Work-Life Balance as a Catalyst for Increased Job Satisfaction Among Women in Modern IT Workplace

Aarthy M.S[1], Dr G Venkatesan[2]

[1]Ph.D. Research Scholar (Part- Time), Department of Management Studies Periyar University Salem-636011
[2]Research Supervisor, Department of Management Studies, Sona College of Arts & Science Salem – 636 005
[1]AarthyMS@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT:

In the high-pressure environment of the IT sector, maintaining work-life balance (WLB) is essential for sustaining job satisfaction, particularly among women, who often face unique challenges balancing professional responsibilities with societal expectations and family duties. This study investigates the impact of work-life balance on job satisfaction among women in IT, using the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model as a theoretical framework. A mixed-method approach was employed, integrating quantitative data from 208 women in various IT roles and qualitative insights from in-depth interviews. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) results demonstrate a significant positive relationship between organizational support, flexible policies, and job satisfaction, mediated by work-life balance. Findings indicate that organizational factors, employee support mechanisms, and financial incentives positively influence work-life balance, which, in turn, drives job satisfaction. The study underscores the need for inclusive policies within IT organizations that address gender-specific challenges, such as caregiving responsibilities and limited leadership representation, to create a balanced, supportive work environment. Recommendations for HR practices, leadership training, and flexible work options are offered to help tech firms better support women's well-being and career satisfaction, contributing to a more engaged and diverse workforce.

Keywords: *Work-life balance, Job satisfaction, Women in IT, Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, Organizational support*

Introduction:

In today's rapidly evolving technological landscape, the IT sector is recognized not only for its innovation but also for its demanding work culture, often characterized by long hours, high stress, and significant performance pressures (Pichler, 2009). These demands impact employees' well-being and work-life balance, with a particularly pronounced effect on women in the industry (Zaitouni, 2024). Despite increasing efforts to bridge gender gaps, women in IT still face unique challenges, including a disproportionate burden of family and caregiving responsibilities alongside professional expectations (Kinman, 2024). This dual responsibility often creates additional stressors, which can adversely impact job satisfaction, satisfaction, and overall productivity (Sani, 2024).

Work-life balance has emerged as a crucial factor in promoting job satisfaction and retaining skilled talent in high-demand industries (Tahir, 2024). In the setting of women in IT, achieving work-life harmony is increasingly important for personal well-being and professional fulfilment (Trombeta, 2024). Job satisfaction—characterized by enthusiasm, commitment, and a positive emotional connection to work—has been widely recognized as a key driver of organizational success (Mattarelli, 2024) . However, without adequate work-life balance, achieving sustained job satisfaction becomes challenging, especially for women navigating complex demands in a male-dominated sector.

This study explores how work-life balance acts as a catalyst for enhancing job satisfaction among women in the modern IT workplace (Hernández Martínez, 2024). By examining the interplay between work-life balance and job satisfaction, the research seeks to identify effective strategies that IT organizations can implement to support women's well-being and boost satisfaction levels (Filippi, 2024). This study aims to bridge existing gaps in literature by focusing specifically on the IT industry, where work-life dynamics are critical yet often overlooked (Munda, 2024).

The primary objectives of this research are threefold: to assess the impact of work-life balance on job satisfaction among women in IT, to identify gender-specific challenges that hinder work-life harmony, and to provide actionable recommendations for organizations to foster a more supportive work environment (Lin, 2024). By highlighting the significance of work-life balance for women in IT, this study contributes valuable insights into the development of inclusive policies and practices that support a balanced, engaged, and diverse workforce (Sasikala, 2024).

Review of Literature:

Pichler, F. (2009) discusses the limitations of current work-life balance (WLB) measures in large-scale surveys. It highlights the complexities in assessing WLB accurately and suggests improvements for capturing the experiences of different workforce demographics more effectively, including gender-based needs. *Zaitouni, M., Hewapathirana, G., Mostafa, M., et al. (2024)* reviews two decades of WLB research, providing insights into

evolving trends and frameworks. It examines different WLB approaches and their implications on job satisfaction, with a focus on cross-cultural perspectives and gender-specific experiences. *Kinman, G. (2024)* explores the relationship between WLB and well-being, particularly in academic settings. It assesses how WLB can alleviate stress and improve mental health, underscoring the importance of tailored organizational policies for improving work-life quality and retention. *Sani, K. F., & Adisa, T. A. (2024)* examines the role of leadership in fostering WLB and job satisfaction. It finds that leadership practices significantly impact employees' WLB experiences and highlights the importance of supportive leaders who promote flexible work environments, especially for women balancing family and professional responsibilities. *Mattarelli, E., Cochis, C., Bertolotti, F., et al. (2024)* investigates how designed work environments and enacted work interactions impact creativity and WLB. It highlights the positive effects of thoughtfully designed workspaces and collaborative practices on employee well-being, suggesting that WLB contributes to a more innovative and engaged workforce.

3.1 Theoretical Framework:

The **Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model** is well-suited to adopt this framework as it comprehensively addresses the impact of both job demands and resources on employee satisfaction and well-being. It also allows for specific adaptations to include gender-specific and industry-specific factors, making it a flexible and widely applicable model in workplace studies.

3.2 Why JD-R Fits This Model Well

Incorporates Job Demands and Resources: The JD-R model categorizes aspects of the workplace into *demands* (e.g., workload, time pressure) and *resources* (e.g., support, flexibility), which directly influence satisfaction and well-being. For women in IT, demands include long hours and high-performance expectations, while resources like flexible work options and supportive policies are essential for balancing personal and professional responsibilities.

Satisfaction as an Outcome: The JD-R model directly links job resources to job satisfaction. By supporting work-life balance, organizations provide resources that help employees manage demands more effectively, leading to increased satisfaction, which is central to your study.

Adaptability for Gender-Specific Contexts: The JD-R model can incorporate additional moderating factors, such as gender-specific challenges. By integrating Social Role Theory and Gendered Organizational Theory into the resources or demands side, the model can reflect the added challenges faced by women in IT and how work-life balance policies can mitigate these demands to foster satisfaction.

Alignment with Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory: The JD-R model aligns well with COR, as it views resources as assets that help employees mitigate stress and maintain satisfaction. By focusing on resource provision, like work-life balance, organizations can support women in conserving their personal and professional energy, reducing burnout, and enhancing job satisfaction.

3.3 Adapting the JD-R Model for the Study

- **Work Demands**: High workload, time pressure, and performance expectations typical in IT roles.
- **Job Resources**: Flexible work hours, remote work options, supportive organizational policies, and workplace inclusivity.
- **Moderating Factors**: Gender-specific challenges, societal expectations, and family responsibilities for women in IT.
- **Outcome**: Enhanced job satisfaction through a balance of demands and resources.

4.1 Conceptual Framework

Fig No:4.1
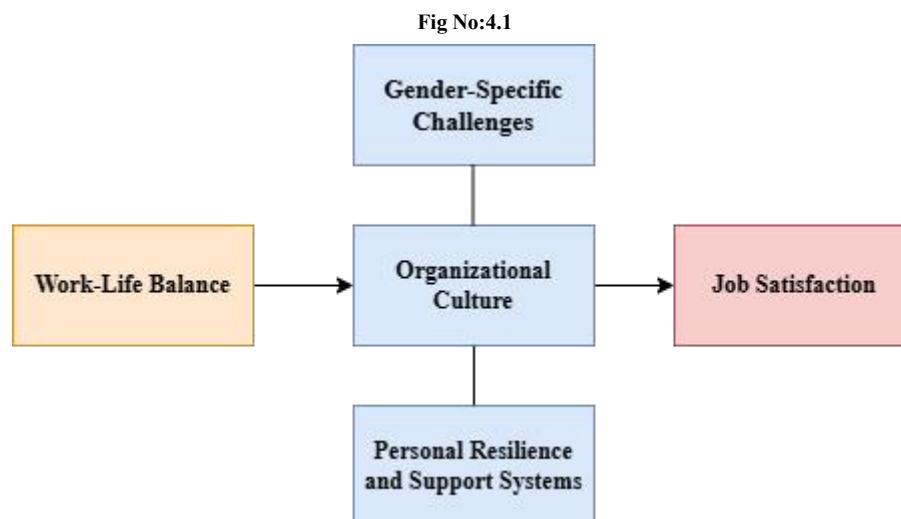
Source: Compiled by the researcher

This diagram shows the relationships between the independent variable (Work-Life Balance), moderating variables (Factors Unique to Women in IT), and dependent variable (Job Satisfaction).

This conceptual framework explores how work-life balance serves as a key driver of job satisfaction for women in IT. Defined as the ability to manage both work demands and personal responsibilities, work-life balance is shaped by factors like flexible work hours, remote options, and organizational support. These elements contribute significantly to reducing stress and enhancing well-being, which can positively impact job satisfaction. In this framework, job satisfaction encompasses emotional, cognitive, and behavioural dimensions—such as commitment, mental focus, and proactive participation—making it a critical measure of an employee's connection and enthusiasm toward work. The link between work-life balance and job satisfaction is further influenced by factors unique to women in IT, which act as moderating variables. These include gender-specific challenges like balancing family roles, navigating gender bias, and limited representation in leadership positions. The organizational culture, workplace inclusivity, and personal resilience factors (such as support networks and coping mechanisms) may either amplify or reduce the effectiveness of work-life balance in fostering satisfaction. By studying this framework, the research aims to identify how these dynamics collectively influence job satisfaction, providing insight into strategies that tech organizations can adopt to enhance work-life balance and support women's satisfaction in the workplace.

5.1 Research Methodology

This study employs a mixed-method approach, integrating quantitative and qualitative data to examine how work-life balance influences job satisfaction among women in IT. A survey of 208 women in various IT roles was conducted to quantitatively measure work-life balance, job satisfaction, and moderating factors like gender-specific challenges and organizational culture, using validated scales. Structural Equation Model is used to reveal statistical relationships among these variables. In the qualitative phase, in-depth interviews with a selected subset of participants explore personal experiences and strategies related to work-life balance. Thematic analysis used to identify recurring patterns, offering deeper insights into the impact of organizational and personal support systems on job satisfaction, and ultimately informing more inclusive workplace practices.

6.1 Analysis

Figure 6.1

Output of structured SEM model
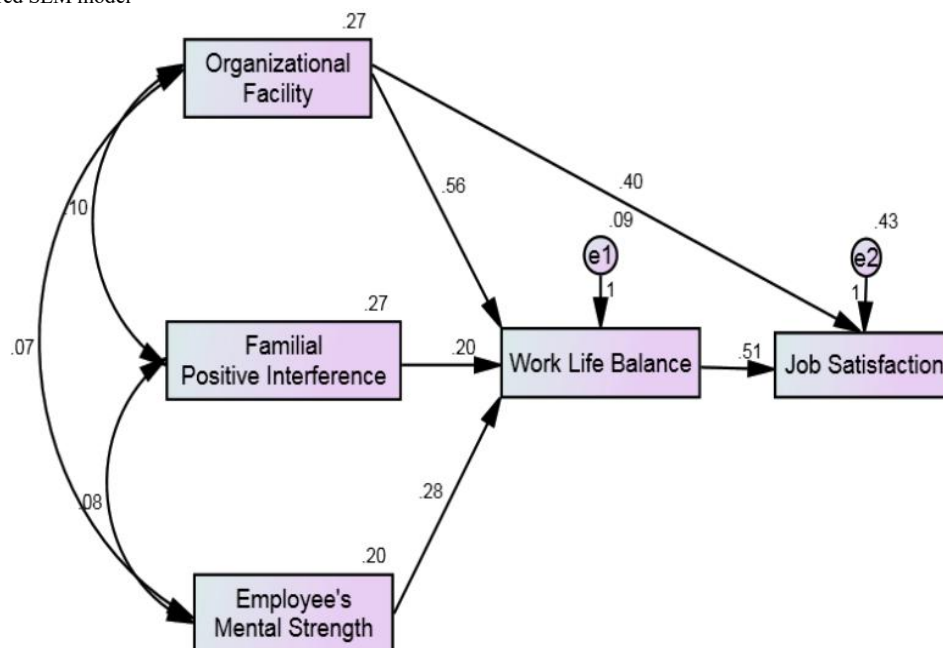
Source: Compiled by the researcher

Table No:6.1

Fit Index	Accepted limit	Structural Model Values
Chi Square/ Degree of freedom	Values less than 3	1.079
Root Mean Sq. error	Less than 0.06	0.016
Goodness of fit index	Greater than 0.90	0.997
Adjusted GFI	Greater than 0.90	0.978

NFI	Greater than 0.90	0.996
CFI	Greater than 0.90	0.998

Source: Primary Data

6.2 Path Analysis of SEM

Table No:6.2

Measurement Path			Estimate	S.E	C.R	P Value
WLB	←	OF	.561	.037	15.316	<0.01
WLB	←	EMS	.281	.043	6.501	<0.01
WLB	←	FPI	.198	.037	5.307	<0.01
JS	←	WLB	.515	.108	4.751	<0.01
JS	←	OF	.402	.105	3.821	<0.01

Source: Primary Data

7.1 Results

Good Model Fit: The structural model exhibits a good fit, with values within accepted limits: the Chi-Square/Degree of Freedom ratio is below 3 (1.079), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) is very low at 0.016, and indices like Goodness of Fit (0.997), Adjusted Goodness of Fit (0.978), NFI (0.996), and CFI (0.998) all exceed the 0.90 threshold, indicating an excellent model fit.

Significant Impact of Organizational Factors on Work-Life Balance (WLB): The path analysis reveals that organizational factors (OF) significantly influence work-life balance, with a high estimate of 0.561 and a critical ratio (C.R) of 15.316, indicating strong statistical significance ($p < 0.01$).

Effect of Employee Support Mechanisms: Employee support mechanisms (EMS) also positively influence work-life balance, with an estimate of 0.281 and a C.R. of 6.501, confirming a significant contribution ($p < 0.01$), though to a lesser extent than organizational factors.

Financial and Personal Incentives on WLB: Financial and personal incentives (FPI) are found to positively affect work-life balance with an estimate of 0.198 and C.R. of 5.307, highlighting their role in supporting work-life balance ($p < 0.01$), albeit with a moderate effect.

Work-Life Balance Enhances Job Satisfaction (JS): Work-life balance (WLB) significantly improves job satisfaction (JS) with an estimate of 0.515 and C.R. of 4.751 ($p < 0.01$). Additionally, organizational factors (OF) directly impact job satisfaction with an estimate of 0.402 and C.R. of 3.821, underlining the importance of supportive work environments in enhancing employee satisfaction.

8.1 Conclusion:

In conclusion, this study underscores the significant role of work-life balance in enhancing job satisfaction among women in the IT sector. The findings indicate that organizational factors, employee support mechanisms, and financial and personal incentives collectively impact work-life balance, which in turn drives job satisfaction. The structural model shows an excellent fit, with all indices within acceptable limits, confirming the robustness of the relationships between variables. Organizational support, flexible work options, and inclusivity are especially influential, highlighting the need for IT firms to adopt inclusive policies that address gender-specific challenges. These results emphasize the importance of a balanced work environment for fostering job satisfaction, engagement, and well-being, which are essential for sustaining a diverse and productive workforce.

9.1 Discussion:

- **Role of Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model:** The study effectively adapts the JD-R model to analyze how both demands (e.g., workload, time pressure) and resources (e.g., flexible policies, support systems) impact job satisfaction, showcasing its flexibility in addressing gender-specific and industry-specific factors.
- **Importance of Tailored Support for Women:** Given the unique challenges women face in IT, such as managing dual responsibilities at work and home, the research highlights that tailored support—like organizational inclusivity, gender diversity initiatives, and flexible working options—can significantly alleviate stress and improve job satisfaction.
- **Relevance of Work-Life Balance to Organizational Success:** By emphasizing work-life balance as a key driver of job satisfaction, the study demonstrates its strategic importance for IT organizations seeking to retain skilled female talent, reduce turnover, and enhance overall organizational performance.
- **Potential for Policy Development:** The study's insights provide a basis for developing evidence-based policies that prioritize employee well-being, address work-life balance, and support gender diversity, making it relevant for HR departments and organizational leaders in the tech industry.
- **Contribution to Literature:** This research fills an existing gap by focusing on women in IT, an area where studies on work-life balance and job satisfaction are limited, thus contributing valuable perspectives to the broader literature on workplace inclusivity and employee engagement in high-demand industries.

10.1 Implications and Suggestions:

- **Organizational Policy Implications**: The findings suggest that IT organizations should develop policies focused on flexible work arrangements, gender inclusivity, and support for work-life balance to enhance job satisfaction among female employees. Companies that adopt such policies are likely to experience improved employee retention, productivity, and overall morale.
- **Human Resource Management**: HR departments can use these insights to create programs specifically addressing the needs of women in IT, such as mentorship programs, support networks, and resilience-building workshops. These initiatives can help reduce the stressors women face, enhancing both job engagement and loyalty to the organization.
- **Leadership Development**: Given that organizational culture significantly influences work-life balance and job satisfaction, the study suggests that leaders should be trained to foster a supportive and inclusive environment. By promoting a culture of flexibility and well-being, leaders can directly contribute to a more satisfied and engaged workforce.
- **Career Development and Advancement**: By understanding the unique challenges faced by women in IT, organizations can develop career progression programs that accommodate work-life balance needs, enabling women to advance without sacrificing personal responsibilities. This could help address the underrepresentation of women in senior IT roles.
- **Social Implications**: The study highlights the broader societal need to re-evaluate traditional gender roles that impact women's work-life balance in high-demand sectors like IT. The findings can inform public discussions on the importance of shared responsibilities in caregiving, promoting cultural shifts that benefit both workplaces and family life.

11.1 Recommendations:

- Allow flexible hours and remote work to help women balance personal and work responsibilities, improving their job satisfaction.
- Set up mentorship and support programs specifically for women in IT to share strategies for managing work-life balance.
- Equip leaders with the skills to foster a supportive and inclusive environment, where work-life balance is respected.
- Ensure transparent and fair policies for promotions and advancement, supporting women's career growth without compromising their work-life balance.

12.1 Acknowledgement

13.1 REFERENCE:

1. Ambrose, D., & Soomro, K. A. (2024). The Impact of Technology on the Successful Work-life Balance of Working Women in Academia. *Journal of Contemporary Trends and Issues in Education*, *3*(2), 105-125.
2. Filippi, S., Yerkes, M., Bal, M., Hummel, B., & de Wit, J. (2024). (Un) deserving of work-life balance? A cross-country investigation of people's attitudes towards work-life balance arrangements for parents and childfree employees. *Community, Work & Family*, *27*(1), 116-134.
3. Filippi, S., Yerkes, M., Bal, M., Hummel, B., & de Wit, J. (2024). (Un) deserving of work-life balance? A cross-country investigation of people's attitudes towards work-life balance arrangements for parents and childfree employees. *Community, Work & Family*, *27*(1), 116-134.
4. Hernández Martínez, L. E., & Chunga-Liu, Z. E. (2024). Job happiness: influence of work flexibility through work-life balance and gender moderation. *Journal of Management Development*, *43*(2), 187-199.
5. Kinman, G. (2024). Work–life balance and wellbeing in academic employees. *Research Handbook of Academic Mental Health*, 276-289.
6. Kinman, G. (2024). Work–life balance and wellbeing in academic employees. *Research Handbook of Academic Mental Health*, 276-289.
7. Lin, Z., Gu, H., Gillani, K. Z., & Fahlevi, M. (2024). Impact of Green Work–Life Balance and Green Human Resource Management Practices on Corporate Sustainability Performance and Employee Retention: Mediation of Green Innovation and Organisational Culture. *Sustainability*, *16*(15), 6621.
8. Mattarelli, E., Cochis, C., Bertolotti, F., & Ungureanu, P. (2024). How designed work environment and enacted work interactions impact creativity and work–life balance. *European Journal of Innovation Management*, *27*(2), 648-672.
9. Munda, N. P., & Gache, M. N. S. (2024). Work-life balance, motivation, and satisfaction as determinants of job commitment. *International Journal of Educational Management and Development Studies*, *5*(1), 1-26.
10. Pichler, F. (2009). Determinants of work-life balance: Shortcomings in the contemporary measurement of WLB in large-scale surveys. *Social indicators research*, *92*(3), 449-469.
11. Sakthi, S., & Akila, B. (2024). A Study Exploring The Effects Of Work-Life Balance On Emotional Intelligence Of Information Technology–Business Process Outsourcing Women Employees. *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice*, *30*(5), 3557-3565.
12. Sani, K. F., & Adisa, T. A. (2024). Work–life balance: Does leadership matter?. *Employee Relations: The International Journal*, *46*(2), 269-286.
13. Sasikala, R., & Akila, R. (2024, July). Determinants of work life balance among employees and its impact on their work performance. In *AIP Conference Proceedings* (Vol. 2965, No. 1). AIP Publishing.
14. Tahir, R. (2024). Work–life balance: is an entrepreneurial career the solution?. *Journal of Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies*, *16*(4), 845-867.

15. Trombeta, G., Barham, E. J., & Bertho, M. A. C. (2024). Understanding How Mindfulness-Based Interventions Promote Work-Life Balance: A Systematic Review of Randomized Controlled Trials. *Trends in Psychology*, 1-38.

16. Vikas, S., & Mathur, A. (2024). Work-Life Balance of Women Employees in the Indian Banking Industry: An Empirical Study of the State of Haryana. *International Journal of Banking, Risk & Insurance*.

17. Zaitouni, M., Hewapathirana, G., Mostafa, M., Al Hajj, R., & ElMelegy, A. R. (2024). Work-life balance: A landscape mapping of two decades of scholarly research. *Heliyon*, *10*(14).