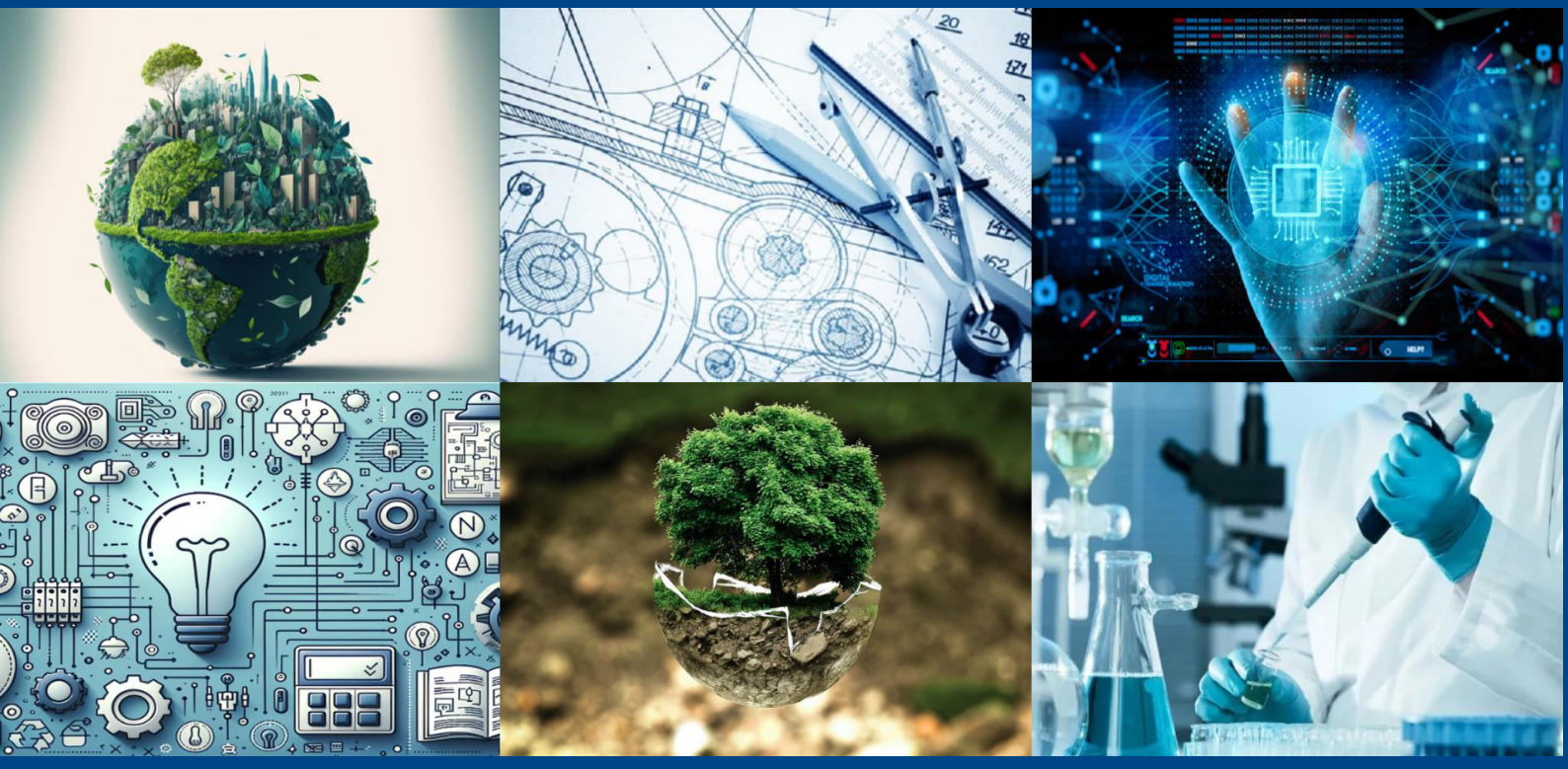
ISSN: 2582-7219

International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research in Science, Engineering and Technology

(A Monthly, Peer Reviewed, Refereed, Scholarly Indexed, Open Access Journal)



Impact Factor: 9.864

Volume 9, Issue 5, May 2026

© 2026 IJMRSET | Volume 9, Issue 5, May 2026| DOI:10.15680/IJMRSET.2026.0905060

ISSN: 2582-7219 | www.ijmrset.com | Impact Factor: 9.864| ESTD Year: 2018|

International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research in Science, Engineering and Technology (IJMRSET)

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A Study on the Impact of Work-Life Balance Practices on Employee Job Satisfaction among IT Sector Employees

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ABSTRACT: This study examines the impact of work-life balance (WLB) practices on employee job satisfaction within the Indian Information Technology (IT) sector. In recent years, the IT industry has experienced rapid growth accompanied by increased job demands, long working hours, and evolving work structures such as remote and hybrid work, making work-life balance a critical factor influencing employee well-being and organisational outcomes.

The research employs a primary quantitative survey method using a structured Likert-scale questionnaire administered to 200 IT sector employees in Bengaluru. The study focuses on five key WLB practice dimensions: Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA), Remote and Hybrid Work Policies (RWP), Employee Assistance and Wellness Programmes (EAP/EWP), Leave Management Policies (LMP), and Supervisory Support for Work-Life Balance (SSWLB). Employee job satisfaction is analysed as a multi-dimensional construct based on established theoretical frameworks.

The study evaluates the relationship between WLB practices and job satisfaction through three research hypotheses (H1, H2, H3), examining both direct effects and the moderating role of demographic variables. The findings reveal a fundamental structural paradox: operational flexibility dimensions are relatively well-implemented, while psychological wellbeing support remains critically under-resourced.

Key Contribution
This research provides a comprehensive, India-specific, post-pandemic analysis of WLB practices in the IT sector using primary survey data from 200 employees. Supervisory support and mental health infrastructure emerge as the most critical and under-resourced determinants of employee experience.

KEYWORDS: Work-Life Balance, Job Satisfaction, IT Sector India, Employee Retention, Burnout, Flexible Work Arrangements, Hybrid Work

I. INTRODUCTION & RESEARCH CONTEXT

1.1 Background

The Information Technology sector in India has emerged as one of the key drivers of economic development, contributing significantly to employment, exports, and innovation. With increasing digitalisation, IT companies operate in dynamic, fast-paced environments where employees coordinate with global teams across time zones. The widespread use of technology has blurred boundaries between work and personal life, as employees are expected to remain available beyond standard working hours, leading to increased stress, burnout, and work-life conflict.

Work-life balance (WLB) refers to an individual's ability to effectively manage professional responsibilities alongside personal life in a balanced and sustainable manner. Organisations have begun recognising that WLB is not only beneficial for employees but essential for organisational success: employees who achieve balance tend to be more productive, motivated, and satisfied, improving overall performance.

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1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Despite the availability of WLB policies in many IT organisations, their effectiveness depends largely on how they are implemented and utilised. Employees may be aware of policies but hesitate to use them due to heavy workload, fear of negative evaluation, or lack of managerial support — creating a critical gap between policy availability and actual utilisation. This study investigates whether WLB practices, when effectively implemented, lead to measurable improvements in job satisfaction and retention among IT sector employees in India.

1.3 Research Objectives

- To examine the impact of WLB practices on employee job satisfaction in the Indian IT sector.
- To assess the relationship between WLB practices and employee retention intent.
- To identify the most critical gaps in current WLB provision among IT organisations.
- To analyse whether demographic variables (gender, age, role, work mode) moderate the WLB–satisfaction relationship.
- To provide actionable recommendations for HR managers and organisational leaders.

1.4 Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Statement
H1	WLB practices have a significant positive impact on job satisfaction of IT sector employees.
H2	A significant relationship exists between WLB practices and employee retention intent.
H3	Demographic variables (gender, age, role, work mode) moderate the WLB–job satisfaction relationship.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE & THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Key Theoretical Frameworks

This study draws on four established theoretical frameworks to conceptualise the WLB–satisfaction relationship:

Theory	Author(s)	Application in This Study
Conservation of Resources Theory (CRT)	Hobfoll (1989)	Explains how inadequate WLB drains psychological resources, escalating burnout and dissatisfaction.
Two-Factor / Motivation-Hygiene Theory	Herzberg (1959)	WLB practices function as hygiene factors; their absence creates acute negative outcomes even if their presence alone does not drive satisfaction.
Work–Family Conflict Model	Greenhaus & Beutell (1985)	Frames WLB practices as structural interventions that reduce time-based, strain-based, and behaviour-based inter-role conflict.
Job Satisfaction Facet Model	Spector (1997)	Operationalises satisfaction across nine facets to enable multi-dimensional measurement of WLB practice outcomes.

2.2 Summary of Literature Evidence

Kossek & Ozeki (1998) documented consistent positive associations between WLB and job satisfaction across 60 studies. Greenhaus et al. (2003) established WLB deficiency as a primary predictor of voluntary turnover in knowledge-intensive sectors. Maslach et al. (2001) identified burnout as resulting from chronic resource depletion — precisely the condition that inadequate WLB produces. Schaufeli et al. (2008) documented 'engaged burnout', where employees remain motivated yet are simultaneously depleted — a pattern directly relevant to IT professionals.

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NASSCOM (2023) specifically identified mental health and wellbeing gaps as a strategic concern for the Indian IT sector, while Prasad et al. (2016) documented inadequate managerial support as an amplifier of occupational stress among Indian IT employees.

2.3 Research Gap

Identified Gap
While international evidence on WLB–satisfaction linkages is robust, India-specific empirical research using post-pandemic primary data from the IT sector remains limited. Most prior Indian studies rely on secondary analysis or small convenience samples. This study addresses the gap by providing primary survey data from 200 Bengaluru IT employees using a validated multi-dimensional instrument.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative, descriptive-analytical research design using a primary survey approach. A structured questionnaire with Likert-scale items (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) was developed based on established WLB and job satisfaction measures. The instrument was administered to IT sector employees in Bengaluru, India's primary technology hub.

3.2 Sample & Data Collection

Sample Size	200 valid responses (IT sector employees, Bengaluru)
Sampling Method	Purposive sampling targeting practising IT professionals
Data Collection	Structured self-administered digital questionnaire
Scale	5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree)
Analysis	Descriptive statistics: mean, median, mode, standard deviation, positive response rates
Period	Academic Year 2025–26
Ethics	Voluntary, anonymous participation; data used exclusively for academic purposes

3.3 Variables of Study

Variable Type	Variable	Operationalisation
Independent (WLB Practices)	Flexible Working Hours	Q6: Likert-scale agreement on flexible hour availability
Independent (WLB Practices)	WFH / Remote Work	Q7, Q10: Comfort with WFH; quality of hybrid infrastructure
Independent (WLB Practices)	Schedule Autonomy	Q8: Perceived control over daily work schedule
Independent (WLB Practices)	Leave Management	Q9: Leave access without professional consequences
Independent (WLB Practices)	EAP / Wellbeing Support	Q11: Access to Employee Assistance Programmes

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Variable Type	Variable	Operationalisation
Independent (WLB Practices)	Supervisory Support	Q12: Manager support for workload and stress management
Dependent (Job Satisfaction)	Overall Satisfaction	Q15: General job satisfaction rating
Dependent (Job Satisfaction)	Retention Intent	Q16: Intent to remain for next 12 months
Dependent (Job Satisfaction)	WLB–Satisfaction Linkage	Q17: Perceived WLB impact on satisfaction
Mediator/Outcome	Work-Life Interference	Q13: Work interference with personal/family life
Mediator/Outcome	Burnout	Q14: Frequency of burnout due to work demands

IV. SAMPLE PROFILE & DEMOGRAPHIC FINDINGS

The survey was completed by 200 IT sector professionals in Bengaluru. The demographic composition of the sample is presented below.

50.5% Female Respondents	**45.5%** Male Respondents	**4.0%** Prefer Not to Say

Demographic Variable	Category	Count	Percentage (%)
Age Group	18–25 years	30	15.0
Age Group	26–35 years	69	34.5
Age Group	36–45 years	55	27.5
Age Group	46–55 years	39	19.5
Age Group	56 and above	7	3.5
Job Role	Individual Contributor	102	51.0
Job Role	Manager / Team Lead	48	24.0
Job Role	Senior Executive	17	8.5
Job Role	HR / People Ops	14	7.0
Job Role	Other	19	9.5
Work Mode	Hybrid	92	46.0
Work Mode	Fully In-Office	61	30.5
Work Mode	Fully Remote	47	23.5

Demographic Significance
The 26–35 age cohort (34.5%) represents the most WLB-vulnerable group — balancing career advancement

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with family responsibilities. Individual contributors (51.0%) are most exposed to work overload and schedule rigidity. Hybrid work (46.0%) has become the dominant post-pandemic arrangement, mirroring industry trends.

V. DATA ANALYSIS: WLB PRACTICE DIMENSIONS

All 13 Likert-scale items were analysed for descriptive statistics. The table below presents the complete statistical summary across WLB practice and outcome variables.

WLB Dimension / Item	Mean	Std Dev	Positive Rate (%)
Flexible Working Hours	3.75	1.08	67.5%
WFH Comfort	3.64	1.09	64.0%
Schedule Autonomy (Control)	3.58	1.04	61.0%
Leave Access	3.53	1.17	57.5%
Remote Work Support (Hybrid)	3.37	1.14	51.0%
EAP / Mental Health Support	3.35	1.14	49.5%
Stress & Workload Support	3.27	1.22	48.5%
Work Interferes with Personal Life	3.33	1.16	51.5%
Burnout	3.17	1.36	45.5%
Overall Job Satisfaction	3.67	1.13	62.0%
Retention Intent	3.36	1.24	53.0%
WLB Affects Satisfaction (H1 item)	4.01	0.95	77.0%
WLB as Turnover Driver (H2 item)	3.74	1.22	69.5%

Critical Pattern — Flexibility–Wellbeing Divide
IT organisations have made measurable progress in flexibility-based WLB (flexible hours: 67.5%; WFH comfort: 64.0%) but critically under-invest in psychological wellbeing. EAP/mental health support (49.5%) and stress management support (48.5%) are the only two WLB dimensions falling below the 50% positive response threshold — directly corresponding to the 45.5% burnout rate documented in this study.

VI. KEY FINDINGS & HYPOTHESIS OUTCOMES

77% Agree WLB Affects Satisfaction (H1 ✓)	**69.5%** WLB Deficit Would Drive Them to Leave (H2 ✓)	**45.5%** Report Burnout Despite 62% Job Satisfaction

Finding	Key Insight	Evidence
F1	Flexible working is the strongest WLB dimension	Mean=3.75; 67.5% positive for flexible hours
F2	Wellbeing support is the most critical WLB gap	EAP mean=3.35 (49.5%); Stress support mean=3.27 (48.5%) — both below 50%

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Finding	Key Insight	Evidence
F3	Work-life interference persists despite flexibility	51.5% report work interfering with personal life even with flexible arrangements
F4	Burnout is prevalent and polarised	45.5% report burnout; SD=1.36 (highest in dataset) — concentrated in high-pressure roles
F5	Job satisfaction is moderate-to-positive	62.0% satisfied; mean=3.67 — above neutral but with substantial room for improvement
F6	WLB–satisfaction nexus is near-universally recognised	77.0% agree WLB shapes satisfaction; mean=4.01 (highest in survey); lowest SD (0.95)
F7	WLB deficiency is a primary turnover driver	69.5% would consider leaving due to WLB deficit; mean=3.74
F8	Satisfaction–retention gap: satisfaction ≠ commitment	9% gap between satisfaction (62%) and retention intent (53%); WLB operates as independent retention driver
F9	Demographic vulnerability patterns confirmed	26–35 cohort and individual contributors most WLB-vulnerable; hybrid workers show mixed outcomes

Hypothesis Testing Summary

Hypothesis	Outcome	Key Evidence
H1: WLB positively impacts job satisfaction	SUPPORTED	77.0% agree (mean=4.01); 62.0% satisfied (mean=3.67)
H2: WLB deficiency drives turnover intent	SUPPORTED	69.5% would leave; only 53.0% show positive retention intent
H3: Demographics moderate WLB–satisfaction	PARTIALLY SUPPORTED	Descriptive patterns by age, role, work mode confirmed; inferential tests recommended

VII. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS & LIMITATIONS

7.1 Discussion with Literature

The finding that 77.0% recognise WLB as a satisfaction determinant strongly aligns with Kossek & Ozeki's (1998) meta-analysis across 60 studies, extending their evidence to India's post-pandemic IT context. The support for H2 (69.5% WLB-driven turnover intent) exceeds rates in prior international studies, suggesting that in India's high-mobility IT sector, WLB exerts amplified influence on retention decisions.

The 'engaged burnout' co-existence — 62% satisfaction alongside 45.5% burnout (SD=1.36) — aligns with Schaufeli et al.'s (2008) model. This is critical for practice: burnout is not merely a dissatisfaction problem; even satisfied employees can be unsustainable without adequate wellbeing support. The persistence of work-life interference (51.5%) despite high flexibility availability partially contradicts boundary theory (Allen et al., 2013), resolved by distinguishing policy availability from workload management quality.

7.2 Managerial Implications

Intervention Area	Specific Recommendation	Priority	Expected Outcome
Mental Health &	Invest in structured EAP with active	Critical	Reduce burnout (currently

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Intervention Area	Specific Recommendation	Priority	Expected Outcome
EAP	awareness campaigns; 25.5% neutral on EAP indicates visibility gap		45.5%)
Stress & Workload	Introduce workload audit mechanisms; train managers in redistribution; adopt real-time stress monitoring	Critical	Address lowest-scoring WLB dimension (mean=3.27)
Hybrid Work Quality	Upgrade collaboration infrastructure; standardise hybrid protocols; train managers on async leadership	High	Close implementation gap (mean=3.37 vs. 3.75)
Retention Strategy	Design WLB as explicit retention mechanism; satisfaction alone insufficient (9% gap)	High	Reduce 25.5% active attrition risk
Leave Culture	Actively encourage leave utilisation; address informal pressure affecting 20.5%	Moderate	Prevent chronic fatigue accumulation
Demographic-Sensitive Design	Tailor WLB for 26–35-year-olds and individual contributors — most vulnerable segments	Moderate	Improve targeted effectiveness

7.3 Limitations

Key limitations include: (1) geographical confinement to Bengaluru IT sector — findings may not generalise to Tier-2 cities or other sectors; (2) cross-sectional design precludes causal inference; (3) self-reported Likert data may be subject to social desirability bias; (4) absence of inferential statistical tests (regression, SEM) — hypothesis support is descriptive; (5) single-method design lacks qualitative depth.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Conclusions

This study provides robust empirical evidence that work-life balance practices exercise a significant and meaningful influence on job satisfaction and retention intent among IT sector employees in India. The findings reveal a fundamental structural paradox in the Indian IT sector's approach to WLB: relative strength in operational flexibility (flexible hours: 3.75; WFH comfort: 3.64) co-exists with critical deficiencies in psychological wellbeing support (stress management: 3.27; EAP: 3.35).

This paradox has produced a workforce in which 62.0% report moderate-to-positive job satisfaction, yet 45.5% simultaneously experience burnout — a pattern consistent with 'engaged burnout' — and only 53.0% express positive retention intent. Both H1 and H2 received strong empirical support; H3 received partial support.

Central Conclusion

IT organisations have invested heavily in the mechanics of flexible working but have failed to build the psychological infrastructure necessary to sustain employee wellbeing under high-demand conditions. Without urgent investment in mental health, EAP, and workload management, the current burnout rate and satisfaction–retention gap will continue to erode long-term organisational sustainability.

9.2 Recommendations for Future Research

- Employ Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with samples of 400–500+ to establish formal causal pathways between WLB dimensions, satisfaction, burnout, and retention.
- Conduct longitudinal panel studies before and after WLB policy interventions to assess causal direction.
- Replicate across IT clusters in Tier-2 cities (Pune, Hyderabad, Chennai) to test geographic generalisability.

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- Adopt mixed-methods designs combining quantitative surveys with in-depth qualitative interviews, particularly with the most WLB-vulnerable sub-groups.
- Examine cross-industry comparisons (banking, healthcare, manufacturing) to identify sector-specific moderators.

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