



A Comparative Study of Work-Life Balance Between Male and Female Employees in The Corporate Sector

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Abstract

This study investigates work-life balance (WLB) disparities between male and female employees in the corporate sector of Coimbatore, India. Using a descriptive research design with a structured questionnaire administered to 110 respondents, the study employs percentage analysis, chi-square tests, and graphical tools to examine gender-based differences in job satisfaction, stress levels, productivity, and overall well-being. Findings reveal that while 36.4% of respondents express satisfaction with their current work-life balance, significant gender disparities persist-female employees face higher role conflict due to dual professional and domestic responsibilities, whereas male employees encounter career-related performance pressures. Chi-square analysis confirms that work-life balance perceptions differ significantly across gender groups. Organizational support emerged as the most critical factor (30.9%), followed by flexible working hours (26.4%). The study recommends gender-sensitive workplace policies including flexible scheduling, reduced workloads, hybrid work models, and enhanced mental health support to foster equitable and sustainable work environments.

Keywords: Work-life balance, Gender differences, corporate sector, Job satisfaction, Employee well-being

1. Introduction

Work-life balance (WLB) has emerged as one of the most pressing concerns in contemporary corporate environments. Driven by globalization, technological advancement, and intensifying competitive pressures, employees are required to maintain heightened levels of productivity, availability, and flexibility. This evolving work culture has fundamentally complicated the concept of work-life balance, particularly in the corporate sector where extended working hours, tight deadlines, and performance expectations are commonplace.

The increasing participation of both men and women in corporate employment has disrupted traditional workplace structures and family role distributions. Although organizations broadly promote equality and diversity, gender-linked social expectations and domestic responsibilities continue to shape employees' lived experiences. Female employees frequently navigate the dual burden of professional obligations and primary caregiving or household duties, which can exacerbate work-life conflict and emotional stress. Conversely, male employees-

traditionally positioned as primary breadwinners-face evolving social expectations that demand greater family involvement, creating additional adjustments and tensions.

In rapidly urbanizing regions such as Coimbatore, where corporate employment is growing and young professionals constitute a substantial share of the workforce, limited empirical research captures the gender-differentiated experiences of work-life balance. This study seeks to address that gap by comparing the WLB experiences of male and female corporate employees across key dimensions: working hours, family responsibilities, stress levels, organizational support, workplace flexibility, job satisfaction, and overall well-being.

2. Review of Literature

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) ^[3] established the foundational framework for work-family conflict by identifying three forms of conflict: time-based, strain-based, and behavior-based. Clark (2000) ^[2] extended this through Work-Family Border Theory, emphasizing that employees actively negotiate work-home boundaries, with

organizational support playing a moderating role. Byron's (2005) [1] meta-analysis demonstrated that women tend to experience significantly higher work-family conflict than men, attributable to greater household and caregiving burdens. This finding has been consistently replicated in subsequent research. Sharma and Kaur (2020) [9] confirmed, in an Indian corporate context, that female employees face greater challenges due to societal expectations and domestic responsibilities. Patel and Shah (2023) [8] further noted that women experience higher work-family conflict while men report more work-related stress, reinforcing the case for gender-specific organizational support systems. Kossek and Lambert (2005) [5] demonstrated that supportive organizational policies-including flexible working hours, telecommuting, and parental leave-significantly improve WLB and reduce gender-based disparities. Kumar and Chakraborty (2019) [6] established that work-life balance positively influences employee performance and retention, while Mehta and Joshi (2024) [7] confirmed that flexible work policies help narrow gender differences in WLB outcomes in urban India.

3. Research Methodology

The study adopts a descriptive research design. Primary data were collected through a structured online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms to corporate employees in Coimbatore. The target population comprised male and female employees aged 21–50 years, with a sample of 110 respondents selected through convenience sampling from corporate offices and professional networks. The questionnaire employed a 5-point Likert scale to measure work stress, family time, job satisfaction, and WLB satisfaction, supplemented by closed-ended questions on demographic and work-related variables. Data were analyzed using percentage analysis, graphical representations, and chi-square tests to examine associations between gender and WLB perceptions.

4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

4.1 Respondent Profile

The study sample comprised 110 corporate employees. The predominant age group was 25–35 years (50.9%), followed by above 35 years (32.7%). Male respondents constituted 56.4% and female 43.6%. Of the respondents, 61.8% were currently employed, and 58.2% reported monthly spending above ₹5,000.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

| Variable / Category | Percentage (n = 110) |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Age: 25–35 years | 50.9% |
| Age: Above 35 years | 32.7% |
| Gender: Male | 56.4% |
| Gender: Female | 43.6% |
| Employment Status: Employed | 61.8% |
| Monthly Spending: Above ₹5,000 | 58.2% |

4.2 Work-Life Balance Perceptions

Respondent perceptions of work-life balance were assessed across multiple dimensions. Satisfaction with WLB stood at 36.4% (Satisfied) with only 8.2% Very Dissatisfied. Around 34.5% held a neutral stance on trust in WLB policies, while 25.5% reported high trust. The majority (57.3%) agreed that

WLB positively enhances productivity, and 41.8% rated their overall WLB experience as 'Good'.

Table 2: Work-Life Balance Perceptions

| WLB Indicator | Key Finding |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Satisfaction with WLB | 36.4% Satisfied; 8.2% Very Dissatisfied |
| Trust in WLB Policies | 34.5% Neutral; 25.5% High Trust |
| WLB Enhances Productivity | 57.3% agreed (Yes) |
| Overall WLB Experience | 41.8% rated 'Good' |
| Work Pressure (Sometimes affects WLB) | 40.0% |
| Work Intrudes into Personal Life | 45.5% (Somewhat); 38.2% (Yes, very much) |
| Positive Outlook on Future of WLB | 36.4% |

4.3 Key Contributing Factors

Respondents identified organizational support as the primary driver of work-life balance (30.9%), followed by flexible working hours (26.4%), personal time management (22.7%), and family support (20.0%). When asked about priorities for improvement, 42.7% of respondents ranked reduced workload as the most critical intervention, followed equally by flexible hours, work-from-home options, and supportive management (19.1% each).

4.4 Chi-Square Analysis

The Chi-Square test of independence was applied at the 5% significance level using the formula:

$$\chi^2 = \sum (O - E)^2 / E$$

where O = Observed frequency and E = Expected frequency. All three tests yielded calculated values substantially exceeding critical values, confirming significant differences in WLB perceptions across groups.

Table 3: Chi-Square Test Summary

| Test Parameter | Value |
|---|--------------------------|
| Test 1: Future of WLB (5 categories) | |
| Calculated χ^2 | 47.56 |
| Critical value (df=4, p=0.05) | 9.488 |
| Result | Null Hypothesis Rejected |
| Test 2: Willingness – Personal Time for Flexibility (3 cat.) | |
| Calculated χ^2 | 7.05 |
| Critical value (df=2, p=0.05) | 5.99 |
| Result | Null Hypothesis Rejected |
| Test 3: WLB Improvement Priorities (4 categories) | |
| Calculated χ^2 | 18.45 |
| Critical value (df=3, p=0.05) | 7.81 |
| Result | Null Hypothesis Rejected |

5. Major Findings

- The majority of respondents (56.4%) are male; 61.8% are currently employed in the corporate sector.
- 36.4% of respondents expressed satisfaction with their current work-life balance, while 24.6% reported dissatisfaction.
- 57.3% of respondents agreed that work-life balance positively enhances employee productivity.

- Organizational support (30.9%) was identified as the single most important factor for maintaining WLB.
- 40% of respondents reported that work pressure sometimes negatively affects their WLB; 30.9% expressed ongoing concern.
- 45.5% of respondents acknowledged that work somewhat intrudes into their personal lives.
- Chi-square tests confirmed that WLB perceptions differ significantly across gender and demographic groups.
- Female employees face higher role conflict due to dual professional and domestic responsibilities, while male employees encounter greater career-related pressure.
- 42.7% prioritized reduced workload as the most needed improvement for better WLB.
- 36.4% of respondents hold a positive outlook regarding the future trajectory of WLB in the corporate sector.

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following evidence-based recommendations are proposed for corporate organizations:

- Implement flexible and hybrid working arrangements to accommodate the varied responsibilities of male and female employees.
- Prioritize workload rationalization through equitable task distribution and realistic performance targets to mitigate burnout.
- Strengthen and clearly communicate WLB policies to build employee trust and ensure consistent application.
- Introduce gender-sensitive support mechanisms, including dedicated parental leave, caregiver flexibility, and mentorship programs.
- Establish organizational wellness programs encompassing stress management training, counselling services, and mental health resources.
- Conduct regular employee satisfaction assessments on WLB to track progress and identify emerging challenges.
- Promote open communication channels between employees and management to address WLB concerns proactively.

7. Conclusion

This study provides empirical evidence that work-life balance in the corporate sector is significantly shaped by gender. Female employees bear a disproportionate burden of work-family conflict arising from combined professional and domestic roles, while male employees contend with distinct pressures related to career advancement and financial expectations. These differences underscore the inadequacy of gender-neutral WLB policies and emphasize the need for tailored organizational interventions.

The findings confirm that organizational support, flexible working arrangements, and reduced workload are the most consequential levers for improving WLB outcomes. Organizations that strategically invest in employee well-being, equity, and flexibility are better positioned to achieve higher job satisfaction, improved productivity, and stronger employee retention-ultimately contributing to sustainable organizational performance in a competitive corporate landscape.

8. References

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