

WORK-LIFE BALANCE: ITS CORRELATION WITH SATISFACTION WITH LIFE AND PERSONALITY DIMENSIONS AMONGST COLLEGE TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

This study attempts to investigate the relationships between Work life balance , Satisfaction with life and Personality dimensions (Big Five Personality Traits). Seventy college teachers (35males and 35 females) were randomly selected from Government colleges of Chandigarh and adjoining areas ranging age of 30 to 55 years . The general hypothesis stated in the reaserch pertains to the relationship between Work life balance, Satisfaction with life and Personality dimensions. The possible effect of gender difference has also been considered in this study. To test the hypothesis t -test, inter correlation and regression analysis were performed. Analysis of results shows that no sex differences were reported on all the variables except one, conscscientiousness where females scored significantly higher than males. Corelation results for the whole sample reavels that Work life balance is strongly related to Satisfaction with life and Extroversion dimension of personality whereas Openness dimension of personality shows positive relationship with Agreeableness and Conscientiousness. The results of stepwise regression shows that Extroversion cotributes 15% of total variance towaeds Work life balance and Work Life Balance contributes 16% of the total variance towards Satisfaction with Life.

INTRODUCTION:

Achieving a ‘balance’ between home life and work life is increasingly a priority and has been argued by many researchers (Scase and Goffee 1989; Schein, 1996; McGovern et al, 1998; Green, 2001). In late 1980s, Scase and Goffee (1989) concluded that growing numbers of people are endorsing a ‘lifestyle’ career anchor (Schein, 1996) which implies that their primary career objective is to balance and integrate their personal needs, their family needs and the requirements of their career. Thus, it is important for every individual, whether working or non-working, that the concept of work-life balance has to play a significant role to live a life free from mental health related problems (such as stress, depression, anxiety, etc.), to acquire a more satisfied job, and to develop adaptive coping strategies in life to handle stressful situations either at work place or at home.

Defining Work-Life Balance:

The term “work/life balance” was coined in 1986, although its usage in everyday language was sporadic for a number of years. Interestingly, work/life programs existed as early as the 1930s. Rosabeth Moss Kanter’s seminal book (1977), “Work and Family in the United States: A Critical Review and Agenda for Research and Policy”, brought the issue of work/life balance to the forefront of research and organizations. In the 1980s and 1990s, companies began to offer work/life programs. While the first wave of these programs were primarily to support women with children, but today’s work/life programs are less gender-specific and recognize other commitments as well as those of the family.

Work/life balance initiatives are not only a phenomenon for employees of a single country rather employees in global communities want flexibility and control over their work and personal lives. There are many different ways to define and discuss balance but most seem to include the notions of flexibility (Hill, Hawkins, Ferris, & Weitzman, 2001; Papalexandris & Kramer, 1997), juggling (Brown, 2004), and sustainability (van Eijnatten & Vos, 2002).

According to Limoges (2003), work-life balance is “primarily a matter of deciding when to hold on and when to let go.”

According to Clark (2000), the very term, ‘work-life balance’ refers to ‘satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home with a minimum of role conflict.’

In the words of Greenblatt (2002), work-life balance has been characterized by ‘the absence of unacceptable levels of conflict between work and non-work demands.’

The Blueprint for Life-Work Designs (Hache, Redekopp, & Jarvis, 2000) describes a complex inter-relationship of life roles. An assortment of “balance wheels” are widely available, typically including such aspects of life as social (e.g., family, friends, and romantic relationships), physical (e.g., physical fitness, environmental conditions, and general health), intellectual (e.g., education, mental challenge), emotional, spiritual, and work (including career, money, homemaking, and community service). For the purposes of this paper, work-life balance will be uniquely defined by individuals, taking into account any or all of the aspects above.

Thus, from the above definitions of work-life balance it could be concluded that when demands from the work and non-work domains are mutually incompatible, conflict may occur. For this reason, a lack of balance between work and non-work is commonly conceptualized as work/family conflict or work/non-work conflict (Frone et al., 1997; Parasuraman et al., 1996). Such conflict can occur both when work roles interfere with non-work roles and vice versa.

Work-Life Imbalance:

Regardless of one’s personal definition for balance, most people know when they are out of balance: they are constantly tired, feel as if their choices are limited, have minimal control, and are no longer able to effectively manage their lives. They may experience life as “happening to them” – and notice that their responses are more reactive than proactive. The glass may seem half-empty rather than half-full – life may seem more negative than positive.

It is generally agreed that work-life balance has become more difficult. Within the past decade or so, the global workplace has seen increased numbers of working women, dual-career and single parent families, and increased numbers of employees with eldercare responsibilities; a decrease in job security; and a blurring of work-family boundaries due to technological change (Duxbury & Higgins, 2001, 2003; Brown, 2004; Parker & Arthur, 2004). As many individuals juggle several significant life roles (e.g., parent, spouse, child, worker, student, community member), role conflict has contributed to work-life imbalance.

“Work-family or work-life conflict occurs when the cumulative demand of these many work and non-work life roles are incompatible in some respect so that participation in one role is made more difficult by participation in the other role” (Duxbury & Higgins, 2001, p. 3). Research confirms that work-life imbalance is costly on both a personal and professional level. Duxbury and Higgins (2003) reported that “the effects of ‘role overload’ are costing Canadian businesses as much as \$10-billion a year in overtime and contracting out required to complete the work of absent employees.” These results are similar to previous Canadian research: “Burnout costs Canadian businesses an estimated \$12 billion per year in health claims, lost productivity, and absenteeism, according to the Conference Board of Canada” (Isherwood & Cajic, 1998). For career management professionals and employers, then, it

seems important to acknowledge and alleviate the damage caused by lack of work-life balance.

Furthermore, work-life balance remains an issue that requires considerable attention from society. The changing nature of the global economy, where organizations often operate on a 24/7 schedule and technological advances have made it possible for an employee to be connected at all times, has ushered the work-life balance issue into the forefront of the minds of many, including students pursuing higher technical education.

In sum, with the present understanding of work-life balance, its definition, and its discrimination from work-life imbalance describe as well as presents the clear understanding of the concept and nature of work-life balance. Researches have been reported that employees who experience increased stress due to work/life conflict and decreased perceptions of control over their work and non-work demands are less productive, less committed to, and satisfied with their organization and more likely to be absent or leave the organization (Adams, 1996; Boles & Babin, 1999; Netemeyer et al, 1996; Boles, Howard & Donofrio, 2001; Frye & Breugh, 2004). Moreover, individuals experiencing interference between work and personal lives are also significantly more likely to suffer from reduced psychological well-being and physical health (Grant-Vallone & Ensher, 2000).

Frone (2000) in a study concluded that people who experienced life/work conflict were nearly 30 times more likely to suffer from a mood disorder (e.g. depression) and 10 times more likely to have an anxiety (disorder). On the other hand, employees with lower levels of work/life conflict report higher job satisfaction overall (Boles et al, 2001).

PERSONALITY AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE:

In recent years, an impressive body of research supported that five basic personality dimensions underlie all other characteristics of personality. Factors in the Big Five Model are: extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness.

Extraversion is the extent to which one is more sociable and out going (extraverted) or more aloof, retiring, reserved and introspected (introverted).

Agreeableness is the extent to which one is trusting and helpful (more agreeable) or suspicious and uncooperative (less agreeable).

Conscientiousness is the extent to which one is hardworking and reliable (more conscientious) or lazy, unreliable and careless (less conscientious).

Neuroticism is the extent to which one is nervous and insecure (emotionally unstable) as opposed to calm and secure (emotionally stable).

Openness is the extent to which one is creative and nonconformist (more open) or conventional and down-to-earth (less open).

Crooker et. al., (2002) have identified that different personality traits allow individuals to cope with work-life balance in different ways. Using these factors as a framework, they state that those individuals with conscientiousness and agreeableness are more likely to have a positive work-life balance. Conscientiousness has three characteristics, which are; commitment, control and challenge. Agreeable individuals create a support mechanism with others, and they reach out when they experience stressful situations. They go on to mention that those individuals with negative affect and low self-efficacy will not achieve a balanced work-life.

Neuroticism and extraversion have also been identified as personality traits that can reflect a pattern of work-life balance. High neuroticism is associated with emotional instability (Ewen et. al., 2003), which can lead to an unstable work-life balance (Kinnunen et. al., 2004). Whereas, extroversion measures individual differences in the preference for social interaction

and the extent to which a person is gregarious, talkative, outgoing, ambitious, assertive and adventuresome (Barrick & Mount, 2001). Individuals high in extroversion prefer interacting with and typically have a large number of relationships whereas those individuals low on extroversion prefer solitude and have a smaller number of relationships.

Extroversion was found to have a significant correlation with work/life balance for service sector employees. It has been found that the more extroverted an individual is, the more likely they are to experience work/life balance. This finding is consistent with the research on subjective well-being. It has been shown that extroverts have a temperament that predisposes them to experience positive affect (Costa & McCrae, 1980). Therefore, while extroverts have this global tendency to experience life in a positive manner, it makes intuitive sense that those individual's high on extroversion are more likely to experience greater work/life balance. Personality traits have been associated to work-life balance.(Mudrack, 2004; Crooker et al 2002). The results from the current study have shown significant findings towards two personality traits; extraversion and neuroticism. The findings show that individuals high in the personality trait of extraversion have positive psychosocial effects on personal and work domains. Research conducted by Wyatt et al (2005) found that individuals with a high measure of the extraversion personality trait used the internet in the work place for both work and socializing . Extraverts can be characterized as sociable and outgoing (Ewen, 2003), corresponding to findings from Wyatt et al (2005).

The approach of psychology of individual differences may be also fruitful for research of Work Life Balance due to the fact that studying aspects of different personality types can enhance our understanding of perceptions of balance. Therefore it can be realized the Personality of an individual can have effects on an individuals balance between work and life.

Consequently, purpose of this study is to identify the impact of personality on Work Life Balance. Based on this, the objective of this research paper was to investigate whether the personality of college teachers related to work life balance. This paper examines the impact of personality on work life balance. It analyses the individual differences in maintaining a proper balance between work and life domains, mainly caused by the personality using 'Big Five' personality dimensions.

Satisfaction with Life and Work life balance: Life satisfaction provides an assessment of an individual's overall sense of well-being (physical, emotional, social productive). Life satisfaction refers to a judgmental process, in which individuals assess the quality of their lives on the basis of their own unique set of criteria (Shin & Johnson,1978). A comparison of one's perceived life circumstances with a self-imposed standard or set of standards is presumably made, and to the degree that conditions match these standards, the person reports high life satisfaction. Therefore, life satisfaction is a conscious cognitive judgment of one's life in which the criteria for judgment are up to the person.

Work-life researchers reason that, because of the interactive and reciprocal nature of the relationships between work and family domains, work-related role stress might combine with work-family demands to exert considerable influence on an employee's overall perception of life satisfaction. Further, it is assumed that improvements in the quality of work-life will produce corresponding improvements in the quality of life as it makes it easier for employees to reduce the strains of managing the modern family. Generally, the research has supported these contentions. High work-life conflict has consistently been associated with lower levels of life satisfaction (Aryee, 1992; Bedeian et al., 1988; Googins, 1991).

Thus, these empirical evidences provide support that work-life balance is directly related to life satisfaction and dimensions of .personality.Also, the fact found from the review of

literature shows that work-life balance being an important aspect for human welfare has constantly being changing its horizons. The research studies already carried out concerning work-life balance are isolated and subjective but not much empirical based studies involving interlinked variables have been undertaken, though it is so vital for the survival and welfare of the human beings as well as growth of an organization.

On the basis of review of available literature the following hypothesis have been formulated:

HYPOTHESIS

- 1) There is significant corelationship between Work Life Balance ,Satisfaction with Life and personality dimensions.
- 2) Work-life balance positively correlates to Satisfaction with life.
- 3) There is a significant gender difference in relation to work-life balance Satisfaction With Life and Personality dimensions.
- 4) Personality dimensions are intercorrelated.

Objectives

- 1) To investigate the concept of work-life balance,
- 2) To examine the consequences of work-life balance including individual well-being and work behavior.
- 3) To trace out the gender differences in context with work-life balance Satisfaction with life and Personality dimensions.

Scope

Taking into consideration of the above mentioned objectives the study confines to the seventy randomly selected Government college teachers (males and females) .

Procedure

Participants for the present investigation have been contacted personally and assured that the information collected from them is purely for research purpose and would be kept confidential. The instructions for each test have been given as per their respective manuals.

INSTRUMENTS: For the present investigation following tools were used.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE SCALE [WLB; Carlson, Grzywacz, & Zivnuska (2009)]: This is a six-item scale designed to represent the definition developed by Grzywacz and Carlson (2007) of work–family balance that refers to the extent to which an individual is meeting negotiated role-related expectations in both the work and family domains. Therefore, each item includes a reference to the expectations or negotiation of roles (negotiation, expectations, etc.) and each item taps the perspective of an external party to capture what other people expect from the focal individual (people, supervisors, family members, co-workers). A sample item is ‘I do a good job of meeting the role expectations of critical people in my work and family life.’

All the six items of this measure are responded on a five-point likert scale where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. Items were such that higher scores equate to higher level of work-life balance. An exploratory factor analysis using Principal Axis Factor Analysis was conducted on the six items. All six items loaded at .77 or above on a single factor, the Eigen values was 4.49 and 74.9 percent of the variance was explained. The Cronbach alpha for this scale was .93.

BIG FIVE INVENTORY [BFI-44; John, Naumann, & Soto, (2008)]: The inventory having big five factors of personality developed by John et al. (1991); John and Srivastava (1999). The inventory contains 44 items that are rated on the 5-point scale ranging from not agree at all (1) to absolutely agree (5). The items are the basis for scoring five BFI scales: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness. Alpha reliability in present study was observed as for extraversion $\alpha=0.67$; agreeableness $\alpha=0.64$; conscientiousness $\alpha=0.52$, Emotional Stability/neuroticism $\alpha=0.54$, and openness $\alpha=0.54$.

SATISFACTION WITH LIFE SCALE [SWLS ; Diener (1985)]: To measure satisfaction with life, the Satisfaction with Life Scale developed by Diener et al. (1985) was used .It consists five items on a 7-point rating scale (from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree). Alpha reliability in the present study was $\alpha= 0. 7$.

Results and discussion

The Mean,standard deviation and t-values on all the variables for males and females are shown in Table No 1

Table -1

	FEMALE		MALE		t-VALUES	P-LEVEL
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
WLB	26.37	3.01	25.26	3.14	1.48	0.14
SWL	26.14		25.94	4.76	.18	0.86
Extroversion	26.60	5.04	26.34	4.85	.22	0.83
Aggreableness	35.89	5.76	34.46	5.08	1.10	0.27
Conscientiousness	35.57	4.19	32.34	5.58	2.74**	0.01
Neuroticism	22.89	5.39	21.06	4.90	1.48	0.14
Oppeness	36.46	4.47	37.26	6.52	-0.53	060

Results indicates that females score high on all variables WLB,SWL,EXT,AGG,CON,NEU except OPP on which males score high. t- test results reveals that female and male population comprising the present sample do not differ with each other almost on all the variables under study except consciousness personality dimension where females scored very high and difference in scoers is significant at (t=2.74; p=0.01) level which indicates that females are more hardworking and reliable than males.

Intercorrelations among different indices included in the study were computed for females , males and total group and are presented in Table-2, Table-3 and Table-4.

Table-2

Intercorrelations among different indices							
	FEMALES (N=35)						
	WLB	SWL	E	A	C	N	O
WLB	1	.383*	.394*	.096	-.127	-.095	.104
SWL		1	-.155	.125	.160	.025	.211
Extroversion			1	-.182	-.093	-.164	.122
Aggreableness				1	.198	-.248	.134
Conscientiousness					1	-.130	.285
Neuroticism						1	.033
Oppeness							1

For the present sample WLB has been reported positive correlation with SWL and only one dimension of personality i.e. Extroversion. None of the personality dimension has been correlated with SWL in female group.

Similar trend of correlations exists in male group with an additional correlation among personality dimensions i.e. Agreeableness is positively correlated with Conscientiousness and Openness. The reason behind such kind of similar trends could be the common work culture and the similar kind of nature of job.

Table-3

	MALE (N=35)						
	WLB_M	SWL_M	E_M	A_M	C_M	N_M	O_M
WLB	1	.415*	.389*	.056	.255	.238	.327
SWL		1	.156	.102	.057	.009	.255
Extroversion			1	-.186	.084	.187	-.064
Aggreableness				1	.314	-.148	.401*
Conscientiousness					1	-.047	.283
Neuroticism						1	.020
Oppeness							1

Correlations results for the whole sample reveals that WLB is strongly related with SWL and Extroversion, whereas Agreeableness dimension of personality shows significant positive relationship with Consenciousness. and Oppeness . In addition to that Consciousness and Oppeness are related to each other too significantly. The results are found to be inconsistent with the findings of Thomson, Lee. Anne (2007).

Table-4

	MALE + FEMALE (N=70)						
	WLB	SWL	E	A	C	N	O
WLB	1	.397**	.390**	.098	.144	.096	.206
SWL		1	.003	.115	.101	.021	.233
Extroversion			1	-.178	.014	.005	.026
Aggreableness				1	.282*	-.175	.251*
Conscientiousness					1	-.022	.247*
Neuroticism						1	.014
Oppeness							1

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

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Regression analysis was finally used to get more insight into structural relationship existing between measures included in the study Work life balance ,Satisfaction with life and Personality dimension.

Step wise regression analysis was conducted for females ,males and total group which reveals:

Female group

		extroversion			
	a	B	β	R^2	F for R^2
EXTROVERSION	20.10	0.24	0.39	0.18	3.62 ^{**}

		wlb			
	a	B	β	R^2	F for R^2
WLB	11.15	0.57	0.38	0.15	5.66 ^{**}

In female group Extroversion leads to Work life balance which further leads to Satisfaction with life and none of the personality dimension leads to Satisfaction with life directly.

Therefore Extroversion contributes 18% of total variance towards WLB and WLB contributes 15% of the total variance towards SWL for female population of the present sample.

Male group

		Extroversion		openness					
	a	B	β	B	β	R^2	F for R^2	$R^2\Delta$	F for $R^2\Delta$
EXTROVERSION	18.65	0.25	0.39	-	-	0.15	5.89 [*]	-	-
OPENNESS	11.93	0.27	0.41	0.17	0.35	0.28	6.09 [*]	0.13	5.49 ^{**}

	a	B	β	R^2	F for R^2
WLB	10.06	0.63	0.41	0.17	6.85 ^{**}

For male group Extroversion and Openness leads to Work life balance to which further leads to Satisfaction with life and none of the personality dimension leads to Satisfaction with life directly. Extroversion contributes 15% of total variance towards WLB and an additional 13% of variance is contributed by the openness dimension of the personality (over & above contributed by the extroversion for the same). Whereas, WLB contributes 17% of the total variance towards SWL for male population of the present sample

TOTAL SAMPLE

N=70					
		EXTROVERSION			
	a	B	β	R^2	F for R^2
EXTROVERSION	19.31	0.25	0.40	0.15	12.18 ^{**}

N=70					
		WLB			
	a	B	β	R^2	F for R^2
WLB	10.89	0.59	0.40	0.16	12.71 ^{**}

In total sample Extroversion leads to Work life balance which further leads to Satisfaction with life none of the personality dimension leads to SWL directly Extroversion contributes 15% of total variance towards WLB and WLB contributes 16% of the total variance towards SWL for the present sample.

Overall, these results suggest that each of the Five Factor Model dimensions are unique and significant predictors of some form of positive or negative Work-life balance and Satisfaction with life. As the Five Factor Model of personality has given much consistency to personality research in general (Costa and McCrae, 1992), it has also given rise to much of the personality research within the work-life balance literature

Of are the most predictive of work-life balance the studies that examined the full Five Factor Model, it seems that Extraversion, is contributing much in Work life balance and Satisfaction with life reason being that extraverted individuals build strong networks of social support which help them to maintain better Work life balance.

Taken collectively, results of this study points to the following;

- (a) positive correlaton exists between Work life balance, Satisfaction with life and Extroversion dimension of personality. This is reveled consistently in all the groups.
- (b) none of the personality dimensionhas been found correlated to Satisfaction with life
- (c) Some of the personality dimensions are positively intercorrelated.
- (d) no gender differences have been reported on all the variables except Conscientiousnes
- (e) regression analysis indicates Extroversion contributes towards WLB and WLB contributes to SWL.
- (f) main hypothesises have been proved.

The present study was based on small sample. Moreover sample was drawn from Chandigarh and adjoining areas and can hardly be considered representative ones. Further studies with larger and different areas sample is needed for more meaningful results.

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