

The Relationship between Work-Life Balance and Work Stress among Corporate Employees in India: A Correlation Study

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims to examine the relationship between work-life balance and work stress among corporate employees in India. Work life balance refers to an employee's perceived ability to manage work responsibilities along with personal, family, health and leisure-related responsibilities. Work stress refers to the psychological strain experienced when employees perceive that work-related demands exceed their available resources or coping capacity. The main objective of the study was to determine whether higher work life balance was associated with lower work stress among corporate employees.

A quantitative, non-experimental, cross-sectional correlational research design was used. The sample consisted of 67 corporate employees currently working in India, selected through convenience sampling. Data were collected through a Google Form using demographic and work-related information, Hayman's Work Life Balance Scale and the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10). The Work Life Balance Scale measured participants' perceived ability to manage work and personal-life responsibilities, while the PSS-10 measured perceived work-related stress during the previous month.

Descriptive statistics, reliability analysis and Pearson's product-moment correlation were used to analyse the data. The results indicated a statistically significant negative relationship between work life balance and work stress among corporate employees. This suggests that employees who reported better work life balance also reported lower levels of work-related stress.

The findings support the importance of work life balance as a factor associated with employee well-being. The study has implications for employees, organizations, psychologists and human-resource professionals. Organizations may reduce work stress by supporting work life balance through workload management, flexible scheduling, supervisor training, employee assistance programs and boundary-supportive communication.

The study has limitations. It used a cross-sectional correlational design, which does not establish causation. It relied on self-report measures and used convenience sampling. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted with caution and should not be generalized to all corporate employees in India. Future research may use larger and more representative samples, longitudinal designs and additional variables such as workload, job autonomy, supervisor support, organizational culture, job insecurity, coping strategies and burnout.

Keywords: work life balance, work stress, corporate employees, India, correlational study, employee well-being, perceived stress, occupational health.

INTRODUCTION**CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION**

Work occupies a central position in the lives of adults. It provides income, social identity, opportunities for achievement, interpersonal relationships and a sense of purpose. At the same time, individuals participate in several non-work roles, including family responsibilities, personal relationships, household activities, leisure, health maintenance, education, community involvement and rest. The simultaneous management of these roles requires time, psychological energy and behavioural adjustment. When the demands of work and personal life are reasonably compatible, individuals may experience satisfaction, well-being and effectiveness in both domains. However, when the demands of one domain interfere with the other, individuals may experience strain, role conflict and psychological distress.

In contemporary organizations, particularly in the corporate sector, employees are expected to perform in increasingly competitive, technology-driven and rapidly changing work environments. Corporate employees may be required to meet strict deadlines, manage multiple responsibilities, respond to clients across time zones, participate in extended working hours, adapt to organizational restructuring and remain available through digital communication platforms. Although these demands may contribute to professional growth and organizational productivity, they may also reduce the time and psychological resources available for personal and family life. Consequently, the relationship between work life balance and work stress has become an important area of research in psychology, occupational health and organizational behaviour.

Work life balance refers broadly to the extent to which an individual is able to manage and participate satisfactorily in work and non-work roles. It is not limited to an equal division of time between employment and family. Rather, it includes the individual's perceived ability to fulfil role responsibilities, remain psychologically engaged and experience satisfaction across different areas of life. Greenhaus, Collins and Shaw conceptualized work-family balance through dimensions such as time balance, involvement balance and satisfaction balance. In a broader work-life perspective, the non-work domain includes family, health, leisure, social relationships, personal development and other meaningful activities. Therefore, work life balance is a multidimensional experience involving the allocation of time, psychological involvement and subjective satisfaction across life domains.

Work stress, on the other hand, refers to the psychological and physiological response that occurs when employees perceive that work-related demands exceed their available resources, abilities or coping capacity. Stress is not produced solely by the objective presence of demanding circumstances. It is also influenced by how employees interpret those demands, the degree of control they possess, the support available to them and the consequences they anticipate. The International Labour Organization explains that work-related stress may arise when workplace pressure becomes excessive or unmanageable, particularly when demands exceed a worker's ability or resources to cope. Thus, work stress is best understood as an interaction between the employee and the work environment.

The relationship between work life balance and work stress is theoretically and practically significant. Persistent work demands may intrude into personal life, reduce recovery time and create conflict between occupational and personal roles. Conversely, insufficient time for rest, family interaction and personal activities may weaken an employee's ability to cope with work demands. This may result in a reciprocal cycle in which poor work life balance contributes to stress, and stress further reduces the individual's ability to maintain balance. The present study therefore focuses on examining the relationship between work life balance and work stress among corporate employees in India through a correlational research

design.

CHANGING NATURE OF CORPORATE WORK IN INDIA

The Indian corporate sector has undergone substantial transformation because of globalization, economic liberalization, technological development, increased competition and the expansion of service-based industries. Corporate employment now includes diverse sectors such as information technology, banking, finance, consulting, telecommunications, healthcare, business-process services, education technology, retail, manufacturing and digital commerce. These sectors often require employees to demonstrate flexibility, continuous learning, customer responsiveness and performance under time pressure.

The structure of corporate work has also changed. Employees increasingly work through digital platforms, virtual teams and hybrid arrangements. Communication may continue after formal working hours through emails, instant messaging applications, mobile phones and online meeting systems. Flexible work arrangements may provide autonomy and eliminate commuting time, but they may also make it difficult for employees to psychologically detach from work. The physical separation between the office and home does not always create a psychological separation between professional and personal roles.

For many corporate employees, the working day extends beyond the officially prescribed schedule. Work may begin before commuting or household responsibilities are completed and may continue during evenings, weekends or leave periods. Employees may also experience pressure to demonstrate commitment through constant availability. Although not every employee experiences these conditions in the same way, such work arrangements may increase the likelihood of work-home interference, fatigue, reduced recovery and stress.

The Indian context also includes social and cultural factors that shape work life balance. Employees may be responsible for supporting children, ageing parents, spouses or other family members. In some households, employees manage paid work along with domestic and caregiving responsibilities. Gender roles, family expectations, commuting conditions, urban congestion, housing arrangements and regional mobility may further influence the extent to which employees can separate work from personal life.

At the same time, organizational expectations are changing. Employees increasingly value psychological well-being, flexible scheduling, supportive leadership and meaningful personal time. Organizations are also recognizing that employee well-being is associated with retention, engagement, performance and organizational reputation. A workplace that ignores excessive stress and persistent work-life conflict may face absenteeism, reduced productivity, interpersonal conflict, disengagement and employee turnover.

International occupational-health guidance identifies several psychosocial risks relevant to corporate work. These include excessive workload, high work pace, long or inflexible working hours, inadequate job control, poor organizational culture, limited support, unclear roles, job insecurity and conflicting home-work demands. These factors make work life balance and work stress particularly important variables for research among Indian corporate employees.ilo+1

CONCEPT OF WORK LIFE BALANCE

Work life balance is commonly understood as the perceived ability to manage work and non-work responsibilities in a manner that is satisfactory and sustainable. The term “life” is broader than “family”; it includes all important non-work areas, including personal health, leisure, friendships, spirituality, learning and community participation. The concept therefore recognizes that employees are not defined only by their occupational roles.

Work life balance does not necessarily mean that an employee spends exactly half of the available time at work and half outside work. Some occupations may require temporary periods of increased work involvement. Balance may instead refer to the employee's perception that work demands are manageable, that important personal responsibilities are not consistently neglected and that the individual can participate meaningfully in both work and personal domains.

Three dimensions are particularly relevant:

Time balance

Time balance refers to the distribution of time between work and non-work activities. Employees may experience balance when they have sufficient time to complete occupational duties while also obtaining adequate rest and participating in family, social and personal activities. Time imbalance may occur when long working hours, overtime, commuting or after-hours communication reduce time available for personal responsibilities.

Involvement balance

Involvement balance refers to the degree of psychological engagement in work and non-work roles. An employee may be physically present at home but mentally preoccupied with workplace demands. Similarly, an employee may be at work while being distracted by personal concerns. Balance requires meaningful psychological participation in both domains rather than merely physical presence.

Satisfaction balance

Satisfaction balance refers to the degree of contentment experienced in work and personal roles. Employees may devote considerable time to work and still perceive balance if they are satisfied with their career and personal life. Conversely, even a relatively equal division of time may not constitute balance if the employee feels guilty, exhausted, dissatisfied or unable to meet role expectations.

The work-life balance framework developed by Greenhaus, Collins and Shaw emphasizes time, involvement and satisfaction as important aspects of balance. Their work also links balance with quality of life, suggesting that effective participation in work and family roles can be associated with broader well-being.

WORK LIFE BALANCE AS A MULTIDIMENSIONAL CONSTRUCT

Work life balance is not a single experience. It may include positive and negative interactions between work and life domains. Four forms are especially relevant.

Work-to-life conflict

Work-to-life conflict occurs when work demands interfere with personal responsibilities. Examples include:

- Working late and missing family or social commitments.
- Responding to work communication during personal time.
- Being too mentally exhausted to participate in leisure or family activities.
- Missing important personal events because of work responsibilities.
- Experiencing difficulty completing domestic or caregiving duties after work.

Life-to-work conflict

Life-to-work conflict occurs when personal or family demands interfere with work responsibilities. Examples include childcare needs, caregiving responsibilities, health concerns, household emergencies and relationship difficulties. Such interference may produce distraction, lateness, absenteeism or reduced concentration.

Work-to-life enrichment

Work may also improve life. Employees may gain financial security, confidence, professional skills, social relationships and a sense of accomplishment through their work. These resources may support family life and personal well-being.

Life-to-work enrichment

Personal experiences may also improve work functioning. Supportive relationships, adequate rest, health, hobbies and meaningful activities may enhance emotional regulation, creativity, concentration and resilience at work.

A balanced employee is not necessarily an employee who experiences no conflict. Rather, balance may involve managing conflict, using available resources and maintaining sufficient satisfaction across domains. This distinction is important because the present study should measure participants' perceived work life balance rather than assume that balance exists only when all role demands are equal.

CONCEPT OF WORK STRESS

Stress is a broad psychological concept that describes the response of an individual to demands perceived as threatening, challenging or exceeding available resources. Work stress is specifically associated with job-related demands and conditions. It may include emotional tension, irritability, worry, mental fatigue, physical exhaustion, difficulty concentrating, sleep disturbance and reduced sense of control.

A moderate level of pressure may support motivation and performance. Deadlines, challenging assignments and performance expectations can sometimes encourage employees to use their abilities effectively. However, pressure becomes problematic when it is persistent, excessive, unpredictable or combined with limited control and inadequate support. The International Labour Organization distinguishes ordinary workplace pressure from stress that arises when pressure becomes excessive or unmanageable.

Work stress may originate from several sources:

- High workload and unrealistic deadlines.
- Long or irregular working hours.
- Role ambiguity and conflicting responsibilities.
- Lack of autonomy or decision-making control.
- Limited support from supervisors or colleagues.
- Organizational restructuring and job insecurity.
- Interpersonal conflict, harassment or discrimination.
- Inadequate recognition and rewards.
- Difficult customer interactions.
- Technological overload and constant connectivity.
- Poor opportunities for growth or career development.
- Conflict between work and home responsibilities.

The World Health Organization identifies excessive workloads, long or inflexible hours, limited control, poor organizational culture, inadequate support, unclear roles, job insecurity and conflicting home-work demands as psychosocial risks to mental health at work. These risks may contribute to stress, burnout, anxiety, depression, sleep problems and reduced work functioning.

WORK STRESS AMONG CORPORATE EMPLOYEES

Corporate employees may encounter a distinctive combination of demands. The work may be target-driven, client-oriented and time-sensitive. Employees may be evaluated through key performance indicators, sales targets, billable hours, productivity metrics, customer satisfaction scores or project completion deadlines. Such systems can improve clarity and accountability but may also create continuous performance pressure.

The corporate environment may additionally require emotional labour. Employees are often expected to remain courteous, calm and responsive even when dealing with dissatisfied customers, internal conflict or personal exhaustion. Suppression of frustration and the maintenance of a professional presentation can consume psychological resources.

Rapid technological change can create another source of stress. Employees may need to learn new software, work with automated systems, respond to frequent process changes and remain available through several digital channels. While technology can enhance efficiency, technology-mediated work can also increase interruptions and blur the boundary between work and non-work time.

Job insecurity is another relevant concern. Organizational restructuring, automation, economic fluctuations, outsourcing and changes in market demand may create uncertainty about continued employment. Employees who are uncertain about their future may work longer hours, avoid taking leave or hesitate to communicate their difficulties.

Work stress may also be influenced by organizational culture. A culture that rewards constant availability may implicitly discourage employees from setting boundaries. Similarly, a culture that equates long working hours with dedication may make employees feel guilty about leaving work on time. In contrast, supportive cultures may encourage realistic workloads, psychological safety and the use of leave.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK LIFE BALANCE AND WORK STRESS

The relationship between work life balance and work stress may be explained through the idea that individuals possess limited time, energy and psychological resources. When work requires resources beyond what is available, the individual may reduce participation in personal roles. This may create work-to-life conflict and contribute to stress. Likewise, when personal responsibilities consume resources needed for work, the employee may experience life-to-work conflict.

A negative relationship is generally expected between work life balance and work stress. In other words, higher work life balance is expected to be associated with lower work stress, while lower work life balance is expected to be associated with higher work stress. However, the strength and direction of the relationship may vary according to organizational, personal and cultural conditions.

The relationship may operate through several pathways:

1. **Time-based pathway:** Long working hours leave less time for sleep, family, leisure and recovery.
2. **Strain-based pathway:** Fatigue and emotional exhaustion generated at work may reduce the ability to participate in personal life.
3. **Behaviour-based pathway:** Behaviours required at work may not be easily transferred to family or personal roles.
4. **Boundary pathway:** Digital communication may make it difficult to psychologically detach from work.
5. **Resource pathway:** Support, autonomy, income and personal coping resources may protect employees from the effects of demanding work.

Research on work-to-family conflict has reported consequences across work-related, non-work-related and stress-related domains, indicating that conflict between occupational and personal roles can have widespread effects. A recent Indian study also reported a significant negative correlation between perceived stress and work-life balance among working professionals, suggesting that higher perceived stress was associated with poorer balance. Since findings may differ across occupations, organizations and samples, further research among corporate employees in India remains warranted.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Role theory

Role theory proposes that individuals occupy multiple social roles, each associated with expectations, duties and behavioural requirements. Employees may simultaneously occupy the roles of worker, spouse, parent, child, friend, caregiver and community member. When role expectations are compatible, individuals may experience harmony. When demands are incompatible or exceed available resources, role conflict may occur.

Work life balance can therefore be understood as the successful management of multiple roles. Work stress may increase when the individual perceives that one role cannot be fulfilled without compromising another. For example, an employee who must remain at work after hours may miss an important family responsibility. The resulting guilt, criticism or conflict may contribute to psychological stress.

Work-family conflict theory

Work-family conflict theory explains that conflict occurs when pressures from work and family roles are mutually incompatible. Conflict can be bidirectional: work may interfere with family life, and family life may interfere with work. Time, strain and behaviour are commonly identified as mechanisms through which conflict occurs.

Although the current study uses the broader term work life balance, work-family conflict remains relevant because family responsibilities are a major part of non-work life for many employees. The broader framework also includes employees who may not have family responsibilities but may experience conflict involving health, education, leisure, social relationships or personal development.

Spillover theory

Spillover theory suggests that experiences in one domain may influence experiences in another. Negative emotions, fatigue and tension generated at work may spill over into personal life. Similarly, family conflict or personal stress may spill over into the workplace. Positive experiences may also spill over; for example, supportive relationships or personal achievement may improve mood and work performance.

Spillover may be emotional, cognitive, behavioural or physiological. An employee who remains preoccupied with workplace problems during family time is experiencing cognitive spillover. An employee who becomes irritable at home after a difficult workday is experiencing emotional spillover.

Boundary theory

Boundary theory focuses on how individuals create, maintain and negotiate boundaries between work and personal life. Some employees prefer segmentation, keeping work and personal life separate. Others prefer integration, allowing the two domains to overlap. Neither style is universally superior; the effect depends on the individual's preferences and the work environment.

Corporate technologies may weaken boundaries by enabling work communication at any time and in any location. Employees who prefer separation may experience greater stress when they are expected to respond during personal time. Employees who prefer integration may benefit from flexibility but may also

find it difficult to disengage from work.

Conservation of Resources theory

Conservation of Resources theory proposes that individuals strive to acquire, protect and preserve valued resources. Resources include time, energy, health, income, social support, self-esteem, autonomy and employment security. Stress occurs when resources are threatened, lost or insufficiently replenished.

From this perspective, poor work life balance may represent the depletion of personal resources. Long working hours can reduce sleep and energy, while work-home conflict can consume emotional resources. Adequate work life balance may help employees recover resources and reduce stress. Organizational support, flexible schedules and autonomy may function as resources that protect employees from excessive demands.

Job Demands–Resources model

The Job Demands–Resources model classifies workplace characteristics into job demands and job resources. Job demands are physical, psychological, social or organizational aspects of work that require sustained effort and may therefore involve physiological or psychological costs. Job resources help employees achieve work goals, reduce demands and stimulate motivation.

In the present study, high workload, long hours, role conflict and emotional demands may function as job demands. Supervisor support, coworker support, autonomy, flexible work arrangements and organizational policies may function as job resources. The model proposes that excessive demands are related to strain, whereas resources support motivation and well-being. It is particularly useful for understanding why two employees exposed to similar workloads may experience different levels of stress. The Job Demands–Resources model can also explain how work life balance may act as a personal or contextual resource. When employees are able to meet personal needs, recover adequately and maintain supportive relationships, they may possess greater capacity to manage work demands. When balance is poor, their resources may become depleted and work stress may increase.

Transactional model of stress and coping

The transactional model developed by Lazarus and Folkman views stress as a transaction between the individual and the environment. Employees first appraise whether a situation is irrelevant, beneficial, threatening or harmful. They then appraise whether they possess resources to manage the situation. Coping responses may be problem-focused, emotion-focused or avoidant.

For example, an employee facing an urgent project may appraise the demand as a manageable challenge if adequate time, autonomy and support are available. The same demand may be appraised as threatening if the employee is already exhausted and has significant personal responsibilities. Thus, objective work conditions and subjective appraisal interact in producing stress.

ORGANIZATIONAL AND PERSONAL FACTORS INFLUENCING WORK LIFE BALANCE

The relationship between work life balance and work stress is influenced by several factors.

Working hours

Long hours reduce time available for sleep and personal responsibilities. Irregular shifts and night work may also disrupt biological rhythms and family routines. The impact of hours depends not only on their duration but also on predictability and employee control.

Workload

Excessive workload may produce fatigue, reduced concentration and emotional exhaustion. It may also compel employees to continue working after formal office hours.

Job control

Employees who have control over when, where and how work is completed may manage competing responsibilities more effectively. Low control may increase helplessness and stress.

Supervisor support

Supportive supervisors may help employees prioritize tasks, negotiate deadlines and use leave without fear of negative evaluation. Unsupportive supervision may intensify work-home conflict.

Organizational policies

Policies concerning flexible work, parental leave, health support, employee assistance, reasonable working hours and remote work may influence perceived balance. However, policies are effective only when employees can use them without stigma or career disadvantage.

Social support

Support from family, colleagues and supervisors can provide emotional assistance, practical help and reassurance. Social support may reduce the effects of stress and improve coping.

Job security

Employees who perceive their employment as insecure may accept excessive work demands and avoid expressing concerns. Job insecurity can therefore influence both work stress and work life balance.

Individual differences

Personality, coping style, resilience, perfectionism, personal values and boundary preferences may influence how employees experience the same work environment. Individual differences should not be used to place responsibility solely on employees; organizational conditions remain important determinants of well-being.

Family and caregiving responsibilities

Employees who care for children, older adults or family members may experience greater demands outside work. The relationship between work and stress may therefore differ according to family structure and caregiving responsibilities.

WORK LIFE BALANCE AND MENTAL HEALTH

Work life balance is closely connected with mental health because it influences recovery, social connection, self-care and emotional regulation. Adequate recovery from work helps individuals restore energy and prepare for future demands. Inadequate recovery may lead to persistent fatigue and irritability. Poor balance may be associated with:

- Emotional exhaustion.
- Anxiety and persistent worry.
- Depressed mood.
- Sleep disturbance.
- Reduced concentration.
- Irritability and interpersonal conflict.
- Decreased job satisfaction.
- Reduced organizational commitment.
- Absenteeism and intention to leave.
- Burnout and reduced performance.

The relationship should not be interpreted as meaning that poor work life balance automatically causes a mental disorder. Rather, it may function as one psychosocial risk factor among several. Mental health

outcomes are influenced by personal history, social support, financial conditions, organizational climate and access to professional care.

The World Health Organization emphasizes that healthy work can support mental health by providing livelihood, purpose, achievement, confidence and positive relationships. At the same time, psychosocial risks such as excessive workloads, long hours, limited support and conflicting home-work demands can threaten mental health. Therefore, the study of work life balance is relevant not only to employee satisfaction but also to occupational mental health.

WORK LIFE BALANCE IN THE INDIAN CORPORATE CONTEXT

India's corporate workforce is diverse in terms of age, gender, region, language, family structure, employment sector and work arrangement. Employees may work in multinational companies, domestic corporations, start-ups, business-process organizations, financial institutions or technology firms. These organizations may differ substantially in work culture, job security, working hours and employee benefits. Indian corporate employees may experience particular challenges related to:

- Long commuting time in metropolitan cities.
- Relocation away from family support systems.
- Expectations of extended availability.
- Multigenerational family responsibilities.
- Dual-earner households.
- Childcare and elder-care demands.
- Competition for promotion and recognition.
- Economic pressure and job insecurity.
- Global clients and time-zone differences.
- Hybrid work and digital communication.
- Social expectations concerning gender and family roles.

These factors make it important to study work life balance in the Indian context rather than relying exclusively on findings from other countries. Work arrangements and cultural expectations differ across societies. A workplace practice that supports balance in one setting may have a different effect in another setting.

Recent Indian research has highlighted work stress, burnout and work life balance as interconnected concerns. A 2026 bibliometric review of Indian workplace research identified excessive workload, ineffective leadership, limited autonomy, work-life balance, organizational culture, support systems and coping mechanisms as important themes in stress and burnout research. While such reviews provide a useful overview, primary studies are still required to examine relationships within specific employee populations.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

The proposed study is needed for several reasons.

First, work stress is an important occupational and psychological concern. Employees who experience persistent stress may face emotional, cognitive, behavioural and physical consequences. Stress can also affect organizational outcomes such as performance, absenteeism, engagement and turnover.

Second, work life balance is relevant to the daily functioning of employees. It influences whether employees can meet professional requirements while maintaining health, family relationships, personal

interests and recovery. A lack of balance may be experienced even when an employee does not meet clinical criteria for a mental-health condition.

Third, the Indian corporate sector contains a large and diverse workforce exposed to fast-paced work, digital connectivity and changing employment arrangements. Research focused specifically on this population can provide contextually relevant findings.

Fourth, the relationship between the variables may help organizations identify potentially modifiable factors. If poor work life balance is associated with higher work stress, organizations may consider interventions involving workload management, supervisor training, flexible scheduling, employee assistance and boundary-supportive communication.

Fifth, many studies examine work life balance or work stress separately. A correlational study examining both variables together can clarify the direction and strength of their association within the selected sample.

Sixth, the study may have relevance for psychologists, human-resource professionals and organizational leaders. Psychology professionals can contribute to assessment, employee counselling, stress-management programs, preventive interventions and organizational policy development.

Seventh, the study may contribute to evidence-based practice. Workplace well-being programs should not rely only on general assumptions. Data from employees can help organizations identify whether perceived balance and stress are related and whether certain demographic or work-related groups require additional support.

STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The study will assess employees' perceived work life balance and level of work stress and determine whether a statistically significant relationship exists between the two variables. The study will not attempt to establish causation. Instead, it will examine the degree to which the variables are associated within the selected sample.

AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to examine the relationship between work life balance and work stress among corporate employees in India.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are:

1. To assess the level of work life balance among corporate employees in India.
2. To assess the level of work stress among corporate employees in India.
3. To determine the relationship between work life balance and work stress among corporate employees.
4. To examine whether work life balance is significantly associated with work stress in the selected sample.
5. To explore whether selected demographic variables, such as age, gender, marital status, work experience, work sector and work arrangement, are related to work life balance and work stress, if included in the final design.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study may be guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the level of work life balance among corporate employees in India?
2. What is the level of work stress among corporate employees in India?
3. Is there a significant relationship between work life balance and work stress?
4. Is the relationship between work life balance and work stress positive or negative?
5. Do selected demographic or work-related variables influence work life balance or work stress?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Saya (2024)

Author/Year: Saya, A. (2024).

Purpose: To examine the relationship between stress and work life balance among private-sector employees in Surat, Gujarat, India.

Sample: 60 employees aged 21–35 years working in the private sector.

Variables: Stress and work life balance.

Measures: Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) and Work Life Balance Scale.

Methodology: Quantitative, correlational design; data were analysed to examine the association between the two variables.

Key findings: The study reported no statistically significant relationship between stress and work life balance in the selected sample.

Limitations reported: The study used a small sample of 60 participants and focused on a specific age group and location, which may limit generalizability.

Relevance to present study: This study is directly relevant because it used the same pair of constructs and similar measures as the present research. Its non-significant finding highlights the need to examine the relationship in different corporate samples and with adequate sample size.

Saya, A. (2024). Relationship between stress and work life balance. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 12(2), 4762–4768.

Gore (2024)

Author/Year: Gore, M. (2024).

Purpose: To explore the loss of work life balance and experiences of stress and anxiety among professionals working from home in a western Indian city.

Sample: Professionals working from home in a western Indian city.

Variables: Work life balance, stress, anxiety, remote work.

Measures: Standardized self-report measures of work life balance, stress and anxiety.

Methodology: Quantitative, exploratory survey-based study.

Key findings: The study found that loss of work life balance was associated with experiences of stress and anxiety among remote-working professionals.

Limitations reported: The study was exploratory and focused on professionals working from home in one city, limiting generalizability to office-based or hybrid employees.

Relevance to present study: This study supports the relevance of examining work life balance and stress in the Indian context, particularly in light of changing work arrangements. It also highlights the need to include employees across different work arrangements in future research.

Gore, M. (2024). Loss of work-life balance, experience of stress and anxiety among professionals working from home: An exploratory study in a western Indian city. *International Journal of Occupational Safety*

and Health, 14(3), 374–383.

Singh (2024)

Author/Year: Singh, S. (2024).

Purpose: To examine the relationship and effect of work life balance and stress on job performance among married working women in private academic institutions in the National Capital Region (NCR).

Sample: Married working women employed in private academic institutions in NCR.

Variables: Work life balance, stress, job performance.

Measures: Standardized scales for work life balance, stress and job performance.

Methodology: Quantitative, correlational and regression-based design.

Key findings: Higher stress and greater work life imbalance were associated with lower job performance. The study found that work life balance and stress significantly affected job performance.

Limitations reported: The sample was restricted to married women in private academic institutions, which limits generalizability to other employee groups.

Relevance to present study: This study is relevant because it demonstrates that work life balance and stress are meaningfully related to employee outcomes. However, it focuses on academic employees rather than corporate employees, supporting the need for research in corporate settings.

Singh, S. (2024). The experiences of work-life balance, job performance and stress among married working women in private academic institutions. *International Journal of Business and Globalisation*.

Kaur and colleagues (2023)

Author/Year: Kaur, P., Dhir, A., Singh, N., Sahu, G., & Almotairi, M. (2023).

Purpose: To examine how techno-stressors affect employees' work life balance and turnover intention through burnout, using the Job Demands–Resources theory.

Sample: 528 employees from Indian information technology companies.

Variables: Techno-stress, burnout, work life balance, turnover intention, psychological capital.

Measures: Standardized self-report scales for techno-stress, burnout, work life balance, turnover intention and psychological capital.

Methodology: Quantitative, time-lagged survey design; structural equation modelling was used to test mediation and moderation effects.

Key findings: Burnout mediated the relationship between techno-stress and work life balance. Psychological capital moderated the impact of techno-stress on burnout.

Limitations reported: The study focused on IT employees and used self-report measures, which may limit generalizability to other sectors.

Relevance to present study: This study is relevant because it uses an Indian corporate sample and applies the Job Demands–Resources perspective. It supports the idea that work-related demands and strain can influence work life balance, which is central to the present research.

Kaur, P., Dhir, A., Singh, N., Sahu, G., & Almotairi, M. (2023). Modeling the impact of techno-stress and burnout on employees' work-life balance and turnover intention: A job demands-resources theory perspective. *Journal of Employment Counseling*, 60(3), 119–135.

Hayman (2005)

Author/Year: Hayman, J. R. (2005).

Purpose: To develop and psychometrically evaluate an instrument designed to measure work life balance among employees.

Sample: Employees in administrative work settings.

Variables: Work life balance, including work interference with personal life, personal life interference with work and work–personal life enhancement.

Measures: Work Life Balance Scale (WLBS), consisting of 15 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale.

Methodology: Psychometric evaluation using factor analysis and reliability testing.

Key findings: The scale demonstrated acceptable validity and reliability. Reported Cronbach's alpha values were .93 for work interference with personal life, .85 for personal life interference with work and .69 for work–personal life enhancement.

Limitations reported: The original validation was conducted in an administrative work setting, which may limit direct generalizability to all corporate sectors.

Relevance to present study: This is an essential original scale-development study because the present study uses Hayman's Work Life Balance Scale. It provides the conceptual and psychometric foundation for measuring work life balance in the present research.

Hayman, J. R. (2005). Psychometric assessment of an instrument designed to measure work life balance. *Research and Practice in Human Resource Management*, 13(1), 85–91.

Cohen, Kamarck and Mermelstein (1983)

Author/Year: Cohen, S., Kamarck, T., & Mermelstein, R. (1983).

Purpose: To develop a global measure of perceived stress that assesses the degree to which situations in one's life are appraised as stressful.

Sample: Three samples: two college student samples and one community smoking-cessation sample.

Variables: Perceived stress, appraisal, coping.

Measures: Perceived Stress Scale (PSS), originally 14 items; later shortened to PSS-10.

Methodology: Psychometric development and validation using reliability and validity analyses.

Key findings: The PSS demonstrated acceptable reliability and validity as a global measure of perceived stress. The PSS-10 is widely used and includes four reverse-scored items.

Limitations reported: The original validation samples were not corporate employees, so researchers using the PSS-10 in occupational settings should clearly describe any work-focused adaptation.

Relevance to present study: This is an essential original scale-development study because the present study uses the PSS-10 to assess perceived work-related stress. It provides the psychometric basis for measuring stress in the selected sample.

Cohen, S., Kamarck, T., & Mermelstein, R. (1983). A global measure of perceived stress. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 24(4), 385–396.

CRITICAL REVIEW

The reviewed studies collectively suggest that work life balance and work stress are related but not always in a simple or uniform manner. Most studies support the idea that poorer work life balance is associated with higher stress or strain, while better balance is associated with lower stress. However, Saya (2024) reported no statistically significant relationship between stress and work life balance in a small Indian private-sector sample, indicating that the relationship may vary according to sample characteristics, measurement approach and contextual factors.

A similarity across the studies is the use of quantitative, self-report survey designs. This approach is practical for examining perceptions of work life balance and stress, but it also means that findings may be influenced by social desirability, recall bias and response style. The studies also differ in their samples

and contexts. Kaur et al. (2023) focused on Indian IT employees, Gore (2024) focused on remote-working professionals, Singh (2024) focused on married women in academic institutions, and Saya (2024) focused on young private-sector employees in Surat. These differences make direct comparison difficult but also highlight the importance of studying corporate employees across sectors and work arrangements.

The reviewed studies also differ in their theoretical framing. Kaur et al. (2023) used the Job Demands–Resources theory and examined burnout as a mediator, whereas Saya (2024) and Gore (2024) focused more directly on the association between work life balance and stress or anxiety. This difference is important because work life balance may not only be directly related to stress; it may also be influenced by job demands, burnout, organizational support and personal resources. Therefore, the present study should interpret correlation carefully and avoid claiming causation.

The original scale-development studies by Hayman (2005) and Cohen et al. (1983) provide strong measurement foundations for the present research. Hayman’s scale captures both conflict and enhancement between work and personal life, while the PSS-10 measures the degree to which situations are appraised as stressful. Using these established instruments improves comparability with prior research and supports the psychometric quality of the present study.

RESEARCH GAP

Existing literature indicates that work life balance and work stress are important variables in employee well-being and organizational functioning. Studies have shown that work demands, burnout, remote work and work-home conflict can influence work life balance and stress. International frameworks also identify workload, long or inflexible hours, limited control, inadequate support and home-work conflict as psychosocial risks.

However, several gaps remain. First, findings are mixed; Saya (2024) reported no significant relationship between stress and work life balance, while other studies suggest a meaningful association. This indicates that more research is needed in different Indian corporate samples. Second, many existing studies focus on specific groups such as IT employees, remote workers, academic employees or married women, rather than a broader corporate employee population. Third, the increasing use of hybrid work and digital communication may alter the relationship between work life balance and stress, making current evidence necessary.

The present study addresses this gap by examining the relationship between work life balance and work stress among corporate employees in India using Hayman’s Work Life Balance Scale and the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10). Its correlational design can provide evidence regarding the direction and strength of the association in the selected sample.

NEED FOR THE PRESENT STUDY

The present study is needed because work life balance and work stress are directly relevant to employee well-being, performance and organizational functioning. Corporate employees in India may face long working hours, digital connectivity, competitive performance expectations, commuting demands, family responsibilities and changing work arrangements. These factors make it important to examine how work life balance and work stress are related in this population.

The study will use two validated instruments:

- Hayman’s Work Life Balance Scale (15 items) to measure work life balance.
- Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10) to measure perceived work-related stress.

The findings may contribute to psychological research, occupational-health practice, employee counselling and organizational policy development. If a significant negative relationship is observed, organizations may consider interventions involving workload management, flexible scheduling, supervisor training, employee assistance and stress-prevention policies. If the relationship is weak or non-significant, the findings may indicate that other variables—such as job demands, organizational support, job control, personality, coping or job insecurity—should be examined.

METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research methodology used to examine the relationship between work life balance and work stress among corporate employees in India. It includes the research approach, design, variables, hypotheses, sample, sampling technique, inclusion and exclusion criteria, measures, procedure, scoring, statistical analysis, ethical considerations and limitations.

RESEARCH APPROACH

The present study used a **quantitative research approach** because the variables—work life balance and work stress—were measured numerically through standardized self-report scales. A quantitative approach is appropriate when the researcher aims to measure variables, test hypotheses and examine statistical relationships.

Quantitative research allows the researcher to collect structured data from a relatively large number of participants and analyse the data using statistical methods. In the present study, participants' responses to the Work Life Balance Scale and the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10) were converted into numerical scores for analysis.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The study used a **non-experimental, cross-sectional, correlational research design**.

- **Non-experimental:** The researcher did not manipulate participants' work conditions, work life balance or stress levels.
- **Cross-sectional:** Data were collected from participants at one point in time.
- **Correlational:** The study examined the direction and strength of the relationship between work life balance and work stress.

A correlational design is appropriate because the purpose of the study is to determine whether work life balance and work stress are statistically associated. The study does not establish causation. Therefore, it cannot be concluded that poor work life balance causes work stress or that work stress causes poor work life balance.

VARIABLES OF THE STUDY

Independent variable

Work life balance was treated as the independent variable or predictor variable.

Work life balance refers to the employee's perceived ability to manage work responsibilities and personal-life responsibilities, including family, health, leisure, social relationships and personal needs.

Dependent variable

Work stress was treated as the dependent variable or outcome variable.

Work stress refers to the psychological strain perceived by employees in response to job demands, workload, time pressure, role expectations, interpersonal conditions, limited control and other workplace factors.

Demographic variables

The following demographic and work-related variables were collected:

- Age.
- Gender.
- Marital status.
- Educational qualification.
- Job level.
- Industry or sector.
- Type of organization.
- Work arrangement.
- Average working hours per week.
- Work experience.
- Caregiving responsibilities.

These variables were collected to describe the sample and, where appropriate, examine group differences in work life balance and work stress.

HYPOTHESES

Null hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant relationship between work life balance and work stress among corporate employees in India.

Alternative hypothesis

H₁: There is a significant relationship between work life balance and work stress among corporate employees in India.

Directional hypothesis

If higher scores on Hayman's Work Life Balance Scale indicate better work life balance and higher scores on the PSS-10 indicate higher perceived stress, the directional hypothesis may be stated as:

H₁: There is a significant negative relationship between work life balance and work stress among corporate employees in India.

This means that higher work life balance is expected to be associated with lower work stress.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Work life balance

For the purpose of the present study, work life balance refers to the employee's perceived ability to manage work responsibilities and personal-life responsibilities, including family, health, leisure, social relationships and personal needs, with acceptable levels of time balance, involvement balance and satisfaction.

The score was obtained using Hayman's Work Life Balance Scale.

Work stress

For the purpose of the present study, work stress refers to the psychological strain perceived by employees in response to job demands, workload, time pressure, role expectations, interpersonal conditions, limited

control and other workplace factors.

The score was obtained using the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10), introduced with a work-focused instruction.

Corporate employee

A corporate employee refers to an adult employee currently working in a formally structured corporate organization in India, whether in a full-time, part-time, hybrid or remote role, according to the inclusion criteria established for the study.

Correlation study

A correlation study is a quantitative research design used to examine the direction and strength of association between two or more variables without manipulating them.

SAMPLE

The sample for the present study consisted of corporate employees currently working in India.

The sample included male and female employees from different corporate sectors, such as:

- Information technology.
- Banking and financial services.
- Consulting.
- Telecommunications.
- Manufacturing.
- Retail and e-commerce.
- Healthcare and pharmaceuticals.
- Education technology.
- Media and entertainment.

The final sample size was determined based on the feasibility of data collection, availability of participants and the statistical requirements of the study.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The study used **convenience sampling**.

Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling technique in which participants are selected because they are easily accessible to the researcher. In the present study, participants were recruited through professional contacts, social media platforms, WhatsApp groups, LinkedIn, email networks and online survey links.

Convenience sampling was chosen because it is practical, time-efficient and suitable for a Master's-level research project. However, it may limit the generalizability of the findings to all corporate employees in India.

INCLUSION CRITERIA

Participants were included in the study if they met the following criteria:

1. Participants were aged 18 years or above.
2. Participants were currently employed in a corporate organization in India.
3. Participants were working in a full-time, part-time, hybrid or remote role.
4. Participants had completed at least six months of employment in their current organization.
5. Participants were able to understand and respond to the questionnaire in English.

6. Participants voluntarily agreed to participate in the study.

EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Participants were excluded from the study if they met any of the following criteria:

1. Participants were not currently employed.
2. Participants were retired.
3. Participants had resigned from their organization and were not currently working.
4. Participants had less than six months of work experience in their current organization.
5. Participants were on extended leave and not currently working.
6. Participants were unable to understand the language of the questionnaire.
7. Participants did not provide informed consent.

MEASURES

WORK LIFE BALANCE SCALE (HAYMAN, 2005)

Author: Hayman, J. R. (2005).

Purpose: To measure work life balance among employees.

Number of items: 15.

Response format: 5-point Likert scale.

Scoring: Higher scores indicate better work life balance.

Dimensions measured:

1. **Work interference with personal life (WIPL):** The extent to which work demands interfere with personal life.
2. **Personal life interference with work (PLIW):** The extent to which personal or family demands interfere with work.
3. **Work–personal life enhancement (WPLE):** The extent to which work and personal life positively support each other.

Sample items:

- “I am able to balance my work and personal life.”
- “My work schedule allows me to fulfil my personal and family responsibilities.”
- “I have enough time for my personal interests and hobbies despite my work demands.”

Reliability: In the original psychometric evaluation, Cronbach’s alpha values were .93 for work interference with personal life, .85 for personal life interference with work and .69 for work–personal life enhancement.

Hayman, J. R. (2005). Psychometric assessment of an instrument designed to measure work life balance. *Research and Practice in Human Resource Management*, 13(1), 85–91.

PERCEIVED STRESS SCALE (PSS-10)

Authors: Cohen, S., Kamarck, T., & Mermelstein, R. (1983).

Purpose: To measure the degree to which situations in one’s life are appraised as stressful.

Number of items: 10.

Response format: 5-point Likert scale.

Scoring: Higher scores indicate higher perceived stress.

Reverse-scored items: Items 4, 5, 7 and 8 are reverse-scored.

Work-focused instruction used in the present study:

“In the past one month, how often have you felt or thought the following because of your work?”

Sample items:

- “I felt upset because of something that happened unexpectedly at work.”
- “I felt unable to control the important things at work.”
- “I felt nervous and stressed because of my work.”
- “I felt confident about my ability to handle my work responsibilities.” (reverse-scored)

Reliability: The PSS-10 has adequate test–retest reliability over two- and four-week periods in adult samples.

Cohen, S., Kamarck, T., & Mermelstein, R. (1983). A global measure of perceived stress. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 24(4), 385–396.

PROCEDURE

The following procedure was followed for data collection:

1. **Ethical approval:** Permission was obtained from the relevant department or institutional ethics committee before data collection.
2. **Pilot testing:** The questionnaire was pilot-tested with 5–10 participants to check clarity, time taken and any confusing items.
3. **Participant recruitment:** Participants were recruited through professional contacts, social media platforms, WhatsApp groups, LinkedIn, email networks and online survey links.
4. **Informed consent:** Participants were provided with an informed consent form describing the purpose of the study, voluntary participation, confidentiality, right to withdraw and approximate time required.
5. **Data collection:** Participants completed the questionnaire through a Google Form. The form included demographic information, Hayman’s Work Life Balance Scale and the PSS-10.
6. **Confidentiality:** No personally identifying information (such as name or employee ID) was collected. Responses were coded and stored securely.
7. **Data export:** Responses were exported from Google Forms to Google Sheets and then downloaded as CSV or Excel files for analysis.
8. **Data analysis:** Descriptive statistics and Pearson’s product-moment correlation were used to analyse the data.

SCORING**Work Life Balance Scale**

- Each item is rated on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).
- Higher total or mean scores indicate better work life balance.
- No reverse-scored items are included in this short version.

Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10)

- Each item is rated on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (never) to 5 (very often).
- Items 4, 5, 7 and 8 are reverse-scored.
- Reverse-scored item score = 6 – original score.
- Total PSS score is computed by summing all 10 items after reverse scoring.
- Higher total scores indicate higher perceived work-related stress.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The following statistical analyses were used:

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Descriptive statistics were computed to summarize the sample and the main variables. These included:

- Frequency and percentage for categorical variables.
- Mean and standard deviation for continuous variables.
- Minimum and maximum scores.
- Skewness and kurtosis to check normality.

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

Cronbach's alpha was computed for both scales to assess internal consistency reliability in the present sample.

CORRELATION ANALYSIS

Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between work life balance and work stress.

- A negative correlation indicates that higher work life balance is associated with lower work stress.
- A positive correlation indicates that higher work life balance is associated with higher work stress.
- A non-significant correlation indicates no statistically significant relationship in the selected sample.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical conduct was maintained throughout the study. The following ethical principles were followed:

1. **Informed consent:** Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and voluntarily agreed to participate.
2. **Voluntary participation:** Participants were informed that participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time.
3. **Confidentiality:** No personally identifying information was collected. Responses were coded and stored securely.
4. **Anonymity:** The Google Form did not collect name, email or employee ID unless ethically required.
5. **Right to withdraw:** Participants were informed that they could skip any question or discontinue participation at any time.
6. **Data security:** Data were stored securely and used only for research purposes.
7. **Avoidance of harm:** Participants were informed that questions about stress may cause mild discomfort and that they may seek professional support if needed.

LIMITATIONS

The study has the following limitations:

1. The study used a cross-sectional design, which does not permit causal inference.
2. The study relied on self-report measures, which may be influenced by social desirability and response bias.
3. The study used convenience sampling, which may limit generalizability to all corporate employees in India.

4. The study focused on perceived work life balance and perceived work stress, not clinical diagnoses or physiological measures.
5. The study may not capture all possible factors influencing work life balance and work stress, such as organizational culture, leadership style or job insecurity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results of the data analysis conducted to examine the relationship between work life balance and work stress among corporate employees in India. A total of 67 responses were included in the final analysis after data screening. Descriptive statistics, reliability analysis and Pearson's product-moment correlation were used to analyze the data.

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

The final sample consisted of 67 corporate employees. Among them, 35 participants (52.2%) were female and 32 participants (47.8%) were male. The majority of participants were married (49, 73.1%), while 18 participants (26.9%) were single.

The largest age group was 25–34 years (25 participants, 37.3%), followed by 35–44 years (17 participants, 25.4%), 45–54 years (10 participants, 14.9%), 18–24 years (10 participants, 14.9%) and 55 years and above (5 participants, 7.5%).

Regarding work arrangement, most participants reported hybrid work (43, 64.2%), followed by fully office-based work (21, 31.3%) and fully remote work (3, 4.5%). The majority reported working 41–48 hours per week (33, 49.3%), while 26 participants (38.8%) reported working up to 40 hours per week, 4 participants (6.0%) reported 49–56 hours and 4 participants (6.0%) reported more than 56 hours.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for work life balance and work stress.

TABLE 1

VARIABLE	Work life balance	Work stress
Mean	3.22	27.16
SD	0.64	4.32
Minimum	1.40	14.00
Maximum	4.80	44.00
Skewness	-0.75	0.62
Kurtosis	1.22	3.09

The mean work life balance score was 3.22 (SD = 0.64), indicating that participants, on average, reported a moderate level of work life balance. The mean work stress score was 27.16 (SD = 4.32), indicating a moderate level of perceived work-related stress among the participants.

The work life balance scores ranged from 1.40 to 4.80, while work stress scores ranged from 14.00 to 44.00. The skewness and kurtosis values suggest that the distributions were acceptable for correlation analysis.

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

Cronbach's alpha was calculated to assess the internal consistency reliability of both scales. TABLE 2 – Reliability Analysis (N = 67)

The Work Life Balance Scale showed good internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = 0.86). The PSS- 10 showed acceptable internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = 0.73).

CORRELATION ANALYSIS

Pearson's product-moment correlation was conducted to examine the relationship between work life balance and work stress.

TABLE 3
Pearson's Correlation Between Work Life Balance and Work Stress (N = 67)

SCALE	NUMBER OF ITEMS	CRONBACH'S ALPHA
Work Life Balance Scale (Hayman, 2005)	5	0.86
Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10)	10	0.73

VARIABLES		
Work Life Balance	—	
Work Stress	-0.485	—

The results showed a statistically significant negative relationship between work life balance and work stress, $r(65) = -.485$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [-.69, -.24]. This indicates that higher work life balance was associated with lower work stress among corporate employees in the present sample.

The correlation coefficient of -.485 represents a moderate negative relationship. Therefore, employees who reported better work life balance tended to report lower levels of work-related stress.

ONE-WAY ANOVA: WORK LIFE BALANCE BY WORKING HOURS

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to examine whether work life balance differed across average weekly working-hour groups.

Table 4
One-Way ANOVA for Work Life Balance Across Working Hours (N = 67)

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P	Eta squared
Between groups	6.69	3	2.23	7.05	<.001	.25
Within groups	19.93	63	0.32			
Total	26.62	66				

Result: There was a statistically significant difference in work life balance across average weekly working-hour groups, $F(3,63) = 7.05$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .25$.

This indicates that working hours accounted for approximately 25% of the variance in work life balance. Employees with different weekly working hours reported different levels of work life balance.

ONE-WAY ANOVA: WORK STRESS BY WORKING HOURS

A one-way ANOVA was also conducted to examine whether work stress differed across average weekly working-hour groups.

Table 5
One-Way ANOVA for Work Stress Across Working Hours (N = 67)

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P	Eta squared
Between group	43.43	3	14.48	0.77	.516	.04
Within groups	1,187.77	63	18.85			
Total	1,231.19	66				

Result: There was no statistically significant difference in work stress across average weekly working-hour groups, $F(3,63) = 0.77$, $p = .516$, $\eta^2 = .04$.

This indicates that working hours accounted for approximately 25% of the variance in work life balance. Employees with different weekly working hours reported different levels of work life balance.

ANOVA FOR OTHER DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

The following ANOVAs were conducted to examine whether work life balance and work stress differed across age, gender, marital status and work arrangement.

WORK LIFE BALANCE

Variable	F	df	p	Result
Age	0.72	4, 62	.581	Not significant
Gender	2.72	1, 65	.104	Not significant
Marital status	1.02	1, 65	.317	Not significant
Work arrangement	1.89	2, 64	.160	Not significant
Working hours	7.05	3, 63	< .001	Significant

WORK STRESS

Variable	F	df	p	Result
Age	0.96	4, 62	.439	Not significant
Gender	1.19	1, 65	.279	Not significant
Marital status	1.49	1, 65	.227	Not significant
Work arrangement	2.51	2, 64	.089	Not significant
Working hours	0.77	3, 63	.516	Not significant

INTERPRETATION OF ANOVA RESULTS

The significant ANOVA result for **work life balance across working hours** suggests that employees with different weekly working-hour patterns reported different levels of work life balance. This is consistent with the idea that longer or less manageable working hours may reduce the time and energy available for

personal, family and leisure activities.

However, work stress did not differ significantly across working-hour groups. This may mean that factors other than working hours—such as workload, job control, supervisor support, role clarity, job insecurity or coping resources—may have a stronger influence on perceived work stress in this sample.

The non-significant results for age, gender, marital status and work arrangement indicate that, in this sample, these variables did not significantly differentiate employees' work life balance or work stress. These findings should be interpreted cautiously because some groups had small numbers of participants, particularly the fully remote work group and the higher working-hour categories.

DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses the findings of the present study in relation to the research objectives, hypotheses and existing literature. The study examined the relationship between work life balance and work stress among corporate employees in India. A total of 67 valid responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, Pearson's product-moment correlation and one-way ANOVA.

Overview of Findings

The main finding of the study was a statistically significant negative relationship between work life balance and work stress, $r(65) = -.485$, $p < .001$. This indicates that employees who reported higher work life balance also reported lower work stress, whereas employees who reported poorer work life balance tended to report higher work stress.

The mean work life balance score was 3.22 (SD = 0.64), suggesting that participants reported a moderate level of work life balance. The mean work stress score was 27.16 (SD = 4.32), indicating a moderate level of perceived work-related stress among the participants.

The Work Life Balance Scale showed good internal consistency, Cronbach's $\alpha = .86$, and the PSS-10 showed acceptable internal consistency, Cronbach's $\alpha = .73$. These results indicate that both measures were sufficiently reliable for use in the present sample.

Relationship Between Work Life Balance and Work Stress

The significant negative correlation supports the study's alternative hypothesis. It suggests that work life balance is meaningfully associated with work stress among corporate employees in India.

This finding is consistent with the theoretical framework of the study. According to Conservation of Resources theory, employees have limited time, energy and psychological resources. When work demands consume excessive resources, employees may have fewer resources available for personal, family and leisure activities. This may result in work-to-life conflict and higher perceived stress.

Similarly, the Job Demands–Resources model suggests that high job demands, such as workload, time pressure and long working hours, may contribute to strain. In contrast, resources such as autonomy, social support and recovery opportunities may help employees manage work demands more effectively. The present finding supports the idea that better work life balance may function as a protective resource associated with lower work stress.

The moderate strength of the correlation indicates that work life balance is an important factor associated with work stress, but it is not the only factor. Other variables, including workload, job control, supervisor support, organizational culture, job insecurity, coping style and personal responsibilities, may also influence work stress.

Comparison With Previous Research

The present finding is broadly consistent with previous research suggesting that poorer work life balance

is associated with higher stress or strain. Studies on work-to-family conflict have reported consequences across work-related, non-work-related and stress-related domains, indicating that conflict between occupational and personal roles can affect employee well-being.

The finding also aligns with research indicating that work demands, burnout and work-home conflict can influence work life balance. For example, Kaur et al. (2023) found that burnout mediated the relationship between techno-stress and work life balance among Indian IT employees. Although the present study did not measure burnout, its finding of a negative relationship between work life balance and work stress is consistent with the broader Job Demands–Resources perspective.

However, the present result differs from Saya (2024), who reported no statistically significant relationship between stress and work life balance in a smaller Indian private-sector sample. This difference may be due to differences in sample characteristics, sample size, geographical location, work sector and measurement procedures. The present study included 67 corporate employees from varied work arrangements and reported a moderate negative correlation.

Work Life Balance and Working Hours

The one-way ANOVA showed a statistically significant difference in work life balance across average weekly working-hour groups, $F(3,63) = 7.05, p < .001, \eta^2 = .25$. This suggests that employees with different weekly working hours reported different levels of work life balance.

This finding is understandable because working hours directly affect the amount of time available for sleep, family interaction, leisure, exercise and personal responsibilities. Employees working longer hours may have less time for recovery and personal activities, which may reduce their perceived work life balance.

However, work stress did not differ significantly across working-hour groups, $F(3,63) = 0.77, p = .516$. This suggests that working hours alone may not fully explain work stress. Employees with similar working hours may experience different levels of stress depending on workload, autonomy, supervisor support, role clarity, job insecurity and coping resources.

Therefore, while working hours appear important for work life balance, work stress may be influenced by a broader set of organizational and personal factors.

Demographic Differences

The ANOVA results showed no statistically significant differences in work life balance or work stress across age, gender, marital status or work arrangement.

For work life balance, no significant differences were found across age groups, $F(4,62) = 0.72, p = .581$; gender, $F(1,65) = 2.72, p = .104$; marital status, $F(1,65) = 1.02, p = .317$; or work arrangement, $F(2,64) = 1.89, p = .160$.

For work stress, no significant differences were found across age groups, $F(4,62) = 0.96, p = .439$; gender, $F(1,65) = 1.19, p = .279$; marital status, $F(1,65) = 1.49, p = .227$; or work arrangement, $F(2,64) = 2.51, p = .089$.

These findings suggest that, in the present sample, work life balance and work stress were not significantly different across the selected demographic groups. However, these results should be interpreted cautiously because some groups had small sample sizes, particularly the fully remote work group and the higher working-hour categories.

Implications of the Findings

The findings have several implications for employees, organizations, psychologists and human-resource professionals.

Implications for employees

Employees may benefit from recognizing the importance of maintaining boundaries between work and personal life. Setting realistic boundaries around after-hours communication, taking adequate breaks, using leave when needed and engaging in restorative activities may support better work life balance. However, employees should not be expected to manage work life balance alone. Organizational conditions, workload and workplace culture also play an important role.

Implications for organizations

The significant negative relationship between work life balance and work stress suggests that organizations may reduce work stress by supporting employees' work life balance. Possible organizational strategies include:

- Reviewing workload distribution and deadline feasibility.
- Monitoring after-hours communication.
- Encouraging employees to use leave.
- Providing predictable and flexible schedules where feasible.
- Training supervisors to support employee well-being.
- Increasing employee autonomy and job control.
- Providing employee assistance and counselling services.
- Developing clear procedures for addressing workplace conflict and harassment.

These interventions should focus on improving the design and management of work rather than placing the entire responsibility on employees.

Implications for Psychologists

Psychologists may use the findings to develop workplace assessments, psychoeducation, stress-management programs and employee counselling services. They may also help organizations distinguish between individual coping difficulties and systemic workplace problems.

Implications for Human-Resource Professionals

Human-resource professionals may use the findings to inform policies related to working hours, flexible work, leave utilization, employee engagement and retention. The findings suggest that work life balance should be considered an important component of employee well-being and organizational health.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings should be interpreted in light of the following limitations.

First, the study used a cross-sectional correlational design. Therefore, it cannot establish causation. It cannot be concluded that poor work life balance causes work stress or that work stress causes poor work life balance.

Second, the study used self-report measures. Responses may have been influenced by social desirability, recall bias or response style.

Third, the study used convenience sampling. Participants were recruited through professional contacts and online platforms. Therefore, the findings may not be generalizable to all corporate employees in India.

Fourth, the sample size was 67, which is adequate for a basic correlational analysis but modest for subgroup comparisons. Some demographic groups had small numbers of participants, particularly the fully remote work group and the higher working-hour categories.

Fifth, the study measured perceived work life balance and perceived work stress. It did not directly measure clinical anxiety, depression, burnout, physical health, organizational productivity or family

functioning.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research may address the limitations of the present study by using larger and more representative samples. Longitudinal designs may help examine whether poor work life balance predicts later work stress or whether work stress predicts later work life balance.

Future studies may also examine additional variables such as workload, job autonomy, supervisor support, organizational culture, job insecurity, coping strategies, resilience and burnout. Sector-specific studies may help identify whether the relationship differs across IT, banking, healthcare, manufacturing and other corporate sectors.

Researchers may also examine whether work life balance mediates or moderates the relationship between job demands and work stress. Such studies would provide a more detailed understanding of the mechanisms through which work life balance influences employee well-being.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY

The present study was conducted to examine the relationship between work life balance and work stress among corporate employees in India. The main objective was to determine whether employees who reported better work life balance also reported lower levels of work-related stress.

A quantitative, non-experimental, cross-sectional correlational research design was used. The sample consisted of 67 corporate employees currently working in India. Participants were selected through convenience sampling using professional contacts, social media platforms and online survey links. The sample included employees from different age groups, genders, marital statuses, work arrangements and working-hour categories.

Data were collected through a Google Form. The questionnaire included demographic and work-related information, Hayman's Work Life Balance Scale and the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10). The Work Life Balance Scale measured participants' perceived ability to manage work and personal-life responsibilities. The PSS-10 measured participants' perceived work-related stress during the previous month.

Before analysis, the data were screened for incomplete or ineligible responses. Descriptive statistics were calculated to summarize the sample and the main variables. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the internal consistency reliability of both scales. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between work life balance and work stress. One-way ANOVA was used to examine whether work life balance and work stress differed across selected demographic and work-related groups. The results showed that the mean work life balance score was 3.22 (SD = 0.64), indicating a moderate level of work life balance among participants. The mean work stress score was 27.16 (SD = 4.32), indicating a moderate level of perceived work-related stress.

Reliability analysis showed that both scales had acceptable internal consistency. The Work Life Balance Scale had Cronbach's alpha of .86, while the PSS-10 had Cronbach's alpha of .73.

Pearson's correlation revealed a statistically significant negative relationship between work life balance and work stress, $r(65) = -.485$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [-.69, -.24]. This indicates that higher work life balance was associated with lower work stress. In other words, employees who reported better balance between work and personal life tended to report lower levels of work-related stress.

The null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, the study found

a significant negative relationship between work life balance and work stress among corporate employees in India.

The one-way ANOVA showed a significant difference in work life balance across average weekly working-hour groups, $F(3,63) = 7.05$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .25$. This suggests that employees with different weekly working hours reported different levels of work life balance. However, work stress did not differ significantly across working-hour groups, $F(3,63) = 0.77$, $p = .516$.

No significant differences were found in work life balance or work stress across age, gender, marital status or work arrangement. These findings suggest that, in the present sample, work life balance and work stress were not significantly different across these demographic groups.

The findings support the theoretical view that work life balance may function as a protective resource associated with lower work stress. When employees have adequate time, energy and psychological resources to manage both work and personal responsibilities, they may experience less strain. Conversely, when work demands interfere with personal life, employees may experience higher stress.

The study has implications for employees, organizations, psychologists and human-resource professionals. Employees may benefit from maintaining healthy boundaries between work and personal life. Organizations may reduce work stress by supporting work life balance through workload management, flexible scheduling, supervisor training, employee assistance programs and boundary-supportive communication.

The study also has limitations. It used a cross-sectional correlational design, which does not establish causation. It relied on self-report measures and used convenience sampling. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted with caution and should not be generalized to all corporate employees in India.

Future research may use larger and more representative samples, longitudinal designs and additional variables such as workload, job autonomy, supervisor support, organizational culture, job insecurity, coping strategies and burnout. Such research may provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between work life balance and work stress among corporate employees

CONCLUSION:

The present study concluded that there is a significant negative relationship between work life balance and work stress among corporate employees in India. Higher work life balance was associated with lower work stress, while poorer work life balance was associated with higher work stress.

The findings suggest that work life balance is an important factor associated with employee well-being. Employees who are able to manage work responsibilities along with personal, family and leisure activities may experience lower levels of work-related stress.

The study also found that work life balance differed significantly across average weekly working-hour groups, indicating that working hours may influence employees' ability to maintain balance between work and personal life. However, work stress did not differ significantly across working-hour groups, suggesting that other factors may also influence work stress.

Overall, the present study highlights the importance of supporting work life balance in corporate settings. Organizations may benefit from creating supportive work environments that reduce excessive work demands, respect personal boundaries and promote employee recovery. Such efforts may help reduce work stress and improve employee well-being.

The study contributes to the limited India-specific literature on work life balance and work stress among corporate employees. Future research with larger samples, longitudinal designs and additional

organizational variables may further clarify the relationship between these important constructs.

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