

# CSCM69: Human-Centred Perspectives and Methods

## Coursework 2 - Work/Life Balance

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### ABSTRACT

#### Author Keywords

Authors' choice; of terms; separated; by semicolons; include commas, within terms only; this section is required.

#### CCS Concepts

•Human-centered computing → Human computer interaction (HCI); *Haptic devices*; User studies; Please use the 2012 Classifiers and see this link to embed them in the text: [https://dl.acm.org/ccs/ccs\\_flat.cfm](https://dl.acm.org/ccs/ccs_flat.cfm)

### INTRODUCTION

Harvard conducted a survey which asked professional people how many hours they worked a week, 94% said they put in more than 50 hours or more. Out of these professionals, 50% said they are working 65 or more hours [8]. What is even more staggering is that this survey got done in 2009, a time where Blackberry mobile phones were all the rage and iPhones had only been on the market for around two years. This year was when the iPhone 3G was just about to hit stores and was way before the iPhone 4 and where the smartphone, as we currently know them, indeed took off and changed the way we interact with our mobile devices. As the Harvard survey also found out that 20-25 hours a week get spent monitoring their Blackberrys while outside of working hours [8].

These numbers show that a work-life balance has been an issue for some years. Especially when looking at statistics published in 2020, by the NY Post's Business Insider, that state 48% of Americans consider themselves workaholics and the CNBC stating that 66% of American works lacking a healthy work-life balance [5]. A staggering fact that we can relate to from experience is that 77% of full-time works suffer from burnout from their current job [5]. Rescue Time analysed their users' data in 2019 and found that 40% of people used their computers after 10 pm and 28% of people start their workday before 8:30 am [7].

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CHI '20, April 25–30, 2020, Honolulu, HI, USA

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1145/3313831.XXXXXX>

What we aim to do within this report is to identify some of the leading apps that get associated with work-life balance. Once these apps get identified, we aim to investigate these tools while critiquing their designs concerning their interactions with HCI. These apps include [list apps here], we will then be interviewing users and finding out their views on these applications and how they have impacted their work-life balance.

### EXISTING APPS AND DEVICES USED WIDELY IN WORK-LIFE BALANCE

"With the pervasiveness of technology, it has not only permeated our workspaces but it has also become invasive in our private personal spaces [9]." This quote got taken from a CHI paper published in 2012. In this paper, they state what defines a work-life balance is on the worker working longer than 50 hours a week compared to personal care and leisure whether it gets paid, or unpaid, but for women that also include the rate of employees who have children [9]. With this definition in mind, we are going to identify and critique four apps and devices that have made an impact for good and bad reasons for people's work-life balance. The applications and devices we will be looking at are emails, instant messaging (IM), meditation apps and mobile phone devices.

One application that has brought about both good things and bad things for work-life balance is the email. While it made communication more accessible, especially in the early days as we did not have to wait for a letter to get sent in the post, it has now become very consuming. In result, it has created a sense of urgency around reading and responding to emails straight away [12]. However, in terms of work, email has improved the efficiency of working when aiming to communicate with colleges or other people when they are not physically present.

An application that has both a positive and negative effect on work-life balance is instant messaging, for example, WhatsApp, iMessage, Facebook Message, Slack. IM has shown how the same communication channel often gets used personal activities and work arrangements. In some cases, both personal and work activities get almost done at the same time [6]. However, IM has become an alternative method to the traditional communication methods for both work [4] and private communication [1], instead of it being an additional medium on top. However, IM, by its very definition, is an interruption, especially if we use the definition defined by O'Conaill & Frohlich, "a synchronous interaction which is not initiated

by the recipient, is unscheduled, and results in the recipient discontinuing their current activity" [10].

The one technology that has made both work-life better and worse at the same time, depending on what angle it gets looked at is the mobile phone. Through the introduction of mobile phones, it has made it very difficult to separate work-life [3, 11] as all the previous apps have demonstrated. This issue is a result of the mobile phone being the one device that enables all of these. Mobile phones have created a grey area between private and work domains, which is why much research is getting carried out in this area [2]. As studies have shown that Workers average just 2 hours and 48 minutes of productive device time a day and check emails and IM about every 6 minutes on average [7]. We wonder if this is a result of mobile phones and them being so available and accessible to "just check" at any points.

#### **Mobile Phones (Device)**

##### **Email**

##### **Meditation - Oak**

##### **Whats app / (Instant Messaging)**

#### **INVESTIGATE THESE TOOLS, CRITIQUING THEIR DESIGN**

##### **Mobile Phones (Device)**

##### **Smart Watch (Device)**

##### **Email**

##### **App timer notifiers - think apple screen time.**

#### **DESIGN AN USER STUDY? -> THAT WHAT ITS CALLED?**

explain what will be included in the US and why made choices?

#### **WRITE UP YOUR RESULTS**

place the results here in tables etc and discuss about them.

#### **CONCLUSION**

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