

IMPACT OF WORK–LIFE BALANCE ON JOB SATISFACTION AMONG COLLEGE FACULTY IN PUNJAB: A SECONDARY DATA ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Work-life balance has evolved as one of the most important determinants of well-being of faculty and evaluating institutional effectiveness in context of higher education. With advancement of time, there has been a considerable increase in expectations related to teaching and productivity along with assignment of administrative responsibilities as per academic role requirements. This study critically evaluates the impact of work-life balance on the job satisfaction among faculty of colleges with reference to Punjab. The study is based on analyzing available literature from government reports, peer-reviewed journals, and empirical studies in order to determine the interconnection between satisfaction and its impact on productivity or performance. It has been found that there is a positive association between job satisfaction and work-life balance in alignment with the support provided by the institution, requirements based on gender roles, workload, and job security. This study shows various challenges faced by faculty in colleges in Punjab and concludes that it is essential to promote work-life balance in order to increase employee satisfaction, retention, and positively impact performance.

Keywords: Work–Life Balance, College Faculty, Secondary Data, Punjab, Job Satisfaction, Higher Education

1. Introduction

There are rapid changes going on in higher education institutions globally due to factors such as digitalization, globalization, and increasing pressures of accountability and performance. Teaching roles have not been limited to only teaching, but teachers are also expected to support in administrative tasks, supervise students, publish research work, as well as contributing to development of the institution. As a result, these additional responsibilities blur the very thin line between balancing personal and professional life. The colleges in Punjab operate under both private as well as government structures. There are often bureaucratic procedures seen in government colleges whereas private colleges enjoy more competitive-based systems and face admission pressure. Both of these realities impact the experiences of the faculties in terms of work-life balance and job satisfaction. Work-life balance can be termed as an ability of an individual to balance work as well as non-work roles effectively without conflicts (Rantanen et al., 2011). On the other hand, job satisfaction can be termed as a positive response resulting from one's experiences over working on the job. It is important to understand how these factors help in improvement of faculty well-being and institutional development. This study analyzes the available evidence to evaluate the impact of work-life balance on job satisfaction among colleges in Punjab.

2. Theoretical Framework

The relationship between work–life balance and job satisfaction is understood by underlying organizational theories.

2.1 Role Theory

Role theory describes that there arises conflict when an individual needs to perform multiple roles, especially when the expectations from the roles are not clear. The difficulty often experienced is work overload pressure, trying to balance professional and personal responsibilities (Michel et al., 2011).

2.2 Spillover Theory

Spillover theory describes that experiences in an individual's life in one domain influences the outcomes in the other domain. Work-related stress can impact family life, putting an enormous impact on overall satisfaction. Research shows that there are unique patterns of work observed in case of higher institution that can be characterized by flexible schedules, extended working hours, and autonomy in work. However, flexibility sometimes creates confusion and challenges between balancing of personal and professional life leading to work-family conflicts impacting job satisfaction levels negatively (Rantanen et al., 2011).

2.3 Conservation of Resources Theory

According to Hobfoll et al. (2018), employees try to save their personal resources such as emotional energy and time, but when these resources are depleted, they experience excessive pressure due to work overload, causing a decline in the job satisfaction.

3. Literature Review

3.1 Work–Life Balance in Higher Education

There are often challenges of work-life balance faced by academic professionals due to extended work schedules. The study described that there arises work and family conflict due to work overload that puts an adverse impact on job satisfaction as well as mental well-being of teachers in higher education.

Another study by Haar et al. (2019) described that there is a positive influence of work-life balance on mental well-being and job satisfaction of individuals. The study has found that individuals who perceive higher work-life balance reported to experience higher engagement as well as lower turnover.

Another study by Kniffin et al. (2021) described that the growth in the digital expectations due to remote teaching, especially in the post-pandemic era, have resulted in increasing work demands. This study reported that the increased pressure due to remote work has increased cognitive as well as emotional workload that has resulted in reduced work-life balance among individuals. In addition to this, another study by Allen et al. (2015) highlighted that remote work has negatively impacted mental well-being of the individuals. The study by Jamun Rani (2024) has highlighted the role of institutional support and flexibility in increasing the work-life balance among the women faculty working in India. The study also mentions that domestic expectations due to gender-based roles also impact the work-life balance perceptions among the individuals.

3.2 Job Satisfaction among Faculty Members

Job satisfaction in academics is influenced by compensation, autonomy, leadership, career progression, and work environment.

Sharma and Verma (2021) highlighted that work life quality gradually impacts job satisfaction among academic professionals in India. Faculty who perceives fairness and transparency in the institution experienced higher level of job satisfaction.

Singh and Arora (2024) found that work–life balance and quality of work life significantly influence faculty commitment and satisfaction in Indian higher education institutions.

3.3 Relationship between Work–Life Balance and Job Satisfaction

Empirical evidence consistently supports a positive relationship between work–life balance and job satisfaction. Study carried out by Brough et al. (2014) reported that flexible work arrangements enhance satisfaction over time. This study shows a longitudinal relation between work-life balance and job satisfaction, indicating that enhanced work-life balance leads to more emotional stability and job satisfaction in the long run. The findings also highlight that improved work-life balance leads to reduction in employee turnover also.

Another review by Rahman et al. (2018) found that work–family conflict negatively predicts job satisfaction among university faculty members. Findings of this study showed that there exists an inverse relationship between job satisfaction and work-family conflicts, indicating that more or the higher the job satisfaction, less is the number of work-family conflicts, thus leading to more emotional stability and well-being of the individuals. The study further shows that initiatives taken by the universities in supporting individuals for work-life balance, like supportive leadership practices, providing flexible work hours, adjustments in workload, lead to significant reduction in work-family conflicts and enhancement in overall job satisfaction outcomes. Overall, the literature confirms that improved work–life balance enhances psychological well-being, engagement, and job satisfaction.

3.4 Contextual Evidence from Punjab

The report of Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) published in 2022 on Higher Education in Punjab reported that there exist staffing shortages, burden of excessive documentation, and administrative inefficiencies that impacts performance in colleges. These challenges lead to increase in the workload among faculty that adversely impacts work–life balance.

4. Research Objectives

The aim of the study is:

- evaluation of work-life balance among faculty working in colleges of Punjab.
- conduct a review of job satisfaction among faculty in higher education institutions.
- to determine the relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction
- identification of contextual factors impacting work-life balance in colleges of Punjab
- to propose recommendations to improve work-life balance.

5. Research Methodology

5.1 Research Design

This study is based on qualitative research. It focuses on analysis of data from published empirical studies, peer-reviewed journals and policy reports.

5.2 Data Sources

Secondary data were collected from peer-reviewed journals, Google Scholar database, institutional repositories and government publications.

5.3 Inclusion Criteria

- Studies published between 2015–2024 have been included
- Research focused in context of higher education faculty working in colleges in India/
- Studies examining work–life balance and/or job satisfaction
- Peer-reviewed articles and official reports

5.4 Data Analysis Technique

The study makes the use of thematic analysis as the data analysis technique. The themes have been made based upon factors such as job satisfaction, job security, gender-based role differences, support from the institution, and overall look. The study focuses on a comparative analysis based upon the interviews and patterns identified among the study.

6. Discussion

The analysis of the secondary data clearly shows that work-life balance has a significant impact on the job satisfaction rate among the individuals working in colleges in Punjab. Factors such as work overload, use of technology, leadership support, flexibility from institution, work-life balance impact the job satisfaction levels on the faculty. The study also shows that there are additional pressures such as pressure of managing administrative tasks, documentations related to accreditation, and additional administrative responsibilities that impact the work-life balance among the faculty. It is important for the institutions to support individuals in maintaining a healthy work-life balance between their professional as well as personal commitments in order to positively impact job satisfaction and performance.

7. Conclusion

It can be concluded from the study that there is a direct positive relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction among faculty working in colleges in Punjab. There are various factors such as workload, remote teaching, use of technology, support from institution, and other factors that impact well-being and quality work-life balance among the individuals. Hence, it is important for institutions to focus on promoting a healthy work-life balance in order to support academic excellence

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