



**Research on the work-life balance of Chinese  
Internet Employees under the "996" working  
system**

**Author: Nan Zhang**

**Tutor: Ricardo Chiva Gómez**

**MASTERS IN MANAGEMENT  
FINAL DEGREE DISSERTATION**

**Courses 2021-2023**

## INDEX

A. INDEX OF TABLES .....	3
I. Introduction .....	4
1.1 Background of the study .....	4
1.2 Research content .....	5
1.3 Significance of the study .....	6
1.4 Research methodology .....	7
2. Theoretical foundations and literature review .....	8
2.1 Theoretical foundations .....	8
2.1.1 Herzberg's motivation two-factor theory .....	8
2.1.2 Analysis of the influencing factors of work-life balance based on two-factor theory .....	9
2.2 Literature review .....	12
2.2.1 A literature review on work-life balance .....	12
2.2.2 Causes of the "996" working system in the context of the Internet .....	15
2.2.3 Current status of research on the factors influencing labor time and causes of overtime work .....	17
2.2.4 The impact of "996" work system on work-life balance .....	19
2.2.5 Differences in work-life balance needs of different types of workers ..	20
2.2.6 A literature review of job satisfaction .....	21
2.2.7 A literature review of job performance .....	22
2.2.8 The impact of work-life balance on work performance .....	23
3. Research methodology and content analysis .....	24
3.1 Subjects and methods .....	24
3.2 Interview questions .....	25
3.3 Analysis of results .....	25
3.3.1 The current situation of "996" work .....	26
3.3.2 Work-life balance .....	27
3.3.3 Staff Job satisfaction .....	31
3.3.4 Impact of work-life balance on work performance .....	33

4. Conclusions and recommendations .....	36
4.1 Conclusion .....	36
4.2 Recommendations .....	37
References .....	40

## **A. INDEX OF TABLES**

Table 1. Herzberg's motivation two-factor theory.....	8
Table 2. Basic information of interviewees.....	25
Table 3. Interviewees' job satisfaction.....	31
Table 4. Factors influencing employee satisfaction.....	33

## **I. Introduction**

### **1.1 Background of the study**

By December 2020, the total number of Internet users in China has exceeded 989 million, and the Internet penetration rate has reached 70.4%(China Youth Daily, 2021). The continuous surge in the number of Internet users has laid a solid foundation for the development of the digital economy. At the same time, China leads the world in terms of network infrastructure construction and Internet applications.

In October 2016, a well-known Internet company in China was announced on the media that it implemented the "996" work system, that is, working at 9 am, 9 PM, and one hour off (or less) at noon and evening, working more than 12 hours and six days a week. This system reflects the prevailing culture of overtime work among Chinese Internet companies, and has been widely accepted by Chinese Internet companies. This approach was considered very demanding and many criticized it for negatively affecting employee work-life balance.

The "996" working system is prevalent. However, both organizational managers and grass-roots employees do not perceive the importance of balance between work and life. Overwork, physical and mental health of employees are frequent red lights, and employees' bad emotions in family life are constantly brought to work(Li,2018). Many problems warn us that we must improve the balance of work and life.

Internet companies seem to assume that the 996 work system will increase their organizational performance by increasing their employees' working time. However, academic research results suggest that long term excessive labor decreases work life balance, which affects the physical and mental health of employees and job satisfaction, which in turn might reduce their performance at work ((Hsu et al. 2019). Numerous studies have shown that working hours and overtime labour can have psychosocial effects: on the one hand, overtime work may result in physical exhaustion, limit opportunities for physical activity, and elevate the likelihood of developing cardiovascular ailments, and negatively affect employees' personal physical health, and accumulated work stress can make employees mentally stressed (Zhang et al., 2018); on the other hand, studies on the happiness effects of working hours show that

moderate work will maximize occupational happiness, but occupational happiness does not rise linearly with the increase of working hours (Wu, 2016), depleting working hours and low maintenance working hours bring real unhappiness, while complementary working hours and breakthrough working hours enhance employees' happiness (Wang, 2017).

But even under the "996" overtime system, many employees are still satisfied with their work because of their pay. The impact of pay on job satisfaction has been the subject of numerous research. According to traditional economic theory, a rise in income is associated with a rise in happiness, and Keynesian economists concur that a rise in employee pay is associated with a rise in work satisfaction (Judge, 2010). According to neoclassical economic theory, working overtime increases wages for employees, which provides them with favorable incentives (Liu, 2010). However, some research contend that overtime benefits employees only when they have a high degree of self-determination (Cui, 2020). Meanwhile, a qualitative study of a group of young people found that working overtime is an active activity that helps young people increase their happiness and fulfillment (Cui, 2021).

This article will explore the impact of China's Internet "996" work system on employees' work-life balance, individual performance, organizational performance, and job satisfaction. The study aims to provide valuable insights for Chinese Internet companies that seek to optimize organizational culture and balance the needs of employees and organizations.

## **1.2 Research content**

The prevalence of overtime even when workers actively oppose it and national labour policies severely restrict it has been shown in numerous studies to be a decision made by individual workers and organisations from an economic utility perspective: workers make a rational decision to engage in overtime work, driven by their personal abilities and the prevailing wage rates in the labor market, with the aim of maximizing their utility (Golden, 2009), while organisations not only shape the occurrence of overtime by "technical control" and "spatial control" to shape the occurrence of overtime by groups of employees (Cai, 2016), but also by managing the "hearts" of workers to

facilitate complex workers to promote (Zhuang, 2018), while some organisations induce workers to work overtime voluntarily by shaping overtime culture and providing logistical support (Meng, 2015). However, is "996 work" really a utility-maximising decision, as individual employees and organisations would like it to be?

We will discuss the impact of the current "996 work system" in the Chinese Internet industry on individual employee and organisational performance based on Herzberg's motivation theory (Herzberg, 1959). Herzberg's two-factor motivation theory is based on research conducted with groups of accountants and engineers and found that there are two main factors that influence employee satisfaction - motivational factors and health care factors, where motivational factors are those that make workers feel satisfied and are mostly related to job content, while health care factors are those that make employees feel dissatisfied and are mostly related to the work environment or work relationships. Essentially, the central concern of this study is the impact of the "996 work system" on employees and the organisation, and the following questions will be examined: Can the "996 work system" lead to higher job performance? Are employees aware that the 996 workday has led to an imbalance in their work lives? What factors affect their work-life balance? Has the "996 work system" reduced employees' individual performance through less work-life balance and job satisfaction? Are there some employees who are happy with the "996 working day" in view of some other factors?

### **1.3 Significance of the study**

With the continuous acceleration of industrialization, the "996" overtime work system is becoming more and more common. In China, the basic situation of urban and rural labor force oversupply will exist for a long time, and the labor force and job seekers will face huge competitive pressure and pressure. In order to avoid being eliminated, workers often spend more time on paid labor to increase family income under certain labor productivity. Therefore, it is of theoretical and practical significance to study the balance between the life and work of employees under the "996" working system.

In terms of practical significance, the "996 overtime system" is common in the Internet field, and people are concerned that more and more companies are hiring employees by default and accepting the "996" working style voluntarily, and when this

overtime system becomes a generalized norm, it will be difficult for employees not to use the "996" system. When this overtime system becomes a universal norm, companies that do not use the "996 overtime" system will be forced to accept this work pattern under greater competitive pressure. Therefore, the study of "996 overtime" will help us understand the current situation, causes, maintenance mechanism and internal relationship of this kind of overtime labor, so that we can find further solutions to balance the exploitation of working hours caused by market competition.

In terms of theoretical implications, there are numerous studies on the psychosocial effects of working hours and overtime labor. First, overtime work can damage health. Overtime work can lead to physical exhaustion, squeeze physical exercise time, and increase the risk of cardiovascular disease, thus affecting physical health; excessive overtime work can severely compress leisure time, accumulate work stress, and cause mental tension (Kang, 2018); second, the happiness effect of working hours is also important; moderate work will maximize occupational happiness, but occupational happiness does not rise linearly with the increase of working hours (Wu, 2016). Depleting work hours and low-maintenance work hours lead to real unhappiness, while complementary work hours and breakthrough work hours enhance happiness (Wang, 2017). However, past studies have mostly focused on urban workers and migrant workers, ignoring young practitioners in new industries, such as the Internet industry. Our study of employees in Internet companies can help us understand whether the psychosocial effects of break-time work in new industries and youth population will still be the same, and can complement the richness of related studies to some extent.

#### **1.4 Research methodology**

We will conduct a qualitative study and interview 15 Chinese employees in this industry. This paper is a qualitative study and will mainly use interview method to collect data. For the selection of interviewees, we chose employees from Internet companies at different stages of development (or of different sizes), working mainly in ChengDu, which are the frontier regions of Internet development in China and have developed a corresponding urban atmosphere. We interviewed a total of 15 workers engaged in the Internet industry, the 15 interviewees included both grassroots employees and middle



and senior managers. We adopted the "progressive focus method" in the interview, starting with chatting with the interviewees and asking them to describe their work experience as much as possible, and then focusing on semi-structured interviews, asking questions about labor characteristics, overtime work, reasons for overtime work, job satisfaction, work-life balance, organizational effectiveness, etc. Develop interactions to gather as comprehensive information as possible.

## 2. Theoretical foundations and literature review

### 2.1 Theoretical foundations

#### 2.1.1 Herzberg's motivation two-factor theory

In 1959, the "motivation-hygiene theory" or two-factor theory was introduced by the American psychologist, Herzberg. This theory categorizes enterprise factors into two distinct types - satisfaction factors and dissatisfaction factors. Satisfaction factors refer to elements that can motivate and satisfy individuals, while dissatisfaction factors refer to those that are susceptible to negative opinions and behaviors, commonly known as hygiene factors. Herzberg posited that employee performance is significantly influenced by these two factors. We generally think that the opposite of "satisfaction" is "dissatisfaction", which are two extremes, but Herzberg proposed that the opposite of "satisfaction" is "no satisfaction", and the opposite of "dissatisfaction" is "no dissatisfaction". There are two transitional states added between "satisfied" and "dissatisfied".

**Table 1. Herzberg's motivation two-factor theory**

Factor	Hygiene factors	Motivation factors
Effect	Eliminate employee dissatisfaction	Motivate employees to work enthusiastically
Content	Company policy and management, supervision, wages, coworker relations, working conditions, etc.	Achievement, appreciation, sense of responsibility, promotion, meaning and challenge of work, development, etc.

Source: Own elaboration.

Factors that result in employee dissatisfaction are known as hygiene factors. These factors cannot be fulfilled, and their absence or inadequacy can easily cause employees

to feel discontented, resulting in passive resistance, sabotage, or even strikes. Despite improving hygiene factors to a certain extent, it remains challenging to satisfy employees fully, and hence difficult to motivate them to perform optimally. Therefore, in terms of hygiene factors: "dissatisfied" The opposite should be "no dissatisfaction". Such as wages, working conditions, corporate policies, administrative management, labor protection, leadership levels, benefits, safety measures, and interpersonal relationships are all hygiene factors. These factors belong to the factors of working environment and working relationship, and are necessary conditions for maintaining the mental health of employees and avoiding setbacks, so they are called maintenance factors. It cannot directly motivate employees, but it is preventive.

Motivation factors are factors that make employees feel satisfied. The improvement of incentive factors to make employees feel satisfied can greatly stimulate their enthusiasm for work and improve labor productivity; but even if the incentive factors are not satisfied by the management, they will not make employees feel dissatisfied, so In terms of motivators: the opposite of "satisfaction" should be "no satisfaction"

The two-factor theory is a theory widely used by enterprises at present. The two-factor theory is significant as it dismantles the conventional perception of satisfaction and dissatisfaction, suggesting instead a dual continuum in the traditional concept. According to this theory, the absence of satisfaction is the opposite of satisfaction, not dissatisfaction. Similarly, the absence of dissatisfaction is the opposite of dissatisfaction, not satisfaction.

### **2.1.2 Analysis of the influencing factors of work-life balance based on two-factor theory**

Through reviewing the literature, the current influencing factors on work-life balance are mainly distributed in the three fields of personal, family, and work, among which the field of work is the most researched, mainly involving several aspects such as work characteristics, organizational support, and leadership style; personal In the field of research, research has focused extensively on demographic variables, the Big Five personality traits, psychological capital, and other related factors; on family, family research predominantly centers on family support and family structure. Based on the

two-factor theory, this paper divides these influencing factors into hygiene factors and motivating factors for analysis.

#### (1) Hygiene factors

According to the two-factor theory, this paper classifies family factors, working conditions, working environment, and leadership styles that affect work-life balance as hygiene factors. Li (2003) research shows that working hours, overtime and shift work have a significant positive impact on work-family conflict. Byron and Meta (2005) explored the impact of work variables and non-work variables on work-family balance. The empirical research on family factors in non-work factors shows that employees who experience more family pressure have greater conflict between family and work. Gao (2011) research shows that family roles are blurred and the division of labor is not clear, which will make working families face greater conflicts. Strengthening family emotional support function can effectively adjust work-family conflicts. However, the research results of Izraeli (1993) are the opposite. They believe that there is no significant difference between men and women in the face of work-family conflict. Family is equally important. Kinnunen and Mauno (1998) showed that, in both sexes, while there was no gender difference, work-family conflict was found to be more prevalent than family-work conflict. According to Zhang et al. (2006), a theoretical framework for work-life balance in China was proposed, and empirical analysis indicated that the work-life balance of Chinese employees, on the whole, is not favorable, but the support of relatives is very significant, which can ease the conflict between work and family. Monique et al.(2011) used organizational support theory and resource protection theory to study the relationship between workplace factors and employee work-life balance, and found that if the job resources provided by the company are better, such as job security, meeting employee needs, flexible work arrangements, The support of superiors and teams is consistent with the view of organizational work and life support. Lingard et al.(2012) investigated a medium-sized construction contracting company for 25 consecutive weeks and found that the weekly working hours can reveal employees' satisfaction with work-life balance, and employees generally maintain a positive attitude towards the company's work-life balance. Gillet (2013) studied the relationship between

transformational leadership and employees' work-life balance, and the results showed that transformational leadership can help employees improve the quality of wage-life balance, thereby improving employees' work engagement, which is more conducive to the development of enterprises. Leadership style is an important management tool for managers that, when used properly, can increase employee motivation. Kara et al.(2013) studied that the transformational leadership style is better than the transactional leadership style to improve employees' work well-being, help them improve their quality of life, and promote work-life balance. Mccarthy (2010) researched that leaders' participation in policies on work-life balance, policy awareness and usage will all affect leaders' attitudes and emphasis on work-life balance. At the same time, leaders' attitudes will directly affect employees' work-life balance. quality.

## (2) Motivation factors

According to the two-factor theory, this paper studies work itself and personal characteristics, which affect work-life balance, as motivating factors. According to Carnicer et al. (2004), there is a positive correlation between the level of physical or psychological demands of a job and the occurrence of work-family conflict, as well as a reciprocal relationship between the two. Bruck's (2002) research shows that conflicts from the work sphere may be greater than those from the family sphere. Therefore, for enterprises, it is necessary to design better methods to minimize the impact of employees' work on their families, so as to better improve employees' job satisfaction. Carlson et al.(2000) studied the impact of individual characteristics on work conflict. The personality variables were classified into four categories, namely Type A personality, Big Five personality, self-efficacy, and negative emotions. Based on the findings, it was observed that both Type A personality and negative emotions were significant predictors of work-family conflict. Individuals exhibiting greater Type A personality traits and fewer negative emotions were found to experience lower levels of work-family conflict. Yang et al.(2012) conducted an empirical study on the relationship between employees' self-efficacy and work-family conflict and gain, and the results showed that employees' self-efficacy has a negative weakening effect on work-family conflict. Chen et al. (2006) discovered that the adoption of job sharing can mitigate work-family conflicts, enhance

work-life balance, and diminish work-related stress to a certain degree. Duxbury (2003) research shows that if the career development opportunities provided by enterprises cannot meet the needs of families, the downsizing of enterprises, reorganization or mergers will lead to increased workload and work pressure of employees, thus affecting the work-life balance of employees. The study conducted by Siu (2013) revealed that individuals with positive psychological capital tend to adopt optimistic attitudes and effective measures in dealing with work-life conflicts. They are also adept at utilizing available resources to effectively resolve such conflicts, thereby attaining a balance between their professional and personal lives.

The hygienic factors and motivating factors that affect work-life balance are sorted out and analyzed by using the two-factor theory. Hygiene factors mainly include working hours, working environment, working conditions, family support, etc. The general research results show that the longer the working hours, the more obvious the conflict between work and family. The job resources provided by the company are relatively good, which will promote the work-life balance of employees. At the same time, leadership style and whether leaders value work-life balance are also related to employees' work-life balance. Motivation factors mainly include the work itself, personal characteristics and other factors. A positive relationship exists between work engagement and work-life balance, with psychological capital, including self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience, helping to enhance work-family balance. While employee self-efficacy weakens work-family conflict, it promotes work-family gain. Therefore, business managers need to consider hygiene factors and motivating factors when formulating work-life balance plans.

## **2.2 Literature review**

### **2.2.1 A literature review on work-life balance**

#### ***Definition of work-life balance***

The concept of work-life balance has always been a subject of discussion in academic circles, and a unified definition has not yet been reached. Through reviewing the literature, the academic community mainly explains the concept of work-life balance from three aspects: role allocation, rational use of resources, and ability utilization.

Some scholars believe that work-life balance reflects the conflict between roles. Marks and MacDermid (1996) were the first to propose the concept of work-life balance. Individuals play different roles in society, and different roles have different needs. Individuals need to seek a balance point among multiple role identities to meet the needs of each role, which can also be called "role balance". Clark (2000) believes that achieving work-life balance is not about eliminating conflicts, but that when individuals are satisfied with their current working and living conditions, the conflicts between different roles are minimized, and Allen et al.(2008) put forward the same point of view.

There are also some scholars who believe that the time and energy of individuals are limited, and work-life balance is to allocate resources reasonably and maximize the effectiveness of resources to achieve a state of satisfaction with work and life. Kirchmeyer (2000) believes that work-life balance is the ability to rationally allocate one's time, energy, and personal resources so that they can be fully utilized. Greenhaus et al.(2003) divided work-life balance into three dimensions: time, psychology, and satisfaction, and believed that individuals who can reasonably allocate and utilize resources in these three dimensions are work-life balance.

In addition, some scholars explain work-life balance from the perspective of ability utilization, and believe that being able to balance work and life is a manifestation of ability. Harris and Foster (2008) think that it is difficult for individuals to achieve work-life balance, and external forces are needed, such as work support provided by enterprises, which can help employees better balance work and life. Wong (2009) believes that individuals can have the autonomy to decide where to work, when to start work, and how long to work. Only with this ability can work-life balance be achieved.

By combing the literature and analyzing and summarizing the views put forward by different scholars, this paper believes that these three aspects should be combined to define work-life balance. Work life balance means that individuals have the ability to use external support and their own abilities in different roles at work and at home, and allocate their time and energy fully and reasonably, so that work and life can reach a satisfactory state.

### ***Theoretical basis of work-life balance***

As discussed in section 2.2.1, the notion of work-life has been defined from diverse viewpoints by various scholars, so there are many theoretical foundations for work-life balance. Through combing the literature, mainly from the role theory, spillover and compensation theory, boundary theory, conservation of resources theory.

#### (1) Role Theory

Role theory(Robert Merton,1957) holds that various social roles are always constantly influencing and interacting with each other, and different social situations often have to play various social roles, and at the same time, role expectations are accompanied. Barnett et al.(1992) believed that the "scarcity hypothesis" and "enhancement hypothesis" in role theory are the most direct theoretical sources of work-life balance. Tiedje et al.(1990) investigated the compatibility of different roles through the study of women who hold multiple jobs, and also believed that when an individual has multiple role identities, it will promote or affect individual satisfaction.

#### (2) Spillover and compensation theory

Spillover theory suggests that despite the temporary physical separation between work and family, work and family are mutually influential, and that this influence can "spill over" from one domain to the other, either positively or negatively(Graham, 1980). Zedeck and Mosier (1990), Judge and Watanabe (1993), Hart (1999), and others have endorsed this theory. Wilensky (1960) argued that if individuals feel dissatisfied at work, they seek compensation by "having fun" in their leisure time outside of work.

#### (3) Boundary theory

Clark (2000), an American scholar, developed the work-family boundary theory to critique prior work-family relationship theories. This theory posits that individuals navigate the boundary between work and family on a daily basis, which influences their interactions with others who also cross this boundary. The work-family boundary theory posits that work and family are considered as separate and independent domains that have their own unique boundaries, which are permeable and flexible. Permeability and flexibility together determine the strength of the boundary between the two realms of work and home. The key to maintaining the stability of the work-family boundary is whether the boundary crossers and boundary maintainers can agree on the

composition and scope of the work family. When the two diverge, work-family conflict arises, and communication between the two needs to be strengthened to restore balance.

#### (4) Conservation of resources theory

According to the conservation of resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989), individuals have a natural inclination to safeguard, maintain, and acquire resources. Consequently, any perceived or actual loss of resources can potentially result in adverse consequences. Individuals have very limited time and energy, and individuals have multiple roles and identities. When one role occupies too many resources, the resources available to other roles will be reduced, and conflicts will arise between roles, thereby affecting the individual work-family balance. Hobfoll (1989) presented a resource conservation model, suggesting that resources required in the work (or family) domain are dependent on resources in the family (or work) domain. Losing these resources can potentially lead to work-family conflicts.

### **2.2.2 Causes of the "996" working system in the context of the Internet**

The 996 working system pertains to a work arrangement that commences at 9:00 am and concludes at 9:00 pm, inclusive of a one-hour (or shorter) break at noon and evening. This work system typically encompasses more than 10 hours of work per day, and a 6-day workweek. This system exemplifies the prevalent culture of working overtime in Chinese internet companies. In the Internet industry, the "996" phenomenon has been around for a long time. It has attracted more and more people's attention and has been continuously raised and discussed. Although there have been so many discussions, "996" has not been eliminated, but has gradually penetrated into every corner of the Internet industry. How did the "996" work system grow wildly in the Internet industry? This article mainly analyzes from the enterprise level and the individual level.

#### (1) Enterprise level

On the one hand, with the development of capital, Internet companies are prone to fall into the "acceleration trap". Facing the pressure of huge market competition, companies need to increase business activities, speed up action, raise performance targets, shorten innovation cycles, and introduce new management techniques or



organizational systems. Under high pressure, employees sometimes burst out with great potential and create brilliant performance. This gives CEO even more luxury: They want to turn this extraordinary pace of development into the new normal. What was originally a temporary assault for emergency turned into a long-term overload of work, which caused serious consequences. When Wei and Zhang (2019) analyzed the causes of Internet companies' "996", they believed that under the influence of the "acceleration trap", the industry's competition has shifted from product and operational aspects to talent acquisition, speed, and efficiency, reflecting a growing internalization trend. When the capital side needs to increase output by increasing labor time, laborers have limited resistance and can only be forced to work overtime. Zhao and Jing (2016) also believe that intensive management with low cost and high output will become one of the magic weapons for enterprises to win, and enterprises hope that employees will work overtime to generate higher benefits.

On the other hand, the flexible working system provides convenience for the "996" working system in disguise. It is quite common to adopt flexible working system in China's Internet industry. In fact, not only Internet companies, but also IT departments in many traditional industries often adopt flexible working system. Flexible working system is currently a working method that is more suitable for IT and Internet practitioners. . However, the flexible working system itself also has some disadvantages. It is often based on fixed tasks. Employees need to complete a fixed workload within a specified time limit. This is linked to their annual performance appraisal, and the performance appraisal is done by the company. In the end, the working hours of employees are still guided by the company, and there is no real flexible working hours. It is precisely because the flexible working system blurs the commuting time, so it breaks the boundary between work and life. Due to the characteristics of the industry, Internet companies do not have high requirements for the workplace. They often only need to have a computer at hand to devote themselves to work. This makes employees unable to completely separate from work even during vacations. Yang (2018) also mentioned in the study that the flexible working system may lead to blurred boundaries between work and life, work and family, and the identity of the protagonist of the self is blurred,

followed by more and more serious negative effects, forming a vicious Loop.

## (2) Personal level

Employee internal drive is an important factor affecting employee work behavior, including innovation awareness, learning awareness, competition awareness, etc. Under the influence of internal drive, even without overtime wages and rewards, employees will consciously increase their working hours. Lu Shuchun, secretary-general of the Internet Finance Association of China, once said that "this era is changing with each passing day, and the talents we need are characterized by being more agile, more open, faster, and talents with mixed thinking and abilities." To maintain pace with the rapidly evolving internet landscape, internet professionals are motivated by intrinsic factors to proactively enhance their workload. At the same time, employees need a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction, especially the high-density positive feedback after work. Moreover, Chinese culture traditionally values investing in future happiness, with hard work and overtime in the present being seen as necessary for future enjoyment.

The sense of crisis and fear are powerful weapons to motivate employees to work overtime willingly. The Internet industry is developing very fast and the competition is fierce. Most of them are mental activities, so it will be more friendly to young people. Employees will fear that their progress cannot keep up with the development of the industry, and they will also feel a sense of crisis due to their age. In order to improve their competitiveness in the workplace, employees will also choose to spend most of their time at work, at the expense of life time, hoping to acquire more knowledge and abilities. This has further promoted the Internet "996" work system to become a common phenomenon in Internet companies, and even some young people have a relatively high acceptance of "996", thinking that they can not only get a higher salary, but also achieve self-improvement.

### **2.2.3 Current status of research on the factors influencing labor time and causes of overtime work**

Despite the active opposition of workers and strict national labor regulations and policies, the phenomenon of overtime work persists. Existing research has primarily

explored this issue from various perspectives, including economic utility, organizational management, work characteristics, and individual and family factors. The following perspectives are representative: Firstly, the economic utility analysis suggests that overtime work is a decision that maximizes workers' utility, regardless of the group of workers, based on their ability endowment under a given labor market wage rate (Golden, 2009). For migrant workers, who face an imperfect social security system and a split labor reproduction system, working overtime is a voluntary choice to increase their economic income (Liu, 2010). Second, organizational management and environmental perspective. Organizations not only shape the occurrence of overtime work of employee groups through "technical control" and "spatial control" (Cai, 2016), but also manage the "hearts" of workers to promote unpaid overtime work. to promote unpaid overtime work for complex workers (Chuang, 2018). Organizations' overtime culture tends to compel employees to extend their working hours and work intensity voluntarily. Organizations offer improved working conditions and logistical support, along with relaxation facilities, to encourage workers to remain in the workplace and work overtime willingly. Additionally, the work identity perspective asserts that several factors such as job autonomy, union status, labor contract, and occupation type can significantly influence overtime work. For instance, greater job autonomy typically corresponds to shorter overtime hours (Luo, 2019). Similarly, individuals who are unionized or have labor contracts generally have a shorter workweek and a reduced likelihood of working overtime (Xu, 2017). With the improvement of occupational status, working hours are shortened, general white-collar and skilled workers have shorter working hours than unskilled workers, employees of institutions and state-owned enterprises have significantly lower working hours than private sector workers, and wages have an incentive effect on workers' working hours, which increase accordingly as wages rise (Jiao, 2019). Fourth, individual family perspective. Because of the unequal distribution of gender roles in society, men tend to assume greater economic responsibilities for the family while women often shoulder more care-related duties, resulting in a lower likelihood for women to work overtime compared to men; those with lower education levels and married people are less likely to work overtime (Le, 2019).

When migrant workers face higher family responsibilities, such as caring for elderly relatives or raising children, they tend to opt for overtime work (Wang, 2010). The above studies provide a multidimensional perspective for understanding overtime work, but what factors drive overtime among youth groups has not yet been clearly explained.

#### **2.2.4 The impact of "996" work system on work-life balance**

The "996" work system has increasingly become a regular requirement for Internet companies. The core is the extension of employees' working hours, making "overtime" a label for Internet companies. However, as we mentioned above, individuals have limited time and energy. If the work allocation time is longer, the corresponding family time will be shorter, which may lead to conflicts between work and life. Meng (2014) conducted research on the problem of Chinese employees' overwork and believed that excessively long working hours would cause the accumulation of fatigue in the body of the laborers and cause great damage to the physical and mental health of the laborers. Wu (2016) believes that the length of working hours will affect occupational well-being. If the working hours are too short, it is difficult to obtain a sense of accomplishment at work, but when the working hours are too long, the benefits of working hours on occupational well-being will no longer increase or even be harmful. Create work-life imbalance. Jin et al. (2014) found that working hours have a significant positive impact on work-family conflict, seriously affecting work-life balance, especially women face greater conflicts. Bakker (2014) believes that employees are subjected to excessive work demands, which will consume a lot of energy of employees. In the long run, employee satisfaction with work will decrease, and the turnover rate of enterprises will increase, which is not conducive to the stable development of enterprises. Wei and Li (2015) reversely stated that excessively long working hours will affect the individual's life time and quality, thus negatively affecting work efficiency.

After combing the literature, it is found that most scholars have reached a consistent conclusion about the negative impact of excessive working hours on work-life balance. In fact, it is not difficult to understand that individuals need to play different roles in society. In addition to being an employee in the workplace, they need to realize their self-worth and corporate value. Give him energy in family life. If a certain role takes

up most of the individual's time, the time of other roles will be squeezed, and in the long run, conflicts between different roles will appear. therefore. The "996" work system in the Internet industry will to some extent have a negative impact on work-life balance.

### **2.2.5 Differences in work-life balance needs of different types of workers**

Work-life balance experiences exhibit intricate and conspicuous disparities across diverse social classes, management levels, occupational categories, and industries. By combing the literature, we sort out the characteristics of different types of workers' needs for work-life balance.

Early research on work-life balance mainly focused on people who are more likely to face work-life conflicts. For example, it is generally believed that women face more work-family conflicts than men, and dual-earner families face more work-family conflicts than single-earner families. , and part-time employees who are disadvantaged in the workplace. Blyton (2011) believes that part-time work will bring positive effects, while Fleetwood (2006) believes that the flexibility of part-time work is only beneficial to employers, but it greatly limits the work-life balance of employees. Lausch and Scully (2007) found that the biggest conflict faced by women or dual-earner families is not only children, uncertain career prospects, etc., many women in the family work part-time to ensure more discretionary funds, but the income of part-time work is not Stable and relatively low job satisfaction. At present, scholars focus their research on three types of social groups: knowledge workers with highly proactive personalities, workaholics with process addiction characteristics, and laborers generated by new work models (such as online car-hailing drivers, takeaway vendors, etc). Mcdowell (2004) employees in high-tech enterprises or universities need to be creative in their labor process. Although they are not vulnerable groups, they are under great pressure. And the high-skilled group has higher autonomy and high pursuit of quality of life, so knowledge workers have a strong sense of competition and an atmosphere of long-term work. Stefano and Gaudiinoa (2018) conducted an empirical study on the impact mechanism of work addiction and work engagement on work-life balance, and the results showed that there was a significant positive correlation between work addiction and work-life conflict, while work engagement was associated with work-life conflict. Negative correlation.

## **2.2.6 A literature review of job satisfaction**

### ***Definition of Job Satisfaction***

The formal concept of job satisfaction was first introduced by Hoppock in 1935, in his doctoral thesis (Hoppock, 1935), it was defined as the psychological and physical satisfaction of employees with environmental factors, i.e. a subjective response of employees to their occupational situation. Schaffer (1953) states that satisfaction with work should be seen as one of the outcomes of meeting one's needs. one aspect. Satisfaction is achieved when employees feel happy when their work is recognised and the value of their contribution is acknowledged by the organisation and others (Locke, 1986). Milbourn and Dunn (1976) suggest that job satisfaction is the degree to which an employee perceives the emotional aspects of his job, his potential for future promotion and the pay he receives for his work. In addition, Currivan (1999) suggests that job satisfaction is the degree to which an employee feels a sense of pleasure from the satisfaction of the job itself.

### ***Factors influencing job satisfaction***

Western academics have produced more similar conclusions about what factors may influence job satisfaction, and they have developed a more consistent view of the research on the factors influencing job satisfaction in the West. Job satisfaction has been divided into four categories: the first category is internal to the organisation, such as the job itself and the work The second category is the outcome of the job, such as the pay, the possibility of promotion, the employee's own personal value and so on. The third category is the individual employee, which includes demographics, personality traits. The fourth category is non-job related factors, including family, life and job matching (Huang Gui, 2005).

The findings in China are similar to those in Western countries, with the main research focusing on state-owned enterprises, private enterprises and joint ventures. Job enrichment and a sound promotion system are important influencing factors for employees' job satisfaction (Peng Shiyong, 2003); Shu Xiaobing (2003) suggests that for managers in state-owned enterprises, leadership behaviour, management mechanisms and working hours are all likely to influence satisfaction; while Hu Bei

(2003) argues that for brain workers, interpersonal relationships have the greatest impact. The second is factors such as the work itself and the environment; Wang Bingcheng's (2011) study argues that regarding pay forms a significant impact on job satisfaction.

### **2.2.7 A literature review of job performance**

The goal of business and organizational operation and development is to achieve optimal performance, and scholars have proposed different perspectives on the definition of performance. Some view performance as an outcome, while others define it as behavior. Still, others emphasize the link between employee potential and performance, with a focus on employee quality and future development (Ma & Wang, 2009). Katz and Kahn (1996) define job performance as consisting of two aspects: the behaviour of employees who come to perform their job duties and behaviours, i.e. in-role behaviours; and the work of employees who help others to better achieve The behaviour resulting from organisational goals, also known as extra-role behaviour, which is referred to as organisational citizenship behaviour. Hall & Goodale (1986) consider job performance as the way in which employees, under the effective direction of their supervisors, learn skills on their own, organise their time and work with colleagues in order to do their jobs, and classify performance as a behavioural category. behaviour should be expected and prescribed by the organisation and should meet the demands of the formalised job role. He argues that performance is behavioural and is to be distinguished from outcomes, which can be influenced by systemic factors. Borman and Motowidlo (1993) defined job performance as comprising all behaviors that contribute to achieving organizational objectives, and they proposed a two-dimensional model of job performance, including task performance and contextual performance. Task performance refers to workers' proficiency in activities that are formally assigned or that contribute to the core activities of the organization. Contextual performance, on the other hand, encompasses supportive behaviors that facilitate organizational, social, and psychological contexts and are closely tied to the performance's organizational characteristics. In contrast, Yang and Ling (2001) defined performance as the ultimate result of an individual or organization's actions within a specific time frame, combining

time, approach, and outcome.

The current research is based on Borman and Motowidlo's (1993) description of job performance, which includes all behaviors that are pertinent to the objectives of an organization and can be assessed based on how much individuals add to these objectives. This includes both task performance and relational performance.

### **2.2.8 The impact of work-life balance on work performance**

At present, scholars' research on work-life balance, in addition to influencing factors, mainly focuses on the economic consequences of work-life balance. Through literature review, it mainly focuses on job performance, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover rate and so on.

According to Behson (2005), providing family support can be crucial for employees to maintain a healthy balance between work and family obligations. Family support can improve employees' job satisfaction, alleviate work-family conflict and pressure, and reduce employees' intention to leave. Wang et al. (2011) took scientific researchers as the research object and found that work-family balance has a significant relationship with organizational performance, further proving the value of work-family balance in human resource development and management. Chow and Chew (2006) found that if a company pays more attention to the needs of employees' work-life balance and formulates a more humanized work-life balance strategy for it, its profits will often perform better than companies that do not provide work-life balance strategies. Bono and Weber (2012) found that under the flexible working system, in order to achieve work-family balance, some employees would rather increase their working hours to complete more workload, so the productivity and performance of the organization will be improved. Chen and Liu (2010) believed that work-life balance strategies work on both individual and organizational levels, and ultimately affect organizational performance. Wang and Ye (2011) conducted a survey of Chinese married employees and found that work-life balance was significantly positively correlated with job satisfaction and life satisfaction, indicating that work-life balance should be an important aspect of human resource management in enterprises. From the perspective of human resource management, Ma and Xv (2010) believe that work-life balance can bring about high



productivity, low turnover rate, and high job satisfaction. Therefore, the organization needs to help employees solve their worries, balance work and life, and bring employees higher work enthusiasm and higher loyalty.

In general, scholars have drawn relatively consistent conclusions about the impact of work-life balance on job satisfaction, life satisfaction, organizational performance, organizational commitment, and work efficiency. Work-life balance should be a factor that companies need to consider when conducting human resource management. If an enterprise can formulate a more humane and effective work balance plan and implement it, it will inevitably improve the job satisfaction, enthusiasm and creativity of employees, and increase the loyalty of employees, because it can also further improve the production of the enterprise. Efficiency and performance increase, while also reducing the turnover rate of corporate employees and enhancing stability. And the positive feedback brought by work will also overflow into family life, thereby promoting life satisfaction and obtaining higher family support, which can further promote employees to not need to be distracted by family affairs at work, thereby improving the work efficiency of employees. So whether it is at the corporate level or at the personal level, work-life balance is beneficial to both parties.

### **3. Research methodology and content analysis**

#### **3.1 Subjects and methods**

In order to understand the working conditions of employees under the 996 working system, as well as the work-life balance of employees under this system and its impact on employee satisfaction and job performance. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner with 15 employees, eight males and seven females, from general staff to middle and senior level, from five first-tier Internet companies in Chengdu. Questions were structured on marital status, age, gender, rank and length of service, and unstructured questions on overtime, job satisfaction, work-life balance and job performance, with a set of pre-determined questions that would be adjusted according to the participants' answers. Interviews are conducted by telephone and are recorded with the consent of the participant. Each employee's interview will last between 20-30 minutes. After the interviews were completed, the interviews were

collated and analysed through the audio recordings and field transcripts.

### **3.2 Interview questions**

What is the size of your company and what level is it at in the industry?

How long have you been working in the Internet industry?

Do you think the "996" phenomenon in the Internet industry is serious?

How long do you work overtime? Are you flexible in the way you work overtime?

Are you satisfied with your current job under the "996" working system? In what ways?

Does your company provide any allowances or benefits for overtime work? For example, overtime allowance, overtime pay, transfer of time off, etc.

Does overtime work have an impact on your family, life and health? In what ways do you regulate it?

What are the things at work that make you feel satisfied or happy? How long can this positive emotion last?

What are the things at work that make you dissatisfied? How long does this negativity last?

Do you think you have a work-life balance now? If not, what are the reasons why you continue to put up with "996"?

What do you think are the factors affecting work-life balance?

Do you consider yourself to be a workaholic?

Do you think the '996' overtime system has improved your personal performance?

Do you think the '996' overtime system has improved the overall performance of your organisation?

### **3.3 Analysis of results**

Table 2 shows the demographic details of the individuals interviewed for this study who worked overtime in the IT industry in China. We have numbered the personnel. The demographic information collected includes gender, age, marital status, rank, education level and length of service.

**Table 2. Basic information of interviewees**

Serial number	Gender	Age	Marital status	Education	Position	Length of service
1	Male	28	Married	Master	Mid-rise	5
2	Female	31	Married	Master	General Staff	7
3	Female	27	Unmarried	Undergraduate	General Staff	3
4	Male	28	Married	Undergraduate	General Staff	5
5	Female	25	Unmarried	Undergraduate	General Staff	1
6	Female	26	Unmarried	Undergraduate	General Staff	4
7	Female	24	Unmarried	Undergraduate	General Staff	5
8	Male	32	Married	Master	General Staff	10
9	Male	41	Married	Undergraduate	Mid-rise	18
10	Male	31	Married	Undergraduate	General Staff	8
11	Male	32	Unmarried	Undergraduate	Mid-rise	10
12	Male	36	Married	Master	Top	14
13	Male	29	Unmarried	Master	General Staff	3
14	Female	32	Married	Undergraduate	Mid-rise	10
15	Female	29	Unmarried	Undergraduate	General Staff	7

*Source: Own elaboration.*

### **3.3.1 The current situation of "996" work**

Firstly, we investigated the respondents' views on the prevalence and extent of "996" overtime work in the Internet industry, and 14 out of 15 respondents think that "996" overtime is very serious in the Internet industry, and only one respondent thinks that overtime in the industry is 'average', which shows that overtime is very common in the Internet industry.

Understanding the current work situation of the respondents is a key prerequisite for in-depth analysis. According to the interview results, 14 out of 15 interviewees said that there is overtime work in their companies, but the working rhythm is different, basically divided into flexible, weekend overtime and inflexible. NO.4 is the representative of inflexible working, he said "the working nodes are tight and inflexible"; NO.2 and No.5 are the representatives of weekend overtime. They said, "I work from 9:00 to 6:00, but I work overtime almost every day, usually at 9:00 p.m., maybe 12:00

p.m. if I'm busy, and I seldom take a break on weekends." Compared with these two forms of overtime, the flexible working type is more humane and is commonly used in large Internet companies. 12 out of 15 interviewees all belong to this category, among which, except for No.9, the rest of the flexible working type respondents work in the head of the industry Internet companies, which shows that large Internet companies prefer to adopt the flexible working system as This shows that large Internet companies prefer to adopt flexible working as a form of compensation for "996 overtime work".

Do you get compensated for overtime work? 7 out of 15 interviewees mentioned that the companies provide overtime pay or overtime pay, which means that in some companies, employees will get extra income for obeying the "996 working system". In addition to overtime pay, some companies also provide overtime compensation in the form of transferring time off. No.4 talks about "no overtime pay, but transferring time off on weekends" and No.11 says "no overtime pay, but transferring time off on holidays". However, the mechanism of overtime pay and transfer is not stable, and it is often canceled when the company's efficiency decreases, as No.13 said, "There is no overtime pay and transfer from this year onwards."

### **3.3.2 Work-life balance**

Are employees aware that the "996" work system has affected their work-life balance?The interviews revealed that all 15 Internet employees believe that the "996" work system affects their work-life balance and that many factors influence it, such as work pressure, organizational support, financial burden, leadership attitude, work autonomy, family support, etc.

(1) High work pressure. The most influential factor mentioned by the interviewees was the heavy workload, resulting in excessive work pressure. Most of the employees suggested that the working hours in Internet companies are higher than those in general, and that the long hours of overload have taken a toll on the physical and mental health of individuals and seriously affected their work-life balance. Two of the interviewees had this to say: "In the company, I experienced unprecedented work pressure, which I could not experience in my two previous internship experiences. 996 is already considered an easy life, and sometimes it may be 9107 or 9106 when I work more overtime, such a

pace, how can I say? It's true that it's growing fast, but such a pace can really take your breath away..."(respondent 14). "My day job is to recruit student users. My boss has set a rather heavy KPI and it's common to work overtime until 11pm. I wouldn't consider it a high KPI or unreasonable work requirement, I just sometimes wonder why I can't finish it and would be prone to self-doubt and anxiety to the extent that I would be laid off if I don't complete the task well..."(respondent 9).

(2) Organisational support. When employees are faced with intense work, if the organisation can provide them with a relatively high level of support, then the employees' work attitude will be more positive. For example, leaders and colleagues who take the initiative to help employees solve problems they encounter at work will to a certain extent relieve their stress and thus promote work-life balance.

"Our company doesn't put much emphasis on building a corporate culture. I don't feel like there is any organizational support that helps my work life balance. There's just so much going on every day and there's just no way to get off work until it's done "(respondent 10).

"My hometown is Chongqing and my girlfriend is there, so I'm actually torn between quitting and going back home. My current company has a good working atmosphere and management system, with open communication with my superiors, simple relationships between colleagues and a cordial atmosphere without too many interests. Although there are many tasks, I can basically arrange my work flexibly and have more autonomy in my work, so I am actually still a bit sad to leave. I would still like to stay in Chengdu for this job if these problems in my life are solved ."(respondent 13).

"The great thing about this place compared to the previous one is that relationships are simpler and it's really a great team atmosphere. The previous company didn't place much value on personal time, here it's a bit more respectful of time and there are no big nights of contact"(respondent 10).

(3) Leadership attitudes. For employees, the attitude and practice of the leader towards work-life balance directly affects the work-life balance of employees. If the leader himself pays more attention to work-life balance, then he will often encourage his subordinates not to work first, but to live well in addition to work, which can play a subtle

role in the daily work process, thus promoting work-life balance among employees.

"The leadership gives more guidance and trust, and I have the opportunity to drive projects independently, I can maintain a good work ethic and feel that the future is promising"(respondent 12).

"My current work status does not do that, the leadership is friendly to subordinates, but also can play their own ability of work opportunities. The sense of achievement that can be gained through the work, the pay is a good match for the workload and there are no opportunities for job promotion at the moment"(respondent 13).

"My superior is a person with a good work life balance, regular fitness and recreation, work matters can also be handled very well, in fact, we human resources this department in the enterprise compared to other sequences or positions is not the most difficult type, so I think it should be my ability can still be improved, so currently need to work overtime or something "(respondent 11).

(4) Job autonomy. The characteristics of the Internet industry suggest that it should be an industry with a relatively obvious feature of flexible working, where employees have a strong sense of control and autonomy over their work, but the structure of the interviews shows that the implementation of flexible working is not ideal and that employees would like to have a higher degree of autonomy at work so that they can allocate their individual time and energy more rationally and thus achieve a work-life balance.

"The current job is OK, a bit busier but the pay matches my workload, but there is a lack of opportunities to work independently and to realise my self-worth"(respondent 7).

"I would like to have more opportunities to participate in company decisions, demonstrate my abilities and have my salary adjusted"(respondent 1)

"The fancy name of flexible working actually gives more excuses for overtime and overnight work. In the past, when we had to clock in and start work at 9am, the leaders would basically send everyone home at 8am or 9am, considering that they had to get up early the next day; now it's a good thing that the flexible working system allows you to come in a little later, so staying late and working overtime has become a matter of course. With flexible working, a vicious circle of late nights and overtime will be

formed."(respondent 6)

(5) Economic burden. Internet employees generally show a young trend, many practitioners are in the unmarried or first marriage age group, need to work hard for a car, the economic burden is relatively heavy. Some employees choose to work long hours of overtime when faced with relatively high economic pressure, which results in their work being particularly stressful as well, without relief, thus causing an imbalance in their work lives.

"The salary is too small, no house or car, can only meet the basic life; parents are old and their health condition is worrying"(respondent 6).

"I have been working in an internet company for 3 years, but my salary is getting lower and lower, there is a feeling of disguised salary reduction, even so, I can't quit, maintaining stability may have been good, some of the internet startups where I have some friends can't pay their salaries, some are closed down. No savings, afraid to face the sudden onslaught of change, rent, food, after the daily consumption of a month's salary left few, and monthly credit card payments. Not to mention buying a house. When I walk down the street and someone hands me a leaflet with property information, I will take it to be polite, but I will throw it in the trash"(respondent 3).

(6) Family support. Family is the warmest harbour. Individuals face more stress at work and if the family can provide more support and understanding, then it helps to relieve the stress of work and the stress of life. For example, showing understanding of your spouse's busy schedule and volunteering to take on more family commitments.

"Being conscientious, responsible and loyal is the family ethos of our family. My family members all give their maximum support to my work. Although the work is hard, the good thing is that I always have my family behind me, and my family's support is my motivation to move forward. When I have time, I also take the initiative to take up household chores and understand that it is not easy for my wife to bring up the children. In such an atmosphere, we understand each other's contribution better and the family relationship is more harmonious, thus allowing me to work well without worries"(respondent 8).

How do employees manage the impact of overtime on their work-life balance? From

the answers of the respondents, the regulation methods of employees under the "996 work system" basically include exercise, adjusting their mindset, and taking short trips, but some respondents said they did not find effective ways to regulate, and could only digest their emotions silently by themselves, which will affect employees' physical and mental health if it continues for a long time. "At present, there is no effective way to regulate it, and I can only keep giving myself psychological hints"(respondent 9). This shows that when overtime work affects their life and health, employees tend to solve the problem by themselves rather than through external forces or institutions, and the company does not provide reasonable help and support.

### 3.3.3 Staff Job satisfaction

Table 2 shows the job satisfaction ratings under the '996' work system based on interviews with 15 interviewed employees.

**Table 3. Interviewees' job satisfaction**

Personnel number	Gender	Age	Education	Position	Length of service	Job satisfaction
1	Male	28	Master	Mid-rise	5	Satisfaction
2	Female	31	Master	General Staff	7	Unsatisfactory
3	Female	27	Undergraduate	General Staff	3	Unsatisfactory
4	Male	28	Undergraduate	General Staff	5	Unsatisfactory
5	Female	25	Undergraduate	General Staff	1	Very dissatisfied
6	Female	26	Undergraduate	General Staff	4	Fair
7	Female	24	Undergraduate	General Staff	5	Fair
8	Male	32	Master	General Staff	10	Fair
9	Male	41	Undergraduate	Mid-rise	18	Fair
10	Male	31	Undergraduate	General Staff	8	Fair
11	Male	32	Undergraduate	Mid-rise	10	Fair
12	Male	36	Master	Top	14	Satisfaction
13	Male	29	Master	General Staff	3	Unsatisfactory
14	Female	32	Undergraduate	Mid-rise	10	Fair
15	Female	29	Undergraduate	General Staff	7	Unsatisfactory

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 2 shows that middle and senior managers are generally more satisfied with



their jobs than the general workforce, indicating that individual job satisfaction increases as the rank increases, even if they are all working under the "996" system. From the perspective of the length of service, the longer the length of service, the higher the job satisfaction, whether or not the "996" system is considered. This indicates that job satisfaction increases as the length of service increases, even in the context of a "996" work schedule.

The above findings also revealed in the interviews that for middle level and above management employees, they even work "996" and even "007" on their own initiative. "I share the honesty that only by paying a huge price can there be a reward one day, and without paying a price, there can be no reward." This was a view shared by a director-level employee in an interview, and basically all the managers interviewed held a similar view. In their view, the point of working hard is not to do it for the boss, but to realise their own value in their work, with the vision of being able to change the world. And most managers hold equity or options in the company. To some extent, the interests of the company are highly aligned with their personal interests, and if overtime can maximise the value of the company, then they are very happy to work overtime without becoming dissatisfied with their work, and it can also improve their personal organisational performance. However, for the average employee, they only hold the mentality of working for the company and believe that long hours of overtime does not bring equal pay. Once the overtime hours exceed their psychological threshold, they will become extremely dissatisfied with their work and even leave, affecting the stability of the organisation. The interviews also revealed that there is a difference in job satisfaction among Internet employees with different working experience. For employees with more than five years of service, they have already adapted to the high intensity of overtime work in Internet companies, and are more accustomed to the longer working hours and faster working pace. Therefore, for employees with longer working experience, the "996" working system has less impact on their job satisfaction. However, for employees with less than three years of service, most of them are newcomers who have just graduated and entered the workplace. The intensity of overtime work in Internet companies is relatively different from the intensity of study in

school, so they feel uncomfortable when they first enter the workplace, so their satisfaction with their jobs is relatively low.

According to Herzberg's motivation theory, there are two factors that affect employees' job satisfaction - motivational factors and health factors, where motivational factors are those that make employees feel satisfied and health factors are those that make employees feel dissatisfied. From the interview results, the motivating factors in the work of the respondents are mainly related to the content of the work, including the sense of achievement brought by the completion of projects or tasks. Among them, the positive emotions brought by the sense of accomplishment of completing tasks and good interpersonal relationships lasted longer, while the positive emotions brought by gaining income and promotion and salary increase lasted shorter, i.e., the sense of recognition and accomplishment motivated employees longer than financial income.

**Table 4. Factors influencing employee satisfaction**

Motivational factors at work	Hygiene factors at work
Achievability	Unreasonable work arrangement
Sense of identity, good interpersonal relationships	Coordination barriers between departments (disharmonious relationships)
Position promotion	Disproportionate return on income
	Internal competition is serious

Source: Own elaboration.

In addition, the health care factors that affect job satisfaction are basically related to the work environment, and the most mentioned are disharmonious departmental relationship and overly competitive environment. We were also able to observe from the duration of positive and negative emotions talked about by the respondents that the impact of health care factors lasted longer than motivational factors.

### **3.3.4 Impact of work-life balance on work performance**

The work-life balance of employees in the 996 work system is directly related to job performance. In this section, we will discuss the impact of the 996 work week on employee performance.

#### ***Impact on individual employee performance***

The impact of the 996 work system on individual employee performance was

investigated through interviews with 15 Internet employees. The following subsections present the findings and analysis of the impact on employees' personal performance.

#### (1) Physical health

The results of this study showed that the "996 work system" had a negative impact on employees' physical health. Participants reported that long working hours and intense workloads led to fatigue, stress, and physical exhaustion. One participant said, 'The long working hours are exhausting. I feel tired all the time and it affects my health. (respondent 1)' Another participant mentioned, "Due to the heavy workload, I often work until my lunch break and have irregular eating habits, which affects my health. (respondent 4)"

The negative impact on physical health has a significant impact on employee well-being and productivity. Physical exhaustion can lead to reduced concentration and cognitive function, affecting employees' ability to complete tasks effectively. One participant said, "I find it difficult to concentrate on my work when I work long hours. It affects my ability to do my job and I make more mistakes (respondent 7)".

#### (2) Family relationships

996 The work system also had a negative impact on family relationships. Participants reported that the long working hours and intense workload made it difficult to spend time with family and friends. One participant said, "I rarely get to spend time with my family. By the time I get home, I am too tired to do anything else. (respondent 2)" Another participant mentioned, "With the 996-year work system, it's hard to maintain a work-life balance. I miss important family activities and this affects my relationship with them (respondent 5)".

The negative impact on family relationships can lead to increased stress and dissatisfaction with work. Participants reported feeling guilty for not being able to spend enough time with family and friends, which affected their overall sense of well-being. One participant said, "I feel guilty about not being able to spend enough time with my family. This affects my mental health and my performance at work. (respondent 1)"

#### (3) Work ethic

The 996 work system also had a negative impact on employees' work ethic.

Participants reported that they felt unmotivated and unappreciated because their efforts were not recognized or rewarded. One participant said, "The long working hours make me feel unmotivated. I don't feel appreciated and this affects my enthusiasm for work. (respondent 6)" Another participant mentioned, "Under the 996 work system, there is a lack of appreciation for the work we do. It affects our work ethic and job satisfaction (respondent 3)".

The negative impact on work ethic can lead to lower productivity and lower quality of work. Participants reported that the intense workload and long hours led to a decrease in their motivation and commitment to work. One participant said, "With the 996 work system, I am not as committed to my work as I used to be. This has affected the quality of my work and I am unable to complete my tasks effectively (respondent 8)." Another participant mentioned, "Since implementing the 996 work system, the productivity of our team has decreased. We are not able to perform our tasks effectively and this has affected the quality of our work (respondent 5)".

### ***Impact on organizational performance***

#### **(1) Increase in staff turnover**

The results of this study showed that the 996 work schedule led to an increase in staff turnover. Participants reported that the long working hours and intense workload caused physical and mental exhaustion, leading to burnout and job dissatisfaction. Respondent 7 said, "The long work hours are exhausting. I was often too tired to do anything else. This affects my health and my personal life." Another participant mentioned, "It's hard to maintain a work-life balance with a 996-year work system. It is not sustainable in the long run (respondent 4)".

The increase in employee turnover has a significant impact on organizational performance. Losing employees affects organizational productivity because replacing and training new employees takes time and resources. One participant said, "The high turnover rate has affected the productivity of our team. We spend a lot of time training new employees and catching up on work missed by the previous employee. (respondent 2)" In addition, the loss of experienced employees leads to lower quality of work and lower customer satisfaction.

## (2) Reduced organizational efficiency

According to the participants' reports, the 996 work system also had a negative impact on organizational effectiveness. Excessive competition, poor team atmosphere, and difficulties in internal collaboration were cited as factors contributing to reduced organizational effectiveness. One participant said, "The 996 work system creates a competitive environment where everyone is trying to outdo each other. This is not a healthy team atmosphere. (respondent 3)" Another participant mentioned that "communication within the team becomes difficult due to the long working hours. When everyone is exhausted, it becomes difficult to collaborate effectively (respondent 7)".

Decreased organizational efficiency leads to decreased quality of work, decreased productivity, and decreased customer satisfaction. Participants reported that intense workloads and long work hours led to a decline in work quality because they were too tired to complete tasks effectively. One participant said, "The workload is so heavy that it affects the quality of my work. I cannot perform at my best due to the long working hours." Another participant mentioned, (respondent 1)"Since implementing the 996 work system, the productivity of our team has decreased. We are not able to collaborate effectively or communicate properly and this has affected our work (respondent 6)".

## (3) Decline in business performance

The decline in employee turnover and organizational effectiveness ultimately leads to a decline in business performance. Participants reported that the negative effects of the 996 work system, such as burnout, dissatisfaction, and decreased quality of work, can lead to decreased customer satisfaction and, ultimately, decreased business performance. One participant said, "If the quality of work goes down, it affects our customer satisfaction and ultimately our business performance. (respondent 8)" Another participant mentioned that "employee burnout and dissatisfaction can lead to higher turnover rates, which affects organizational productivity and profitability."

## **4. Conclusions and recommendations**

### **4.1 Conclusion**

under the 996 work system, employees in the Internet industry face a more serious work-life imbalance problem, with high work intensity and lack of non-work life being the

general characteristics of this group. 996 The work-life balance of Internet employees under work is influenced by many aspects of the company, family and individual. The commonality of the effects of working hours, organisational support, leadership attitudes and job autonomy on work-life balance is obvious, and financial pressure and family support are also important factors affecting the work-life balance of employees. There is a close link between work-life balance and job satisfaction for Internet employees. Under the 996 working system, the imbalance in the work-life relationship of employees leads to a generally low level of employee satisfaction. In the long run, 996 work does not improve performance. In today's highly competitive society in China, employees are under pressure from both work and life, and when work-life balance is lost, both the employee and the company's performance will receive a certain degree of negative impact.

“996” work systems are unsustainable, and it is time to rethink the way we work. Organizations need to create a work environment that promotes employee well-being, motivation, and job satisfaction. A balance must be struck between work and personal life to promote employee well-being and productivity. Organizations need to prioritize the well-being of their employees and create a work culture that promotes work-life balance. It is important to recognize the negative impact of long hours and excessive workloads on employee performance and take steps to address these issues. Some possible solutions include offering flexible work arrangements, providing employee support programs, and improving management practices.

Limitations of this study include the small sample size and the reliance on self-reported data. Future research should investigate the impact of 996 work on other aspects of employee performance, such as creativity and innovation, as well as its impact on the broader economy.

## **4.2 Recommendations**

### **1. Improve the construction of the legal system**

Improving the construction of the legal system is an important guarantee to ensure a balanced work life for employees of Internet companies. Improve the social security system, strictly enforce the 8-hour working system, and effectively protect the relevant rights of employees in their lives, so that they can be effectively protected when they

believe their legitimate rights and interests in their personal lives have been infringed upon. Fundamentally improve the employment environment for Internet employees, so that employees feel that their legitimate rights and interests will be protected, reducing their psychological burden and making their work and life more balanced.

## 2. Change the concept of enterprise

Internet companies must consider the needs of business development in the development process while constantly meeting the mainstream needs of employees. The establishment of a favorable corporate culture is vital for the sustained growth of businesses. This includes the integration of employee values, with work-life balance being a mainstream requirement for those in Internet firms. Hence, incorporating work-life balance into the development of corporate culture is crucial. To promote work-life balance among employees, managers should fundamentally raise the importance of work-life balance among employees, change management concepts, not to judge employees by their working hours, and encourage and help employees to promote work-life balance.

## 3. Optimising management measures

These include, in particular, flexible working arrangements, promoting employee well-being and enhancing team communication and cooperation. Flexible working arrangement options, such as telecommuting or compressed work weeks, can promote work-life balance and reduce the negative impact of long working hours on employee well-being. Promoting employee wellbeing and providing employees with support programmes such as counselling, mental health resources and health and wellness programmes can help employees manage stress and maintain good physical and mental health. Open team communication and good teamwork can reduce the negative effects of excessive competition and a poor team atmosphere. All of these help to balance the work and life of employees in internet companies.

## 4. Seek help and support in many ways

According to the factors affecting work and life balance, employees of Internet companies should take to seek support from the company and family in many ways to cope with the needs of multiple roles in work and life, clarify the role of the organisation,

family, etc. for their own positioning and needs, and take appropriate action according to the specific situation. For example, you can seek the help of your leaders and colleagues, establish mutual support and cooperation with them, and seek their help when you face problems in your own life. It is also important to focus on the important impact of family support on work-life balance. Leveraging the support of family members can facilitate work-life balance. For individuals from large families, there may be more family members available to provide support. Strengthening communication with family members and spouses can help keep them informed about work-related obligations, while also proactively taking on family responsibilities during available free time. It is also essential to consider the support and assistance from friends and classmates, as they can serve as an important resource in achieving work-life balance.



## References

- Allen, T. D., Johnson, R. C., Saboe, K. N., Cho, E., Dumani, S., & Evans, S. (2012). Dispositional variables and work–family conflict: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *80*(1), 17–26. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2011.04.004>
- Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., & Sanz-Vergel, A. I. (2014). Burnout and Work Engagement: The JD–R Approach. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, *1*(1), 389–411. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-031413-091235>
- Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., & Verbeke, W. (2004). Using the job demands-resources model to predict burnout and performance. *Human Resource Management*, *43*(1), 83–104. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.20004>
- Barnett, R. C., Marshall, N. L., & Pleck, J. H. (1992). Men's Multiple Roles and Their Relationship to Men's Psychological Distress. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *54*(2), 358. <https://doi.org/10.2307/353067>
- Behson, S. J. (2005). The relative contribution of formal and informal organizational work–family support. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *66*(3), 487–500. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2004.02.004>
- Blyton, P. (2011). Working time, work—life balance and inequality. *Reassessing the Employment Relationship*, 299–317. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-230-36595-7\\_13](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-230-36595-7_13)
- Bruck, C. S., Allen, T. D., & Spector, P. E. (2002). The Relation between Work–Family Conflict and Job Satisfaction: A Finer-Grained Analysis. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *60*(3), 336–353. <https://doi.org/10.1006/jvbe.2001.1836>
- Byron, K. (2005). A meta-analytic review of work–family conflict and its antecedents. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *67*(2), 169–198. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2004.08.009>
- Bhatti, M. I., Awan, H., & Razaq, Z. (2014). The key performance indicators (KPIs) and their impact on overall organizational performance. *Quality Quantity*, *48*(6), 3127–3143.

- Caplan, R. D. (1987). Person-environment fit theory and organizations: Commensurate dimensions, time perspectives, and mechanisms. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 31(3), 248–267. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0001-8791\(87\)90042-x](https://doi.org/10.1016/0001-8791(87)90042-x)
- Carlson, D. S., Kacmar, K., & Williams, L. J. (2000). Construction and Initial Validation of a Multidimensional Measure of Work–Family Conflict. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 56(2), 249–276. <https://doi.org/10.1006/jybe.1999.1713>
- Chan, D. (1996). Cognitive Misfit of Problem-Solving Style at Work: A Facet of Person-Organization Fit. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 68(3), 194–207. <https://doi.org/10.1006/obhd.1996.0099>
- Chatman, J. A. (1989). Improving Interactional Organizational Research: A Model of Person-Organization Fit. *Academy of Management Review*, 14(3), 333–349. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1989.4279063>
- Chow, I. H., & Chew, I. K. (2006). The Effect of Alternative Work Schedules on Employee Performance. *International Journal of Employment Studies*, 14(1), 105. <https://search.informit.com.au/documentSummary;dn=284934803693560;res=ELBUS>
- Clark, S. C. (2000). Work/Family Border Theory: A New Theory of Work/Family Balance. *Human Relations*, 53(6), 747–770. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726700536001>
- Clark, S. C. (2001). Work Cultures and Work/Family Balance. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 58(3), 348–365. <https://doi.org/10.1006/jybe.2000.1759>
- Chen, W., Li, G., & Wu, J. (2007). Research on the role of work sharing in promoting work-life balance. *China's industrial economy*, (6), 5-12.
- Chuang, J. K. (2018). From the Managed Hand to the Managed Mind - A Study of Overtime in the Perspective of Labor Process. *Sociological Research*, 33(3).
- Cai, W., & Shi, Y. (2016). De-skilling of labor processes, spatial production remediation and overtime - an analysis based on data from the 2012 China Labor Force Dynamics Survey. *Journal of Northwest Normal University (Social Science Edition)*, 52(1), 14-24.

- Chen, X. (2018). Problems and countermeasures of enterprise performance management in the Internet era. *Modern State-owned Enterprise Research*, 20, 138.
- Cui, J., Li, X., & Xue, Y. (2020). Can overtime behavior enhance employees' job happiness? *Journal of Capital University of Economics and Business*, 22(1), 80-91.
- Cui, Z. (2021). Active busyness and happiness perceptions: A case study based on a youth group. *China Youth Studies*, (3), 84-89.
- Cowling, B. J., Yu, H., Hongjie, Y., et al. (2013). Human infection with avian influenza A H7N9 virus: An assessment of clinical severity. *Lancet*, 382(9887), 138-145.
- Chen, Y., & Liu, Y. (2010). Review on the relationship between work-life balance strategy and organizational performance. *The Future and Development*, (7), 78-81.
- Del Bono, E., Weber, A., & Winter-Ebmer, R. (2012). CLASH OF CAREER AND FAMILY: FERTILITY DECISIONS AFTER JOB DISPLACEMENT. *Journal of the European Economic Association*, 10(4), 659–683.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1542-4774.2012.01074.x>
- Demerouti, E., Bakker, A. B., & Bulters, A. J. (2004). The loss spiral of work pressure, work-home interference and exhaustion: Reciprocal relations in a three-wave study. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 64(1), 131–149.  
[https://doi.org/10.1016/s0001-8791\(03\)00030-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0001-8791(03)00030-7)
- Demerouti, E., Bakker, A. B., Nachreiner, F., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2001). The job demands-resources model of burnout. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86(3), 499–512. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.86.3.499>
- Di Stefano, G., & Gaudiino, M. (2018). Differential effects of workaholism and work engagement on the interference between life and work domains. *Europe's Journal of Psychology*, 14(4), 863–879. <https://doi.org/10.5964/ejop.v14i4.1626>
- Duxbury, L. (2003). Work-life Conflict in Canada in the New Millennium - a Status Report. *Sydney Papers, The*, 15(1), 78.  
[http://hrcouncil.ca/hr-toolkit/documents/rprt\\_2\\_e.pdf](http://hrcouncil.ca/hr-toolkit/documents/rprt_2_e.pdf)

- Edwards, J. R., & Rothbard, N. P. (1999). Work and Family Stress and Well-Being: An Examination of Person-Environment Fit in the Work and Family Domains. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 77(2), 85–129. <https://doi.org/10.1006/obhd.1998.2813>
- Edwards, J. R., & Rothbard, N. P. (2004). Work and Family Stress and Well-Being: An Integrative Model of Person-Environment Fit Within and Between the Work and Family Domains. *Work and Life Integration*, 215–245. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781410611529-23>
- Fleetwood, S. (2007). Why work–life balance now? *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 18(3), 387–400. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585190601167441>
- Fredrickson, B. L., & Losada, M. F. (2005). Positive Affect and the Complex Dynamics of Human Flourishing. *American Psychologist*, 60(7), 678–686. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066x.60.7.678>
- Fan, Y., Yu, W., & Yan, L. (2014). The person of the new generation of employees- -the relationship between organizational values matching and emotional commitment — the intermediary role of career success. *Soft Science*, 28 (8), 51-55.
- Gao, C. (2011). Study on the influence of work and family conflicts on college attitudes. China University of Geosciences.
- Galea, C., Houkes, I., & De Rijk, A. (2013). An insider’s point of view: how a system of flexible working hours helps employees to strike a proper balance between work and personal life. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 25(8), 1090–1111. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2013.816862>
- Gillet, N., Fouquereau, E., Bonnaud-Antignac, A., Mokoukolo, R., & Colombat, P. (2013). The mediating role of organizational justice in the relationship between transformational leadership and nurses’ quality of work life: A cross-sectional questionnaire survey. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 50(10), 1359–1367. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2012.12.012>

- Greenhaus, J. H., Collins, K. M., & Shaw, J. D. (2003). The relation between work–family balance and quality of life. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 63(3), 510–531. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0001-8791\(02\)00042-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0001-8791(02)00042-8)
- Hackman, J. R., & Lawler, E. E. (1971). Employee reactions to job characteristics. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 55(3), 259–286. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0031152>
- Hobfoll, S. E. (1989a). Conservation of resources: A new attempt at conceptualizing stress. *American Psychologist*, 44(3), 513–524. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066x.44.3.513>
- Hobfoll, S. E. (1989b). Conservation of resources: A new attempt at conceptualizing stress. *American Psychologist*, 44(3), 513–524. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066x.44.3.513>
- Izraeli D N.(1993). Work/family conflict among women and men managers in dual-career couples in Israel. *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality*, 8(3), 371.
- Judge, T. A., Piccolo, R. F., Podsakoff, N. P., et al. (2010). The relationship between pay and job satisfaction: A meta-analysis of the literature. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 77(2), 157-167.
- Kara, D., Uysal, M., Sirgy, M. J., & Lee, G. (2013). The effects of leadership style on employee well-being in hospitality. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 34, 9–18. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2013.02.001>
- Karasek, R. A. (1979). Job Demands, Job Decision Latitude, and Mental Strain: Implications for Job Redesign. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 24(2), 285. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2392498>
- Kinnunen, U., & Mauno, S. (1998). Antecedents and Outcomes of Work-Family Conflict Among Employed Women and Men in Finland. *Human Relations*, 51(2), 157–177. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001872679805100203>
- Kirchmeyer, C. (2000). Work-life initiatives: Greed or benevolence regarding workers' time? *Trends in Organizational Behavior*.

- Kossek, E. E., & Lautsch, B. A. (2012). Work–family boundary management styles in organizations. *Organizational Psychology Review*, 2(2), 152–171.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/2041386611436264>
- Kossek, E. E., Lautsch, B. A., & Eaton, S. C. (2006). Telecommuting, control, and boundary management: Correlates of policy use and practice, job control, and work–family effectiveness. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 68(2), 347–367.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2005.07.002>
- KRISTOF, A. L. (1996). PERSON-ORGANIZATION FIT: AN INTEGRATIVE REVIEW OF ITS CONCEPTUALIZATIONS, MEASUREMENT, AND IMPLICATIONS. *Personnel Psychology*, 49(1), 1–49.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.1996.tb01790.x>
- Kuhn, M. H. (1951). LEWIN, KURT. Field Theory of Social Science: Selected Theoretical Papers. (Edited by Dorwin Cartwright.) Pp. xx, 346. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951. \$5.00. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 276(1), 146–147.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/000271625127600135>
- King, J., Liu, C., & Lee, W. (2014). Work-hours and work-family clashes: a study based on gender differences. *Scientific Research management*, 35 (8), 44-50.
- Lapierre, L. M., & Allen, T. D. (2006). Work-supportive family, family-supportive supervision, use of organizational benefits, and problem-focused coping: Implications for work-family conflict and employee well-being. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 11(2), 169–181.  
<https://doi.org/10.1037/1076-8998.11.2.169>
- Lautsch, B. A., & Scully, M. A. (2007). Restructuring time: Implications of work-hours reductions for the working class. *Human Relations*, 60(5), 719–743.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726707079199>
- Lingard, H., Francis, V., & Turner, M. (2012). Work–life strategies in the Australian construction industry: Implementation issues in a dynamic project-based work environment. *International Journal of Project Management*, 30(3), 282–295.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijproman.2011.08.002>

- Li, H. (2003). Work- -a study of the influencing factors of family conflict. *Human ergonomics*, 9 (4), 14 – 17.
- Lin, Y. (2009). The impact of personal-work fit and personal-organizational fit on happiness-with new coaching as the interference variable. *Zhongxing University*, Taiwan.
- Liu, F., & Zhang, X. (2018). Research on the impact of organizational redundancy on the performance of manufacturing firms: A study based on exploring the moderating role of utilization behavior. *Technology and Management*, 20(05), 28-36.
- Liu, L. P., Zhang, C. N., & Chen, S. J. (2010). Farmers' view of benefits and farmworkers' action logic - An analysis of farmworkers' willingness and purpose to work overtime. *China Rural Economy*, (9), 48-58.
- Meng, X., & Wang, X. (2015). Causes of overtime work and labor time characteristics of corporate employees. *Economic and Management Research*, 12, 66-74
- Marks, S. R., & MacDermid, S. M. (1996). Multiple Roles and the Self: A Theory of Role Balance. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 58(2), 417.  
<https://doi.org/10.2307/353506>
- McCarthy, A., Darcy, C., & Grady, G. (2010). Work-life balance policy and practice: Understanding line manager attitudes and behaviors. *Human Resource Management Review*, 20(2), 158–167.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2009.12.001>
- Mcdowell, L. (2004). Work, workfare, work/life balance and an ethic of care. *Progress in Human Geography*, 28(2), 145–163.  
<https://doi.org/10.1191/0309132504ph478oa>
- Ma, L., & Young, C. (2013). Researchers' working family matching and balance research —is based on the perspective of person-environment matching. *China Human Resources Development*, (7), 10-16.
- Meng, X. (2014). Study on some theoretical problems of laborer overwork. *Proceedings of the Symposium on Relations between Labor and Employment*, 227-239.

- Ma, L., & Xu, C. (2010). A New perspective in human resource management: Work-life balance. *Enterprise economy*, (6), 66-68.
- Neely, K. A., Kurani, A. S., Shukla, P., et al. (2015). Functional brain activity relates to 0-3 and 3-8 Hz force oscillations in essential tremor. *Cerebral Cortex*, 25(11), 4191-4202.
- Ng, T., & Feldman, D. C. (2008). Long work hours: A social identity perspective on meta-analysis data. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 29(7), 853-880.
- Pilar de Luis Carnicer, M., Martínez Sánchez, A., Pérez Pérez, M., & José Vela Jiménez, M. (2004). Work - family conflict in a southern European country. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 19(5), 466–489.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940410543579>
- Siu, O. L. (2013). Psychological Capital, Work Well-Being, and Work-Life Balance Among Chinese Employees. *Journal of Personnel Psychology*, 12(4), 170–181.  
<https://doi.org/10.1027/1866-5888/a000092>
- Staines, G. L. (1980). Spillover Versus Compensation: A Review of the Literature on the Relationship Between Work and Nonwork. *Human Relations*, 33(2), 111–129.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/001872678003300203>
- Stansfeld, S. A., Shipley, M. J., Head, J., Fuhrer, R., & Kivimaki, M. (2013). Work Characteristics and Personal Social Support as Determinants of Subjective Well-Being. *PLoS ONE*, 8(11), e81115.  
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0081115>
- Tiedje, L. B., Wortman, C. B., Downey, G., Emmons, C., Biernat, M., & Lang, E. (1990). Women with Multiple Roles: Role-Compatibility Perceptions, Satisfaction, and Mental Health. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 52(1), 63.  
<https://doi.org/10.2307/352838>
- Tan, X. (2012). The impact of matching individual and organizational values on employees' work input and organizational support. *Psychological science*, 35 (4), 973-977.
- Valcour, M., Ollier-Malaterre, A., Matz-Costa, C., Pitt-Catsoupes, M., & Brown, M. (2011a). Influences on employee perceptions of organizational work–life support:



- Signals and resources. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 79(2), 588–595.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2011.02.002>
- Valcour, M., Ollier-Malaterre, A., Matz-Costa, C., Pitt-Catsoupes, M., & Brown, M. (2011b). Influences on employee perceptions of organizational work–life support: Signals and resources. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 79(2), 588–595.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2011.02.002>
- Wilensky, H. L. (1960). Work, careers and social integration. *International Social Science Journal*. <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1962-00867-001>
- Wong, S. C. K., & Ko, A. (2009). Exploratory study of understanding hotel employees' perception on work–life balance issues. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 28(2), 195–203. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2008.07.001>
- Wei, Y., & Zhang, S. (2019). Research on the causes and countermeasures of the "996" phenomenon in the Internet industry. *Journal of North China Electric Power University: Social Science Edition*, (6), 70-77.
- Wu, W. (2016). The effect of working hours on occupational well-being —— is based on an empirical analysis of three typical occupations. *China's industrial economy*, (3), 130-145.
- Wang, Y., & Ye, M. (2011). Structural validation of work-family balance and its causal analysis. *Management Review*, 23 (11), 92-101.
- Wei, X., & Li, W. (2015). Field experimental study of the impact of living time on work performance. *China's industrial economy*, 9,69-83.
- Wu, W. (2016). The study of working hours on occupational well-being--an empirical analysis based on three typical occupations. *China Industrial Economy*, (3), 130-145.
- Wang, X. (2017). Are long working hours really unhappy? The effect of working hours on happiness from a heterogeneous perspective. *Advances in Psychological Science*, 25(1), 180-189.
- Wu, W. (2016). The impact of working hours on occupational well-being: An empirical analysis based on three typical occupations. *China Industrial Economics*, (3), 130-145.

- Wang, X., et al. (2017). Are long working hours really unhappy? The effect of working hours on happiness from a heterogeneous perspective. *Advances in Psychological Science*, 25(1), 180-189.
- Wan, X., & Yang, J. (2017). Internet platform choice, vertical integration and firm performance. *China Industrial Economics*, (07), 156-174.
- Yang, J. (2018). Boundary and crossover: changes in the model of work-family relationships. *Exploration and contention*, 20 (10), 62-71.
- Yang, J., Zhan, D., & Zhan, M. (2012). Study of self-efficacy based on social support and work-family conflict and gain. *Journal of Guizhou University of Finance and Economics*, 30 (1), 76.
- Yang, J. H., & He, S. (2014). Changes and continuity of family in the process of social transformation. *Population Studies*, (2).
- Yu, B. (2020, April 10). How a self-exploiting elite class has sharply widened the gap between rich and poor. *First Financial Daily*, p. A12.
- Zhao, L. & Lu, J. (2016). Identification of overtime work and human resource management response strategies. *Human Resources Development in China*, (12), 80-85.
- Zhang, A., Liu, C., & Ding, S. (2018). How working hours affect the health status of urban workers—an empirical analysis from dynamic challenge data of Chinese labor force. *Labor Economics Research*, 39(6), 107-127.
- Zhuang, J. (2018). From the managed hand to the managed mind - A study of overtime work in the perspective of labor process. *Social Blood Research*, 3, 74-91.
- Zhang, A., Liu, C., & Ding, S. (2018). How working hours affect the health status of urban workers: An empirical analysis of data from the China Labor Force Dynamics Survey. *Labor Economics Research*, (6), 107-127.
- Zhou, D., Yang, Y. J., et al. (2018). Spillover or dilution: The role path of service transformation in manufacturing firms. *Technology Economics*, 37(08), 43-51.