2.00 (Disagree)	1.00[a] (Strongly disagree)	1.00
2.	Ability to manage stress	2.00 (Disagree)	2.00 (Disagree)	2.00 (Disagree)	1.00
3.	Client-facing activities	3.00	3.00	3.00	1.50
4.	Individual consulting activities	7.00	7.00	8.00	1.50
5.	Internal team meetings	2.00	1.50	1.50	1.00
6.	Training and development	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.50
7.	Firm-building activities	1.00	1.25	1.25	0.50
8.	Mentoring, coaching and feedback	1.00	0.75	.50[a]	0.50
9.	Hours worked during the week	13.00	13.00	13.00[a]	1.50
10.	Hours worked during the weekend	3.00	3.00	1.00[a]	2.50
11.	Commuting to work	1.00	0.50	0.50	0.50
12.	Breaks at work	1.00	0.75	0.75	0.50
13.	Hours of sleep	6.00	6.50	5.50	1.00
14.	Physical health activities	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
15.	Mental health activities	0.50	0.50	0.00	0.50
16.	Assistance for health	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
17.	Personal recreation time	0.50	0.75	0.75	0.50
18.	Attending to work in personal time	1.50	1.75	2.00	0.50
19.	Leave days taken per year	15.00	15.00	18.00	2.50
20.	Assisting in family/household activities	1.00	0.75	0.75	0.50
21.	Family recreation time	1.00	0.75	0.75	0.50
22.	Flexibility programmes taken	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Note: All values are taken at midpoint of the rating scales; values rounded based on bounds of ratings scales
a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown
N = 29 (Sample size)

APPENDIX F: VARIABLE FREQUENCIES

Variable 1: Satisfaction with work-life balance

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	11	37.9	37.9	37.9
	Disagree	11	37.9	37.9	75.9
	Neither agree nor disagree	3	10.3	10.3	86.2
	Agree	4	13.8	13.8	100.0
	Total	29	100.0	100.0	

Variable 2: Ability to manage stress

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	6	20.7	20.7	20.7
	Disagree	9	31.0	31.0	51.7
	Neither agree nor disagree	6	20.7	20.7	72.4
	Agree	7	24.1	24.1	96.6
	Strongly agree	1	3.4	3.4	100.0
	Total	29	100.0	100.0	

Variable 3: Client-facing activities

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0 to 2 hours	6	20.7	20.7	20.7
	2 to 4 hours	14	48.3	48.3	69.0
	4 to 6 hours	7	24.1	24.1	93.1
	6 to 8 hours	2	6.9	6.9	100.0
	Total	29	100.0	100.0	

Variable 4: Individual consulting activities

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2 to 4 hours	1	3.4	3.4	3.4
	4 to 6 hours	7	24.1	24.1	27.6
	6 to 8 hours	10	34.5	34.5	62.1
	Longer than 8 hours	11	37.9	37.9	100.0
	Total	29	100.0	100.0	

Variable 5: Internal team meetings

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0 to 1 hour	2	6.9	6.9	6.9
	1 to 2 hours	14	48.3	48.3	55.2
	2 to 3 hours	5	17.2	17.2	72.4
	3 to 4 hours	7	24.1	24.1	96.6
	Longer than 4 hours	1	3.4	3.4	100.0
	Total	29	100.0	100.0	

Variable 6: Training and development

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	I do not spend time on training in the week	17	58.6	58.6	58.6
	Less than 0.5 hours	7	24.1	24.1	82.8
	0.5 to 1 hour	4	13.8	13.8	96.6
	1.5 to 2 hours	1	3.4	3.4	100.0
	Total	29	100.0	100.0	

Variable 7: Firm-building activities

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 0.5 hours	5	17.2	17.2	17.2
	0.5 to 1 hour	8	27.6	27.6	44.8
	1 to 1.5 hours	9	31.0	31.0	75.9
	1.5 to 2 hours	3	10.3	10.3	86.2
	Longer than 2 hours	4	13.8	13.8	100.0
	Total	29	100.0	100.0	

Variable 8: Mentoring, coaching and feedback

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 0.5 hours	11	37.9	37.9	37.9
	0.5 to 1 hour	11	37.9	37.9	75.9
	1 to 1.5 hours	3	10.3	10.3	86.2
	1.5 to 2 hours	3	10.3	10.3	96.6
	Longer than 2 hours	1	3.4	3.4	100.0
	Total	29	100.0	100.0	

Variable 9: Hours worked during the week

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	8 to 10 hours	2	6.9	6.9	6.9
	10 to 12 hours	7	24.1	24.1	31.0
	12 to 14 hours	10	34.5	34.5	65.5
	Longer than 14 hours	10	34.5	34.5	100.0
	Total	29	100.0	100.0	

Variable 10: Hours worked during the weekend

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	I do not work on weekends	4	13.8	13.8	13.8
	0 to 2 hours	7	24.1	24.1	37.9
	2 to 4 hours	7	24.1	24.1	62.1
	4 to 6 hours	7	24.1	24.1	86.2
	6 to 8 hours	3	10.3	10.3	96.6
	Longer than 8 hours	1	3.4	3.4	100.0
	Total	29	100.0	100.0	

Variable 11: Commuting to work

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 0.5 hours	15	51.7	51.7	51.7
	0.5 to 1 hour	7	24.1	24.1	75.9
	1 to 1.5 hours	1	3.4	3.4	79.3
	1.5 to 2 hours	2	6.9	6.9	86.2
	Longer than 2 hours	4	13.8	13.8	100.0
	Total	29	100.0	100.0	

Variable 12: Breaks at work

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 0.5 hours	12	41.4	41.4	41.4
	0.5 to 1 hour	13	44.8	44.8	86.2
	1 to 1.5 hours	3	10.3	10.3	96.6
	1.5 to 2 hours	1	3.4	3.4	100.0
	Total	29	100.0	100.0	

Variable 13: Hours of sleep

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 5 hours	1	3.4	3.4	3.4
	5 to 6 hours	12	41.4	41.4	44.8
	6 to 7 hours	11	37.9	37.9	82.8
	7 to 8 hours	3	10.3	10.3	93.1
	Longer than 8 hours	2	6.9	6.9	100.0
	Total	29	100.0	100.0	

Variable 14: Physical health activities

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	I do not participate in physical health	3	10.3	10.3	10.3
	Less than 0.5 hours	15	51.7	51.7	62.1
	0.5 to 1 hour	10	34.5	34.5	96.6
	1 to 1.5 hours	1	3.4	3.4	100.0
	Total	29	100.0	100.0	

Variable 15: Mental health activities

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	I do not participate in mental health activities	14	48.3	48.3	48.3
	Less than 0.5 hours	10	34.5	34.5	82.8
	0.5 to 1 hour	5	17.2	17.2	100.0
	Total	29	100.0	100.0	

Variable 16: Assistance for health

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	I do not use any health practitioner to enhance my physical and mental health	17	58.6	58.6	58.6
	Use 1 physical and/or mental health practitioner	9	31.0	31.0	89.7
	Use 2 physical and/or mental health practitioners	3	10.3	10.3	100.0
	Total	29	100.0	100.0	

Variable 17: Personal recreation time

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 0.5 hours	12	41.4	41.4	41.4
	0.5 to 1 hour	13	44.8	44.8	86.2
	1 to 1.5 hours	3	10.3	10.3	96.6
	1.5 to 2 hours	1	3.4	3.4	100.0
	Total	29	100.0	100.0	

Variable 18: Attending to work in personal time

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	I do not attend to work-related activities during my personal time	2	6.9	6.9	6.9
	0.5 to 1 hour	6	20.7	20.7	27.6
	1 to 1.5 hours	5	17.2	17.2	44.8
	1.5 to 2 hours	5	17.2	17.2	62.1
	Longer than 2 hours	11	37.9	37.9	100.0
	Total	29	100.0	100.0	

Variable 19: Leave days taken per year

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 12 days	8	27.6	27.6	27.6
	12 to 14 days	2	6.9	6.9	34.5
	14 to 16 days	6	20.7	20.7	55.2
	16 to 18 days	2	6.9	6.9	62.1
	More than 18 days	11	37.9	37.9	100.0
	Total	29	100.0	100.0	

Variable 20: Assisting in family/household activities

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	I do not assist with family or household-related activities	8	27.6	27.6	27.6
	0.5 to 1 hour	16	55.2	55.2	82.8
	1 to 1.5 hours	4	13.8	13.8	96.6
	1.5 to 2 hours	1	3.4	3.4	100.0
	Total	29	100.0	100.0	

Variable 21: Family recreation time

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	I do not spend time on leisure and recreational activities with family	6	20.7	20.7	20.7
	0.5 to 1 hour	17	58.6	58.6	79.3
	1 to 1.5 hours	4	13.8	13.8	93.1
	1.5 to 2 hours	2	6.9	6.9	100.0
	Total	29	100.0	100.0	

Variable 22: Flexibility programmes taken

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No flexibility programmes used	25	86.2	86.2	86.2
	1 flexibility program used	4	13.8	13.8	100.0
	Total	29	100.0	100.0	

APPENDIX G: CORRELATION OUTPUT

#	Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
1	Satisfaction with work-life balance	--																					
2	Ability to manage stress	0.53**	--																				
3	Client-facing activities	0.27	0.12	--																			
4	Individual consulting activities	-0.32	-0.37*	-0.37*	--																		
5	Internal team meetings	0.11	0.12	0.28	-0.12	--																	
6	Training and development	0.08	0.08	0.12	-0.17	0.19	--																
7	Firm-building activities	0.01	0.15	0.15	-0.07	0.28	0.28	--															
8	Mentoring, coaching and feedback	-0.06	0.12	0.14	-0.21	0.00	0.28	0.38*	--														
9	Hours worked during the week	-0.41*	-0.28	-0.07	0.31	-0.08	-0.07	-0.16	-0.07	--													
10	Hours worked during the weekend	-0.41**	-0.25	0.11	0.06	0.18	0.09	0.13	0.11	0.40*	--												
11	Commuting to work	-0.04	0.07	0.17	0.00	0.24	0.02	0.36*	0.35*	0.09	0.21	--											
12	Breaks at work	0.12	0.25	-0.17	0.18	0.04	0.10	0.14	-0.02	-0.19	-0.23	-0.01	--										
13	Hours of sleep	0.37*	0.05	0.15	0.00	0.28	0.33*	-0.03	-0.16	-0.39*	-0.22	-0.30	0.04	--									
14	Physical health activities	0.46**	0.05	0.35*	0.08	0.15	0.13	0.20	0.03	-0.28	-0.27	0.01	0.26	0.47**	--								
15	Mental health activities	-0.02	-0.04	0.19	-0.06	0.13	0.41*	0.21	0.31	-0.20	-0.08	-0.03	0.00	0.32	0.11	--							
16	Assistance for health	-0.23	-0.22	0.31	0.00	0.17	0.05	0.05	0.16	0.17	0.22	-0.06	-0.25	0.01	-0.03	0.28	--						
17	Personal recreation time	0.30	0.17	-0.07	0.01	-0.14	-0.05	-0.22	-0.17	-0.17	0-.42**	-0.19	0.16	0.09	0.01	0.22	-0.06	--					
18	Attending to work in personal time	-0.22	-0.08	0.26	0.07	0.09	-0.12	0.18	0.23	0.31	0.33*	0.55**	-0.19	0-.34*	-0.16	0.05	0.15	-0.31	--				
19	Leave days taken per year	-0.15	0.04	-0.06	0.12	-0.25	0.40*	-0.05	-0.05	0.09	0.05	-0.21	0.21	0.01	-0.18	0.11	-0.18	0.00	-0.14	--			
20	Assisting in family/household activities	0.42*	0.17	0.20	-0.34*	0.08	0.27	0.11	-0.17	-0.38*	-0.38*	-0.21	0.07	0.23	0.27	0.28	0.13	0.46**	-0.26	-0.03	--		
21	Family recreation time	0.37*	0.12	0.34*	-0.29	0.12	0.01	-0.17	-0.22	-0.10	-0.30	-0.27	0.02	0.18	0.11	0.13	0.23	0.33	-0.15	-0.05	0.46**	--	
22	Flexibility programmes taken	-0.43*	-0.35*	0.05	0.20	-0.06	0.07	0.14	0.21	0.21	0.49**	-0.01	-0.11	-0.08	-0.04	0.07	0.45*	-0.43*	0.26	0.17	-0.25	-0.29	--

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

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

N = 29