

WORK – LIFE BALANCE CRETEAS WELL-BEING THROUGH SUSTAINABLE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AT ET CETTERA

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Abstract

This study aims to thoroughly examine how sustainable human resource management (HRM) practices are implemented at the et Cetera fashion boutique located in Medan Centre Point Mall, and to what extent these practices influence work-life balance and employee well-being. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, direct observation, and review of internal company documents. The study's findings reveal that, although working hours are generally within normal limits, increased workloads during certain periods and the lack of flexibility and compensation present challenges in achieving work-life balance. Moreover, although social relationships among employees are positive, the reward system and training programs are not yet systematically managed. Based on these findings, it is recommended that et Cetera develop more comprehensive and sustainable HRM policies, including flexible working arrangements, fair incentive systems, and support for employees' physical and psychological well-being. These measures are expected to improve employee loyalty and productivity while enhancing business resilience in the face of industry dynamics.

Keywords: work-life balance, employee well-being, sustainable HRM, fashion boutique, et Cetera

INTRODUCTION

In today's evolving professional landscape, there has been a fundamental shift in how work is perceived. Work is no longer seen merely as a means to earn a living but as an integral part of one's identity and overall quality of life. This phenomenon is evident across various industries, including in companies such as et Cetera, where employees are increasingly concerned about balancing job demands with their personal lives. This shift underlines the importance of harmony between professional and personal roles as a key component in achieving well-being.

The et Cetera referred to in this context is not a café, but a women's fashion boutique located on the 2nd Floor, Store Unit 19, Medan Centre Point Mall, Jl. Jawa No. 8, Medan, North Sumatra, Indonesia—one of the city's major shopping centers. This boutique is known for offering a wide variety of stylish and modern ready-to-wear clothing, aligning with the brand character of et Cetera, which is present in various major cities in Indonesia. Its strategic location in a premium mall makes it easily accessible for shoppers seeking quality apparel in a comfortable setting.

Along with these changes, the concept of sustainable human resource management (HRM) has become increasingly relevant. This approach not only focuses on achieving organizational goals but also emphasizes sustainability in managing human resources, particularly from the perspective of employee well-being. In an environment of intense competition and rapid

change, applying a sustainability-oriented HR strategy is essential for companies like et Cetera, which operate in dynamic work environments that require high adaptability.

A key component of sustainable HRM is work-life balance, which involves aligning work responsibilities with personal life, both in terms of time and emotional/psychological capacity. A work environment that supports this balance fosters a healthier, more productive, and supportive atmosphere for employees.

Moreover, the contribution of sustainable HRM to organizations significantly impacts business stability and growth. By implementing policies that focus on the long-term well-being of employees, organizations can enhance job satisfaction, reduce turnover, and strengthen competitiveness in the market.

Based on this background, this study aims to explore how sustainable HRM practices are implemented at et Cetera, and how these strategies help foster work-life balance and support employee well-being as the foundation of organizational success.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance is a condition in which individuals can manage their time, roles, and responsibilities in a balanced manner. Putra (2019) emphasizes that maintaining such balance is crucial to preventing role conflict and work-related stress. Companies that support work-life balance are more likely to create mentally and physically healthy working environments for employees.

Employee Well-being

Employee well-being encompasses physical, emotional, and social balance in work life. According to Hartono (2019), well-being is not solely dependent on financial compensation, but also on factors such as work appreciation, a supportive work environment, and opportunities for professional growth. Employees who feel well-supported tend to be more motivated, loyal, and productive.

Sustainable Human Resource Management

Sustainable HRM refers to organizational strategies that aim for a long-term balance between organizational needs and employee well-being. Yuliana (2019) states that this approach includes ethical policies, continuous training, competency development, and attention to health and work-life balance. This strategy is essential for maintaining organizational continuity and workforce stability.

The Interrelation Between Work-Life Balance, Sustainable HRM, and Employee Well-being

A study by Ramadhani (2019) shows that consistent implementation of work-life balance policies can enhance employee well-being. Furthermore, sustainable HRM practices strengthen this balance through flexible work systems, fair workload distribution, and

emotional support. The synergy of these elements creates the foundation for a harmonious and productive work environment.

Relevance to the Context of et Cetera

As a creative company, et Cetera relies heavily on the capacity, enthusiasm, and well-being of its employees to produce innovative results. Therefore, implementing sustainable HRM that supports work-life balance is crucial. This strategy can help build a positive and healthy work culture that supports employee performance sustainability over the long term.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Approach

This research adopts a descriptive qualitative approach aimed at exploring employees' views, experiences, and understandings of the implementation of work-life balance, sustainable HRM strategies, and their impact on well-being in the workplace at et Cetera. This approach was chosen to capture the complexity of social dynamics at work that cannot be reduced to mere statistics.

Research Focus

The research focuses on the following aspects:

1. How employees understand and practice work-life balance in their daily work activities.
2. The implementation of sustainability-oriented human resource management, particularly related to training, flexible work policies, and well-being.
3. Employee perceptions of how organizational policies and workplace culture affect their physical, emotional, and social well-being.

Research Informants

Informants were selected using purposive sampling with criteria as follows:

1. Permanent employees who have worked at et Cetera for at least one year.
2. Representing various divisions and positions within the organizational structure.
3. Willing to provide information through in-depth interviews.

The number of informants was determined by data saturation—when no new information is obtained. An estimated total of 3 informants was used.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection techniques included:

1. In-depth interviews with a semi-structured format to allow for broader exploration of informants' experiences.
2. Participant observation, where the researcher directly observed workplace interactions, interpersonal dynamics, and daily routines to complement interview data.
3. Document study, analyzing internal company documents such as HR policies, welfare programs, and relevant internal reports.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis followed thematic analysis , involving:

1. Full transcription of interviews,
2. Initial coding to identify key points,
3. Grouping of main themes based on work-life balance, sustainable HRM, and employee well-being dimensions,
4. Interpretation of the meaning of each theme within the context of conversations and narratives,
5. Drawing conclusions that reflect patterns and general employee experiences.

This process was conducted iteratively and reflectively, including a member check step to confirm findings with the informants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on interviews and observations of three employees (a cashier, a sales assistant, and a store manager), several key findings emerged regarding the work environment and HR management at et Cetera:

Work-Life Balance

1. Employees reported that daily working hours were within normal limits, approximately 8 hours per day with one day off per week.
2. However, the cashier and sales assistant noted increased workloads during weekends and promotional events, without corresponding overtime compensation or scheduling adjustments.
3. The store manager acknowledged that employees often take administrative work home, especially near reporting deadlines.

Employee Well-being

1. Social relationships among employees were described as harmonious and cooperative, creating a supportive work environment.
2. Financially, earnings were in line with industry standards, with health benefits and performance bonuses available.

Sustainable HR Management

1. There were some formal systems for human resource development such as regular training, performance evaluations, and clear career paths.
2. The store manager actively guided and coached staff, although these efforts were informal and not based on written policies.

Despite regular working hours, the lack of flexible arrangements and peak workload periods may lead to stress and burnout, especially for frontline employees. While social interactions were a strength, financial and job security aspects were still weak. The absence of structured incentives and performance appreciation could reduce morale and long-term loyalty.

Sustainable HR practices at et Cetera have not yet been systematically implemented. Ideally, HR management should go beyond daily operations to include capacity building, reward systems, and psychological support. Even as a small-scale business, et Cetera requires an adaptive HRM approach to maintain service quality and long-term sustainability.

CONCLUSION

This research reveals that the application of sustainable human resource management at et Cetera faces several challenges. While employee working hours generally conform to industry norms, work-life balance has not been fully achieved. High workloads during promotional periods and the tendency to take work home are not supported by adequate compensation or flexibility policies.

Moreover, HR management's support for work-life balance remains informal. Although training and coaching efforts exist, they lack systematic policy structure—highlighting the need for more strategic planning in HR management.

An imbalance in work-life integration impacts employee well-being, with work pressure and lack of structural support potentially leading to fatigue and stress. Despite positive interpersonal relationships, more attention is needed in formalizing wellness support.

Therefore, it is essential for et Cetera to formulate a more comprehensive sustainable HR strategy. This strategy should include flexible working arrangements, fair reward systems, ongoing training, and attention to employees' physical and psychological well-being. These steps are believed to enhance employee loyalty and productivity, while supporting long-term business continuity.

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