



A Study on Work-Life Balance and Employee Job Satisfaction

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Abstract

Work-life balance (WLB) has become an important human resource concern because employees increasingly manage simultaneous occupational, family, and personal responsibilities. This methodology paper develops a structured empirical approach for examining whether employees who experience better work-life balance report higher job satisfaction. The proposed study adopts a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design. Work-life balance is measured through a concise multi-item scale informed by established work-family research, while job satisfaction is assessed as employees' overall positive evaluation of their jobs. A stratified or convenience sample of approximately 200-250 employees from service and administrative organizations is proposed. Data analysis proceeds through reliability assessment, descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression with demographic controls. For methodological demonstration only, a synthetic dataset is used in the Results section; it shows the expected positive relationship between WLB and job satisfaction but is not presented as real field evidence. The paper integrates research published no later than and provides a transparent sequence for questionnaire design, sampling, data collection, ethical practice, and statistical testing. The proposed framework can support later field studies seeking practical evidence for flexible scheduling, supervisor support, manageable workloads, and boundary-management initiatives.

Introduction

Employees do not experience work and non-work domains as completely separate systems. Work schedules, workload, supervisory expectations, family responsibilities, commuting, and personal recovery compete for finite time and psychological resources. Clark's (2000) work/family border theory explains that individuals continually cross and manage boundaries between work and family domains, and that the flexibility and permeability of these boundaries influence balance. When work demands repeatedly intrude into non-work life, strain can accumulate and reduce positive attitudes toward the job.

The empirical literature supports this concern. Allen et al. (2000) reviewed consequences of

work-to-family conflict and identified important work-related, non-work, and stress outcomes. Greenhaus et al. (2003) further conceptualized balance through time, involvement, and satisfaction across work and family roles. More recent pre-2015 research treats WLB as a distinct construct rather than merely the absence of conflict. Carlson et al. (2009) showed that work-family balance explained variance in job satisfaction beyond conflict and enrichment, while Brough et al. (2014) validated a concise WLB measure and reported positive associations with job and family satisfaction. Haar et al. (2014) found a positive WLB-job satisfaction relationship across seven cultures. Accordingly, the central research question is: To what extent does perceive work-life balance influence

employee job satisfaction? The study is designed to test a clear, practically relevant relationship while controlling for basic demographic and employment characteristics.

Literature Review

Work-life balance refers to a satisfactory pattern of participation across work and non-work roles rather than a rigid 50:50 allocation of time. Greenhaus et al. (2003) described balance in terms of time, involvement, and satisfaction, showing that the quality of role allocation matters as much as simple time distribution. Clark (2000) emphasized the management of borders between work and family, suggesting that balance improves when individuals can negotiate boundaries and maintain appropriate participation in both domains.

The distinction between balance, conflict, and enrichment is methodologically important. Netemeyer et al. (1996) developed reliable measures of work-family conflict (WFC) and family-work conflict (FWC), providing a foundation for studying negative cross-domain interference. Carlson et al. (2009), however, demonstrated that balance is not identical to low conflict: their balance measure accounted for additional variance in job satisfaction and other outcomes. Brough et al. (2014) later validated a four-item subjective WLB measure across several large samples, supporting the use of a concise global construct in organizational surveys.

Job satisfaction is an evaluative attitude reflecting how positively employees feel about their job and work experiences. It may incorporate satisfaction with work itself,

supervision, recognition, pay, advancement, and working conditions, but an overall satisfaction measure is particularly useful when the study focuses on the general effect of WLB. Job satisfaction is organizationally significant because it is associated with performance-related outcomes. Judge et al. (2001), in a large meta-analytic review, estimated a meaningful positive relationship between overall job satisfaction and job performance, reinforcing the importance of satisfaction as an HR outcome.

The dominant expectation in the literature is that better WLB should increase job satisfaction by reducing role strain and enabling employees to meet valued responsibilities outside work. Allen et al. (2000) found that work-to-family conflict is associated with several adverse outcomes, including job-related attitudes. Kossek et al. (2011) showed that work-family-specific supervisor and organizational support are especially important for reducing work-family conflict. This indicates that organizational practices and supervisor behavior can shape the conditions under which employees evaluate their work positively.

Direct evidence is also strong. Carlson et al. (2009) reported that work-family balance contributed uniquely to job satisfaction after accounting for conflict and enrichment. Brough et al. (2014) found WLB to be positively associated with job satisfaction in large Australian and New Zealand samples. Haar et al. (2014) similarly reported positive associations between WLB and job satisfaction across multiple cultures, suggesting that the relationship is broadly relevant while still allowing for contextual variation.

Table 1. Selected Literature Supporting the Proposed Model

Study	Focus	Contribution to Present Study
Netemeyer et al. (1996)	Validated WFC/FWC scales	Established reliable measurement of cross-domain conflict.
Clark (2000)	Work/family border theory	Explains how boundary flexibility and permeability shape balance.
Greenhaus et al. (2003)	Work-family balance and quality of life	Defines balance through time, involvement, and satisfaction.
Carlson et al. (2009)	Balance vs. conflict/enrichment	Balance explains additional variance in job satisfaction.
Kossek et al. (2011)	Meta-analysis of workplace support	Work-family-specific support is strongly linked with lower conflict.
Brough et al. (2014)	Longitudinal WLB measure validation	WLB positively predicts job and family satisfaction.
Haar et al. (2014)	Seven-culture WLB study	WLB is positively associated with job satisfaction across cultures.

The study integrates border theory with resource-based reasoning. Border theory

suggests that employees experience better balance when they can manage the boundaries

between work and personal roles (Clark, 2000). In parallel, the conflict literature indicates that excessive demands in one domain consume time and energy needed in another domain (Allen et al., 2000; Netemeyer et al., 1996). When organizations provide flexibility and work-family-specific support, conflict can be reduced (Kossek et al., 2011). Lower conflict and stronger perceived balance should therefore improve employees' appraisal of their employment experience. The model treats work-life balance as the independent variable and overall job satisfaction as the dependent variable. Demographic and employment characteristics are included as controls because work-life experiences may vary by age, gender, marital status, tenure, job level, and working hours. The study does not assume that these controls are causes of satisfaction; they are included to estimate the unique association between WLB and job satisfaction more clearly.

H1: Work-life balance has a positive and statistically significant effect on employee job satisfaction.

Methodology

1. Research Design

A quantitative, cross-sectional, explanatory survey design is proposed. The design is appropriate because the objective is to estimate the direction and strength of the association between WLB and job satisfaction at a defined point in time. A standardized questionnaire enables consistent measurement across respondents and supports statistical analysis. Although a longitudinal design would provide stronger temporal evidence, the cross-sectional design is practical for a compact methodology study and can later be extended into repeated-wave research.

2. Population and Sampling

The target population consists of full-time employees working in service, administrative, educational, financial, information-technology, or comparable organizations. Employees should have at least six months of organizational tenure so that they have sufficient experience to evaluate both their work-life conditions and job

satisfaction. A target of 220 usable responses is proposed, allowing adequate power for correlation and multiple regression with a modest number of control variables. Where organizational lists are available, proportionate stratified sampling by department or job level is preferred; otherwise, controlled convenience sampling may be used with transparent reporting of its limitations.

Step-by-Step Research Procedure

Identify participating organizations and obtain permission from management or HR representatives.

Define eligibility criteria: full-time status and at least six months of tenure.

Prepare the questionnaire using established WLB and job-satisfaction items, followed by demographic questions.

Pilot-test the questionnaire with approximately 20 employees to check wording, completion time, and reliability.

Distribute the final questionnaire electronically or in paper form with an informed-consent statement.

Screen responses for missing data, straight-lining, duplicate submissions, and extreme completion times.

Compute scale scores, assess reliability, summarize descriptive statistics, and test the hypothesis using correlation and regression.

Report findings without identifying individual respondents or participating organizations.

3. Conceptual Framework and Variables

Figure 1 summarizes the proposed causal logic. Higher perceived work-life balance is expected to increase overall job satisfaction. The WLB construct reflects employees' ability to meet work and non-work responsibilities with acceptable levels of time pressure, involvement imbalance, and cross-domain interference. Job satisfaction reflects the respondent's global positive evaluation of the job. Control variables are entered in the first regression block and WLB is entered subsequently to assess its incremental explanatory power.

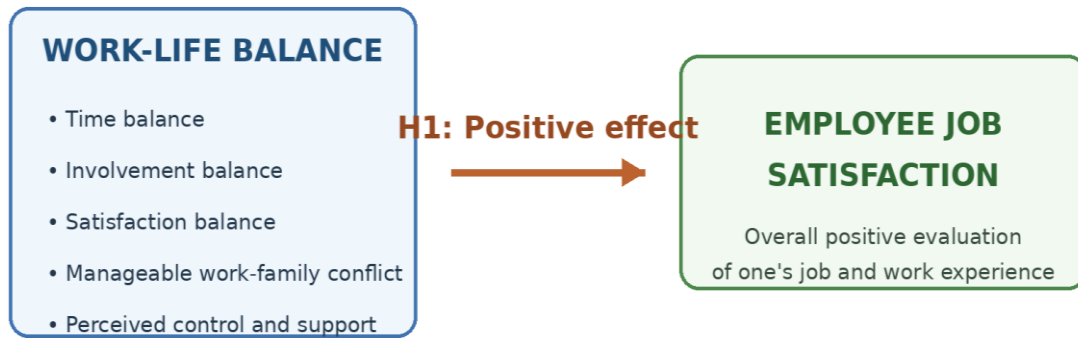


Figure 1. Proposed Conceptual Framework for the Study

4. Measurement Instrument

The questionnaire uses a five-point Likert response format (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). WLB can be assessed with a concise global measure adapted from the construct-validation approach of Brough et al. (2014) and the balance conceptualization of Carlson et al. (2009). Example items assess whether respondents can balance work with

non-work activities, whether work leaves sufficient time and energy for personal responsibilities, and whether work and personal roles are compatible. Job satisfaction is measured with several global items such as overall satisfaction with the job, enjoyment of current work, and willingness to recommend the job as a good place to work. Items should be positively and clearly worded, with reverse-coded items used only if necessary.

Table 2. Operationalization of Study Variables

Construct	Role	Items	Scale	Scoring
Work-life balance	Independent	5 items	1-5 Likert	Higher score = better perceived balance
Job satisfaction	Dependent	5 items	1-5 Likert	Higher score = greater satisfaction
Demographics	Controls	6 variables	Categorical / continuous	Age, gender, marital status, tenure, hours, level

5. Reliability, Validity and Pilot Testing

Internal consistency should be assessed with Cronbach's alpha, using .70 as a conventional minimum for acceptable reliability in an applied study. Item-total correlations should also be examined, and items that reduce reliability or show ambiguous wording should be reconsidered after the pilot test. Content validity is supported by grounding items in established WLB and work-family literature (Carlson et al., 2009; Brough et al., 2014). Construct validity can be strengthened by examining whether the WLB scale is positively related to job satisfaction and, where an additional conflict scale is included, negatively related to WFC/FWC as measured in the tradition of Netemeyer et al. (1996).

6. Data Collection and Ethical Considerations

Participation should be voluntary and based on informed consent. Respondents should be told the purpose of the study, the approximate completion time, and their right to stop without penalty. No names, employee IDs, or direct personal identifiers are required. Data should be

stored in password-protected files and reported only in aggregate form. Managers should not receive individual-level responses. These safeguards are particularly important because work-life questions may involve perceptions of workload, supervisor support, and organizational practices.

7. Data Analysis Plan

Analysis is conducted in four stages. First, data screening identifies missing values, implausible working hours, duplicate cases, and outliers. Second, reliability analysis evaluates the internal consistency of the WLB and job-satisfaction scales. Third, means, standard deviations, frequencies, and Pearson correlations summarize the sample and bivariate relationships. Fourth, hierarchical multiple regression tests H1. Control variables are entered in Step 1, followed by WLB in Step 2. The standardized beta coefficient for WLB, its p-value, and the change in R^2 indicate whether WLB explains unique variance in job satisfaction.

Before interpreting regression results, assumptions should be checked. Approximate

linearity can be assessed with scatterplots; normally distributed residuals with Q-Q or P-P plots; homoscedasticity with residual-versus-predicted plots; independence with the Durbin-Watson statistic; and multicollinearity with

variance inflation factors (preferably $VIF < 5$). Statistical significance may be set at $p < .05$, while effect sizes and confidence intervals should be emphasized rather than relying on significance alone.

Table 3. Step-by-Step Statistical Analysis Plan

Step	Analysis	Purpose
1	Data screening	Missing data, duplicates, range checks, outliers
2	Scale quality	Cronbach's alpha and item-total correlations
3	Descriptive analysis	Mean, SD, frequencies, respondent profile
4	Bivariate test	Pearson correlation between WLB and job satisfaction
5	Hypothesis test	Hierarchical multiple regression with controls
6	Diagnostics	Residual plots, VIF, Durbin-Watson, influential cases

Results

To demonstrate how the proposed analysis would be reported, this section uses a synthetic dataset of 220 hypothetical employees. The values below are generated for instructional purposes and must not be interpreted as observed evidence from a real organization. In an actual study, the same tables would be populated with field data after ethical collection and cleaning.

Reliability and Descriptive Results

In the synthetic demonstration, the five-item WLB scale produced Cronbach's alpha = .86 and the five-item job-satisfaction scale produced alpha = .88, indicating satisfactory internal consistency. Mean WLB was 3.42 (SD = 0.71), while mean job satisfaction was 3.58 (SD = 0.68) on the five-point response scale. These values represent moderate-to-positive average perceptions and provide sufficient variability for correlation and regression analysis.

Table 4. Illustrative Reliability and Descriptive Statistics (Synthetic Data, N = 220)

Variable	Items	Mean	SD	Cronbach's α
Work-life balance	5	3.42	0.71	.86
Job satisfaction	5	3.58	0.68	.88

Correlation and Regression

The synthetic data produced a positive Pearson correlation between WLB and job satisfaction ($r = .59$, $p < .001$). A hierarchical regression was then specified. Demographic and employment controls explained approximately 7% of the variance in job satisfaction in Step 1. After WLB was entered in Step 2, total explained variance

increased to 36%, representing an illustrative ΔR^2 of .29. WLB showed a positive standardized effect ($\beta = .56$, $p < .001$). In the demonstration, H1 would therefore be supported.

Table 5. Illustrative Hierarchical Regression Results (Synthetic Data)

Model	R^2	ΔR^2	β for WLB	p
Step 1: Controls only	.07	—	—	—
Step 2: + Work-life balance	.36	.29	.56	< .001

Interpretation

If a comparable pattern emerged in actual field data, it would be consistent with pre-2015 evidence that WLB contributes positively to job satisfaction. The result would align with Carlson et al. (2009), Brough et al. (2014), and Haar et al. (2014), while also fitting the broader conflict literature summarized by Allen et al. (2000). Importantly, causality should not be inferred from cross-sectional data. High job satisfaction may also influence how employees perceive work demands, and unmeasured organizational factors could affect both constructs.

Conclusion and Discussion

This methodology paper provides a concise framework for examining the relationship between work-life balance and employee job satisfaction. The literature published up to 2015 supports the expectation that employees who can manage work and non-work responsibilities effectively tend to report more favorable job attitudes. Border theory explains why permeability and flexibility between work and family domains matter (Clark, 2000), while conflict research demonstrates the costs of incompatible demands (Allen et al., 2000; Netemeyer et al., 1996). More direct studies

show that balance contributes uniquely to job satisfaction (Carlson et al., 2009) and that robust WLB measures positively predict job satisfaction across large and culturally varied samples (Brough et al., 2014; Haar et al., 2014). Methodologically, the proposed design is straightforward and replicable: define the employee population, pilot a concise questionnaire, collect anonymous survey responses, verify reliability, and test the WLB-job satisfaction relationship using correlation and hierarchical regression. The illustrative results show how the analysis may be presented, but they are explicitly synthetic and should be replaced by real field results in any empirical submission. The study's main limitation is its cross-sectional design, which cannot establish temporal causality. Self-report measures may also increase common-method bias, and convenience sampling may limit generalizability. Future studies should use longitudinal data, multisource indicators, and sector-specific comparisons. For HR practice, a significant positive relationship would justify closer examination of workload design, schedule flexibility, leave practices, supervisor support, and norms surrounding after-hours communication. Such interventions should not be assumed to have identical effects for all workers; employees differ in family structure, career stage, role preferences, and boundary-management needs. The most defensible organizational approach is therefore to combine supportive policies with managerial discretion, employee voice, and periodic evaluation of outcomes.

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