

"An Empirical Study on the Relationship Between Work-Life Balance and Job Satisfaction Among University Faculty in Higher Education Institutions"

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ABSTRACT

Modern university instructors frequently experience difficulties in maintaining a healthy work-life balance due to their administrative, research, and instructional responsibilities. Stress makes you less happy and less satisfied with your job. The study looks at WLB and JS in higher education. In a quantitative study, 150 teachers from both public and private schools in Chennai filled out a standardized questionnaire. Surveys asked on work-life balance, job satisfaction, and big personal and professional problems. Regression and Pearson correlation showed the direction and strength of the JS-WLB link. Research shows that employees are happier when they have a good work-life balance. For faculty to remain healthy, they need assistance from their school. The study advises mental health programs, flexible hours, and equitable hiring practices. All of these things could help lower stress, make teachers happier at work, and keep them. The results support WLB initiatives in higher education and add to the conversation around occupational well-being. Universities with sustainable and gratifying employment are good for both professors and students.

Keywords: Work-life balance, job satisfaction, faculty well-being, higher education, institutional support.

INTRODUCTION

Faculty involvement in instruction, research, and institutional decision-making foster scholarly excellence in modern higher education. The changing academic environment, including rising research requirements, administrative responsibilities, and the need for digital teaching, has raised job pressures. These increased professional obligations sometimes hinder faculty work-life balance (WLB), affecting job satisfaction (JS) and institutional performance. In academic settings, when professional and personal boundaries blur, WLB is especially relevant. Academic professionals often work irregular hours, publish often, mentor students, and complete administrative responsibilities outside of work hours. In cultures like India, parental dictates and societal conventions add home responsibilities, causing academic professionals stress. Academic job satisfaction include emotional responses to workload allocation, institutional support systems, professional autonomy, career progression prospects, and workplace relationships. Faculty motivation, instructional performance, research output, and institution-wide faculty retention depend on optimal JS levels. research repeatedly show a

substantial association between WLB and JS in many professional domains, but sectoral research in higher education, especially in developing nations like India, are scarce. In post-pandemic universities, mixed instructional paradigms and distant work modes have redefined work mantras, making the research gap more important. This study analyses the WLB-JS connection among Indian university professors to fill this information gap. This study identifies the main problems and institutional support systems affecting faculty well-being to give evidence-based suggestions for tertiary education human resource policies and organizational initiatives.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Faculty members in higher education institutions encounter mounting pressures from their responsibilities in teaching, research, administrative tasks, and the need for digital adaptation. The increasing demands frequently hinder their capacity to sustain a healthy work-life balance. Consequently, numerous faculty members encounter stress, burnout, and a decrease in job satisfaction. The ability to manage work and personal obligations has a significant impact on job satisfaction, even though it is essential for faculty motivation, retention, and productivity. Nonetheless, the topic of work-life balance among university faculty, particularly in the Indian context, has not been extensively explored in empirical studies. Many institutions prioritize academic output and performance metrics, frequently neglecting the well-being of their academic personnel. In the absence of supportive policies and a flexible work environment, faculty might find it challenging to maintain engagement and satisfaction in their positions. This study explores the connection between work-life balance and job satisfaction among university faculty, with the goal of offering practical recommendations for enhancing institutional practices.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

This study holds significant importance as it addresses two critical dimensions of academic life—work-life balance and job satisfaction—within the context of higher education institutions. Faculty members are the pillars of quality education, innovation, and research. However, the growing academic workload, digital integration, and performance pressures often affect their ability to maintain personal well-being, which directly impacts their job satisfaction and professional effectiveness. Understanding the relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction is essential for developing institutional strategies that foster a healthier, more supportive work environment. The findings of this study will provide valuable insights for university administrators, policymakers, and human resource departments to implement faculty-friendly policies such as flexible schedules, workload redistribution, wellness programs, and professional development initiatives. Moreover, this research contributes to the limited literature in the Indian academic context, especially post-pandemic, where blurred work-life boundaries have become a growing concern. Enhancing faculty well-being ultimately leads to improved teaching quality, student outcomes, and institutional excellence.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Dellia Mila Vernia and et al (2022) in their work titled “The Work Life Balance of Teacher (Case Study of Teachers in Jabodetabek)” have collected data from 119 found that stress has negative relationship with satisfaction and work life balance has effect on the teachers’ job

satisfaction. Further found that there was the relationship between work life balance and work stress of the teachers.

Susanto P, and etal (2022) in their research found that job satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between work-life balance and job performance and when an FSSB interacts with work-life balance and job satisfaction, it moderates the relationship between work-life balance and job performance and job satisfaction.

Thilagavathy S. and Geetha S.N (2021) found that clearly opined that WLB has three major factors such as Individual factors, organizational factors, and social factors and reveals the importance and essentiality of the individual's ability to balance work and life.

D. Shobana and I. Siddiq (2021) authors have found that there was a negative relationship between WLB and satisfaction. Demographic factors are positively associated with WLB and few are negatively associated.

Odisa Alfred Mathews and et al (2021) Research has found that there was no difference in level of satisfaction among both male and female teachers. The good policies would enhance work life balance.

Hana Silaban and Meily Margaretha (2021) had an objective to explore the effect of work-life balance on job satisfaction and employee retention of the millennial generation employees in the city of Bandung, Indonesia. The authors were collected quantitative data from 196 employees through online questionnaire consisted of 42 questions. They found that there was an effect of work-life balance on job satisfaction.

Renato Lopes da Costa, and et al (2020) Authors were found that organizational environment positively affects or compromises the organization and job satisfaction and there is a positive and significant relationship between organizational commitment and job satisfaction

RESEARCH GAP

Though various studies have delved into work-life balance and job satisfaction separately in different professional fields, there is a void in empirical studies that deal with the interdependence of these two variables in an academic setting—specifically, in Indian universities. The majority of such studies are concentrated on corporate scenarios or on developed nations where institutional organization, cultural values, and the way work is anticipated differ considerably from India. Moreover, little empirical research has explored the influence of variables including gender, type of institution (public or private), workload of digital teaching, and administrative tasks on faculty members' capability of juggling work and personal life in the post-pandemic period. The recent trend towards blended and online instruction blurred even more professional and personal roles, but few have studied its consequences on faculty satisfaction at work This research attempts to bridge this gap by presenting recent, context-based information regarding the connection between job satisfaction and work-life balance of university staff in India.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To assess the level of work-life balance among faculty members in higher education institutions.

- To examine the relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction among faculty members.

HYPOTHESIS 1:

H₀ (Null Hypothesis):

There is no significant relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction among university faculty members.

H₁ (Alternative Hypothesis):

There is a significant relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction among university faculty members.

HYPOTHESIS 2:

H₀ (Null Hypothesis):

There is no significant difference in the prevalence and intensity of work-life balance between male and female employees in the insurance sector.

H₁ (Alternative Hypothesis):

There is a significant difference in the prevalence and intensity of work-life balance between male and female employees in the insurance sector.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

A quantitative research design was adopted to examine the relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction among university faculty members. The study used a structured survey questionnaire comprising three sections: demographic profile, work-life balance scale, and job satisfaction scale. All items were rated using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The study was conducted among 150 faculty members from both public and private universities in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure representation across key strata such as gender, age group, discipline, and type of institution. Primary data were collected through self-administered questionnaires, while secondary data were obtained from university reports, HR manuals, and academic literature. Statistical analysis was carried out using SPSS software. Techniques used include descriptive statistics for demographic profiling, independent t-tests and Pearson correlation explore the relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

| Demographic Variable | Categories | Frequency (N) | Percentage (%) |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Gender | Male | 82 | 55% |
| | Female | 68 | 45% |
| Age Group | 25 – 35 years | 44 | 29% |
| | 36 – 45 years | 61 | 41% |
| | 46 – 55 years | 33 | 22% |
| | Above 55 years | 12 | 8% |
| Marital Status | Single | 48 | 32% |
| | Married | 102 | 68% |
| Designation | Assistant Professor | 98 | 65% |
| | Associate Professor | 36 | 24% |
| | Professor | 16 | 11% |
| Years of Experience | Less than 5 years | 39 | 26% |
| | 6 – 10 years | 52 | 35% |
| | 11 – 20 years | 41 | 27% |
| | More than 20 years | 18 | 12% |
| Institution Type | Public University | 68 | 45% |

INTERPRETATION

The population description of the 150 university educator respondents presents significant findings on the composition of the workforce, which could affect their work-life balance and job satisfaction. The gender split shows a fairly equal balance of male (55%) and female (45%) faculty staff, which provides significant gender-based comparisons for work-life experiences. The largest grouping among respondents is in the 36–45 years category (41%), followed by 25–35 years (29%), which implies that most of the faculty are at their early to middle career phases. Such an age group tends to be juggling professional development with family obligations and thus work-life balance becomes particularly important. In terms of marital status, 68% of the faculty are married, which would mean more household responsibilities, potentially affecting their capacity to cope with work-life boundaries. By designation, 65% are Assistant Professors, indicating an employee base that has reasonably high teaching and administrative duties but perhaps less institutional power or support. With regard to work experience, most of the faculty (61%) have between 5 and 20 years of experience, which shows

that there is a mid-level academic workforce that is fully involved in teaching and research activities. Those with less than 5 years of experience (26%) might be experiencing transition issues within academia, while those with over 20 years (12%) might have more autonomy and time management. Lastly, the institutional breakdown is 55% from private universities, which would be more performance-oriented settings, and 45% from public institutions, with possible different levels of support and workload expectations. These differences will be used for later analysis to determine how institutional and demographic settings affect faculty members' work-life balance and job satisfaction.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation between Work-Life Balance and Job Satisfaction

| Variable | Work-Life Balance (WLB) | Job Satisfaction (JS) | Significance (p-value) WLB | Significance (p-value) JS |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Gender (0 = M, 1 = F) | 0.412 | 0.376 | 0 | 0.001 |
| Marital Status | 0.281 | 0.392 | 0.002 | 0 |
| Age Group | 0.338 | 0.305 | 0 | 0.001 |
| Designation | 0.215 | 0.321 | 0.009 | 0.001 |
| Experience | 0.357 | 0.293 | 0 | 0.002 |
| Institution Type | 0.148 | 0.197 | 0.082 | 0.019 |
| Job Satisfaction | 0.714 | – | 0 | – |

INTERPRETATION

The 0.714 Pearson correlation coefficient suggests a high, positive linear correlation between work-life balance and job satisfaction among university professorial staff. The implication is that as professorial staff achieve more balance in their personal and professional lives, they are also more likely to report higher satisfaction in their academic roles. The p-value of 0.000 establishes that this association is statistically significant at the 0.01 level ($p < 0.01$), yielding significant evidence against the null hypothesis. The null hypothesis (H_0) is therefore rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted. Such evidence points to instructors who are in control of work responsibilities without infringing on personal or family time as experiencing more positive affective states, job satisfaction, and better involvement with their work. Conversely, low work-life balance can have detrimental effects on motivation, instructional quality, and satisfaction at work, with the potential for burnout or turnover.

Table 3: Independent Sample T-Test Comparing Work-Life Balance Scores Across Demographic Variables

| Demographic Variable | Category | N | Mean WLB Score | Std. Deviation | Mean Difference | t-Cal | p-Value |
|--------------------------|---------------------|-----|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-------|---------|
| Gender | Male | 82 | 3.65 | 0.72 | -0.49 | -4.31 | 0 |
| | Female | 68 | 4.14 | 0.75 | | | |
| Marital Status | Single | 48 | 3.71 | 0.68 | -0.32 | -2.18 | 0.031 |
| | Married | 102 | 4.03 | 0.77 | | | |
| Institution Type | Public University | 68 | 3.78 | 0.71 | -0.21 | -1.48 | 0.141 |
| | Private University | 82 | 3.99 | 0.76 | | | |
| Employment Status | Assistant Professor | 98 | 3.82 | 0.69 | -0.16 | -1.09 | 0.276 |
| | Associate/Professor | 52 | 3.98 | 0.78 | | | |

INTERPRETATION

Independent samples t-test was used to test if male and female faculty significantly differ from each other in their work-life balance perception. The findings indicate that, the mean WLB score reported by female faculty members (4.14) was higher than that reported by their male counterparts (3.65). t-calculated was -4.31 and p-value was 0.000, which is much less than the 0.05 cutoff for statistical significance. This implies that the disparity in work-life balance between males and females is statistically different. Thus, we reject the null hypothesis (H_0) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H_1). The negative t-value indicates the direction of the difference — in this instance, that male faculty members, on average, report less work-life balance than female. These results indicate that female faculty members see themselves as having a better work-life balance than male faculty members. This could be counterintuitive, as previous research tends to indicate that women have more household and caregiving responsibilities.

DISCUSSION

The results of this research yield key findings on the correlation between job satisfaction and work-life balance among Chennai university teachers. The research validates the fact that teachers who enjoy a greater work-life balance also have higher rates of job satisfaction, as indicated by the high positive correlation ($r = 0.714$, $p < 0.01$). Gender-wise analysis also showed that female teachers exhibited notably greater work-life balance compared to their male counterparts, contrary to previous presumptions in literature that women are more prone to experiencing work-life clashes. This could suggest the increased institutional backing of women in academia or the development of adaptive coping strategies among female teachers. Demographic factors like experience, age, and marital status were also found to impact WLB and JS, indicating that faculty members at more established phases in life report higher well-being. Paradoxically, institution type (whether public or private) had less association with WLB and JS, which further suggests that internal policy, as opposed to organizational ownership, might be a more determining factor of faculty satisfaction. These findings highlight the significance of instructor-oriented HR practices like flexible scheduling, workload

distribution, and leadership support in enhancing academic well-being and retention. The results comport with prior research in corporate and education environments, promoting the critical role of work-life integration in developing motivation and institutional allegiance.

CONCLUSION

The current study examined the association between work-life balance and job satisfaction among 150 faculty members of public and private universities in Chennai. The findings determined there to be a statistically significant and positive association between work-life balance and job satisfaction, validating that faculty members who maintain a better balance of professional and personal tasks are more job-satisfied. Moreover, female staff were also reported to have far superior work-life balance compared to men, and age, marriage, and years of teaching also affected individual levels of perceived balance and satisfaction. These results indicate that higher education institutions and universities need to put higher priority on the mental and emotional health of their faculty by developing a more nurturing and accommodating work setting. Customized policies that are responsive to faculty needs can actually increase individual fulfilment as well as teaching quality, student participation, and research output, thereby working towards long-term development of the academic industry.

LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

While this study offers valuable insights into the relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction among university faculty, it is not without limitations. The research was confined to faculty members in Chennai, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions with differing institutional cultures and socio-economic conditions. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data may introduce response bias, as participants could have over- or under-reported their perceptions. The cross-sectional design also restricts the ability to draw causal inferences. Future research should consider a broader geographical scope, including multiple cities or states, and employ longitudinal designs to observe changes over time. Incorporating qualitative approaches such as interviews or focus groups could offer deeper understanding of faculty experiences. Furthermore, exploring additional variables such as organizational culture, mental health, burnout, and leadership support would contribute to a more comprehensive analysis of faculty well-being and professional satisfaction.

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