

WORK-LIFE BALANCE IS A PREDICTOR OF HAPPINESS ON WORK FROM HOME SCENARIO - INDIAN EMPIRICAL OUTCOME

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Abstract

Covid -19 Pandemic brought work from home to all the spheres of job. This new discourse associated with Work-Life Balance (WLB) can be observed in recent times. Happiness is vital component of every individual's life. Health and happy person can bring a success in family and career life. Vital purpose of this study is to find the correlation any existing between WLB and happiness and to evaluate the predication of WLB on happiness among IT employees working from home during Covid pandemic. Quantitative research approach was adopted for the study. Sample of 718 IT (Information Technology) employee were surveyed using Work Life Balance questionnaire and Happiness scale. Correlation and regression analysis was computed to obtain the result. Result of the study indicates the relationship between variable and predication of WLB on happiness in percentage.

Keywords:

Work-Life Balance, Happiness, Work From Home, Predication and IT Employees

1. INTRODUCTION

A new discourse associated with work-life balance can be observed in recent times, especially during Covid-19 pandemic, where the employees have to work from home. The research aims to explore the question of working from home and its impact on work-life balance [1]. Work-life balance is being considered here as a predictor of happiness across the IT employee base that is working from home (WFH). Therefore, the various parameters associated with the topic will be evaluated in the research, in a detailed manner. Numerous disruptions in the business process. Because of the physical restrictions, office space was closed temporarily. Work from home came into play as the organisations needed a way to continue their functional segment. The sudden change in the existing systems also impacted the work-life balance of the employees [2].

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Since the emergence of COVID-19, majority of the organisations across the world has faced. As per the views of, [3] work-life balance can be termed as a vast segment that focuses on setting proper priorities between work and career and other responsibilities. As mentioned by [4], maintaining employee happiness through work-life balance will enable them to perform in more positive roles. As an example, WFH enables the employees to spend more time with their family and peers, blurring the boundaries between work and family.

According to the statement of [5], simplistic differentiation between home life and work-life is not enough to identify all the determinants that are present in the process. Research conducted by [6] maps the work-life needs of people in three interrelated

segments. They are termed as personal time and space, care time and space, work time and space. Proper alignment of these three segments is more likely to result in economic sufficiency and happiness for the employee base. In accordance with the research topic, it can be said that work-life balance here is acting as a viable predictor of happiness for the employee base.

As mentioned by [7], personal time is often getting fragmented in the WFH segment. Working from home makes it an office equivalent place, and there is almost no way to relax. The feeling of constantly being at work makes it difficult for the employees to manage happiness and life balance. The role of gender is also prominent in this segment, as men are more likely to define themselves as wage earners and have fewer amounts of personal conflicts. As mentioned by [8], stratification of gender differences can also be observed among women workers. Professional women are more likely to face some conflicts as they have to manage the home and work together. Overall, it can be presented from the literature review that work-life balance is a complicated segment and there are various truthful elements present in it. It is difficult to establish a specific pattern between employee happiness and work-life balance, and it will require further evaluation [9]. If handled well, work-life balance is more likely to improve the employee performance outcomes such as performance and productivity [10]-[13].

3. RESEARCH PURPOSE

The research aims to assess work-life balance in a critical manner and the changes in employee happiness during the work from home period. The increased awareness towards work-life can be developed further with the help of recent technological developments. The idea here is to establish work-life balance as an element of happiness and the potential changes that it can bring to the WFH segment. This is why the research aims to use work-life balance as a predictor of happiness, and assess its overall contribution to employee happiness levels. The outcomes of the research can be used as a viable tool to establish more effective working schedules for the employees in a remote working segment. Furthermore, these realisations can also be aligned with the home working environment and positive benefits can be attained.

4. OBJECTIVES

- To evaluate the relationship between Work-Life Balance and Happiness among IT employees.
- To assess Work-Life Balance as a predictor of Happiness among the IT employees.

5. HYPOTHESES

*H*₁: There is no significant relationship present between work-life balance and happiness among the IT employees.

*H*₂: Work-life balance may not act as a predictor of happiness among IT employees.

6. METHOD

In this portion of the study, the research design and associated factors are being evaluated in a detailed manner. The research is being conducted with the help of primary data. The primary data is being collected from a sample size of 718 IT employees that those who are working from home. As per the views of Dreyer, et al. [13], the primary data collection method increases the overall viability of the research due to the presence of humane elements in it. The participants are selected using a snowball sampling technique. Samples were given a note about the research objective and received willingness to participate in the study (written informed consent obtained). The respondent those who are not willing to participate are excluded from the study.

6.1 MATERIALS USED

The tools used in the research are termed the work-life balance (WLB) questionnaire and the happiness scale. The WLB is established on the basis of the theoretical and conceptual framework of work-life balance a self- developed and validated questionnaire is used for this study. The questionnaire is of total 32 items. The validity constraints can be presented as face validity, content validity and content validity index. Reliability is assessed using a split-half method along with a spearman-brown coefficient of 0.793, Guttman split-half coefficient = 0.778. In accordance with external consistency, the test-retest method (0.898) is conducted having three weeks of intervals and total sample for questionnaire validation is *N* = 140. The 25 items happiness scale presented by Ajawani and Sethi is used here. Content and face validity is assessed by expert opinion. Alongside that, the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient ranging from 0.957 is used for reliability checking. Test-retest method (0.898) is conducted having three weeks intervals and *N* = 140.

7. RESULTS

This portion describes the different analysis being used here and their overall implication for the research segment. A hypothesis wise analysis has been conducted to assess the validity of the proposed null hypotheses. As can be seen from Table.1, aims to identify the relationship present between the two main variables, named work-life balance and happiness. Pearson Correlation numbers are used as a way to measure the overall strength and direction of the relationship that is observed between these two variables. The range of the coefficient is from +1 to -1. A value of -1 indicates a perfect negative correlation whereas the value of +1 indicates a perfect positive correlation. A value of 0 indicates no correlation between the variables.

The value observed in the table is 0.893 and it can be used to determine the extent of predicting one variable with the other. The value also indicates the numerical description of the points

surrounding the lines. The correlation is significant at 2 tailed values. The Sig 2 -tailed is also termed as the p-value related to the correlation. The *N* value indicates the total number of participants present in the research, which are 718 here. However, there exit a significant positive correlation observed between the variables Work Life Balance and Happiness here.

Table.1. Correlation test between variables

		Work Life Balance	Happiness
Work Life Balance	Pearson Correlation	1	0.893**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	718	718
Happiness	Pearson Correlation	0.893**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	718	718

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table.2. Correlation Coefficient for Work-Life Balance and Happiness

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.893 ^a	0.798	0.798	5.90616

a. Predictors: (constant), Work Life Balance

The Table.2 presented above provides a detailed description of the correlation coefficient associated with Work-Life Balance and Happiness. The values observed in the table are R, R-squared and adjusted R-square. The *R* value is an indicator of the relationship present between the variables. The square of the *R* values provides the percentage of variables that can be related to the other variable. Therefore, an r-value of .893 indicates the predicated values of work-life balance on happiness. The R square value, 0.798 indicates that 79.8% of the variance on the dependent variable (happiness). The standard error statistics presented here provides a detailed understanding of the confidence interval (CI) observed in the study. The confidence interval of the study indicates the interval where the true population correlation can be observed. It is also a viable tool to determine the precision of the estimate in accordance with the sample correlation statistic. A small value of the standard error of estimate indicates a better fit in the model. In this case, the value of the standard error estimate is 5.906, which can be termed a worse fit. Therefore, it can be stated that work-life balance is a significant predictor of happiness scores of works from home IT employees.

Table.3. ANOVA regression model

Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	98698.832	1	98698.832	2829.446	0.000 ^b
Residual	24976.043	716	34.883		
Total	123674.875	717			

a. Dependent Variable: Happiness
b. Predictors: (constant), Work Life Balance

The Table.3 presented above indicate the ANOVA regression analysis. Value of p indicates .000 ($p < .05$) which indicates that the regression model statistically significant at .05 level of significance. The results states, Work Life Balance a significant predictor of Happiness score among working from home IT employees.

Table.4. Linear regression analysis

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.	95% CI for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Constant	0.682	1.733		0.394	0.694	-4.084	2.720
Work Life Balance	0.867	0.016	0.893	53.193	0.000	0.835	0.899

a. Dependent Variable: Happiness

Using linear regression, the variable values can be predicted in accordance with the other research variables. The variable being predicted is the independent variable or the outcome variable. In the case of this research, work-life balance is the independent variable. The impact of work-life balance on the dependent variable happiness is being assessed here.

The coefficients table presented above provides information that can be used to predict the impact of work-life balance on happiness. Along with that, the values of the sig column also indicate the statistical significance of the model. The regression equation can be presented as:

$$\text{Happiness (Y)} = .682 + .867 (\text{Work-Life Balance})$$

7.1 DISCUSSION

Analysis of the quantitative data collected through the research indicate correlation present between IT employees work life balance and happiness. Therefore, work-life balance is a significant predictor of IT employee's happiness. However, a review of the related literature indicates that WLB still has some impact on a positive employee experience and should be considered as a viable organisational element. Especially in the remote working segment, the employees are more likely to adapt to a changing work routine. As a result of this, the overall stability of the process is being disrupted.

This makes the organisation to have a clear specific workplace strategy. Using the outcomes of this present study, the organisation will be able to find a balance between work and home. Along with that, overall employee engagement can also be improved significantly. Work-life balance is considered a predictor here. Using the research outcomes, the state of the existing workplace policies can also be assessed. In case of the employees do not provide satisfactory performance and happiness levels, they can approach with changes in the working strategy. Once the changes are implemented, the overall change in performance and satisfaction need to be assessed properly. However, there is a specific level of significance present between the variables. Therefore, it will be essential to have some form of alignment between these variables and assess it in a critical manner. It is recommended here to maintain a specific balance between the work and life which directly influence on the happiness of the employee and in turn may achieve the

organisational goals effectively and may leads to productivity. In short it can say as a way to maintain the overall efficiency of the process.

7.2 IMPLICATIONS

The outcomes of the study can be used as an effective tool to formulate a workplace strategy that aims to improve the work-life balance of the employee base. Along with that, the plan will also be in accordance with the WLB segments, making it easier to assess any gaps present in the work-life balance of the employee base. Happiness is directly depended on the work life balance; hence it is required every employee to remain happy to achieve the goals of the organisation and individual.

8. CONCLUSION

Evaluation of the factors associated with work-life balance and happiness of the employee base indicates that work-life balance presented as a predictor of happiness for the IT employees that those who are working from home. On the other hand, the regression analysis presented that these variables are a standard fit in the overall model, indicating positive relationship present between the variables work life balance and happiness. Therefore, work-life balance and the factors associated with it need to be integrated as a part of the workplace policies, as it will be helpful in developing employee motivation, performance and engagement. Keeping the employees motivated will also act as support towards enhancing their level of happiness, resulting in positive outcomes for the workforce. This will also act as a source of competitive advantage for the organisation.

Future studies in this regard should focus on the other factors that can be associated with work-life balance and employee happiness. Employee happiness can be impacted by a number of factors that are associated with the workplace segment and they should be evaluated in a detailed manner. Factors such as the demographic variables should be a part of future research conducted on this topic.

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