

# EXPLORING THE EFFECTS OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE AMONG IT PROFESSIONALS

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## ABSTRACT

Work-life balance has emerged as a critical issue in both academic research and professional practice, as work and personal relationships represent two of the most significant dimensions of an individual's life. The conflict between professional demands and personal responsibilities often leads to stress, reduced productivity, and negative impacts on employee well-being. With the rapid expansion of the global IT industry, these challenges have become particularly pronounced. The sector's fast-paced environment, high expectations, and demanding workloads often contribute to employee exhaustion, role conflict, and increased attrition. The concept of "work-life balance" (WLB), first articulated in 1986, has since become a focal point in understanding how individuals and organizations can navigate the competing pressures of work and personal life. While developed economies have long recognized these challenges, developing economies are increasingly acknowledging the importance of integrating sustainable models of work-life management. In this context, the present study aims to examine work-life balance among employees in the IT industry, specifically focusing on the effects of work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict on their overall well-being and professional outcomes.

**Keywords:** Work Life Balance , Conflict, Buzz, Information Technology

## 1. Introduction

The effective management of several duties at work, at home, and in other areas of life is referred to as "work life equilibrium." This is a significant concern for employees as well as businesses. Organizations are under pressure to increase efficiency in the current financial climate, and they want workers who have a better work-life balance since these workers will make more meaningful contributions to the expansion and success of the business (Naithani, 2010). Numerous changes in the workplace, workforce demographics, and interpersonal relationships have brought this issue to light. The global industrial market is growing increasingly sensible, and businesses are outsourcing to cut costs.

The Expenses of Employment: Because of this, workers feel pressured to work longer hours in order to meet and even exceed their employers' expectations and keep their jobs. As a result, the "long hours culture" and "24/7 lifestyle" have taken over the lives of highly qualified and sophisticated managers and professionals. It was generally anticipated a few decades ago that new technologies would reduce working hours and provide employees with more time for leisure and rest. However, rather than providing comfort and leisure, modern technology has left workers—especially professionals—with limited time off from paid employment. Actually, employees are now expected to be ready for office work even when they are at home because technology has made it harder to distinguish between the two.

Because of the resources, IT networking has made available to us when we're at home. The workforce now faces new hurdles in coordinating with nearly 10-hour-delayed western markets due to the current global environment. As a result, the labour has increased in difficulty and strain.

Workplace pressures and demands, manifested in increased work hours, fatigue, and the rise in evening and weekend employment, leave little opportunity for "quality" contact with family members, which can lead to issues like drug misuse and adolescent criminality. Furthermore, the employees' health is being directly impacted by these work-related stressors. Once more, because of the quickly evolving economic environment, businesses are unable to offer stable employment, which is why attitudes the values of individuals at work are also shifting, and they are less inclined to show unwavering dedication to the company. As mentioned by Guest (2002), this leads to an imbalance between work and the rest of life as work declines as a key life interest.

Today's youth are rapidly changing their outlook on life as well. They think you should work hard and have even more fun. They prefer to travel, interact with others, engage in adventurous sports, and follow their hobbies. They become enraged and unhappy when they are unable to find time for these pursuits. The work-life balance of characters in today's setting has been affected by changes in the relationships sphere, such as nuclear families, single-parent households, dual-earner households, parents who work at separate locations, and an increase in household chores. It is now quite challenging to satisfy the needs of relationships as a result. Another shift is the significant increase in the number of women entering the workforce, despite their prior status as homemakers. Women are so fulfilling two roles, that of a homemaker and a wage earner

### **1.1. Work life equilibrium**

Equilibrium between work and life Work-life equilibrium is the total of the working professional's scores on three dimensions: work/personal life enhancement, work/personal life interference, and work/personal life interference as determined by the work-life equilibrium scale.

### **1.2. Working professional**

A professional, as defined by MacMillian Dictionary (2009), is a person with training or credentials. According to the current study, a working professional is an employee in the IT or ITES sector who has obtained specialized training to enable them to work in these fields (such as data management, networking, computer hardware engineering, database and software design, management and administration of entire systems, customer interaction services, such as call centers and email help desks, engineering, and design, back processing insurance claims, office administration, and remotely supplied finance and accounting data search, integration, and analysis; HR services (offered remotely); network consulting and management; data development and maintenance services; IT facilities management (including offered remotely).

## **2. Review of Literature**

Adams et al. (1996) revealed a correlation between lower levels of relationships interfering with work and higher levels of instrumental and emotional assistance from relationships. According to Frone et al. (1997), by lowering relationship pain and parental overburden, relationship-related support (spouse and other relation members) may lessen relationships to work conflict. Hammer et al. (1997) gathered data from 399 dual-earner couples and suggested that a character's level of work relations conflict was a significant predictor of their partner's level of work relations conflict.

Drew and Murtagh (2005) looked at senior managers' attitudes and experiences with work-life balance, both male and female. Work-life balance was a strategic corporate goal for the large Irish company that conducted the study. The study's conclusion was that the "long hours" culture—which holds that taking advantage of flexible choices like working from home or flex time is incompatible with retaining a senior management position—was the biggest barrier to attaining work-life balance. The majority of women in senior jobs were unable to assign care responsibilities or relationships to their spouses, a feat that many senior males were able to accomplish. Men therefore sought a work-life balance to address concerns related to commutes and job schedules. Senior management

personnel, both male and female, realized their careers would be gravely endangered .by implementing work-life balance strategies.

Rajadhyaksha and Velgach (2009) discovered that women encountered much more work-related relationship interference in comparison to men. Men and women did not, however, experience work interfering with relationships in significantly different ways. Alam et al. (2009) investigated the relationship between working hours and work relations equilibrium for three targeted groups: corporate house groups and teaching professionals. It was discovered that respondents who put in five to seven hours a day at work did not think that working hours had an impact on the balance between work and relationships. However, despite working long hours (9–10 hours a day), women managers in the corporate sector concurred that time was a critical component of work relations equilibrium. The relationship between working hours and conflicts in work relations was confirmed by the study. Because they work nine to ten hours a day, women managers – reported having work relations conflicts in 99 percent of cases. Merely 20% of those engaged in instruction stated as much.

The results of the study will be useful in determining the traits, relationships, and occupational factors associated with work-life balance. Therefore, the research would assist practitioners in the field in: (a) comprehending work-life balance and its different aspects; (b) comprehending the connection between character-related variables, relations-related variables, and work-life balance; and (c) designing interventions to improve the emotional intelligence of working professionals, as well as create support systems that help them fulfil their interpersonal obligations and lessen the disruption of their personal lives at work; (c) rethink work-related factors like task variety, task autonomy, and work schedule flexibility in order to enhance working professionals' work-life balance. Furthermore, the research will aid in evaluating current initiatives to improve work-life balance and developing new plans to make these initiatives stronger. Better talent management and cost savings would result from the industry's ability to create policies for professional hiring, development, and deployment.

This research is designed to investigate the connection between work-life balance and emotional intelligence, to investigate the connection between the work-life equilibrium dimension and work centrality and to investigate the connection between work-life balance and relationship-related characteristics (marriage status). We formulate the following hypothesis.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no considerable difference between work life equilibrium and emotional intelligence

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no considerable difference between work life equilibrium and work centrality

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no considerable difference between work life equilibrium and relations related (Marital Status) variables

### 3. Data and Methodology

200 persons are taken as sample from select IT companies. Sample is drawn randomly. Emotional Intelligence Scale, Work Centrality Scale and House Hold Responsibility Index are applied for data analysis. The study has been restricted to Hyderabad region only. Sample of the study has been restricted to only IT and ITES companies in the selected regions. Only selected character variables, relations related variables, work related variables have been included in the study.

**Table 1: Descriptive statistics for character related variables**

Statistics	Character related variables	
	EI (N=250)	WCEN (N=250)
Mean	131.57	37.84
Median	132	38

Std. Deviation	13.4	7.1
Skewness	0.22	-0.02
Std. Error of Skewness	0.13	0.13
Kurtosis	0.51	0.22
Std. Error of Kurtosis	0.29	0.29
Minimum	89	15
Maximum	168	57

It is evident from Table 1 that scores on emotional intelligence (EI) ranged between 91 and 171. The mean for emotional intelligence scores was found to be 131.57 and the median was found to be 132. The distribution of scores on emotional intelligence was found to be normal as skewness (Sk=.22, Table 1) was found to be inconsiderable at .01 level of significance. The kurtosis (Ku=.51) was also found to be within limits at .01 level of significance. Likewise, for the character variable, work centrality (WCEN), the skewness (Sk= -.02) was found to be inconsiderable. Thus, the distribution of scores on work centrality was found to be normal. The peakedness of scores (Ku= .22) was found to be within the limits at .01 level of significance.

#### 4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

##### 4.1. Correlations between emotional intelligence, work life equilibrium and its dimensions

Table 2 shows correlations between emotional intelligence and work life equilibrium and its dimensions. Emotional intelligence of IT and ITES working professionals was found to be considerable positively correlated with personal life interference with work (PLIW;  $r=.28$ ), work/personal life enhancement (WPLE;  $r=.26$ ) and with overall work life equilibrium (WLB Total;  $r=.25$ ) at .01 level of significance. Results imply that higher the emotional intelligence, lesser is the personal life interference with work; higher is the work/personal life enhancement; and higher is the overall work life equilibrium and vice versa.

**Table 2: Emotional Intelligence and Work Life Equilibrium**

Work Life Equilibrium	Correlation with EI (N=200)
WIPL	0.08
PLIW	0.28(**)
WPLE	0.26(**)
WLB Total	0.25(**)

Note: \*\* denotes significance at the 0.01 level.

The IT and ITES working professionals with high level of emotional intelligence, i.e., the professionals who are focused, consistent, able to manage conflicts and stay composed and who do not mix emotions with issues at hands, can concentrate on tasks in spite of disturbances and can perform multitask and are self-motivated for work, tend to show less interference of personal life with work. Again, IT and ITES working professionals with high level of emotional intelligence tend to have high work/personal life enhancement and they derive energy from work for personal life and energy from personal life for work. On the other hand, IT and ITES working professionals with low emotional intelligence tend to have low levels of work/personal life enhancement.

The IT and ITES working professionals with high levels of emotional intelligence also tend to show high levels of overall work life equilibrium and vice versa. Professionals with high emotional intelligence are able to minimize interference of personal life with work and enhance work and personal life by deriving energy from each other and hence tend to have high work life equilibrium.

Hence, Hypothesis H<sub>01</sub> that there will be considerable correlation between the emotional intelligence and work life equilibrium (including its dimensions) of working professionals in IT and ITES industry is accepted for the dimensions of personal life interference with work, work/personal life enhancement and for overall work life equilibrium. However, it is rejected for the dimension of work interference with personal life.

## 4.2. Work Centrality and Work Life Equilibrium

### 4.2.1. Correlations between work centrality and work life equilibrium and its dimensions

The correlations between work centrality and work life equilibrium and its dimensions, and differences among IT and ITES working professionals at varied levels of work centrality on work life equilibrium and its dimensions are discussed in Table 3. The variable of work centrality was found to be considerably positively correlated with WIPL (r=.11) at .05 level and WPLE (r=.26) and WLB Total (r=.20) at .01 level of significance.

**Table 3: Correlations between work centrality and work life equilibrium and its dimensions**

Work Life Equilibrium	Correlation with WCEN ( N=200)
WIPL	0.11(*)
PLIW	0.06
WPLE	0.26(**)
WLB Total	0.20(**)

Note: \* and \*\* denote significance at the 0.05 and 0.01 levels respectively.

The results imply that higher the importance attached to work by an character, lower is the interference of work with personal life, higher is the work/personal life enhancement and higher is the overall work life equilibrium and vice versa. IT and ITES working professionals who have high work centrality, i.e., who give high priority to their work in life, keep their work above other pursuits, derive satisfaction in life from work and have personal life goals work oriented, tend to show less interference of work with personal life, are able to derive energy from work for personal life and exhibit high level of work life equilibrium of working professionals in IT and ITES industry is accepted for the dimensions of work interference with personal life, work/personal life enhancement and for overall work life equilibrium. However, it is rejected for the dimension of personal life interference with work

Hence, Hypothesis H<sub>02</sub> that there will be considerable correlation between the work centrality and work life equilibrium (including its dimensions).

**Table 4: Dimensions of work interference**

Work Life Equilibrium	Sources of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
WIPL	Between Groups	236.83	2	118.42	2.73
	Within Groups	13251.3	305	43.45	
	Total	13488.1	307		
PLIW	Between Groups	85.58	2	42.79	2.94
	Within Groups	4441.99	305	14.56	
	Total	4527.57	307		
WPLE	Between Groups	452.83	2	226.42	11.40(**)
	Within Groups	6060.14	305	19.87	

WPLE	Total	6512.97	307		
	Between Groups	1928.49	2	964.25	8.33(**)
	Within Groups	35292.7	305	115.71	
WLB Total	Total	37221.2	307		

Note: \* and \*\* denote significance at the 0.05 and 0.01 levels respectively.

Work life equilibrium of IT and ITES working professionals at varied levels of work centrality. Table 4 shows that F-values were found to be highly considerable for the dimension of work/personal life enhancement (WPLE; F=11.40) and for overall work life equilibrium (WLB Total; F=8.33). The results thus showed that there were considerable differences among IT and ITES working professional with low, average and high work centrality on the dimension of WPLE and on WLB Total.

#### 4.2.2. Significance of differences among mean scores on work life equilibrium of IT and ITES working professionals at varied levels of work centrality

Work life equilibrium of IT and ITES working professionals at varied levels of work centrality. Further t-ratios were calculated to find out significance of differences between means and the results are given in Table 5. Considerable differences were found between IT and ITES working professionals with low and high work centrality on the dimension of WPLE (ML=17.27, MH=20.29, t=4.65, p=.01) and WLB Total (ML=69.04, MH=74.57, t=3.15, p=.01). Again considerable differences were observed between IT and ITES working professionals with average and high work centrality on dimension of WPLE (MA=18.04, MH=20.29, t=3.59, p=.01) and on WLB Total (MA=69.17, MH=74.57, t=3.85, p=.01). However, no considerable differences were observed between IT and ITES working professionals with low and average work centrality.

**Table 5: Work Life Equilibrium**

Work Life Equilibrium	WCEN	N	Mean	SD	Group differences	t-ratio
	Low	54	30.1	7.89	Low-average	Not Applicable
	Average	86	30.12	5.68	Low-high	Not Applicable
	High	60	32.02	6.53	Average-high	Not Applicable
<b>WIPL</b>	Total	200	30.69	6.63		
	Low	54	21.67	3.83	Low-average	Not Applicable
	Average	86	21.02	3.82	Low-high	Not Applicable
	High	60	22.26	3.8	Average-high	Not Applicable
<b>PLIW</b>	Total	200	21.57	3.84		
	Low	54	17.27	3.94	Low-average	1.26
	Average	86	18.04	4.64	Low-high	4.65(**)
	High	60	20.29	4.62	Average-high	3.59(**)
<b>WPLE</b>	Total	200	18.51	4.61		
	Low	54	69.04	11.77	Low-average	0.1
	Average	86	69.17	9.46	Low-high	3.15(**)
	High	60	74.57	11.52	Average-high	3.85(**)
<b>WLB Total</b>	Total	200	70.77	11.01		

The results imply that IT and ITES working professionals who accord primary importance to work in their lives and derive satisfaction from work show considerably higher work/personal life enhancement and higher work life equilibrium than the IT and ITES professionals with average and low levels of work centrality. Hence, Hypothesis H<sub>02</sub> that there will be considerable differences among the mean scores of IT and ITES working professionals at varied levels of work centrality on work life equilibrium and its dimensions is accepted for the dimensions of work/personal life enhancement and for overall work life equilibrium. However, it is rejected for the dimension of work interference with personal life and personal life interference with work.

### 4.3. Marital Status and Work Life Equilibrium

#### 4.3.1. Correlations between marital status and work life equilibrium and its dimensions

The correlation between marital status and work life equilibrium and its dimensions; and differences between married and unmarried IT and ITES working professionals on work life equilibrium and its dimensions are discussed in Table 6.

As is evident from the Table 6, no considerable correlation was found between the marital status of IT and ITES working professionals and the overall work life equilibrium. Further, the correlations between marital status and the dimensions of work life equilibrium, namely, work interference with personal life, personal life interference with work and work/personal life enhancement were also found to be inconsiderable.

The results thus imply that marital status and work life equilibrium are not related. Hence, Hypothesis H<sub>03</sub> that there will be considerable correlation between the marital status and work life equilibrium (including its dimensions) of working professionals in IT and ITES industry is rejected

**Table 6: Correlations between marital status and work life equilibrium and its dimensions**

Work Life Equilibrium	Correlation with Marital Status
WIPL <sup>1</sup>	-0.04
PLIW <sup>1</sup>	-0.09
WPLE	-0.09
WLB Total	-0.02

#### 4.3.2. Significance of differences between mean scores on work life equilibrium of married and unmarried IT and ITES professionals

The results of significance of differences entered in Table 7, show that there were no considerable differences between the married and unmarried IT and ITES working professionals on the dimensions of WIPL (t=.76), PLIW (t=1.62), WPLE (t=1.64) and on WLB Total (t=.34). These results are consistent with the results of the study by Hsieh et al. (2005) who also did not find any differences between married and unmarried managers with regard to work-personal life equilibrium. Hence, Hypothesis H<sub>03</sub> that there will be considerable differences between the mean scores of married and unmarried IT and ITES working professionals on work life equilibrium and its dimensions stands rejected.

**Table 7: Marital status and work life equilibrium**

Work Life Equilibrium	Marital Status				t-Ratio
	Married		Unmarried		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
WIPL	30.39	5.73	30.96	7.36	0.76
PLIW	21.2	3.85	21.91	3.82	1.62

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WPLE	18.96	4.1	18.1	5	1.64
WLB Total	70.54	10.16	70.97	11.76	0.34

## 5. Conclusion

The scores on work life equilibrium scale could range between 15 -105. However, the scores of IT and ITES working professionals on overall work life equilibrium ranged between 48 and 105. The average work life equilibrium of IT and ITES working professionals was found to be 70.77 and median was found to be 70. 50% of the IT and ITES working professionals scored below the score of 70 and remaining scored above the score of 70. The results indicate that the mean work life equilibrium of the professionals was above average.

Hypothesis is accepted for the dimensions of personal life interference with work, work/personal life enhancement and for overall work life equilibrium. However, it is rejected for the dimension of work interference with personal life.

The results imply that IT and ITES working professionals who accord primary importance to work in their lives and derive satisfaction from work show considerably higher work/personal life enhancement and higher work life equilibrium than the IT and ITES professionals with average and low levels of work centrality. Hence, Hypothesis H<sub>02</sub> that there will be considerable differences among the mean scores of IT and ITES working professionals at varied levels of work centrality on work life equilibrium and its dimensions is accepted for the dimensions of work/personal life enhancement and for overall work life equilibrium. However, it is rejected for the dimension of work interference with personal life and personal life interference with work

The results thus imply that marital status and work life equilibrium are not related. Hence, Hypothesis H<sub>03</sub> that there will be considerable correlation between the marital status and work life equilibrium (including its dimensions) of working professionals in IT and ITES industry is rejected. Work life Equilibrium is one of the important thing should maintain by the character working in high pressure and long working hours. If it is not maintained properly with personal life of the employee it affect the personal life and efficiency of the character it leads to low efficiency at work place.

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