



A Study On Relationship Between Work-Life Balance And Job Stress: A Case Study of IT Employees Working In Jodhpur

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ABSTRACT

Stress is a universal element and persons from nearly every walk of life have to face stress. Employers today are critically analyzing the stress management issues that contribute to lower job performance of employees originating from dissatisfaction and high turnover ultimately affecting both organizational goals as well as family life of employees. The main reason for stress appears to be either failure to balance between career goals and family responsibility. This imbalance ultimately leads to increased number of family disputes, divorce cases, failure at corporate level and so on.

The aim of the research was to find out the relationship between independent variable – work-life balance and dependent variable – job stress. The findings of the study revealed that the incidence of job stress was directly associated with the level of work-life balance. The result of hypothesis testing rejected the null hypothesis of no association between these two variables meaning there by the acceptance of alternate hypothesis of a strong association between these two variables. At the same time result of correlation coefficient between these two variables was highly negative which was interpreted that high work life balance has less job stress establishing the fact that a proper work-life balance certainly lessens job stress. The incidence of job stress in the female employees of IT industry in Jodhpur was more as compared to the male employees of the same age group.

Keywords : Work-life balance, Job stress, Job satisfaction, IT employees

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Introduction

Work-life balance is an expectation of today's job seeker. Life in the 21st century is increasingly complex with people juggling multiple roles. Therefore, they will only stay with a job that offers flexibility. Work-life balance (WLB) is a term that refers to the desire on the part of both employees and employer to achieve a balance between workplace obligations and personal responsibilities.

Job Stress Associated with Work Life Balance

Stress is a universal element experienced by employees around the globe. Stress is prevalent in modern life, yet in spite of its frequent use, the word 'stress' is an ambiguous term. Stress is the psychological and physical state that results when the resources of the individual are not sufficient to cope with the demands and pressures of work situation or family affairs. Many emotions characterize stress, such as anger, anxiety, sadness, despair, depression and disappointment. In today's life the main reason for stress is multitasking and failure to balance between career goals and family goals. Therefore, stress is major problem for such employees which fail to balance between these two diverse goals, particularly female employees. The incidence of job stress is more frequent in the employees working in IT industry because almost all the jobs in this industry either target based or to be completed in a tight time schedule. Therefore, one need to take extra caution while working in IT industry because balancing between career and home is even difficult for male employees because of stretched work schedule at office and unpredictable timeline in completing critical jobs like debugging or fault removal services, increasing demand of attention by family members, if both husband and wife are working the male member is expected to share certain responsibility at home also. Therefore, irrespective of the gender of the employees the incidences of job stress are increasing day-by-day due to an imbalance in career and home particularly in IT industry.

Work-life conflict can be the major reason of job stress. Work-life conflict occurs when the cumulative demands of work and role at home are incompatible in some respect so that participation in one role is made more difficult by participation in the other. Sometimes described as having too much to do a too little time to do it, role overload is a term that is sometimes used as a means of examining the conditions that give rise to work-life conflict which has three components (i) role overload, (ii) work to family interference, and (iii) family interference with work.

Role overload is the major reason for work-life conflict. Role overload is caused by a convergence of pressures and conditions found both in the workplace and in a person's private/social life. At work, the combination of high job pressure and low control over the job causes workers to feel overload. When these conditions are combined with stressors from the home and family situation (such as caring for children or aging relatives – parents), this can create work-life conflict, especially when the social support is absent. The absence of social support is more in case of female employees as compared to male employees. Certain

survey studies on work-life conflict have focused on understanding mental health, job stress, family stress leading to health hazards. The predominant model for understanding the sources of stress is demand/control model. This model shows that high pressure plus low control at work contribution to strain, particularly when combined with home stress and the absence of social support.

Review of Literature

The relationship between work-life balance and job stress has been well established in the literature as negative in nature. That is to say, higher level of balance between career and home leads to less mental stress, smooth sailing at family front whereas lower level of balance between career and home leads to more stress, difficulty at family front resulting into profession as well as social distress. In a study conducted by Professor Currivan in the year 2009 it was concluded that the role ambiguity was more strongly related to work-life conflict leading to job stress among the employees working in knowledge process organization (KPO). In another study by Sharpe Jr. in the year 2010 on bank employees of middle east countries it was concluded that increasing demand of attention by family members was the major reason for poor performance at the professional front leading to job dissatisfaction, job stress, and increased employee turnover. The employees are very much distressed which resulted into frequent job changes in search of job satisfaction so as to lower the job stress.

In another study in the year 2011 Brown concluded that the incidences of frequent job changes among middle aged executives was due to the failure of the employees in coping with the job pressure, family pressure and social responsibility like taking care of aged parents, education of children and so on. All these factors lead to work-life conflict and employees start switching their jobs very frequently without knowing the real reason for the same. Taylor Fransis conducted a study in the year 2011 on college professors on work-life balance and tested the variables that the successful professor had very little social/family responsibility hence they could concentrate more on professional goals – research and publication work. In the same study it was concluded that the professors who have increased social/family responsibilities were not much excellent in carrying out research and publication activities. Therefore, the findings of the study concluded that there is a negative relationship between social/family responsibility and professional excellence i.e. high social/family responsibility means low performance at professional front.

Methodology

Objectives

- To measure the relationship between employee's job stress and level of work-life balance of employees working in IT industry in Jodhpur.
- To gain familiarity with the phenomenon of work-life balance and job stress.

Hypothesis

Following hypothesis was formulated to establish the relationship between job stress and level of work-life balance:

H₀: There is no relationship between employee's job stress and level of work-life balance of employees working in IT industry in Jodhpur.

H_a: There is a relationship between employee's job stress and level of work-life balance of employees working in IT industry in Jodhpur.

Nature of Study

The present study is descriptive in nature as it aims to establish a relationship between work-life balance and job stress.

Data Type and Data Collection Tools

Primary data relating to opinion of IT companies' employees of Jodhpur was collected through survey method using questionnaire whereas secondary data was collected from different published sources.

Tools for Analysis

Method of tabulation and statistical tools like mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the data.

Limitations

It was assumed in the study that there might be a close relationship between work-life balance and job stress but still there might be certain other variables affecting the job stress but have not been considered in this study as the main focus of the study was to testify the relationship between work-life balance and job stress.

The findings of the research can not be used for generalized deduction, the findings are applicable for the period of the study which was from 1st February 2023 to 31st August, 2024, further the findings are applicable only for Jodhpur city of Rajasthan state in India.

Survey Findings, Analysis and Interpretation

Findings

Questionnaire were emailed to 400 employees and only 288 questionnaires were received back which were complete in all respect, this resulted into 72% response rate. Table 'A' given below depicts respondents profile

Table 'A': Respondents Profile

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Age Group (in years)		
25-35	80	28
35-45	62	22
45-and above	146	50
	288	
Education Level		
Graduate	90	31
Post-graduate	198	69
Gender		
Male	182	63
Female	106	37
Income (Rupees per annum)		
Less than 3,00,000	44	15
3,00,000 – 5,00,000	60	21
5,00,000 – 7,00,000	56	19
7,00,000 – 10,00,000	100	35
Above 10,00,000	28	10

Table 'A' shows that out of the sample 50% employees were in the age group 45 years or more and 69% of the total employees were have a post-graduation degree. Out of the total sample surveyed 63% were male employees and rest were female employees. While referring to income group the majority i.e. 35% belonged to the income group Rs. 7,00,000 to Rs. 10,00,000.

Apart from these demographic data the respondents were asked to rate their work-life balance using 'Likert's Scale' ranging from positive – highly balanced to negative – ill balanced. At the same time level of job stress was measured using similar scale ranging from very high job stress to negligible job stress.

Analysis and Interpretation

The data collected through survey was analyzed using method of cross variable analysis and certain statistical tools. For the purpose of analysis two main variables were identified i.e. (i) Independent variable – Work-Life Balance and (ii) Dependent variable – Job Stress.

A cross-variable analysis revealed that there was more job stress among female employees of age group 35 to 45 as compared to the male employees, about 70% of the female employees as compared to 45% of male employees reported stress at professional level as well as family level.

Rating about work-life balance showed that female employees in the age group 25 to 35 reported high level of work-life balance and less job stress perhaps due to less quantum of responsibility at the family front or being unmarried.

A cross-variable analysis of education level and job stress revealed that the incidence of stress was more among post-graduates as compared to graduates, and the reasons reported by the respondents was high ambition among post-graduates as compared to the ambition level of graduates. In total 52% of graduates were having job stress as compared to 90% of the post-graduates were in job stress. The major reason reported was frequent job changes leading to high job stress.

Result of Hypothesis Testing

Following hypothesis was tested using 'z' score:

H₀: There is no relationship between employee's job stress and level of work-life balance of employees working in IT industry in Jodhpur.

H_a: There is a relationship between employee's job stress and level of work-life balance of employees working in IT industry in Jodhpur.

The method of two group mean variance criterion was employed to calculate (i) mean and standard deviation of each variable's score on work-life balance scale and job stress scale, (ii) correlation coefficient between the score of work-life balance and job stress scores and (iii) 'z' score was calculated.

The findings of these parameters were as follows

The correlation between the score of work-life balance and the score of job stress was highly negative i.e. '-0.750' and it was interpreted that a high level of work-life balance means less level of job stress and vice-versa.

The mean difference between the score of work-life balance and job stress was 3.30 and standard error was 1.02 whereas 'z' score was 3.05 as compared to the table value 1.96 of 'z' score at 5% significance level established in rejecting the null hypothesis.

Thus, the result of hypothesis showed that there was a high level of relationship between work-life balance and job stress among the employees of IT industry working in Jodhpur. The same fact is supported by the interpretation of correlation between both of these variables.

Conclusion

The aim of the research was to find out the relationship between independent variable – work-life balance and dependent variable – job stress. The findings of the study revealed that the incidence of job stress was directly associated with the level of work-life balance. The result of hypothesis testing rejected the null hypothesis of no association between these two variables meaning there by the acceptance of alternate hypothesis of a strong association between these two variables. At the same time result of correlation coefficient between these two variables was highly negative which was interpreted that high work life balance has less job stress establishing the fact that a proper work-life balance certainly lessens job stress. The incidence of job stress in the female employees of IT industry in Jodhpur was more as compared to the males of the same age group.

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