EXPLORING TRAVEL FOR WORK-LIFE BALANCE: A STUDY ON SOLO WOMAN TRAVELLERS IN BALI

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ABSTRACT

With the importance of balance in life, the phenomenon of work-life balance is very engaging to be associated with travelling activities, especially solo travel, which became popular during the COVID-19 pandemic as a new trend that emerged. This research aims to analyse the phenomenon of travelling for work-life balance, whether it can be a trend or lifestyle, using an exploratory study approach that focuses on solo women travellers in Bali, especially those from Denpasar City and Badung Regency. Qualitative descriptive methods were used in this study, with data collection techniques through literature studies, observations, and comprehensive interviews of 13 informants consisting of 10 primary informants, 2 key informants, and 1 supporting informant. The selection of informants is carried out using purposive sampling techniques with the Pentahelix approach. With the selection of the primary informant criteria, namely, solo woman travellers in Bali aged 18-26 years, and the criteria of key informants and supporters are academics that have insights into the field of travel, especially in women travellers. The results showed that travelling activities have a strong and significant influence in building new behaviour patterns towards women travellers in Bali in doing solo travelling activities to achieve work-life balance. The need for healing activities for their lives and performance become a motivation and desire that every solo woman traveller in Bali wants to realise. Travelling for work-life balance plays a vital role in achieving productivity and can be a workable lifestyle.

Keywords: Travelling, Work-life balance, COVID – 19, Solo woman traveller.

INTRODUCTION

For those pursuing careers and jobs, decisions in taking a vacation and work can be a personal conflict. This phenomenon creates the need for balance in working life. The balance between working with personal life, better known as work-life
Work-life balance is familiar among workers. Work-life balance is a balance in energy and time between work and life problems (Dhas, 2015). Work-life balance involves how much effort a person spends on work and living a personal life (Reiter, 2007). The rapid development of technology requires that humans have competence and productivity in their work. Fapohunda (2014) Research on the "Effect of Work-life Balance on Productivity" shows that work-life balance involves the equal division of time in work with other activities; this affects how a person goes about his work. Work-life balance becomes relevant in every worker's life to achieve productivity. Especially when the development of times requires people to work optimally and becomes a question of how productivity in work can be achieved (Erickson, 2010), this problem encourages the importance of work-life balance in workers' lives. Every day people work to build a life according to their expectations. Mental and physical health both for work and life must always be maintained to increase productivity and achieve work-life balance.

The importance of work-life balance results in the need for a choice to achieve that concept; now, travelling is in the spotlight as an activity chosen to take off the burden of work and achieve balance in life. Travelling produces a healing impact from work and relaxation during the holidays; this can contribute to workers' mental and physical health (Fritz, 2006). Said to be a visit activity from one place to another, there are many reasons for someone to travel, such as business needs, vacations, or more importantly, to meet the work-life balance. Because of this, the phenomenon of travelling for work-life balance needs to be discussed more deeply. The variety of insights and experiences that can be taken makes travelling for work-life balance began to be in demand by many people. This activity can also reduce the burden of the mind because it is basically intended to refresh from work and mainly to find entertainment. Travelling activities on fatigue at work or burnout shows that travelling can reduce work stress and fatigue experienced by respondents (Westman et al., 2008). Travelling has become one of the most exciting things besides work and can be done to achieve a work-life balance.

Most people consider travelling the primary need in personal life, not only for work-life balance. The development of travelling has also become more widespread, especially in this modern era, where tourists want more time for vacations (Wen et al., 2020). In some societies, travelling has become part of every people's lifestyle. Lifestyle has a significant role in people's lives because it can affect the behaviour patterns of individuals in living their lives. It can be said that travelling is a way of life when people want to take off burdens felt for a while (Jensen, 2007). In addition to being a lifestyle, travelling can also be a trend. At the beginning of a shift in consumer interest or behaviour, trends result in new phenomena in people's lives (Du, 2012). Trends will always experience a change, especially in travelling, because tourism life continues to move and can change people's behaviour patterns in travelling activities.

The shift in travel trends occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic; people's space and mobility were limited to reduce the spread of the virus. These impacts travel activities that began to be restricted and change people's behaviour patterns in travelling. Quoted from a trusted news article by Kompas (2020), tourism trends
are experiencing a complete revolution during the pandemic, health and security factors have become the central importance in lives. In this article, the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Ir. Joko Widodo, stated that there would be a shift in tourism trends that leans more toward solo travelling and staycation to avoid health problems during these difficult times. Health problems, particularly those associated with infectious viral diseases, are a priority, especially in tourism (Monterrubio, 2010). The government has made a new policy to keep the tourism sector running, one of which is to make regulations that require all tourists to follow health protocols in travelling activities. New policies during the pandemic impact the cognition and behaviour of tourists in travelling (Bauer et al., 2021). In pandemics, tourists play a crucial role in transmitting viruses, and outbreaks, especially in tourist destinations and travel activities (Abbott, 2021). Many tourists stay away from mass tourism or crowded tours, and some cancel travel plans due to fear of transmission of the virus (Mamirkulova et al., 2020). Seeing the health risks and possible transmission of diseases during the COVID-19 period, tourists are experiencing a change in the trend from mass tourism to solo travel activities. According to News (2021), Solo travel increased by 761.15% in 2021. Many tourists are looking for entertainment and trying new experiences in solo travelling after experiencing restrictions during the pandemic, especially on attractive and popular tourist attractions for tourists. Solo travel is the number two most popular travel activity to do during the COVID-19 pandemic (French, 2020). Through the website Analytica (2021), Solo travel will dominate the global travel market due to various factors that affect tourists such as the influence of social media, different preferences and interests, psychographic nature, and conditions aspect during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Solo travel gets considerable attention from academics and the tourism industry (Abbasian, 2018). Various reports claim that solo travellers have increased by almost 50% since 2015; this trend is predicted to grow in the future (Elliott, 2018). Solo travelling is a new trend that attracts attention, especially for women travellers in Bali. Female travellers are identified as consumers who have greater growth in the solo travel market segment than male travellers (Hostelworld, 2018) and represent more than half of the travel market (Zhang, 2017). A woman who soloes travel has a broader experience and perspective of travels. (Wilson, 2006). The solo travelled to escape the burden of social and work. Women experience more significant social pressure than men in their careers and personal lives; women feel that work careers are just as important as personal lives (Helm, 2002). Regardless of the hours they work, women also have a great responsibility to care for their family life. (Linehan, 2000). Solo travel activities become the choice of female tourists as entertainment activities to release the burden of their lives and work; this affects the motivation of women to travel. Travel Motivation is a driving intention that directs tourists to travel (Devesa et al., 2010), which includes psychological and biological needs in giving the intention of tourists to travel (Park, 2009). The needs for women to escape life and work problems becomes a travel motivation that encourages female tourists to travel solo to achieve balance in their lives.
The existence of the phenomenon of work-life balance, travelling motivation, especially in solo woman travellers, have become the focus of research in the last decade, as in the following study:

Table 1.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Researcher's name</th>
<th>Research title</th>
<th>Research results</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(Yang et al., 2019)</td>
<td>The meanings of solo travel for Asian women</td>
<td>This study examined Asian women who travel solo in their focus on finding sole purposes in travelling. This paper also explains the perspective of Asian women and their patterns of behaviour in travelling. This study mentioned some of the experiences and obstacles experienced by Asian female travellers in tourism activities. Such as the differences in services felt by tourist service providers, criticism of the appearance of Asian women who are different from western tourists, and differences in perspective views of Asian female tourists towards western female tourists.</td>
<td>This study only focuses on the experience of Asian female tourists in solo travel and the lack of theoretical explanations about the motivation of Asian women in solo travelling activities for work-life balance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>(Lirio, 2014)</td>
<td>Taming travel for work-life balance in global careers</td>
<td>This research examines how generation X achieves work-life balance by implementing travelling activities combined with technology. This paper explained how travelling activities have a role in optimising business and personal life when living a career. The study also examines the role of work-life balance in pursuing a global career to increase the flexibility and productivity of one's performance.</td>
<td>What is presented in this study only represents the experiences of a select group of informants who are handpicked, namely x-gen informants, where they are interviewed about their personal lives and their careers. There is no study and interview about trends and lifestyles of an individual regarding their preferences in travelling activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>(Wheatley, 2012)</td>
<td>Work-life balance, travel to work, and the dual-career household</td>
<td>This study examines how conflicts related to work-life balance, and travelling in working life, occur in individuals who have multiple</td>
<td>The evidence presented in this study only examines the impact of overwork on work-life balance and how travelling can be done for</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
careers. This study also explained the prevention of overworking in female workers and discussed various personal conflicts when achieving work-life balance in working life.

(Source: data processed, 2022)

Previous research in table 1.1 above; shows that the focus on travelling for work-life balance as a trend or lifestyle during the COVID-19 pandemic has not yet been focused. This research focuses on female tourists who travel solo (solo woman travellers), especially in the Denpasar City and Badung Regency areas and the background that motivates them to travel in the form of exploration study.

METHODOLOGY

Qualitative descriptive research methods with an exploratory study approach were used in this research. Exploratory study research is conducted through tracing, especially stabilising concepts in a broader scope of research with a greater conceptual range (Yusuf, 2021). Through exploratory studies, researchers can analyse the phenomenon of travelling for work-life balance as a momentary trend or a lifestyle more deeply. The selection of key informants, primary informants, and supporting informants was carried out using the technique of **purposive sampling** using specific criteria selection. Pentahelix, according to Soemaryani (2016), is a reference to the development between agencies to achieve goals. Then it is necessary to encourage tourism systems by optimising the role of **business** (business), **government** (government), **community** (community), **academic** (academic), and **media** (media publication) or BGCAM.

Based on the **purposive sampling** method and the Pentahelix concept approach, several informant sources were obtained, including the following:

5. The main informant is the main subject in this study, namely **solo woman travellers** who have the original population of Denpasar City and Badung Regency. By criteria; Aged 18-26 years, had done **solo travelling** before the pandemic and in the **new normal era**.

6. Key informants are experts in tourism, namely academics, entrepreneurs in **women travellers**, and government experts in the fields.

7. Supporting informants are informants who are considered to be able to provide additional information as support of this research. Supporting information was obtained from the media selected from experts in tourism business marketing.
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

The results of interviews, observations, and documentation studies are the results of the data found in this research; there are 13 informants. There are 10 primary informants, 2 key informants, and 1 supporting informant. The following are the results of interviews, observations, and documentation studies:

Table 1.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Profession</th>
<th>Origin</th>
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<td>GF1</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>Denpasar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA2</td>
<td>female</td>
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<td>female</td>
<td>23</td>
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<td>Denpasar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>20</td>
<td>College Student</td>
<td>Denpasar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PW5</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>College Student</td>
<td>Denpasar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP6</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Denpasar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS7</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>College Student</td>
<td>Denpasar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DM8</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>College Student</td>
<td>Denpasar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD9</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Hotel Employees</td>
<td>Badung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PN10</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Hotel Employees</td>
<td>Badung</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initials</th>
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<th>Age</th>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PY</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>Denpasar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>Badung</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DISCUSSION

Work-life balance

Work-life balance is dividing time both for work and other activities outside of work in which there is individual behaviour that can be a source of personal conflict (Fisher, 2003). Work-life balance has various variations worldwide due to different cultural contexts (Lirio, 2014). Work-life balance refers to an individual's ability, regardless of age or gender, to balance work and personal life responsibilities. Based on interviews conducted by the primary informants said that work-life balance has an essential role in life. One of the statements expressed by the informants is as follows:

"Work-life balance is essential for life, and if pressured to work, I can feel bored, and after that, continuous work can damage me mentally and physically. Therefore it is necessary to balance work with vacation." (AP, 21 y.o)

"In today's world, work-life balance is mandatory for all workers. By implementing a work-life balance, workers can learn to manage time or balance work, family, personal life, and other responsibilities to become more productive and creative." (CS, 21 y.o)

"Life and work must be balanced where we can divide time for activities other than doing work. Nowadays, technology is sophisticated and forces us to continue working and focusing on achieving targets, so work-life balance is mandatory not only in work but also in all activities." (DM, 21 y.o)

This statement proves that work-life balance can be said to be important in human life; key informants support this opinion stated as follows:

"Work-life balance is a person's ability to balance life and responsibilities. A person, of course, wants to achieve a workable balance in his life because it becomes an ideal that is sometimes difficult to realise. One's ability to realise WLB will greatly affect one's performance." (PY, 36 y.o)

From the four responses, the work-life balance is something that every human needs to achieve maximum performance because balance is the basis of well-being both in oneself and the environment. In addition to reaching top
performance, work-life balance also causes each individual always to pay attention to their personal life's conditions and balance it with work-life.

**Travel motivation**

Solo travel refers to those who travel individually for various purposes and motivations related to tourism (Jordan, 2008). The combination of drive and intent triggers solo women travellers to find identity, remove boredom, and travel freely without considering the interests of others. As for other things that encourage people to travel, as stated by the informant as follows:

"One of my motivations for travelling is to get rid of boredom and burdens in my daily life after that so that I can also explore tourist attractions that I have never visited." *(AP, 21 y.o)*

"We cannot always focus on work without composure. If we cannot heal ourselves, the effect is that we cannot enjoy our work, and we become unable to take responsibility for the work we will do later, or our performance at work will decrease. This situation becomes our motivation to find and travel because it can also heal and relieve fatigue at work so that we can focus more on work and balance both in work and vacation." *(CS, 21 y.o)*

The response above states that having the motivation to travel is essential. With reason, we can be encouraged to achieve what we want. On the other hand, key informants supported this response and stated the following reactions:

"My motivation for travelling is to reduce boredom in my work. After that, travelling also relieves stress and looks for new ideas that I can realise later in my work. Not only that, but I also travel to balance work and vacation, so it is not too heavy on the other side and balanced side by side; as the saying goes, balance is everything for all the activities we do." *(PY, 29 y.o)*

Motivation is essential for travellers, especially those who undergo work-life balance in travelling activities. Motivation, according to supporting informants, is as follows:

"For the most part, motivation is determined by the personal needs of each tourist. Some guests travel to unwind and do healing, updates on social media, and some travel for work and family needs; some are even out of Bali to carry out their duties And meet family or relatives outside Bali. Some Balinese female guests who book flight tickets to go out of Bali are sometimes for urgent matters because they have assignments or work outside the area. Because of this pandemic condition, young tourists travel inside Bali to save costs and prefer rural tourism leaning more toward recreational activities. Female tourists from Bali usually go on vacation in the local area, especially in the Ubud and Gianyar districts. There are many photo spots and many tourist attractions that are more about the aspect of healing. Young women are drawn more into life on social media and prefer
to go to famous and attractive places. Gianyar also had many delicious culinary spots that attracted the attention of female tourists, especially young ones, because they tend to like to seek culinary delights. The Gianyar area is also not that far from Denpasar and Badung. Usually, working people tend to refresh there; Ubud is already famous and has become a centre for recreation and healing; there is also a beautiful and calm atmosphere suitable for unwinding from work. Some of my female co-workers like to go to Tabanan, Bedugul, and Kintamani areas to get some cool and fresh air apart from the busy life in the city and usually spend their time there with family and partners." (KA, 53 y.o).

The four responses stated that the motivation for travelling is a supporting factor for them to start a travel activity for both refreshing and healing. They often capture the moments by taking pictures and sightseeing in the local area as a motivation for the next trip.

Trend

According to Romagosa (2020), the Covid-19 outbreak has significantly impacted tourism, triggering essential changes in mobility, social behaviour, consumption, and recreation patterns. Trends that can change due to various reasons have led some informants to state the following:

"In my opinion, the trend of travelling during the COVID-19 pandemic can go up and down. It could have gone up because vacation tickets were half of the normal price, making people tempted to take a vacation during the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, it was said to be going down because not everyone could travel because they had to undergo several processes such as PCR and self-quarantine following the regulations procedures for the region/country to be addressed. So that people who want to take a vacation have to think twice about travelling." (CS, 21 y.o)

"One indication is that the public has realised the importance of caring for themselves and the surrounding environment. The increasingly widespread of Covid-19 viruses makes vaccination is essential and covers a wide area of health protocols and safety" (MD, 21 y.o)

The response above confirms that travel trends during the COVID-19 pandemic require tourists to comply with strict health protocols to travel activities to tourist attractions. The point of view of key informants stated as follows:

"As one of the fulfilment of human needs. Some people use travelling as a basic need, and some people use travelling for self-actualisation" (PY, 36 y.o)

"It is challenging to find a conclusion whether it is a trend or a workable lifestyle because it concludes that there must be a lot of quantity and quality data. Still, from personal experience, not everyone makes travelling a way to achieve Work-life balance, depending on one's internal factors such as
perspective, comfort, or desire for something. Also, external factors, in my opinion, such as the social and economic conditions, not everyone in my neighbourhood wants to travel. Some want to spend time with family at home or play games in their room. However, suppose travelling is a way of a process. Whether travelling from home to the beach or a more distant place, I think it is not exactly a trend because it will happen continuously, but a lifestyle as a dynamic human being and the need for work-life balance whether it is for himself or his work." (PM, 29 y.o)

The four statements above said that trends in travelling always move for various reasons. Trends can change according to current conditions and cannot guarantee whether work-life balance can be said to be a trend in several things outside of people's needs. Travelling should be hindered by personal needs, as a way of life.

**Lifestyle**

Lifestyle can influence a person in making choices in travelling. Lifestyle practices provide a unique sense of personal identity on the one hand and a distinct behaviour on the other hand (Cohen, 2011). Research has shown that lifestyle can affect a person's behaviour, as stated by the following informants:

"The higher their lifestyle, the greater their enthusiasm to work hard so that their lifestyle continues and fulfilled." (PN, 24 y.o)

"Because people's lifestyles usually reflect how they choose vacation destinations, such as if the person likes adventure, their vacation destination is more hiking and nature exploration and vice versa. If the person like serenity, they prefer yoga and spa activities to places of worship and temples. like temples or if people like shopping they can choose to travel to tourist spot" (DM, 21 y.o)

The response above explains where lifestyle plays a role in significant changes of need for someone, both a lifestyle for work and travelling. The key informants also described the following:

"Lifestyle greatly influences a person's behaviour. For example, a healthy and clean person usually shows an attitude of maintaining cleanliness and implementing a healthy life". (PY, 36 y.o)

The key informants also explained how lifestyle is very influential with travelling, as follows:

"Traveling can open other people's minds because we become open to new life experiences with our horizons. Travelling can also become a lifestyle to increase happiness and togetherness with oneself and family." (PY, 36 y.o)

"It depends on the person's needs, depending on the person's liking, if they like travelling, it will add to their enthusiasm. Their lifestyle will affect how they see the world and how other people see them in the community.
Lifestyle reflects people's needs and ambitions on how they feel and receive incoming experiences. That can be said in travelling for work-life balance because it is the needs and what they want in their lives, then if it is the needs for a way of life it can become a lifestyle that they can follow. (PM, 29 y.o)

The statement from the informant above states how lifestyle impacts work and tourism; in addition to these two fields, lifestyle also affects a person through behaviour in living a lifestyle; this is also a daily activity for women who live a work-life with personal activities.

CONCLUSION

The interviews showed that travelling activities significantly influence a person's behaviour to achieve work-life balance. The main informant argues that work-life balance has a vital role in balancing work life with personal life, especially in balancing free time between oneself and work to achieve more efficient and productive performance. They were supported by key informants who stated that work-life balance could be an ideal that every personal life wants to realise, dramatically affecting a person's performance. Several informants said that travelling could use as an alternative way to heal; by travelling to a tourist attraction and achieving a work-life balance in their private life. Travelling can make people achieve satisfactory performance and productivity in their work. With travelling activities, work will feel much less burden; besides that, a person's mental and physical will recover from the existing workload, which will help them achieve life goals. The students' informant argues that travelling is an essential activity as an alternative way to achieve work-life balance. It becomes an act to learn and seeks entertainment for the mind. The informant also stated that the need to take a vacation and enjoy life is also a motivation for travelling, especially solo travelling, to save costs and seek freedom.

Most primary informants stated that travelling for work-life balance was a lifestyle. They assumed travelling was a way of life essential for their own lives and became a behavioural pattern that each individual could achieve. This response is also supported by key informants who stated that travelling for work-life has become a lifestyle nowadays where technological advances and developments require more performance in working and the needs activities to relieve stress and burdens during a pandemic.

Not only responding to work-life balance as a lifestyle but a small part of the primary informants also stated that travelling for work-life balance can be a trend. Some key informants think that this activity can only be done for some time and will not carry out continuously. Continuously over a long time, especially in the conditions and situations of the COVID-19 pandemic, several informants also said that trends could change due to the continuous development of times, which resulted in changes in people's behaviour patterns for an individual has its different reasons.
Based on the above discussion results, one can conclude that travelling for work-life balance activities can be expressed as a lifestyle in each individual's life. What can be validated by the number of informants who stated that 60% that travelling for work-life balance is part of one's lifestyle—also confirmed by key informants with the same statement. This statement follows the theory by Sonnentag and Fritz (2007), which explains that workers who take vacations can contribute to individual well-being in working productivity because they get the opportunity to get away from their work and determine the activities they want to do during the holidays. This statement is supported by Fapohunda (2014), who researched the "Effect of work-life balance on productivity," showing that work-life balance involves an equal division of time in work and other activities outside of work; this affects how a person does his job. The informants' interviews also stated that work-life balance could be a lifestyle in their respective personal lives. The results from several interviews and theories related to each other state that travelling for work-life balance activities can be noted as a lifestyle. Thus, this study finds new things that previous research has not discussed: travelling for work-life balance activities as a lifestyle.

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