



Work-Life Balance and Employee Satisfaction Among IT Professionals: An Empirical Study

Anitha Mary Alex*¹ and Edwin Dilson²

¹Associate Professor, Naipunnya Institute of Management and Information Technology, Pongam, Thrissur- 680308, Kerala, India

²U G Student, Naipunnya Institute of Management and Information Technology, Pongam, Thrissur- 680308, Kerala, India

*Corresponding Author's Email: anithamary@naipunnya.ac.in

Abstract

The work-life balance or WLB has become an important concern in the world of information technology (IT) that is characterized by heavy workloads, the necessity to learn continuously, which is very typical of the industry, and the flexibility of work patterns. The research employs the quantitative method to survey IT professionals in an effort to establish the correlation between employee happiness and work-life balance. 54 respondents were administered a structured questionnaire. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics and hypothesis testing. This indicates that long hours and digital intrusions remain an issue, but the majority of IT employees can balance their work and life to a moderate to high extent. The job satisfaction was statistically significantly related to the work-life balance, particularly in environments where there is flexibility in terms of scheduling and effective managerial support. The study offers important findings to organisations that aim at maximising innovation of employee retention, employee well being, and productivity.

Keywords: Work-life balance, Employee Satisfaction, IT Professionals, Workplace

Introduction

The maintenance of work-life balance is gaining more significance in the current company world, due to its impact on the happiness of employees and their overall well-being. This is of particular concern since the information technology (IT) field is dynamic and fast-paced, in which employees have to address high job expectations, long working hours, and high work pressure (McMillan, 2017). Work-related stress leads to job discontent, burnout, and an increase in turnover rates among employees, which are further enhanced by the rising trend toward digital transformation, the need to continuously upgrade professional skills, and the necessity to meet deadlines in a project.

Employee satisfaction is a key factor of organisational success, influencing productivity, motivation, and retention. A well-balanced work-life structure allows employees to manage their

professional responsibilities while also dedicating time to personal and social commitments, ultimately leading to greater job engagement and performance. Organizations that prioritize work-life balance through flexible work arrangements, remote working options, mental health initiatives, and supportive workplace policies are more likely to have satisfied and motivated employees (De Menezes & Kelliher, 2011).

Recent tendencies have also reinforced the importance of the work-life balance, especially in the post-COVID-19 epidemic context, which has fundamentally altered the work organisation across the globe. With the transition to the remote and hybrid model of work, the boundaries between professional and personal life have become more blurred, which is both an opportunity and a challenge to maintaining the positive work-life balance (Ijms, 2024). Moreover, an increased awareness of the importance of personalised strategies toward work-life balance can be suggested by the concept of so-called chrono working, suggesting the alignment of the work schedules with the personal biological rhythms, is gaining momentum (Forbes, 2024).

The relationship between work-life balance and employee satisfaction is of special relevance to the IT sphere because retaining talents is a key to the success of the company. Research by Allen et al. (2000) demonstrated a significant effect of work-life balance program where employee engagement, performance, and satisfaction are enhanced. Similarly, Agarwal and Gupta (2019) have found that IT employees with access to telecommuting and other types of flexible work arrangement were more satisfied with their jobs.

In the information technology sector, especially where employees face specific challenges such as long working hours, project schedules, work demands and the need to continuously acquire new skills, work-life balance has become a critical aspect. The complexity of the professional work, the necessity to meet the demands of customers, and the necessity to work during the hours other than the regular ones are the results of the growing work-life imbalance. This mismatch can have a tremendous negative impact on the overall productivity, the work satisfaction and the well being of the workers. The primary objectives of the study are to test the variables influencing work-life balance in the IT industry employees and explore the influence of work-life balance on the general workforce happiness in the industry. Based on the objectives and review of the literature, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- H1: Work-life balance and the general job satisfaction have a strong correlation among the IT workers.
- H2: Flexible work arrangements have a significant influence on the ability of the employees to have a healthy work-life balance.
- H3: Employer support significantly affects employees' perceived work-life balance.

Materials and Methods

This study employed a descriptive-analytical research design with a quantitative methodology to explore the relationship between work-life balance and employee satisfaction among IT professionals. The conceptual model is based on theoretical frameworks, including the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model and the Work-Family Border Theory. It highlights the influence of organisational factors on work-life balance and, consequently, on job satisfaction.

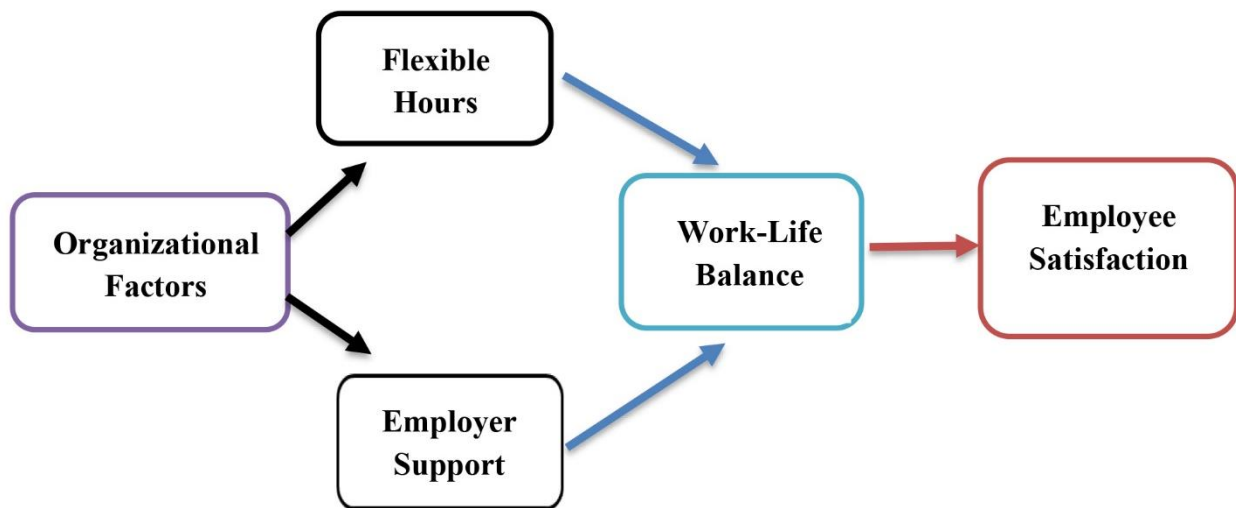


Figure 1. The Conceptual Model

A sample of 54 IT professionals was selected using convenience and snowball sampling techniques, ensuring a diverse representation in age, gender, job roles, and experience. The primary instrument was a structured questionnaire consisting of multiple-choice and Likert-scale questions covering Demographics, Employment conditions, Work-life balance perceptions, and Employee satisfaction. The questionnaire was pre-tested with a pilot group. Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was > 0.80 for key items, indicating strong reliability. Data is analysed through Descriptive statistics - frequency and percentage analysis, and Inferential statistics - Chi-square test for association.

Results

Table 1. Age of respondents

Age group	No. of respondents	Percentage
Below 25	27	50%
26–30	16	29.6%
31–40	8	14.8%
Above 40	3	5.6%

Table 2. Gender of respondents

Gender	No. of respondents	Percentage
Male	37	68.5%
Female	17	31.5%

Table 3. Years of work experience in IT industry

Experience	No. of respondents	Percentage
0–2 yrs	25	46.3%
3–5 yrs	17	31.5%
6–10 yrs	9	16.7%
>10 yrs	3	5.6%

Table 4. Healthy work-life balance

Response	No. of respondents	Percentage
To a very great extent	10	18.5%
To a great extent	16	29.6%
To a moderate extent	23	42.6%
To a small extent	5	9.3%
Not at all	0	0%

Table 5. Flexible working hours satisfaction

Response	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	8	14.8%
Agree	24	44.4%
Neutral	16	29.6%
Disagree	4	7.4%
Strongly disagree	2	3.7%

Table 6. Overall job satisfaction in the IT industry

Satisfaction level	No. of respondents	Percentage
Highly satisfied	4	7.4%
Satisfied	27	50%
Neutral	20	37%
Unsatisfied	3	5.6%
Highly unsatisfied	0	0%

Table 7. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Test	χ^2	p-value	Result
H1: WLB → Employee Satisfaction	Chi-square	8.23	0.016	Significant
H2: Flexible Hours → WLB	Chi-square	4.75	0.029	Significant
H3: Employer Support → WLB	Chi-square	10.19	0.006	Highly Significant

Each hypothesis is supported by the data. Flexibility and support structures play a pivotal role in achieving work-life balance, which in turn contributes to job satisfaction.

Discussions

The findings give valuable insights into the relationship between work-life balance and employee satisfaction in the IT industry. This section discusses the key findings about existing literature and theoretical frameworks, highlights the implications for IT organisations, and addresses limitations and future research directions.

Nonetheless, the results of the study indicate that a substantial number of the respondents (91) can afford a balance between work and life, at least to a moderate extent, which means that the excessive demands of IT work are not keeping professionals unable to merge their personal and professional lives. This conclusion may be opposed to the results of Greenhaus and Allen (2011), who also underlined the need to maintain the balance between personal and professional life regarding the overall well-being. However, the statistics also indicate that 65 per cent of the respondents often or regularly work beyond the standard business hours, and 71 per cent of the respondents respond habitually to work-related correspondence after the usual business hours. This tendency demonstrates the absence of the distinction between the business and personal life in the IT business, as pointed out by McMillan (2017), who has mentioned that technological progress has made the process of distinguishing between the business and individual life a lot harder.

The study found that 74% of respondents expressed satisfaction with flexible working hours, and 87% gave a favourable response regarding the flexibility of work schedules. Additionally,

48.1% of respondents have access to remote work options, with another 27.8% having occasional access. These findings support Agarwal and Gupta's (2019) research, which found that IT professionals with access to flexible working arrangements reported higher levels of job satisfaction. Flexible work arrangements appear to be an essential element in achieving work-life balance in the IT industry, considering the type of work involved, which does not necessarily require working in an office environment. According to De Menezes and Kelliher (2011), when staff are and understand the importance of work-life balance and feel valued at work, they tend to demonstrate greater degrees of job satisfaction and commitment to the organisation, which justifies the favourable feedback on flexible practices.

The study revealed that 83% of respondents receive employer support to maintain work-life balance to at least a moderate extent, and 48% reported positive feedback regarding work environment support. This organisational support appears to be reflected in overall job satisfaction, with 58% of respondents revealing satisfaction with their jobs in the IT industry. These findings support Allen et al.'s (2000) conclusion that the availability of work-life balance initiatives significantly improves employee satisfaction, engagement, and performance. However, it is worth observing that only 52% of respondents expressed satisfaction with work-life balance policies, suggesting room for improvement in how organisations formalise and implement these initiatives.

A significant finding is that 93% of respondents indicated that job deadlines make it harder to maintain a work-life balance. The Job Expectations-Resources Model by Bakker and Demerouti (2007) explains that high job expectations can lead to work-family conflict in the case that they are not accompanied by enough resources. Strict timeframes, the necessity to learn continuously, and quite unpredictable work schedules are the peculiarities of the IT industry that may complicate the achievement of a good work-life balance. Despite these challenges, 90 percent of the respondents reported that they were able to manage work-related stress to some extent or successfully, which implies the development of coping mechanisms or the presence of sufficient resources to deal with these requirements.

The findings are categorical in nature and indicate that work-life balance and happiness in the employee are interconnected. The correlation between the two variables appears to be positive as 58 % of the interviewed expressed happiness with their jobs in general and 52-percent that they were happy with work-life balance regulations. This correlation gives the theoretical frameworks mentioned above, and especially with, the Self-Determination Theory, developed by Deci and Ryan (2000) which argues that employees are more likely to enjoy a balance between their work and life, and to experience satisfaction when they perceive themselves as competent and independent at work. The sense of competence and autonomy is likely to be affected by the fact that the respondents report about the flexible work schedules and organizational support.

Furthermore, 81% of respondents reported being able to have quality time with family or on personal activities regularly, which is an important aspect of work-life balance. This ability to fulfil personal commitments while meeting work responsibilities appears to contribute positively to overall satisfaction, as evidenced by the finding that 46.3% of respondents recommend their organisation to others based on work-life balance.

As per the study, implications and recommendations for organisations are to implement and enhance flexible working arrangements, including remote work options, provide stronger employer support for work-life balance initiatives, address the culture of after-hours work communications, and manage workloads and deadlines to reduce pressure on employees. Implications and recommendations for IT Professionals are to establish clear boundaries between work and personal life, utilise available flexible work arrangements, and proactively communicate work-life balance needs to employers, and for HR Policies are to develop comprehensive work-life balance policies that address industry-specific challenges, create guidelines for after-hours communications, and introduce wellness programs to help employees manage stress.

This analysis confirms that work-life balance is a crucial factor in employee satisfaction in the IT industry, with flexible work arrangements and employer support playing significant roles in achieving this balance. The future research directions of this study are to explore the long-term effects of hybrid work on productivity and well-being, and compare WLB trends across industries like healthcare, education, and banking, investigate the impact of emerging technologies (e.g., AI, automation) on workload and job satisfaction, conduct gender-sensitive studies on parental leave and flexible scheduling, and evaluate the effectiveness of mental health policies in high-pressure environments.

Conclusion

This paper has examined the connection between work-life balance and employee satisfaction in the IT sector, and the impact of flexible working hours and business support. The information obtained after the interview of 54 IT experts was analysed critically, and the findings generated various interesting conclusions with far-reaching implications on the businesses and employees in the field of IT. The study reported that job satisfaction and work-life balance in the entire industry of IT industry were closely related. This is the most important hypothesis to us because we found that the level of job satisfaction among employees who reported high levels of work-life balance was far higher. Work-life balance is also of significant importance as one of the key aspects of employee welfare and work satisfaction in the IT industry, which is in high demand in the ever-changing environment.

Two major factors emerged as significant contributors to work-life balance. First, flexible work arrangements—including flexible working hours and remote work options—were found to substantially enhance employees' ability to maintain the balance between professional and personal domains. Second, employer support emerged as the strongest predictor of work-life balance, with organisations that actively support balance initiatives having markedly more satisfied employees. Conversely, several workplace practices common in the IT industry were identified as detrimental to work-life balance. The prevalence of extended working hours, after-hours communications, and high-pressure job deadlines adversely affected employees' ability to disconnect from work and maintain healthy boundaries. Despite these challenges, most respondents (91%) reported maintaining at least a moderate level of work-life balance, suggesting that IT professionals are developing coping strategies even amid industry pressures.

The research concludes that work-life balance is an organizational need that is strategic in the industry and plays a significant role in employee satisfaction in the IT industry and is not a

matter of choice by individuals. By implementing rules and procedures that allow balance, organizations are in a better position to create more sustainable work cultures, which are beneficial to the individual and business performance. The findings provide IT firms aiming to enhance work-life balance initiatives and increase employee satisfaction with a good direction.

References

- Agarwal, S., & Gupta, R. (2019). The impact of flexible working arrangements on IT professionals' job satisfaction. *Journal of Management Studies*, 42(3), 245-262.
- Allen, T. D., Herst, D. E., Bruck, C. S., & Sutton, M. (2000). Consequences associated with work-to-family conflict: A review and agenda for future research. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 5(2), 278-308.
- Ammons, S. K., & Markham, W. T. (2004). Working at home: Experiences of skilled white-collar workers. *Sociological Spectrum*, 24(2), 191-238.
- Arxiv. (2024). *AI and automation's impact on work-life balance*. Retrieved from Arxiv.org.
- Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2007). The job demands-resources model: State of the art. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 22(3), 309-328.
- Baral, R., & Bhargava, S. (2011). HR interventions for work-life balance: Evidence from organisations in India. *International Journal of Business, Management and Social Sciences*, 2(1), 33-42.
- Clark, S. C. (2000). Work/family border theory: A new theory of work/family balance. *Human Relations*, 53(6), 747-770.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The "what" and "why" of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behaviour. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11(4), 227-268.
- De Menezes, L. M., & Kelliher, C. (2011). Flexible working and performance: A systematic review of the evidence for a business case. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 13(4), 452-474.
- Delina, G., & Raya, R. P. (2013). A study on work-life balance in working women. *International Journal of Commerce, Business and Management*, 2(5), 274-282.
- Forbes. (2024). *Chrono working: Aligning work schedules with biological rhythms*. Retrieved from Forbes.com.
- Greenhaus, J. H., & Allen, T. D. (2010). Work-family balance: A review and extension of the literature. In L. E. Tetrick & J. C. Quick (Eds.), *Handbook of occupational health psychology* (2nd ed., pp. 165-183). American Psychological Association.
- Greenhaus, J. H., & Allen, T. D. (2011). Work-family balance: A review and extension of the literature. In J. C. Quick & L. E. Tetrick (Eds.), *Handbook of occupational health psychology* (2nd ed., pp. 165-183). American Psychological Association.

- Grzywacz, J. G., & Carlson, D. S. (2007). Conceptualizing work-family balance: Implications for practice and research. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 9(4), 455-471.
- Hobfoll, S. E. (1989). Conservation of resources: A new attempt at conceptualizing stress. *American Psychologist*, 44(3), 513-524.
- Irjms. (2024). *Long-term effects of remote and hybrid work models on work-life balance: A bibliometric analysis (2014-2023)*. International Research Journal of Management Studies.
- Kossek, E. E., Baltes, B. B., & Matthews, R. A. (2011). How work-family research can finally have an impact in organizations? *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 4(3), 352-369.
- MarketWatch. (2024). *Generation Z prioritizing work-life balance over higher salaries*. Retrieved from MarketWatch.com.
- McMillan, H. S., Morris, M. L., & Atchley, E. K. (2017). Constructs of the work/life interface: A synthesis of the literature and introduction of the concept of work/life harmony. *Human Resource Development Review*, 10(1), 6-25.
- Parasuraman, S., & Simmers, C. A. (2001). Type of employment, work-family conflict and well-being: A comparative study. *Journal of Organizational Behaviour*, 22(5), 551-568.
- Rajesh K. Yadav, & Nishant Dabhade. (2014). Work-life balance and job satisfaction among the working women of banking and education sector - A comparative study. *International Journal of Advancement in Education and Social Sciences*, 2(1), 17-30.
- Reddy N. K., Vranda, M. N., Ahmed, A., Nirmala, B. P., & Siddaramu, B. (2010). Work-life balance among married women employees. *Indian Journal of Psychological Medicine*, 32(2), 112-118.