

Work-Life Balance and Job Satisfaction among Working Professionals: A Cross-Sectional Correlational Study

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Abstract: *Work-life balance and job satisfaction are important aspects of employees' occupational experiences and well-being. This study examined the association between work-life balance and job satisfaction among working professionals in Kerala. A quantitative, cross-sectional correlational design was adopted, using convenience sampling and an online questionnaire. Of 58 submitted responses, 53 were classified as eligible based on the recorded consent and eligibility fields. Work-life balance was assessed using a four-item measure attributed to Brough et al. (2014), and job satisfaction was assessed using the 36-item Job Satisfaction Survey developed by Spector (1985). Descriptive statistics, internal consistency estimates, Shapiro-Wilk tests, and correlation analyses were reported. The mean work-life balance score was 12.04 (SD = 1.85), while the mean job satisfaction score was 124.79 (SD = 7.73). Cronbach's alpha was .201 for work-life balance and .137 for job satisfaction, indicating substantial measurement concerns. Spearman's correlation showed a weak positive association that was not statistically significant ($p = .197$, $p = .158$, $N = 53$). The findings should be interpreted cautiously because of the low internal consistency estimates and the need to confirm the scoring procedures.*

Keywords: Work-life balance; job satisfaction; working professionals; Kerala; occupational psychology

1. Introduction

Work-life balance has become an important topic in occupational and organisational psychology because employees must manage responsibilities associated with employment and other areas of life. Work demands can influence the time, energy, and psychological resources available for family responsibilities, personal activities, and recovery. When these demands are difficult to manage, employees may experience conflict between their work and non-work roles.

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) described work-family conflict as a form of inter-role conflict in which pressures from work and family roles are incompatible. Their framework highlights the importance of considering how work-related expectations interact with responsibilities outside the workplace. Although work-life balance is related to work-family conflict, the concepts are not identical. Work-life balance also concerns how individuals evaluate the compatibility of their work and personal responsibilities.

Job satisfaction refers to an individual's overall evaluation of their job and experiences at work. It can reflect attitudes towards several aspects of employment, including supervision, pay, promotion opportunities, colleagues, working conditions, and the nature of the work itself. Spector (1985) developed the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) to assess satisfaction across multiple aspects of employment.

Work-life balance and job satisfaction may be related because employees' experiences of managing work and personal responsibilities can influence how they evaluate their employment. At the same time, satisfaction with employment conditions may affect how employees perceive the compatibility of their work and personal lives. The direction

and strength of this relationship may vary across occupations, employment conditions, and individual circumstances.

Kerala provides a relevant setting for investigating these variables among working professionals. Employees may differ in their occupations, working hours, family responsibilities, and access to organisational support. Understanding these experiences may help identify areas for further occupational research and workplace interventions.

However, a relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction cannot be assumed in advance. It must be examined empirically, with appropriate attention to measurement quality, research design, and statistical interpretation.

2. Literature Survey

2.1 Work-Family Conflict and Work-Life Balance

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) examined the sources of work-family conflict and described time-based, strain-based, and behaviour-based conflict. Their framework explains how demands associated with one role can interfere with participation in another role. The framework remains relevant to understanding the challenges employees may experience when managing competing responsibilities.

Brough et al. (2014) evaluated a work-life balance measure across workers in Australia and New Zealand. Their work provides a basis for studying employees' perceptions of work-life balance using a structured measurement approach. The application of a scale in a different population, however, requires careful attention to the exact instrument version, response options, and scoring procedures.

2.2 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a multidimensional construct that can reflect employees' evaluations of different aspects of their employment. Spector (1985) developed the Job Satisfaction Survey for measuring satisfaction across nine facets, including pay, promotion, supervision, benefits, contingent rewards, operating procedures, coworkers, the nature of the work, and communication.

A multidimensional measure can provide information about several aspects of employment. However, researchers must follow the appropriate scoring instructions and consider whether an overall score is suitable for the intended interpretation. Internal consistency should be examined rather than assumed.

2.3 Relationship Between Work–Life Balance and Job Satisfaction

Work–life balance and job satisfaction are conceptually related but distinct. Employees who perceive greater compatibility between work and personal responsibilities may evaluate their employment more favourably. Conversely, unsatisfactory work conditions may make it harder to manage non-work responsibilities.

Nevertheless, a positive relationship is not guaranteed. Differences in working conditions, personal circumstances, occupational demands, and measurement characteristics may influence the observed association. Correlational research is therefore necessary to assess whether these variables are associated within a particular sample.

2.4 Research Gap

The present study focuses on working professionals in Kerala and examines the association between work–life balance and job satisfaction within a cross-sectional correlational framework. The study contributes sample-specific findings on these variables. Its results must be interpreted in light of the convenience sampling method and the reliability estimates obtained in the present dataset.

The study does not establish that these findings represent all working professionals in Kerala. Further research using larger and more diverse samples, verified measurement procedures, and stronger psychometric evidence is required.

3. Problem Definition

Work–life balance and job satisfaction are relevant to employees' experiences of work, but the relationship between these constructs may vary across individuals and occupational settings. There is a need to examine their association among working professionals in Kerala using a structured quantitative approach.

The present study investigates this relationship using self-reported questionnaire responses. Particular attention is required when interpreting the findings because the internal consistency estimates obtained for both measures are low. Consequently, the results should be viewed as preliminary

evidence about the observed scores rather than definitive conclusions about the underlying psychological constructs.

3.1 Aim

To examine the relationship between work–life balance and job satisfaction among working professionals in Kerala.

3.2 Objectives

- To describe work–life balance scores among the participants.
- To describe job satisfaction scores among the participants.
- To examine the internal consistency of the measures used in the study.
- To investigate the association between work–life balance and job satisfaction.

3.3 Research Hypothesis

- **Null hypothesis (H_0):** There is no statistically significant association between work–life balance and job satisfaction among the participants.
- **Alternative hypothesis (H_1):** There is a statistically significant association between work–life balance and job satisfaction among the participants.

The hypotheses concern association and do not imply a causal relationship.

4. Methodology / Approach

4.1 Research Design

The study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional correlational design. Data were collected at one point in time through a self-administered online questionnaire. The design was selected to examine the association between work–life balance and job satisfaction without manipulating either variable.

4.2 Participants and Sampling

Convenience sampling was used to recruit working professionals. The dataset contained 58 submitted responses. According to the recorded eligibility field, 53 responses were eligible and five were ineligible. The final analytical sample comprised 53 participants.

Eligibility was determined using the self-reported consent and eligibility fields in the questionnaire. Because the eligibility question combined several criteria, including employment, age, and work or residence in Kerala, the individual criteria could not be independently verified from that combined response alone. The reported age range among eligible participants was 18–66 years.

4.3 Data Collection

Data were collected through an online questionnaire using Google Forms. Participants' responses were exported to a spreadsheet for screening and statistical analysis.

The audit report indicated that all submitted records selected the consent option and that no missing cells or duplicate timestamps were detected. Five records marked ineligible were excluded from the scale summaries and correlational analysis.

The consent and eligibility fields were treated as self-reported information. No independent verification of employment or residence was documented in the supplied audit report.

4.4 Measures

4.4.1 Work–Life Balance

Work–life balance was assessed using a four-item measure attributed to Brough et al. (2014). The proposed scoring used five response categories, coded from 1 to 5, with Item 2 reverse-scored using the transformation $6 - x$.

The original numeric scoring key was not available in the audited workbook. Accordingly, this coding represents the scoring assumption used in the reported calculations. The response options and scoring must be confirmed against the exact questionnaire administered before the results are considered final.

4.4.2 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction was assessed using the 36-item Job Satisfaction Survey developed by Spector (1985). The responses were coded on a six-point scale, ranging from 1 (Disagree very much) to 6 (Agree very much).

The audit applied reverse scoring to Items 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 19, 21, 23, 24, 26, 29, 31, 32, 34, and 36, using the transformation $7 - x$.

The specified reverse-scoring procedure was applied in the audit. However, the correspondence between this scoring key and the exact instrument version administered should be confirmed against the relevant scoring instructions.

4.5 Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to summarise the total scores for work–life balance and job satisfaction. These included means, standard deviations, and observed minimum and maximum values.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Work–Life Balance and Job Satisfaction

Variable	Items	N	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum	Possible total range
Work–Life Balance	4	53	12.04	1.85	6	15	4–20
Job Satisfaction	36	53	124.79	7.73	99	141	36–216

The mean total score for work–life balance was 12.04 ($SD = 1.85$), with observed values ranging from 6 to 15. The mean total score for job satisfaction was 124.79 ($SD = 7.73$), with observed values ranging from 99 to 141.

These statistics describe the scores in the present sample. Without confirmed scoring and adequate evidence of measurement reliability, they should not be interpreted as definitive estimates of the underlying constructs in the broader population of working professionals in Kerala.

Cronbach's alpha was used to examine the internal consistency of each measure. Shapiro–Wilk tests were reported to assess departures from normality in the total scores.

Pearson's product–moment correlation and Spearman's rank–order correlation were calculated to examine the association between the two variables. Spearman's correlation was designated as the primary result in the supplied audit because of the distributional findings, the ordinal nature of the item responses, and the reliability concerns. Pearson's correlation was retained as a supplementary analysis.

All statistical results in this manuscript are taken from the supplied audit report and have not been independently recalculated from the original response file.

4.6 Ethical Considerations

The supplied audit indicates that participants selected the consent option before their responses were analysed. The analysis was based on self-reported questionnaire data.

Information regarding formal ethics committee approval, an approval reference number, or a formal exemption was not provided in the supplied materials. Such details should be included only if applicable and documented. No ethics approval should be claimed without supporting documentation.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1 Participant and Data Summary

The dataset contained 58 submitted responses, of which 53 were classified as eligible according to the recorded eligibility field. Five ineligible records were excluded, resulting in a final analytical sample of 53 participants.

The audit reported no missing cells and no duplicate timestamps. These checks address the recorded spreadsheet data but do not establish that each eligibility criterion was independently verified.

5.2 Descriptive Statistics

5.3 Internal Consistency

Table 2: Internal Consistency of the Study Measures

Measure	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha	Interpretation
Work–Life Balance	4	0.201	Very low internal consistency
Job Satisfaction Survey	36	0.137	Very low internal consistency

The audit produced Cronbach's alpha values of .201 for work–life balance and .137 for job satisfaction. Both values are

substantially below commonly used guidelines for internal consistency.

These findings raise concerns about the consistency of the item responses within each measure. Several explanations are possible, including scoring errors, a mismatch between the questionnaire and scoring key, differences in how respondents interpreted items, or limitations in the functioning of the measures within this sample. The current results do not establish which explanation is responsible.

For the WLB measure, the response coding was assumed from the verbal response labels rather than verified against an original scoring codebook. For the JSS, the reverse-scoring list was applied as specified in the audit, but its correspondence to the administered version remains to be confirmed.

The low alpha values therefore require further investigation through item-level diagnostics and confirmation of the instruments' scoring procedures. Until these checks are completed, the total scores should be interpreted cautiously.

5.4 Normality Assessment

The supplied audit reported Shapiro–Wilk results of $W = .897$, $p < .001$ for work–life balance and $W = .953$, $p = .038$ for job satisfaction.

Both tests indicated statistically significant departures from normality at the .05 level. These findings informed the decision to use Spearman's rank-order correlation as the primary association analysis.

Normality tests should not be used in isolation to select a correlation method. The nature of the variables, the relationship's shape, potential outliers, and the study's measurement limitations also matter. The very low internal consistency estimates further limit the confidence with which either correlation can be interpreted.

5.5 Correlation Analysis

Table 3: Association Between Work–Life Balance and Job Satisfaction

Statistical test	Coefficient	p-value	N	Significant at .05
Spearman's rank correlation	$\rho = .197$	0.158	53	No
Pearson's correlation	$r = .292$	0.034	53	Yes

Spearman's rank-order correlation indicated a weak positive association between work–life balance and job satisfaction ($\rho = .197$, $p = .158$, $N = 53$). The result was not statistically significant at the .05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected under the designated primary analysis.

The supplementary Pearson analysis indicated a positive correlation ($r = .292$, $p = .034$). This result was statistically significant at the .05 level. However, the two correlation methods produced different conclusions regarding statistical significance.

The Pearson and Spearman coefficients measure different aspects of association, and their results should not be selected

or interpreted solely according to which produces the smaller p-value. The choice of primary analysis should be justified by the characteristics of the data and the study design.

Furthermore, both analyses depend on the quality of the underlying scores. The very low reliability estimates mean that the observed correlations may not provide a dependable representation of the relationship between the intended constructs. The association findings should therefore be treated as tentative.

5.6 Discussion

The present study examined the association between work–life balance and job satisfaction among working professionals in Kerala. The descriptive results indicated a mean WLB score of 12.04 and a mean JSS score of 124.79. However, the measurement findings substantially limit the conclusions that can be drawn from these values.

The primary Spearman analysis showed a weak positive association between the two sets of scores, but the result was not statistically significant. Thus, the analysis did not provide sufficient evidence of a monotonic association in this sample at the conventional .05 significance level.

The supplementary Pearson analysis produced a statistically significant positive correlation. Nevertheless, this result should not be treated as conclusive evidence of a relationship because the choice of correlation method must be justified independently of the p-value, and both scales displayed very low internal consistency.

The discrepancy between the Pearson and Spearman findings highlights the importance of examining data characteristics and measurement quality. It also demonstrates why statistical significance should not be interpreted without considering the reliability of the measures and the limitations of the study design.

The findings do not establish that work–life balance causes job satisfaction, that job satisfaction causes work–life balance, or that either variable predicts changes in the other over time. A cross-sectional correlational design cannot establish temporal ordering or causal effects.

The reliability estimates are the most important limitation affecting the interpretation of this study. Further work is required to confirm the questionnaire versions, verify the scoring keys, and examine item-level response patterns. If the low reliability estimates remain after these checks, the results should be reported with an explicit acknowledgement that the measures may not have assessed their intended constructs consistently in this sample.

6. Conclusion

This study examined work–life balance and job satisfaction among 53 eligible working professionals in Kerala. The mean work–life balance score was 12.04 ($SD = 1.85$), while the mean job satisfaction score was 124.79 ($SD = 7.73$).

The primary Spearman correlation showed a weak positive association between the scores, but the result was not statistically significant ($\rho = .197$, $p = .158$). The supplementary Pearson correlation was statistically significant ($r = .292$, $p = .034$), although this finding should be interpreted cautiously because of the difference between the two analyses and the low internal consistency estimates.

Cronbach's alpha was .201 for work–life balance and .137 for job satisfaction. These values raise substantial concerns about the reliability of the scale scores. Confirmation of the questionnaire versions, response coding, and reverse-scoring procedures is therefore necessary before drawing firm conclusions.

Overall, the present findings do not provide robust evidence of a statistically significant association under the designated primary analysis. They should be treated as tentative and sample-specific rather than conclusive evidence about working professionals in Kerala.

7. Future Scope

Future research should address the measurement and design limitations identified in this study.

First, researchers should confirm that the exact versions of the WLB measure and JSS are appropriate for the study population and that the response options and scoring keys match the instruments administered. The wording, item order, response coding, and reverse-scoring rules should be documented before data collection.

Second, cognitive pre-testing and a pilot study could help determine whether participants interpret the items as intended. Where appropriate, researchers should evaluate the suitability of the measures for the language and cultural context in which they are administered.

Third, item-level analyses should be used to investigate the low internal consistency estimates. Corrected item–total correlations and inter-item correlations can help identify potential scoring or measurement problems. Items should not be removed solely to increase reliability.

Fourth, subsequent studies should consider larger and more diverse samples drawn from different occupations, employment arrangements, and geographical settings. Broader sampling could improve the generalisability of findings beyond the convenience sample examined here.

Finally, longitudinal research could investigate how work–life balance and job satisfaction change over time. Studies examining organisational support, working hours, role demands, and other relevant variables may also provide a more comprehensive understanding of employees' occupational experiences.

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