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# A Study on Determinants of Work and Life Proposition for IT Professionals

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## Abstract

*With reference to India, work-life balance issues are becoming increasingly important. With increasing expectations of employers and new work settings, things are becoming difficult specially in private sector. This paper deals with work-life proposition issues with reference to IT professionals in Bengaluru city. An attempt has been made to explore the factors affecting work-life imbalance for the IT professionals. A research was carried on 150 IT professionals. Primary data was collected by structured questionnaire constructed on Likert five point scale. Such data was analyzed by using statistical tools and significant results were obtained. The study has wide implications for IT industry in particular.*

**Keywords:** *Determinants, Information Technology, IT Professionals, Work-life Balance, Work-life.*

**Introduction:** An employee has two lives to play: professional as well as personal life. Such spheres were by and large clear earlier when there was clear demarcation between the two. However, now due to ever-increasing employer expectation along with increasing salaries, people have to give in more inputs than ever. Technology on one side has become a boon; on the other hand it comes as a bane. It has been widely acknowledged that one has to take the load of professional life into personal life. Gone are the days when people used to forget the office related worries at home. So, when job stress starts affecting the personal life of an individual, work-life equilibrium gets imbalanced causing problems. Due to organisational stress, role clashes are observed that cause performance deficiency at organisational level as well as family level.

IT industry has been facing more cases of work-life imbalance. Due to long sitting at one place and working on terminals for long hours and meeting targets; the life of IT professionals at times becomes troublesome. They have to carry the work related onerous activities at home as well. There are many top level IT companies having their operations in Bengaluru. Popularly known as the 'Silicon Valley of India' due to the presence of many IT companies, this city has contributed almost one-third of the total IT exports in India. The IT sector in Bengaluru can be broadly seen in three categories namely- Software Technology Parks of India, International Tech Park and Electronics City. Due to the presence of IT giants like-Infosys, Wipro, Cognizant, Hexaware, MindTree, TCS, HCL, Tech Mahindra, Mphasis, L&T Infotech and many other companies, it deserves to be known as the 'Silicon Valley of India'.

The city has attracted many people from all across the country and even abroad for exploring job options. It has

been offering high paying IT jobs to many pass-outs of IITs and other reputed engineering and technical institutions of the country. However, due to the ever demanding job profile with expanding roles, people at times feel that their professional and personal lives are getting imbalanced. Such problems lead to stress and burnout, which causes many physiological and well as mental imbalances. At times, they have to work in night for completion of the projects. People in their 30's of age are having many health problems like- irregular blood pressure, hypertension and other diseases. There are many benefits of improved work-life. The achievement of better work-life balance can get dividends for the employers in terms of having a highly motivated, productive and less stressed manpower that feels valued (Byrne, 2005). With reference to IT sector, the study of work-life equilibrium factors becomes imperative. The study is an attempt to elaborate work-life balance issues with reference to IT professionals in a city in India.

## Review of Literature:

A brief review of the existing research work in this area has been presented in this section. Crooker et al (2002) have tried to explain how life complexity and dynamism affect work-life balance. The authors have explained individual value systems on the relationship between life complexity and work-life balance. Guest (2002) has explored why work-life balance has become an important topic for research and policy in some countries specially European countries. McDowell (2004) has elaborated the ways in which organizations and institutions operate at a range of spatial scales as well as new sets of responsibilities towards co-workers, members of households and the public. Morris and Madsen (2007) have shown the importance of work-life balance. By better understanding work-life theory, HR professionals

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can contribute to the strategic development of policies, practices, programs and interventions. Moore (2007) conducted a research to compare work-life balance issues workers and managers of an MNC. It was concluded that managers are not able to achieve work-life balance.

In a research, Hughes and Bozionelos (2007) concluded that work-life imbalance was not only a source of concern, but also that it was the major source of dissatisfaction for participants. Premilla and Noronha (2008) conducted a research on call-center executives in Bangalore and Mumbai. They covered issues like reorienting self, balancing expectations, neutralizing stress for executives. To establish and illustrate the levels of awareness of work-life balance policies within the surveying profession in Australia and New Zealand, Wilkinson (2008) conducted a research. It was concluded that the consequences of an imbalance between work and personal or family life is emotional exhaustion, cynicism and burnout. Koubova and Buchko (2013) explored the importance of emotional intelligence as a crucial tool for achieving both personal life and work performance. The effect of emotions in an individual's personal life environment is of primary importance in the development of emotional intelligence, which influences the work environment. The effects of work experience on one's personal life are influenced significantly by the level of emotional intelligence.

**Objectives:**

1. To explore the determinants that lead to work-life imbalance of IT professionals working in Bengaluru city.
2. To study the impact of working style of IT professionals on work-life balance proposition.
3. To suggest the measures for managing work-life proposition.

**Research Methodology:**

The study was conducted by using primary as well as secondary data. The secondary data were collected from sources like- Internet, books, newspapers, journals, business magazines etc. For collecting primary data, questionnaire as a tool was adopted for exploring the determinants of work-life balance. There were 22 statements made on Likert scale having range of options from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The respondents were asked to tick any option against the statement. There were 150 respondents selected randomly from 8 big IT companies located in Bengaluru. The respondents were engineering graduates and post-graduates; working as software professionals at middle and executive positions in the age group of 22 to 30 years; almost half of them were married. There were approximately half of the

female respondents. The data was collected and was analyzed using factor analysis, correlation and regression analysis by statistical software SPSS 16.0.

**Analysis and Results:**

Reliability Analysis- Scale (Alpha): Using Chronbach's Alpha for 22 items, reliability analysis was done that shown 0.897, meaning that that the data was reliable.

Before undergoing Factor Analysis, KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was used. The value of KMO should be between 0 to 1; and adequate value of KMO should be higher than .5 so as to move further for factor analysis. Likewise, Bartlett's Sphericity Test was used for testing hypothesis. When both KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were found appropriate, it shows that factor analysis should be performed. All 22 items of questionnaire were subjected to factor analysis by using principal components analysis and varimax rotation for determining the dimensions.

**Table 1.1: KMO and Bartlett's test**

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.735
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2563.516
	Df	780
	Sig.	.000

The value of KMO Bartlett's test is .735, which shows that the data is accepted for factor analysis and Eigen values of all factors were found greater than 1.0.

**Factor Analysis:** The response of respondents was subjected to factor analysis by using SPSS 16.0, which gave 7 factors. These factors were:

**Factor 1: Family Support (3.873)**

The first factor identified through Factor Analysis was family support. This is a significant factor which adds to work and life proposition. It has been seen that those with full support from family and office are able to do justice with their jobs. This factor consisted of four sub-factors: i.e. support from family (.848), friends' support (.713), emotional support (.645) and autonomy in decisions (.691).

**Factor 2: Organization Support (3.639)**

The second factor was organization support. When the organization offers support with the employees, it has its own importance. This factor consisted of four sub factors: i.e. Supportive Organization policies (.847), Better Communication (.821), organization's work culture supportive (.816) and authority distribution (.639).

### Factor 3: Nature of Job (3.184)

The third factor was nature of job. In IT sector the nature of working is different than many other areas like- sales etc. One has to do sitting job for long hours. This factor consisted of three sub factors: job choice in IT sector (.782), monotonous type of work (.753) and routine nature (.732).

### Factor 4: Stress at workplace (3.439)

The fourth factor was stress in the office. In the office, there are many factors that lead to stress. Though a moderate amount of stress is good, but when it becomes intolerable, things become difficult. This factor consisted of three sub factors: i.e. expectations from superiors (.847), shrinking deadlines (.801), and higher work pressure (.759).

### Factor 5: Time factor (3.176)

The fifth factor which came through factor analysis was time factor. There are time constraints where people in IT have to do much work in less time. Much of the work is directed as per the international guidelines and professionals have to take care of the time factor. This factor consisted of sub factors- workload issues (.856), difficulty in managing time (.795), and lack of breaks during work hours (.674).

### Factor 6: Work requirements (2.183)

The sixth factor was work requirements. The IT work calls for error-free working; which may even call for working from home or working overtime. Such pressures lead to work life imbalance. It consisted of three sub-factors- requirements of the job profile (.792), availability at work (.713), and work related demands (.656).

### Factor 7: Empathy Factor (1.942)

The last factor was empathy. The IT professionals expect people to understand the working of this sector, which is not easy. From family as well as the office, they expect understanding from others. It consisted of two sub factors- i.e. human consideration (.722), and concern for them (.624).

**Correlation Analysis:** Correlation was done for the purpose of finding the linkage between IT and factors related with work life proposition. Following results were seen, when correlation analysis was done on 7 factors:

Table 1.2: Correlation Analysis

SN	Correlations Between	Value of Pearson Correlation	Level of significance	No. of Cases
1.	IT and family support factor	0.359	0.01	150
2.	IT and organization support factor	0.474	0.01	150
3.	IT and nature of job factor	0.362	0.01	150
4.	IT and stress at workplace factor	0.627	0.01	150
5.	IT and time factor	0.491	0.01	150
6.	IT and work requirements	-0.102	0.860	150
7.	IT and empathy factor	0.483	0.01	150

The results of correlation analysis indicates association of Information Technology with work-life proposition factors, which shows that the impact of IT on 6 factors namely- family support (.359), organization support (.474), nature of job (.362), stress at workplace (.627), time factor (.491) and empathy factor (.483) is positive at 0.01 level of significance; while impact of IT is showing negative correlation with the work requirements factor (-.102).

**Regression Analysis:** For the purpose of finding the nature of relationship among the variables, regression was applied. The results indicate that IT as independent variable is related to the determinants of work-life propositions of professionals. The square of this correlation measure indicates the ratio of variance in work life proposition. Such variation on factors of work-life proposition is explained by the essential factors: IT.

### Conclusions of Study:

The result provides much on determinants of work life proposition. Support of the family is the first factor with highest factor load which shows that family is the most important part of an individual life. When the family supports emotionally, things become easier for the people. The impact of IT on family support shows positive correlation to show that family ties are highly crucial for an individual's performance at all levels (Dunne, 2007). Research shows that family bonding has always been prominently significant specially in Indian families where the concept of joint families has been yet prevailing (Baral and Bhargava, 2011). Though the number of nuclear families is getting increased, yet, family ties are yet the strongest. The emotional support one has from the family boosts up his performance at all times.

The second factor was organization support, which is almost equally important for a professional for

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facilitation in better job performance. There is positive correlation found between the impact of IT on organization support. Organization work settings have been highly appreciable for the employees (Hyman and Summers, 2007). Organizational level approaches of having sound HR policy which has got realistic goal settings help in reducing stress. Supportive work culture ensures physical and emotional health of employees (Murthy and Guthrie, 2012). The third factor was job, which indicates that nature of job has got importance in deciding the equilibrium of work and life. There is positive correlation found between impact of IT on job factor. The IT sector has got a job setting where one has to work in similar fashion for long time. Routine job offers lesser opportunities for the incumbents (Eikhof et al., 2007). At times it becomes monotonous in nature leading to less enthusiasm.

Fourth factor was stress at workplace, which indicates that stress has become a part of professionals in the young age. The deadlines seem to be shrinking and the pressure is higher. In last few years, the pay packages have been increasing for IT professionals; barring the recession period. Further, there is positive correlation found between impact of IT on stress factor. With high stress, the employees employee turnover gets increased (Deery, 2008 and *Gregory et al., 2013*). The fifth factor was time, which indicates that much of the work is time-bound in IT sector where one has to stick to the deadlines. At times, people have to work overtime and manage the workload. However, overtime takes the share of the family aspect. Sometime, IT professionals have to work on Sundays or holidays as the need arises. They don't take breaks during work at times. Such factors lead to imbalance in work and family life. Work-life imbalance is not only a source of concern, but also that it is the major source of dissatisfaction (Doherty, 2004). Further, there was positive correlation found between impact of IT on time factor.

Sixth factor was work requirements, which indicates that IT professionals have to work from home, when the demand arises. In such cases, they are not able to manage their family affairs. Working beyond hours leads to disparity. The impact of IT on work requirement was found negative, which shows that the requirement of work has adverse impact on work life balance. The work needs are different for IT sector. Work intrusion into domestic life hampers the performance of the people (Hyman and Summers, 2004). The requirements of IT role demands are unique since the expectations are higher along with the quality standards. Last factor was empathy, which indicates that the employees want human considerations as the concern. They expect their family and the supervisors to understand the plight of

overburden. There was positive correlation found between impact of IT on empathy. Analysis of the situations of the job is necessary for maintaining work-life balance (Pasamar and Cabrera, 2013).

### **Implications:**

The study has many implications for the IT sector in particular. The nature of job can not be changed, but the way job is performed needs a change. Work life balance has become top priority agenda before HR managers and policy makers. This has special reference to women employees as well in IT companies. As per NASSCOM reports, women employees form approximately 30 percent of the workforce in IT and IT enabled services. Technology has led to all round improvement in people's lives. Now, people can live longer; can perform better; can communicate better; can have more access to knowledge than ever. Technology has always facilitated creating a worldwide workplace; a place where individuals can do business with many companies throughout the globe.

However, it has led to many limitations as well. Due to increased speed of working, the expectations of employers are getting increased. People now have to take the office workload at their homes. The accessibility of people on mobile phones is creating troubles. With many communication modes, one can communicate immediately to any part of the world. Further, with the arrival of smart phones, tablets etc., the employees can leave their office, but can't surrender their work. They are seamlessly connected to the world even at their home while being with their family. The lines between work and life are getting blurred. What was a nine-to-five job is now endless job taking the Sundays and holidays. All such things are snatching away the family time. Since the hours are limited in a day; one has to utilize it anyhow. The more time one is giving to his office beyond hours; he/she is donating the family hours. Though many companies are doing many considerable efforts to manage work and life; but more endeavours are needed. The rising cases of stress related diseases and disorders among those in their 30's of age is a warning signal. Finally, work life balance is the key to overall prosperity of the organization which can be ensured through increasing the productivity of the employees. Unless the employees are motivated to work with new zeal, organization cannot expect progress in short run as well as long run.

### **Limitations and Scope of Study:**

This study was confined to IT professionals working in Bengaluru city. The findings of the study should not be generalized for professionals working in other cities and other employees. The results may differ in such cases.



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Further studies can be carried out on a large sample and gender-based comparison can be done along with emphasis on other demographic variables. There is much which can be done for making work life balance proposition more better for individuals as well as the organisation.

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