

An Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Flextime Program as a Benefit in Improving Work–Life

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Abstract

This study explores the perceived effectiveness of flextime in supporting work-life balance at PT Angkasa Pura Indonesia, Adisutjipto Airport Branch, Yogyakarta, focusing on how the policy is designed, experienced, and constrained in practice. This study used an exploratory qualitative descriptive design with an interpretivist orientation. Data were gathered through a semi-structured interview with a key informant, internal documentation, and field observations, and then analyzed thematically. Flextime supports work-life balance by reducing morning time pressure, providing time for non-work responsibilities, and signaling organizational trust. However, it is limited by the need for coordination, role differentiation, and airport operational requirements. Flextime should be viewed as a conditional resource, with its value depending on clear rules, managerial support, role fit, and alignment with operational needs. This study is a single-case analysis, limiting its generalizability, and relies on a small sample from one airport branch. This study contributes to the literature by showing how temporal flexibility works in high-discipline service environments and clarifying why its effectiveness is context-dependent

Keywords: Airport Administration, Exploratory Case Study, Flextime, Flexible Working Arrangements, Work-Life Balance

1. INTRODUCTION

Human resource management has long moved beyond its earlier narrow association with payroll administration, attendance control, and rule enforcement. In contemporary organizations, people management is increasingly expected to contribute to organizational resilience, sustainable performance, employee engagement, and psychological well-being. This development is especially visible in debates about how work should be structured in ways that protect both productivity and human sustainability (Jiejing, Arshad, & Mengjiao, 2024). Employees are no longer seen solely as labor inputs whose time must be monitored efficiently, they are also understood as social actors who navigate multiple overlapping demands arising from work, family, commuting, caregiving, education, recovery, and community life (Demerouti, 2025). Within this broader view, employee well-being is not a peripheral welfare concern but a strategic management issue because the quality of work design shapes motivation, retention, fatigue, organizational attachment, and day to day functioning. The literature on human resource management increasingly recognizes that adaptive, supportive, and fair work arrangements can influence how employees interpret their employment relationships and how effectively they cope with role demands. This shift helps explain the growing managerial interest in work arrangements that preserve organizational discipline while offering employees greater room to manage their everyday lives (Hewett & Shantz, 2021; Ray & Pana-Cryan, 2021).

Work-life balance is a concept that sits at the center of this development. Work-life balance does not imply an identical distribution of time between work and non-work spheres, nor does it require an idealized state in which conflict disappears (Alfalalah et al., 2025). More modestly, it refers to an employee's perceived ability to manage, coordinate, and reconcile work responsibilities with the demands of life outside work in a manner that feels acceptable, sustainable, and psychologically manageable. In practical terms, employees often experience work-life balance through daily rhythms, such as whether they can prepare for work without excessive haste, whether commuting disrupts family obligations, whether they can respond to urgent non-work matters without jeopardizing their work standing, and whether work schedules generate predictable rather than chaotic transitions between roles. When these rhythms are poorly aligned, employees may experience stress, role conflict, fatigue, frustration, and reduced job satisfaction. When they are better aligned, employees are more likely to report well-being, organizational commitment, and a

sense that work is compatible with life beyond the workplace ([Allen, Merlo, Lawrence, Slutsky, & Gray, 2021](#); [Chauhan & Rai, 2024](#); [Chung & Van der Lippe, 2020](#)).

The renewed managerial concern with work-life balance has gone hand in hand with the expansion of flexible working arrangements. Flexibility may refer to where work is performed, when it is performed, how long it is performed, or how tightly work processes are scheduled. In recent years, public and scholarly discussions have been dominated by remote, hybrid, and digital connectivity. Yet flexibility takes many forms, and not all organizations or job categories can rely on spatial flexibility ([Barrero, Bloom, & Davis, 2023](#)). In sectors that require physical presence, customer interaction, coordination across units, or strict operational timing, schedule flexibility often becomes more relevant than location flexibility. This is where the significance of flextime remains. Flextime is one of the oldest and most practical forms of work flexibility; employees are allowed some discretion over their starting and finishing times, but the organization retains control over total work hours, operating periods, and core tasks. Because it does not necessarily require a full redesign of work systems, flextime may be particularly attractive to organizations that wish to support employee well-being without altering the fundamental logic of on-site work ([Brega, Briones, Javornik, León, & Yerkes, 2023](#); [Erhel, Guergoat-Larivière, & Mofakhami, 2024](#); [Wöhrmann, Dilchert, & Michel, 2021](#)).

However, the value of flextime should not be treated as self-evident. Its practical meaning depends on the context. In some workplaces, flextime offers meaningful control over daily transitions and reduces unnecessary time pressures. In others, it may exist mostly on paper, be too narrow to make a difference, or be offset by supervisory expectations and operational constraints. Therefore, the same policy can be experienced very differently depending on job design, organizational culture, clarity of rules, and managerial support ([Chen et al., 2023](#)). A schedule flexibility policy that appears generous in formal terms may be difficult to use in practice if meetings are routinely scheduled early, if employees fear stigma for arriving later within the permitted window, or if the nature of the work requires synchronous presence regardless of formal flexibility. These issues have been recognized in the broader scholarship on flexibility, which increasingly stresses that policy availability alone does not guarantee beneficial outcomes. What matters is the enacted meaning of flexibility: how it is designed, interpreted, accessed, and legitimized within specific organizational environments ([Boccoli, Tims, Gastaldi, & Corso, 2024](#); [De Gieter, De Cooman, Bogaerts, & Verelst, 2022](#); [Lee & Kim, 2025](#)).

These questions are particularly significant in service organizations with strong coordination and timing requirements. The aviation sector provides a clear example of this. Airport operations are built around punctuality, safety, continuity of service, regulatory compliance, and interdependent work flows. Different functions within airport organizations are associated with distinct temporal demands. Frontline and operational roles may be closely bound to service windows, flights, safety procedures, or public-facing schedules, whereas administrative functions may have somewhat greater latitude. However, even administrative work in airport environments does not occur in a vacuum. It remains connected to broader organizational rhythms that demand coordination, meetings, reporting cycles, and responsiveness to operational developments ([Hayashi, 2024](#)). This means that any flexibility policy implemented in such a context is likely to be limited rather than absolute. The issue, then, is not whether flexibility exists in an unrestricted form but how a controlled degree of temporal discretion can operate meaningfully within a high-discipline service environment ([Brega et al., 2023](#); [Grönlund & Öun, 2022](#); [Wöhrmann et al., 2021](#)).

PT Angkasa Pura Indonesia offers a relevant case for examining this issue in the following way. As a state-owned enterprise engaged in airport management and aviation-related public services in Indonesia, the organization must balance employee welfare, discipline, and service reliability. During the researcher's internship at PT Angkasa Pura Indonesia, Adisutjipto Airport Branch Office, Yogyakarta, flextime emerged as a visible human resource practice designed to support employees while preserving their work obligations. Preliminary observations suggested that employees viewed the policy positively because it gave them room to regulate their morning routines and respond to everyday contingencies before work. However, an initially favorable impression is not the same as careful evaluation. A policy may be appreciated because it feels humane, yet still be limited in its practical effect or shaped by constraints that complicate its value. Conversely, even a

modest flexibility window may have meaningful consequences if it reduces friction at a critical point during the workday. These possibilities make the case analytically interesting ([Hewett & Shantz, 2021](#); [Silminawati & Rachmawati, 2022](#)).

The present study was motivated by both practical and scholarly considerations. Organizations need reflective evidence on whether flextime can function as a useful human resource benefit without compromising coordination and service continuity. For managers, the relevant question is not simply whether flexibility is desirable in principle, but whether a bounded form of flexibility helps employees and fits the work system in which it operates. From a scholarly perspective, the case highlights several limitations in the current research. First, much recent flexibility research remains centered on telework and hybrid work, even though traditional schedule flexibility continues to be important in fixed workplaces. Second, many studies rely on survey designs that establish associations among variables but offer less insight into how employees interpret and experience bounded flexibility in specific organizational settings. Third, service environments characterized by operational discipline and limited spatial flexibility remain comparatively underexplored in the literature, especially in Indonesian settings and studies focusing on airport administration. A qualitative case-based inquiry can therefore add value by illuminating the conditions under which flextime is perceived as useful, limited, or symbolically meaningful ([Agnoletto, 2024](#); [Brega et al., 2023](#); [Riasnugrahani, Setiawan, & Batara, 2025](#)).

This article also responds to methodological caution. Because the available evidence comes primarily from a key informant perspective supplemented by documentation and field observation, this study does not claim to provide a broad causal demonstration that flextime universally improves work-life balance. Such a claim would be difficult to sustain, especially within the context of a single-case qualitative design. Instead, this study positions itself more carefully as an exploratory investigation into perceived effectiveness. This distinction is important. By focusing on perceived effectiveness, this study examines how the policy is understood in practice, what problems it appears to solve, how it fits the organizational environment, and what kinds of constraints shape its value. Therefore, the emphasis is interpretive and context-sensitive rather than deterministically causal. This framing is consistent with qualitative inquiries aimed at clarifying processes, meanings, and conditions rather than estimating net effects across large populations ([Villamin, Lopez, Thapa, & Cleary, 2025](#)).

To guide the inquiry, this study formulated four research questions. First, how is flextime designed and implemented within the administrative setting of PT Angkasa Pura Indonesia at the Adisutjipto Airport Branch Office? Second, in what ways is the policy perceived to support employees work-life balance? Third, what organizational and operational conditions enable or constrain a policy's perceived effectiveness? Fourth, what does this case contribute to the broader understanding of bounded flexibility in service organizations that must preserve punctuality and coordination? These questions allow the study to move beyond a simple positive or negative judgment toward a more nuanced analysis of how a flexibility policy works in a specific context.

This study makes three main contributions. Empirically, it offers a context-rich account of how flextime operates in an airport-related administrative environment in Indonesia, a setting rarely discussed in flexibility literature. Theoretically, it integrates insights from the Job Demands-Resources perspective, Boundary Theory, and organizational support thinking to explain why a relatively limited flexibility policy may still matter for work-life balance. Rather than treating flextime as a binary policy variable, this study conceptualizes it as a bounded job resource whose value depends on design, legitimacy, and fit with task demands. Practically, this study provides managers with a more realistic lens for evaluating flexible work policies in service settings: the question is not whether flexibility should be unlimited, but how a carefully designed form of temporal discretion can reduce strain, improve daily manageability, and communicate trust without undermining operational reliability.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Flextime As Employee-Oriented Temporal Flexibility

Flextime is commonly defined as a work arrangement that allows employees some discretion over when they begin and end work while preserving the required working hours and organizational

control over essential time boundaries. In contrast to rigid schedules, flextime introduces a controlled variability into the workday. Employees are not released from attendance obligations; rather, they are given limited autonomy to organize their presence within a specified range (Febrianty, Sentanu, Martini, & Divianto, 2025). This makes flextime one of the most practical and durable forms of flexibility in organizations where work remains largely site-based. It does not require employees to work from different locations, nor does it necessarily alter the job content, reporting structures, or core service periods. Therefore, flextime often occupies an intermediate position between traditional schedule discipline and more expansive flexible arrangements. It offers a narrow but potentially consequential form of temporal control (Brega et al., 2023; Wöhrmann et al., 2021).

The human resource significance of flextime lies in the fact that time control can function as a non-monetary benefit. Employees often value flexibility because it reduces friction in their everyday lives rather than because it changes their formal workload. A modest degree of schedule control may help employees navigate commuting uncertainty, childcare routines, school schedules, short domestic obligations, health appointments and periods of fatigue. In this sense, flextime can be understood as part of the broader package through which organizations shape employment relationships. This indicates that management recognizes employees as individuals with responsibilities extending beyond the workplace. The symbolic value of such recognition can matter as much as the practical schedule adjustment itself, especially in organizations where employees experience strict temporal discipline daily (Hewett & Shantz, 2021; Vyas, 2022).

Simultaneously, flextime is not a uniform or self-explanatory concept. The extent of flexibility may vary widely, some organizations offer broad start-time windows, while others permit only minor deviations from standard hours. Some systems include core hours, accumulated time banking, or formal approval mechanisms, while others rely on informal supervisor discretion. Therefore, the practical experience of flextime depends on policy design. A short flexibility window may still be meaningful if it targets a high-pressure part of the day, whereas a formally broader window may be less useful if employees cannot use it. This distinction is important because it shifts attention away from the mere existence of a policy toward its enacted usability. Employee-oriented temporal flexibility is not defined simply by what is written in formal regulations, but by how much real discretion employees feel they possess within operational boundaries (Lee & Kim, 2025).

This study adopts the latter view. Rather than assuming that flextime is inherently empowering, it treats the arrangement as a bounded form of employee-oriented temporal flexibility, whose value must be examined in context. This framing is particularly appropriate for organizations that rely on synchronized work processes. There, flextime is best understood not as a departure from discipline but as a carefully managed recalibration of time. Therefore, the relevant analytical question is not whether employees are free in a broad sense, but whether the degree of schedule discretion available to them is sufficient to reduce strain, improve daily manageability, or strengthen their sense of organizational support (Erhel et al., 2024; Grönlund & Öun, 2022).

2.2 Work-Life Balance As Perceived Compatibility Rather Than Equal Division

Work-life balance is frequently used in organizational discourse. However, the concept can be misleading if interpreted too literally. Balance does not necessarily mean equal time or psychological investment in work and non-work spheres. Rather, the more analytically useful understanding is perceived compatibility: the extent to which employees feel that the demands of work and non-work domains can be handled without chronic conflict, overload, or unacceptable sacrifice (Kekeocha, Anoke, Chukwuemeka-Onuzulike, & Ngozi, 2024). This perception is dynamic, rather than fixed. It can vary across life stages, household configurations, organizational cultures, and specific times of the day. An employee may feel balanced during one period and overwhelmed during another, even if the formal work hours remain unchanged. Consequently, work-life balance is best treated as a subjective yet socially shaped condition (Allen et al., 2021; Chung & Van der Lippe, 2020).

The subjective nature of work-life balance does not render it analytically weak. In contrast, perception is central because employees experience work arrangements through their lived routines. A policy is perceived as supportive if it reduces time pressure, enhances predictability, lowers

conflict between roles, or allows smoother transitions between personal and professional obligations. For example, a short flextime window may have substantial perceived value if it helps an employee avoid stressful commuting congestion or accommodate a child's morning routine. The same window may matter less to someone whose non-work demands are structured differently. Therefore, the concept requires attention to daily rhythms, role expectations, and practical time management at the micro level ([Chauhan & Rai, 2024](#); [De Gieter et al., 2022](#)).

Another important point is that work-life balance should not be individualized. Although individual coping strategies matter, balance is also shaped by institutional support, workload characteristics, managerial expectations, and social norms regarding commitment ([Muchsinati, Sari, & Aliandrina, 2026](#)). An organization may offer nominal flexibility while still rewarding constant availability or implicitly stigmatizing its use. In such cases, the burden of balance is shifted back onto employees, who are expected to manage conflict privately, without meaningful structural support. A more useful perspective treats work-life balance as partly produced by work design and an organizational culture. From this standpoint, flextime becomes relevant not only because it changes hours, but also because it may alter how manageable the work system feels from the employee's perspective ([Riasnugrahani et al., 2025](#); [Vyas, 2022](#)).

In this study, work-life balance is examined as an experienced condition reflected in employees' ability to begin the day with less haste, coordinate work with personal obligations more smoothly, and perceive reduced conflict between work timing and non-work routines. This definition is deliberately modest and practical. It avoids idealized assumptions about perfect harmony and instead asks whether the policy helps employees manage everyday transitions and responsibilities in a more sustainable way ([Allen et al., 2021](#)).

2.3 Flextime As A Job Resource: The Job Demands-Resources Perspective

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) perspective offers a helpful starting point for understanding why flextime may be important. In broad terms, the JD-R model distinguishes between job demands and resources. Job demands refer to aspects of work that require sustained effort and may generate psychological or physical costs, such as workload, time pressure, emotional demands, interruptions, or role conflict. In contrast, job resources are aspects of work that help employees achieve work goals, reduce demands and their associated costs, or stimulate growth, learning, and motivation. Examples include autonomy, social support, role clarity, developmental opportunities and supportive supervision. The value of the JD-R framework lies in its flexibility: rather than prescribing a fixed list of demands and resources, it allows researchers to identify what functions as demanding or supportive in a particular context ([Ray & Pana-Cryan, 2021](#)).

Within this framework, flextime can be conceptualized as a job resource because it gives employees control over when they respond to work demands ([Pramudita, 2025](#)). Temporal control does not eliminate demands but may change how these demands are encountered. A required eight-hour workday may feel less taxing if employees can choose whether to start slightly earlier or later, depending on commuting conditions, personal responsibilities, or energy patterns. In this sense, flextime may reduce the strain associated with rigid time pressure, even when the workload remains constant. It can also support self-regulation by enabling employees to align their work entry and exit with daily realities more effectively. The resource value of flextime therefore lies not in reducing the amount of work but in increasing employees' capacity to manage when work begins and how it intersects with other role demands ([Herrera-Ballesteros, de las Heras-Rosas, Mota Veiga, & Sampaio Rodrigues, 2025](#); [Ray & Pana-Cryan, 2021](#)).

However, the JD-R perspective also suggests why flextime does not have identical effects everywhere. Job resources are beneficial, partly because they interact with demands. If demands are structured in a way that leaves little room for schedule discretion, the practical effect of flextime may be limited. For instance, if an employee's role requires synchronous early morning meetings, immediate public service, or rigid cross-unit coordination, a formal flexibility window may exist but be difficult to use. In this scenario, flextime has less resource value because the demands surrounding the role absorb the flexibility that the policy appears to offer. Conversely, when employees perform work that allows minor shifts in start time without significant disruption, the

same policy may have noticeable effects on stress reduction and perceived control ([Boccoli et al., 2024](#); [Erhel et al., 2024](#)).

The JD-R lens is therefore useful not because it proves that flextime is beneficial in general, but because it directs attention to conditions of fit. Flextime becomes analytically meaningful when examined as a resource whose value depends on the demand structure of the work environment. In the airport administrative context, demands related to punctuality, service continuity, and coordination are likely to shape the resource value of schedule control. This study adopts this view, the purpose is not to assume that flextime automatically improves well-being but to investigate how a limited degree of temporal control operates within a demand-intensive service environment ([Brega et al., 2023](#); [Wöhrmann et al., 2021](#)).

2.4 Boundary Theory and the Management of Daily Transitions

Boundary Theory adds a second layer to the analysis by focusing on how people create, maintain, and negotiate boundaries between work and non-work domains. Individuals differ in their preferences for segmentation and integration. Some prefer a clearer separation between work and family life, while others are more comfortable with flexible, overlapping boundaries. Regardless of preference, all employees must manage transitions between roles. Morning routines are especially significant because they often represent the point at which home and work responsibilities collide. Children may need to be prepared for school, traffic may be unpredictable, domestic tasks may arise unexpectedly, and work schedules may impose strict expectations regarding punctuality. Work-life conflict frequently emerges not from abstract role incompatibility but from recurring transition points ([Allen et al., 2021](#)).

Flextime may help widen the space within which employees can manage such transitions. Even a narrow adjustment in the allowable start times can create a buffer that reduces friction between domains. This buffer may permit employees to complete domestic tasks, recover from transport delays, or avoid the stress associated with racing against a rigid start time. In boundary terms, flextime does not dissolve the boundary between work and home, rather, it changes the permeability and timing of the boundary in a way that may improve the fit with lived routines. This is important because perceived control at transition points can shape employees views of their schedules as humane and manageable ([De Gieter et al., 2022](#)).

Boundary Theory also helps explain why the same policy can be experienced differently by different employees. A flexibility window that is highly useful for employees with caregiving responsibilities may matter less to others. Similarly, employees who prefer a strict routine may value a predictable schedule over discretionary flexibility. However, in many cases, the significance of flextime lies not only in its utility for exceptional events but also in its ability to reduce chronic low-level tension. Employees do not need to face major crises for a policy to matter, it may be sufficient that the policy helps them begin the day with less urgency and fewer role collisions. This study draws on Boundary Theory to interpret the ways in which flextime supports role transitions and clarify why temporal fit, rather than simple policy existence, is central to perceived work-life balance ([Allen et al., 2021](#); [Chung & Van der Lippe, 2020](#)).

Simultaneously, boundaries are socially shaped. Employees can effectively manage boundaries only when organizational conditions permit them to do so. If flexibility is formally allowed but informally discouraged, or if the timing of collective tasks neutralizes the available discretion, boundary management benefits may be weakened. Thus, boundary Theory complements the JD-R perspective, one emphasizes the resource value of schedule control, while the other highlights how that control affects transitions between domains and why contextual legitimacy matters ([Lee & Kim, 2025](#); [Vyas, 2022](#)).

2.5 Organizational Support, Social Exchange, And The Symbolic Meaning Of Flexibility

The third theoretical perspective concerns the role of organizational support and employment relationships. Flexible work policies are not merely technical arrangements, they carry symbolic meaning. When an organization allows employees a degree of schedule discretion, it may signal trust, respect, and recognition of life beyond the workplace. Employees may interpret such policies as evidence that management is attentive to their well-being rather than focusing solely on

surveillance and compliance. This symbolic meaning can shape attitudes independently of practical schedule adjustments. Employees may respond to supportive treatment with greater commitment, gratitude, or willingness to act responsibly, consistent with the broader social exchange reasoning in human resource management ([Hewett & Shantz, 2021](#); [Vyas, 2022](#)).

This is especially relevant when flexibility is bounded rather than unlimited. In such cases, employees may value the policy not because it grants them broad autonomy, but because it acknowledges their legitimacy as persons with non-work obligations. A narrow flextime window can still communicate that management understands the realities of commuting, family demands, and the unpredictability of everyday life. The perception of being trusted to regulate one's time within the agreed limits may be experienced as a form of respect. This symbolic interpretation matters because employment relationships are sustained not only by material rewards but also by perceptions of fairness, support and dignity.

The organizational support perspective also clarifies why policy availability is insufficient. Employees benefit from flexibility only when they feel safe using it to work remotely. If supervisors' attitudes are punitive, if colleagues interpret policy use as a sign of low commitment, or if communication about eligibility is unclear, the symbolic value of flexibility may erode. What appears to be a supportive benefit may become a source of ambiguity or stigma. Accordingly, the present study attends not only to what flextime permits in formal terms but also to the meanings employees attach to the policy and the role of managerial trust in sustaining those meanings ([Lee & Kim, 2025](#); [Vyas, 2022](#)).

Combining this perspective with previous frameworks produces a richer view of flextime. As a job resource, it offers limited control over the timing. As a boundary-management tool, it widens the space for managing transitions between home and work. As a signal of organizational support, it shapes how employees interpret the quality of their relationships with management. These layers do not operate independently of each other. The two reinforce each other. A policy that increases control but is not seen as legitimate may have weaker effects, while a policy that symbolizes support but provides no usable discretion may feel hollow. Therefore, this study treats perceived effectiveness as arising from the intersection of functional utility and symbolic meaning ([Hewett & Shantz, 2021](#); [Ray & Pana-Cryan, 2021](#)).

2.6 Bounded Flexibility in Service Organizations and Airport Environments

Recent scholarship on flexibility has focused on telework, digital connectivity, and post-pandemic work design. These debates are important but can obscure the continuing relevance of schedule flexibility in organizations where physical presence remains central. Service organizations often depend on real-time coordination, customer, or public interaction, and standardized operating periods. In such environments, flexibility is typically constrained by collective timing requirements. Employees may have some room to vary their schedules. However, the organization cannot simply distribute work across time without regard to service continuity or team interdependence. The result is what may be called bounded flexibility, such as limited, structured, role-sensitive discretion over time rather than unrestricted autonomy ([Agnoletto, 2024](#); [Brega et al., 2023](#)).

Airport environments exemplify this condition. Their activities are organized around schedules, safety procedures, regulatory requirements and interdependent units. Even administrative functions embedded in airport organizations operate under the shadow of temporal demands. Meetings, reporting, coordination with operational units, and responsiveness to emerging issues create a work rhythm that is more tightly synchronized than in many other office settings. This does not imply that flexibility is impossible, rather, it indicates that flexibility must be designed with careful consideration. Management must identify where discretion is feasible, how much deviation the system can absorb, and which roles can use flexibility without undermining the collective reliability ([Brega et al., 2023](#); [Grönlund & Öun, 2022](#)).

The notion of bounded flexibility is analytically important for the following two reasons. First, it avoids the false dichotomy between rigid and free work. Many organizations operate in a middle zone where some discretion is possible but only within clearly defined constraints. Second, it encourages more realistic evaluation criteria to be developed. In such settings, the success of flexibility should not be measured solely by the degree of autonomy. A policy may be successful

precisely because it is modest, yet well-aligned with operational realities. If a narrow flextime window meaningfully reduces employee strain without creating coordination problems, then the policy may be effective in relation to its intended purpose, even though it would appear limited when compared with more expansive arrangements in other sectors ([Erhel et al., 2024](#); [Wöhrmann et al., 2021](#)).

This reasoning is particularly relevant for state-owned enterprises and public-service-oriented organizations, where managerial legitimacy may depend on balancing efficiency, fairness, accountability, and employee welfare. Such organizations often face stronger expectations of procedural clarity and equitable treatment. Therefore, a bounded flexibility policy in this context raises questions not only of utility but also of justification. If some roles can access schedule discretion and others cannot, management must articulate why this differentiation is operationally necessary. Otherwise, a well-intentioned policy may generate perceptions of inequity. These issues make airport administration a valuable site for examining how bounded flexibility is designed, explained and experienced ([Hewett & Shantz, 2021](#); [Lee & Kim, 2025](#)).

2.7 Research Gap, Analytical Framework, and Expected Contribution

Against this background, three gaps are identified. First, the flexibility literature is disproportionately oriented toward remote and hybrid work, whereas schedule flexibility in fixed-service workplaces deserves more sustained attention. Second, many studies emphasize measurable outcomes such as satisfaction, turnover intention, or self-reported balance through survey designs. However, there is still a need for context-sensitive qualitative work that examines how bounded flexibility is enacted and interpreted in everyday organizational life. Third, airport-related service settings in Indonesia are rarely addressed in the literature, despite their distinctive combination of administrative work, public service responsibilities, and operational discipline. These gaps justify an exploratory case study that focuses less on proving a universal effect and more on understanding how flextime functions in a specific but analytically revealing setting ([Agnolotto, 2024](#); [Brega et al., 2023](#); [Wöhrmann et al., 2021](#)).

To address these gaps, the present study uses a simple analytical framework that links flextime to work-life balance through three mediating factors. First, flextime may function as a job resource by increasing the limited temporal control. Second, it may improve boundary management by creating a buffer during daily transitions between the home and work. Third, it may strengthen the perceived organizational support by signaling trust and recognition of non-work responsibilities. Simultaneously, the realized value of the policy is shaped by contextual conditions, particularly operational coordination, role differentiation, policy clarity, and managerial endorsement. In this framework, perceived effectiveness is not assumed, it emerges only when the available discretion is usable, legitimate, and aligned with the work demands ([Allen et al., 2021](#); [Hewett & Shantz, 2021](#); [Ray & Pana-Cryan, 2021](#)).

Therefore, this study interprets flextime as a conditional human resource practice. It is conditional because its effectiveness depends on role suitability, communication, and operational fit. It is a human resource practice because it is part of the organization's effort to manage employment relationships and employee well-being. This is relevant to work-life balance because it affects how employees coordinate their work timing with their broader life responsibilities. By clarifying these relationships within a bounded service setting, this study aims to contribute a more realistic account of flexibility, one that takes seriously both the promise and limits of temporal discretion in organizations that cannot simply detach work from coordinated time ([Villamin et al., 2025](#)).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design and Philosophical Orientation

This study adopted an exploratory qualitative descriptive design with an interpretivist orientation. The choice of design directly follows the research problems. This study does not seek to measure the statistical magnitude of flextime's effect on work-life balance, nor does it attempt to test a causal model through large-sample inference. Instead, it seeks to understand how a bounded flexibility policy is implemented, interpreted, and perceived in a particular organizational setting.

An interpretivist orientation is appropriate because the phenomenon under examination, policy effectiveness in relation to work-life balance, is mediated by meaning. Employees and managers do not experience policy as an abstract variable, they understand it through their daily routines, expectations, organizational norms, and judgments of fairness, usefulness, and trust. Qualitative descriptive inquiry is therefore suitable because it allows the researcher to remain close to the language of practice while still producing an analytically organized account of the case ([Villamin et al., 2025](#)).

3.2 Case Selection and Research Setting

The case selected for this study is PT Angkasa Pura Indonesia, the Adisutjipto Airport Branch Office, Yogyakarta. The site was chosen purposively because it provides an information-rich context in which flextime had already been implemented as part of human resource practice, the policy operated within a work environment characterized by timing discipline, coordination requirements, and service continuity. This combination made the case analytically useful for this study. This allowed the study to examine flexibility not in a permissive environment where schedule control is easy to grant, but in a setting where flexibility must be balanced against operational needs. The focus of the inquiry was on the administrative and related human resource coordination environment rather than frontline airport operations as a whole. This delimitation is important because this study does not claim that the same degree of flexibility is feasible across all job categories within airport organizations ([Campbell et al., 2020](#)).

3.3 Unit of Analysis and Participant Selection

The unit of analysis is the implementation and perceived effectiveness of flextime as a human resource practice in the selected organizational settings. Informant selection was purposive rather than probabilistic in nature. The principal formal informant was a Human Capital Development officer who possessed direct knowledge of the policy, its implementation logic, attendance arrangements, and the ways in which employees used the system in their daily work. The informant was chosen because the study required a structural and process-level understanding of the policy rather than a broad enumeration of attitudes across a large number of employees. This choice reflects the exploratory nature of this study. Given the limits of access and the study's case-based orientation, the goal was to obtain a deep, information-rich account from a key actor positioned close to the policy enactment. Nevertheless, this study explicitly recognizes that a single key-informant design limits the diversity of perspectives represented. For that reason, the article frames its claims carefully and avoids broad generalization ([Campbell et al., 2020](#)).

3.4 Data Sources and Collection Procedures

Three sources of data were used for the analysis. First, the study relied on semi-structured face-to-face interviews with key informants. The interview lasted approximately one hour and explored the background of flextime adoption, the practical mechanics of implementation, perceived benefits for employees, limits or coordination challenges, and the indicators by which the policy could be considered useful. Semi-structured interviewing was chosen because it provided both focus and openness: the researcher could ensure that core themes relevant to the research questions were addressed while still allowing the informant to elaborate on their experience and context. Second, the study drew on relevant organizational documents related to working time arrangements, attendance expectations, and human resource practices. These documents were not used as independent proof of effect but as contextual material that helped clarify how the policy was formally framed. Third, the researcher's field observations during the internship period provided additional contextual understanding of daily routines, organizational rhythms, and the general environment in which the policy operated. Observation is especially useful for interpreting the practical significance of timing, commuting, and coordination issues ([Villamin et al., 2025](#)).

3.5 Researcher Positionality

Because the researcher conducted the study during an internship, positionality deserves explicit reflection. The internship created a form of insider access that facilitated familiarity with

the organizational context and improved sensitivity to the daily work rhythms. However, insider proximity also carries potential risks. Researchers may become overly sympathetic to organizational narratives, assume contextual knowledge that is not fully articulated, or avoid critical questioning because of role relationships. These risks, the analysis was guided by a deliberate strategy of analytic distancing. Field observations were treated as contextual aids rather than as unquestioned evidence. Claims were framed conservatively, with attention to what could and could not be supported by the available materials. The researcher also maintained a written analytic trail in which observations, interpretations, and emerging themes were separated as clearly as possible. This reflexive stance does not remove positionality but helps make the interpretive process more transparent.

3.6 Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis with descriptive and interpretive orientations. The analytical procedure involved several steps. First, the interview material, field notes, and document-based contextual information were reviewed repeatedly to build familiarity with the case. Second, segments of material relevant to the research questions were coded using provisional categories, such as policy rationale, implementation mechanism, perceived daily benefits, family related usefulness, organizational support, coordination constraints, and role differentiation. Third, these codes were compared and grouped into broader themes that captured recurrent patterns in the material. Fourth, the themes were refined by checking whether they were sufficiently distinct, internally coherent, and analytically connected to the research questions of this study. Finally, the themes were interpreted in relation to the literature on flextime, work-life balance, job resources, boundary management and organizational support. This process yielded a set of central themes concerning the background of policy adoption, mechanism of implementation, perceived benefits, symbolic meanings, operational constraints, and conditional indicators of effectiveness.

3.7 Trustworthiness and Rigor

Several steps were taken to strengthen the study's trustworthiness. Credibility was supported through triangulation across interview data, documentary material, and field observations, thereby reducing total dependence on a single narrative source. The aim of triangulation here was modest, not to manufacture false certainty but to check whether the informant's account aligned with the broader organizational context as observed and documented. Dependability was supported by a transparent account of the research procedures, including case selection, data sources, and coding logic. Confirmability was strengthened by reflexive attention to the researcher's internship position and the use of an analytic trail separating raw observation from interpretation. Transferability was addressed through a thick description of the context, policy boundaries, and organizational conditions so that readers can judge whether the insights may be relevant to similar service environments. Because the study relies primarily on a key informant, rigor depends less on sample size and more on transparency, careful claim making, and contextual depth ([Villamin et al., 2025](#)).

3.8 Ethical Considerations

The study was conducted with attention to ethical considerations appropriate for qualitative organizational research. The informants participated voluntarily and were approached based on their role relevance to the research topic. Sensitive operational details that were not necessary for the analysis were not reported. The purpose of the study was explained clearly, and the analysis was presented in a manner that prioritized organizational learning over individual attribution. Given that this study touches on internal human resource practices, the article avoids unnecessary disclosure of confidential information and does not seek to evaluate employees individually. Ethical caution was especially important because the organization operated in a public service oriented sector where reputational and operational considerations were significant.

3.9 Scope and Limitations of the Design

The study design shapes the scope of its conclusions. An exploratory qualitative case study centered on a key informant can illuminate processes, meanings, and contextual conditions, but it cannot establish broad representativeness or causal certainty. Therefore, this study avoids language

suggesting that flextime is universally effective or that the present findings can be generalized to all employees, all units, or all airport organizations. Instead, this study offers an analytically bounded account of perceived effectiveness in a specific administrative setting. This limitation is not merely treated as a weakness; it is also part of the study's contribution because it allows for a careful examination of how a modest flexibility policy is understood in a context where temporal coordination remains central. Future research may build on this exploratory foundation through broader interviews, comparative cases, survey designs or mixed methods ([Villamin et al., 2025](#)).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Background of Flextime Adoption

The first theme concerns why flextime emerged as part of the organization's human resource practices. The material suggests that the policy was developed as an adjustment to a more rigid attendance system rather than as a radical transformation of work design. In earlier arrangements, arrival and departure were governed more strictly by conventional office time expectations. Over time, management introduced a limited flexibility window intended to make the schedule more adaptive to employees' realities while preserving accountability and productivity. This is important because it indicates that flextime was not conceptualized as a privilege detached from organizational needs. Instead, it was introduced as a calibrated managerial response to everyday sources of time pressure, particularly those associated with morning routines and commuting.

In practical terms, the policy appears to reflect an organizational recognition that strict uniform start times can generate avoidable stress without necessarily adding value to the performance. Employees do not arrive at work as abstract time units, they arrive after dealing with transport conditions, household responsibilities, and daily contingencies that cannot always be precisely predicted. Therefore, the policy responded to the ordinary realities of employees' lives rather than a desire to relax discipline in a broad sense. From the key informant's perspective, flextime represented an attempt to make the work system more humane while maintaining its structure. This is a significant finding because it frames the policy as a human resource adjustment aimed at reducing low-level structural friction rather than redesigning the employment relationship.

The organizational background also suggests that flextime is connected to a broader orientation toward employee welfare. While the study does not claim that the organization adopted the policy solely for well-being reasons, the practice was clearly understood as one of the benefits through which the company sought to support its employees. In this sense, flextime serves both instrumental and symbolic purposes. Instrumentally, it offered a narrow degree of temporal discretion for the government. Symbolically, this signaled that management was willing to recognize employees' non-work realities within the limits of operational feasibility.

4.2 Mechanism of Policy Implementation

The second theme concerns how the policy was implemented in practice. According to the interview material, employees were permitted to arrive within a bounded time window, generally between 08.00 and 08.30, and their departure time was adjusted accordingly to ensure that the required daily working hours were completed. This indicates that the policy combines discretion with obligation. Employees gained some freedom over when to start but not whether to complete the required duration of work. Therefore, flextime in this setting did not erode discipline, rather, it redistributed discipline across a narrow schedule range.

The implementation mechanism also revealed that flextime was selective rather than universal. Not all roles can use the same degree of schedule flexibility. The possibility of using flextime depends on the characteristics of the job, timing of tasks, and coordination requirements. Administrative and related office-based functions had more room for temporal adjustment than positions directly tied to tightly scheduled operational needs. This selective design is central to understanding this case. The policy was not based on the assumption that equality requires identical treatment across all roles. Instead, it was structured around the idea that different forms of work permit different degrees of schedule discretion for employees.

The bounded nature of the implementation should not be mistaken as a weakness. In contrast, this appears to be one of the features that made the policy viable. By keeping the flexibility window

relatively narrow and linking it to the continued fulfillment of working-hour obligations, management was able to provide employees with meaningful room for adjustment while minimizing the risk of disruption. This mechanism translated employee-oriented flexibility into a form compatible with organizational control. This is one of the clearest indications that the case concerns bounded flexibility rather than generalized autonomy.

4.3 Reduced Morning Pressure and Smoother Entry into Work

The most immediate perceived benefit of the policy was the reduction in morning time pressure. The key informant described flextime as useful because employees no longer had to experience the start of the day as a race against a rigid threshold. The availability of a limited arrival window helped employees regulate their morning routines more calmly and reduced the psychological tension associated with commuting delays and minor domestic disruptions. This finding suggests that the policy's value lay not only in the number of minutes it offered but also in the quality of experience it changed. A short flexibility window may still be effective if it intervenes at a point in the day where stress is concentrated.

This reduction in morning pressure may have practical implications for work-life balance. When employees can begin working without unnecessary haste, the transition from home to work becomes more manageable. Stress associated with traffic, transport uncertainty, or tightly sequenced domestic tasks is less likely to spill over into the early workday. In this sense, flextime functions as a buffer against everyday strain. The policy did not eliminate work responsibilities or personal obligations, but it changed the temporal fit between them sufficiently to improve employees' experience of entering work. This finding supports the idea that work-life balance can be strengthened through modest changes in the timing of work rather than only through large-scale flexibility reforms.

The emphasis on commuting- and transition-related stress is particularly relevant in urban and semi-urban contexts, where transport conditions are variable. Employees may face significant uncertainty regarding travel time, and even a small delay can be psychologically costly when the schedule is rigid. The policy seems to have reduced this vulnerability by making punctuality requirements more realistic rather than less important. Employees were still expected to fulfill their obligations, but the system recognized that a narrow degree of temporal elasticity could reduce avoidable tension at the beginning of the day.

4.4 Support for Personal and Family-Related Responsibilities

The fourth theme concerns how flextime supports non-work responsibilities, especially in the morning. The key informant indicated that the policy gave employees the flexibility to manage short domestic tasks, respond to family needs, or complete personal obligations before coming to the office. This does not mean that flextime solves deeper work-family conflicts or removes all role strain. Rather, it suggests that the policy created a small but meaningful temporal buffer that helped employees sequence their responsibilities more effectively and efficiently. In many organizations, role conflict is not always caused by an extreme workload; it is also produced by rigid timing that leaves no room for normal life events. The present case shows how a policy can matter precisely because it addresses everyday rigidity.

The usefulness of flextime for family related responsibilities also helps explain why employees may value the policy, even if the flexibility window is modest. The issue is not simply the amount of free time created but also the strategic placement of that time. Morning flexibility can be disproportionately meaningful because it affects school preparation, short caregiving tasks, transport arrangements, and urgent personal matters that arise before work begins. Therefore, a narrow window offered at the right time may provide more value than a broader but less relevant flexibility option. From a work-life balance perspective, this finding underscores the importance of temporal-fit policies that support balance when they align with the moments at which employees actually experience conflict.

The material also suggests that flextime reduces the feeling that employees must choose abruptly between being a responsible worker and a responsible family member at the beginning of the day. Instead of confronting a strict either-or logic, employees had some space to navigate both

sets of obligations more realistically and flexibly. Therefore, the policy appears to have functioned as a form of preventive support. It did not wait for conflict to become severe; it reduced the likelihood that minor role tensions would escalate into stress or lateness. This preventive quality is one reason why the policy was perceived positively.

4.5 Flextime as a Signal of Trust and Organizational Care

Beyond its practical scheduling effects, flextime carries symbolic meaning. The findings indicate that employees interpreted the policy as evidence that the organization cared about their well-being and trusted them to manage their time responsibly. This symbolic dimension is analytically significant in several ways. Employees often judge human resource practices not only by what they allow but also by what they imply about how management sees them. A policy that acknowledges employees' life circumstances can communicate respect and institutional empathy, especially in environments that otherwise operate with strong time discipline.

The perception of trust seems to have contributed to the policy's positive reception. Employees were not treated as if any deviation from the standard arrival time signaled low commitment. Instead, the bounded flexibility system assumes that employees can be given limited discretion without abandoning accountability. Such trust may strengthen the willingness to reciprocate through responsible policy use and continued attention to work obligations. In this sense, flextime operated as more than a technical attendance arrangement; it also shaped the quality of the employment relationship.

This symbolic effect should not be underestimated. Human resource policies often fail not because their formal design is weak, but because they do not create a meaningful sense of support for employees. In the present case, the value of flextime was partly derived from the fact that it was experienced as human. Employees perceived that management recognized the legitimacy of non-work responsibilities and everyday constraints. Therefore, the policy's usefulness was intertwined with the message it sent, employees were expected to work responsibly, but they were not expected to behave as if life outside work did not exist.

4.6 Comfort, Motivation, and Accountable Autonomy

Another recurring theme was the relationship between flexibility, comfort and motivation. The policy was perceived to make workdays feel less coercive and more manageable. Employees were still accountable for their working hours and job responsibilities, yet the degree of control they were granted appears to have increased their sense of comfort. This comfort is not merely an emotional by-product, it is relevant because employees who feel that work arrangements are fair and workable may be more willing to engage positively with their tasks and work more efficiently. The policy thus seems to have supported a form of accountable autonomy, employees were trusted within limits, and this trust encouraged a more constructive orientation toward work.

Importantly, these findings do not suggest that comfort is achieved through laxity. Employees are subject to clear expectations. They were required to fulfill their daily hours, coordinate with work processes, and adjust when organizational needs required synchrony. Therefore, the policy's contribution to motivation appears to arise from the combination of discretion and structure. Employees did not experience flexibility as the absence of rules but as a more reasonable rule system. This supports the broader idea that autonomy and accountability are not contradictory. Under a suitable design, a small degree of autonomy can enhance employees' willingness to act responsibly rather than reduce it.

4.7 Operational Constraints and Conditional Effectiveness

Despite the benefits described above, the policy's effectiveness is conditional. The first constraint concerns coordination. Airport-related administrative work still depends on meetings, inter-unit communication, and synchronization with broader organizational processes. When specific tasks or meetings required earlier collective presence, employees using flextime had to adjust their schedules. This means that the discretion offered by the policy was always nested within the larger organizational rhythm. Flextime does not override collective time; rather, it operates around it.

The second constraint concerns the narrowness of the flexibility window. The bounded nature of the policy was one reason it remained operationally acceptable, but it also meant that its benefits were necessarily moderate, rather than transformative. Employees gained room for adjustment, but not enough to completely redesign the structure of their day. This finding reinforces the argument that policies should be evaluated relative to their intended purpose. It was not designed to provide an unrestricted autonomy. Its purpose was more limited: to reduce avoidable time pressure and improve manageability at the margins of the working day.

The third constraint involved role differentiation. Employees in administrative and similar functions were better positioned to benefit from flextime than those in highly operational roles were. This selective accessibility is understandable in light of the organization's service obligations, but it also raises issues of perceived fairness. If some employees can use the policy and others cannot, the legitimacy of this differentiation must be clear. This study does not provide sufficient evidence to judge how all employees interpreted this issue, but the possibility is analytically important. Bounded flexibility requires both explanation and design. Management must articulate why temporal discretion is feasible in some roles and not in others if it wishes to preserve the policy's legitimacy.

Taken together, these constraints indicate that flextime in this setting should not be judged through an all-or-nothing lens. This policy was neither universally transformative nor merely symbolic. It had concrete usefulness, but this depended on the organizational environment. In that sense, the findings point toward conditional effectiveness: the policy was perceived as effective in reducing morning strain, supporting daily role transitions, and signaling support while remaining compatible with role requirements and coordination needs.

4.8 Indicators of Perceived Effectiveness

Based on the material, several practical indicators helped clarify what effectiveness meant in this case. First, employees were perceived to experience smoother transitions into the workday, with less haste and tension around punctuality. Second, the policy reduced commuting- and routine-related stress at the start of the day. Third, it enables employees to manage minor personal or family responsibilities before work more easily. Fourth, it was interpreted positively as a sign of trust and care for the organization. Fifth, the policy remained workable from an organizational standpoint because the required working hours were still fulfilled and the flexibility window was narrow enough to preserve coordination.

These indicators suggest that the effectiveness of qualitative policy analysis should be understood in relation to the problem the policy is intended to address. In this case, the problem was not primarily low productivity or absenteeism; it was the tension generated by rigid attendance expectations in a setting where a limited degree of schedule adjustment was feasible. The policy appears to have addressed this problem to a meaningful extent. However, because the evidence comes from an exploratory case and a key informant perspective, the findings are best read as a grounded account of perceived effectiveness rather than a definitive evaluation of organizational impact across all employees.

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Conclusion

This study evaluated the effectiveness of the flextime program as a human resource benefit in improving employees' work-life balance at PT Angkasa Pura Indonesia, the Adisutjipto Airport Branch Office, Yogyakarta. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, the study found that flextime contributes positively to employees' daily time management, reduces stress related to starting work, and helps employees align their personal responsibilities with their professional obligations. The policy also carries symbolic value because it is perceived as a sign of organizational support and trust.

However, the study also shows that the effectiveness of flextime is conditional, rather than absolute. Its benefits are shaped by the operational characteristics of the airport environment, the need for coordination, limited flexibility, and the selective applicability of the policy across roles. These factors do not negate the policy's value; rather, they clarify the conditions under which flexibility can be implemented. Overall, the findings support the conclusion that flextime can function as an effective human resource strategy for supporting work-life balance in service organizations, provided that the

policy is clearly regulated, compatible with task requirements, and supported by a culture of trust and communication. Future studies may expand this inquiry through larger samples, mixed-method designs, or comparisons across industries to better understand how different forms of flexibility influence employees' well-being, job satisfaction, and organizational performance.

5.2 Research Limitations

This study had several limitations. First, it relied on a limited number of informants and focused on a single organizational setting. Therefore, the findings are context-specific and cannot be generalized broadly. Second, this study emphasized employees' perceived experience of flextime and did not include quantitative productivity or turnover indicators. Third, the analysis focused on flextime and work-life balance, while other relevant factors such as workload intensity, organizational culture, and supervisory style were not examined in-depth.

5.3 Suggestions and Directions for Future Research

Future research should involve a larger and more diverse group of participants, including employees from different units and levels of responsibility in the organization. Comparative studies across sectors would also be valuable, especially between organizations with high operational discipline and those with more flexible structures. In addition, mixed-method or quantitative studies could test the relationship between flextime, job satisfaction, work stress, absenteeism, and employee performance, more systematically.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

II conceptualized and designed the study, conducted data collection through interviews and field observations, analyzed the data thematically, and wrote the manuscript. MM provided guidance on the research methodology, assisted with the data analysis, and contributed to revising the manuscript for academic rigor.

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