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Teaching in balance: Exploring the link between work-life balance and job satisfaction among school teachers in Kerala

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Abstract

This study investigates the influence of work-life balance (WLB) on job satisfaction (JS) among school teachers in Kerala. Using a structured questionnaire based on validated scales, data were collected from 182 teachers across government, aided, and private schools in Kerala. The study found a strong positive correlation between WLB and JS ($r = .728, p < .05$). Multiple regression analysis revealed that key WLB components—Personal Life Balance (PL), Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL), and Organizational Support and Boundary Management (OSB)—explained 80.9% of the variance in job satisfaction ($R^2 = .809, p < .005$). Significant differences in WLB and JS were found based on age, experience, and school type. Findings emphasize the need for supportive institutional policies to enhance teacher well-being and satisfaction.

Keywords: Work-life balance, job satisfaction, school teachers

1. Introduction

Human resources are vital to any organization's success, and in educational institutions, work-life balance (WLB) has emerged as a key factor affecting employee satisfaction and performance (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010) ^[1]. For teachers, managing WLB is especially challenging due to their pivotal societal role and intense work demands (Miryala & Chiluka, 2012) ^[12]. Poor WLB can negatively impact motivation, commitment, and well-being (Sharma & Singh, 2019), often leading to stress, burnout, and reduced teaching effectiveness (Kalliath & Brough, 2008) ^[8]. Teachers face the dual pressures of professional responsibilities and personal obligations, compounded by limited institutional support (Mahammadsha *et al.*, 2020) ^[10]. While WLB has been widely discussed in education, little research has examined its specific impact on teachers in Kerala. This study addresses that gap by exploring how various factors influence WLB and its correlation with job satisfaction.

This study aims to examine the work-life balance of school teachers in Kerala. Second, it seeks to analyze the impact of various demographic factors—such as gender, age, years of teaching experience, and type of school—on teachers' work-life balance. Finally, the study aims to evaluate the relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction among school teachers.

Hypothesis of the study

- **H1:** Work life balance of school teachers has significant influence on job satisfaction
- **H2:** There is a significant difference in work life balance of school teachers based on demographic variables.
- **H3:** There is a significant difference in job satisfaction of school teachers based on demographic variables.

2. Review of Literature

Work-life balance (WLB) plays a critical role in the well-being of employees, particularly in the education sector, where teachers often face high demands in both their professional and personal lives. Bianchi and Milkie (2010) ^[1] discuss broader trends in work and family dynamics, noting how WLB has evolved over

the first decade of the 21st century and its profound impact on workers, including teachers. Similarly, Kalliath and Brough (2008) ^[8] highlight the importance of supportive work environments, emphasizing that organizational policies and supervisor support are key to enhancing teachers' WLB. Choi and Kim (2017) ^[4] argued that supportive school leadership is essential for helping teachers manage both professional responsibilities and personal life (Effective leadership can alleviate emotional strain and contribute to teachers' overall well-being (Choi & Kim, 2017) ^[4]). Several factors contribute to teachers' ability to maintain a healthy work-life balance, including workload, emotional stress, and institutional support. Work-life balance is significantly correlated with job satisfaction (Fernandez & Lebin, 2022) ^[6]. Rajput and Arora (2021) ^[14] argue that factors such as excessive workload and emotional stress significantly affect teachers' WLB in Indian educational institutions. Pandey and Singh (2020) ^[13] also underline the importance of support and favorable working conditions, particularly in rural India, where teachers face significant challenges due to lack of institutional support and stressful work environments. Similarly, excessive workload and poor time management hinder teachers' ability to balance their professional and personal responsibilities. WLB directly affects teachers' job satisfaction, which in turn influences teaching effectiveness (Mahammadsha & Gaurav, 2020) ^[10]. Sharma and Singh (2019) ^[15] suggest that teachers who achieve a work-life balance report higher job satisfaction, which leads to improved teaching practices and better student outcomes. This is corroborated by Mathews and Fernandez (2021) ^[21], who observe that factors such as job autonomy and supervisor support positively influence job satisfaction, making teachers more engaged and productive. Additionally, inadequate support, job stress, and long working hours create challenges for teachers in India, reducing their job satisfaction and affecting their performance (Kumar and Sharma, 2021) ^[9]. These findings

highlight the need for effective institutional interventions to support teachers' well-being and job satisfaction. Although work-life balance (WLB) is widely recognized as essential for teacher well-being, many still struggle to manage professional and personal demands due to high workloads and limited support (Mahammadsha & Gaurav, 2020; Pandey & Singh, 2020) ^[10, 13]. Despite research on WLB in education, little is known about its specific impact on school teachers in Kerala. This study aims to fill that gap by exploring the factors influencing WLB and its correlation with job satisfaction in this context.

3. Materials and Methods

This study employed a descriptive and analytical research design employing a structured Questionnaire for collecting data from respondents. A total of 182 school teachers working in Government, Government aided and Self-financing sectors in Kerala responded to the questionnaire through Google form. The data were collected relating to Demographic characteristics of teachers, Work life balance and job satisfaction. The Questionnaire was developed based on the dimensions of work life balance Scale (Time and Personal life balance, Work interference with personal life and Organizational Support and Boundary Management) formulated by Greenhaus and Allen (2011) ^[7]. The Job Satisfaction Scale by Brayfield & Rothe (1951) ^[2] was used to measure Job Satisfaction, which offers a more concise measure while maintaining strong psychometric properties. Convenience sampling method was used to collect data as this method is advantageous for accessibility and practical data collection (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016) ^[5]. The data were analyzed using SPSS software. Reliability is ensured through Cronbach's Alpha testing. Multiple regression analysis assesses the influence of work life balance on job satisfaction. Additionally, independent t-test and one-way ANOVA examines the influence of demographic variables on work life balance and job satisfaction of school teachers.

Table 3.1: Measurement Items

Constructs	Items
Time and Personal Life Balance	I feel that my work hours are manageable within my personal life.
	My job allows me to enjoy time for rest and recovery after work hours.
	I am able to disconnect from work completely during weekends or holidays.
	I feel that the amount of work I am assigned does not affect my ability to relax at home.
	I feel satisfied with the amount of free time I have for myself, despite my job responsibilities.
	I am able to spend enough quality time with my family and friends despite my work commitments.
Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL)	I have adequate time for personal hobbies and interests outside of work.
	I find it challenging to balance my professional duties with my personal life.
	I often feel that my work is demanding and impacts my personal well-being.
	I frequently have to bring work home in order to meet my job responsibilities.
	I feel that my work demands leave little room for personal relaxation or self-care.
	I often find myself working outside of regular school hours to complete my tasks.
	The amount of work I have to do makes it difficult for me to maintain a balanced lifestyle.
I often feel stressed due to the demands of my job.	
Organizational Support and Boundary Management	My job responsibilities interfere with my personal or family time.
	I have flexibility in my work schedule to accommodate personal or family needs.
	I am able to separate my personal life from my work life effectively.
	The school administration supports teachers in maintaining a healthy work-life balance.
Job Satisfaction	I feel that my workload is reasonable and does not hinder my personal well-being.
	I find my job to be really unpleasant.
	I get more pleasure from my work than from my free time.
	I get bored with my work a lot.
	I'm feeling generally content at my present job.
	I am enthusiastic about my work most of the time.
I regret ever accepting this job.	
I feel fairly well satisfied with my present job.	

Note. Items adapted from the Work-Life Balance Scale by Greenhaus and Allen (2011) ^[7], and the Job Satisfaction Scale by Brayfield and Rothe (1951) ^[2].

Table 3.2: Reliability Analysis

Constructs	No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha coefficient
Time and Personal Life	7	0.699
Work Interference in Personal Life	8	0.934
Organisational support and Boundary Management	5	0.701
Job Satisfaction	7	0.757

Source: Primary data

The reliability analysis using Cronbach’s Alpha shows that all constructs in the study are showing acceptable reliability ($\alpha > 0.7$), ensuring the internal consistency of the measurement scales

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Relation between Work Life Balance and Job Satisfaction: To explore the relationship between teachers’ work-life balance and their job satisfaction, a Pearson correlation analysis was conducted.

Table 4.1: Correlation Analysis

		Work Life Balance	Job Satisfaction
Work Life Balance	Pearson Correlation	1	.728**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	182	182
Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.728**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	182	182

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

Source: Primary data

The study found a strong, statistically significant positive correlation between work-life balance and job satisfaction among teachers ($r = .728, p < .05$), indicating that improved balance between professional and personal life is linked to higher job satisfaction.

4.2 Influence of Work Life Balance on Job Satisfaction

To examine the influence of key work-life balance components on teachers’ job satisfaction, a multiple regression analysis was conducted. The independent variables included Personal Life Balance (PL), Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL), and Organizational Support and Boundary Management (OSB), with Job Satisfaction (JS) as the dependent variable.

H1: Work life balance of school teachers has significant

influence on job satisfaction

Table 4.2: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.899 ^a	.809	.805	.37139

a. Predictors: (Constant), OSB, WIPL, PL

Source: Primary data

The model summary shows a strong correlation between the predictors and job satisfaction ($R = .899$), with $R^2 = .809$ indicating that 80.9% of the variance is explained by the predictors. The adjusted $R^2 = .805$ and standard error of .371 confirm a robust and well-fitting model.

Table 4.3: ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	103.770	3	34.590	250.775	.000 ^b
	Residual	24.552	178	.138		
	Total	128.322	181			

a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Time and Personal Life, Work Interference in Personal Life, Organisational Support and Boundary Management

Source: Primary data

The ANOVA results confirm that the regression model is statistically significant ($F(3, 178) = 250.775, p < .005$). This indicates that the predictors collectively have a significant

impact on job satisfaction, and the model as a whole reliably predicts the outcome variable

Table 4.4: Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	1.871	.248		7.534	.000
	Time and Personal Life	.486	.053	.555	9.224	.000
	Work Interference in Personal Life	-.278	.048	-.222	-5.841	.000
	Organisational Support and Boundary Management	.247	.060	.241	4.131	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

Source: Primary data

The coefficients reveal that Personal Life Balance (PL) had the strongest positive impact on job satisfaction ($\beta = .555$, $p < .005$), followed by Organizational Support and Boundary Management (OSB) ($\beta = .241$, $p < .005$). Conversely, Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL) had a significant negative effect ($\beta = -.222$, $p < .005$), indicating that increased

work intrusion lowers satisfaction. The constant ($B = 1.871$) reflects baseline job satisfaction when all predictors are zero.

4.3 Analysis of Work Life Balance and Job Satisfaction based on Demographic Information

Table 4.5: T-Test and ANOVA Results for Demographic Variables

Categorical Variable	Continuous Variable	Results
Gender	Work Life Balance	$t(170.499) = -2.215$, $p = 0.028 < 0.05$
	Job Satisfaction	$t(180) = -1.383$, $p = 0.168 > 0.05$
Age group	Work Life Balance	$F(3,178) = 12.228$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$
	Job Satisfaction	$F(3,178) = 18.341$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$
Experience Years	Work Life Balance	$F(3,178) = 5.721$, $p = 0.001 < 0.05$
	Job Satisfaction	$F(3,178) = 10.195$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$
Level of School	Work Life Balance	$F(2,179) = 0.010$, $p = 0.990 > 0.05$
	Job Satisfaction	$F(2,179) = 0.992$, $p = 0.373 > 0.05$
Type of School	Work Life Balance	$F(2,179) = 91.231$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$
	Job Satisfaction	$F(2,179) = 238.726$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$

Source: Primary data

T-tests and ANOVA results showed significant differences in work-life balance (WLB) and job satisfaction (JS) based on several demographic variables. WLB differed significantly by gender ($t(170.499) = -2.215$, $p = .028$), though JS did not ($t(180) = -1.383$, $p = .168$). Age and teaching experience significantly influenced both WLB ($F = 12.228$, $p < .005$; $F = 5.721$, $p < .005$) and JS ($F = 18.341$, $p < .005$; $F = 10.195$, $p < .005$). School level showed no significant effect, while type of school had a strong influence on both WLB ($F = 91.231$, $p < .005$) and JS ($F = 238.726$, $p < .005$), pointing to institutional variations in teacher satisfaction and well-being.

This study found a strong, significant relationship between work-life balance (WLB) and job satisfaction (JS) among school teachers in Kerala ($r = .728$, $p < .05$). Regression analysis showed that Personal Life Balance (PL), Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL), and Organizational Support and Boundary Management (OSB) explained 80.9% of the variance in JS ($R^2 = .809$, $p < .005$). PL was the strongest positive predictor ($\beta = .555$), followed by OSB ($\beta = .241$), while WIPL negatively impacted JS ($\beta = -.222$). Age, teaching experience, and school type significantly influenced both WLB and JS, with younger and private school teachers reporting lower scores. These findings support prior research (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011; Brough *et al.*, 2014; Mahammadsha Nadaf *et al.*, 2020) [3, 10] and highlight the importance of supportive policies for improving teacher well-being and retention (Choi & Kim, 2017; Sharma & Singh, 2019) [4, 15].

6. Conclusion

This study provides valuable insights into the work-life balance of school teachers in Kerala, emphasizing the need for institutional support and policies that address the unique challenges teachers face in balancing their professional and personal lives. This study confirms that work-life balance significantly influences job satisfaction among school teachers, with a strong positive correlation between the two. The regression model further revealed that work-life balance components explain a substantial 80.9% of the variance in job satisfaction. Among these, Personal Life Balance had the most positive effect, while Work Interference with Personal Life negatively impacted satisfaction. Additionally,

significant differences in WLB and job satisfaction were observed across age, experience, and type of school. These findings highlight the urgent need for supportive institutional policies and work environments that promote personal balance and reduce job-related interference, ultimately enhancing teacher satisfaction and well-being. Educational institutions must prioritize teacher well-being by offering supportive work environments, professional development opportunities, and flexible work arrangements to foster a more balanced and fulfilling work life for educators (Kalliath & Brough, 2008) [8].

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