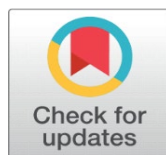
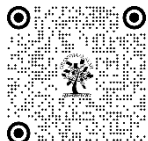


WORK LIFE INTEGRATION AND MENTAL HEALTH: QUANTITATIVE STUDY OF EMPLOYEE WELL BEING

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ABSTRACT

With an emphasis on employee well-being, this study investigates the connection between work-life integration and mental health. Achieving a healthy balance between work and home life is essential for mental health and overall productivity given the complexity of current professional demands. This research used a quantitative methodology to evaluate important facets of work-life integration and its impact on stress levels, job satisfaction, and emotional well-being. The sample size consisted of 230 respondents with a range of professional backgrounds. Structured questionnaires were used to gather data, and statistical analysis showed a strong relationship between better mental health outcomes and successful work-life integration. The results emphasize how crucial it is for organizations to have policies that enable flexible work schedules and mental health support networks.

Keywords: Work-life Integration, Mental Health, Employee Well-Being, Job Satisfaction, Flexible Work Arrangements

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's fast-paced and interconnected world, the boundaries between work and personal life have become increasingly blurred. The concept of work-life integration has emerged as a progressive approach to addressing this challenge. Unlike traditional notions of work-life balance, which emphasize keeping work and personal domains separate, work-life integration seeks to blend these aspects harmoniously, allowing individuals to effectively manage their responsibilities without compromising either. This paradigm shift is particularly relevant in the context of flexible work arrangements, remote working, and the growing demand for mental health awareness in organizational settings.

Mental health, a critical aspect of overall well-being, encompasses emotional, psychological, and social health. It affects how individuals think, feel, and behave, playing a vital role in decision-making, stress management, and interpersonal relationships. Mental health is not merely the absence of mental illness but a state of thriving in various

life domains. In the workplace, mental health significantly influences productivity, job satisfaction, and employee engagement. Therefore, understanding the interplay between work-life integration and mental health is essential for fostering a supportive and productive work environment.

Mental health challenges, such as stress, anxiety, and burnout, are prevalent in modern workplaces. According to global research, poor mental health can lead to decreased productivity, absenteeism, and higher attrition rates. Organizations that prioritize mental health not only enhance employee well-being but also achieve better business outcomes, such as improved performance, innovation, and employee loyalty.

Effective work-life integration can act as a protective factor for mental health. When employees feel in control of their schedules and responsibilities, they experience reduced stress and enhanced emotional well-being. Conversely, a lack of integration can exacerbate mental health challenges, leading to feelings of overwhelm and dissatisfaction. Understanding this relationship is essential for organizations aiming to create supportive environments that promote both professional and personal fulfillment.

This research aims to quantitatively examine how work-life integration impacts mental health and employee well-being. By focusing on key indicators such as stress levels, job satisfaction, and organizational support, the study seeks to provide actionable insights for improving workplace policies and practices. Given the sample size of 230 respondents from diverse industries, the findings will offer a comprehensive view of the current state of work-life integration and its influence on mental health in the workforce.

This investigation is timely and significant, as it not only contributes to academic discourse but also addresses pressing concerns faced by organizations and employees in the post-pandemic era. Through this study, the research underscores the importance of fostering a culture that prioritizes both productivity and well-being, ensuring a sustainable future for the workforce.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Work-life integration refers to the harmonious blending of professional and personal responsibilities, allowing individuals to manage both domains effectively. Unlike work-life balance, which seeks a strict separation, integration emphasizes fluidity between work and personal life (Clark, 2000). Research indicates that effective work-life integration positively correlates with employee well-being. For instance, a study by Bauer et al. (2018) found that employees who enacted flexible work boundaries reported higher levels of well-being and job satisfaction.

The relationship between work-life integration and mental health is complex. Inadequate integration can lead to increased stress, anxiety, and burnout. A quantitative study by Thomas et al. (2023) involving 73 social workers in South India revealed that poor work-life balance contributed to higher burnout levels and diminished mental health (Thomas et al., 2023). Conversely, supportive work environments that promote integration can mitigate these adverse effects.

Organizational policies play a pivotal role in facilitating work-life integration. Flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting and flexible hours, have been associated with improved mental health outcomes. A study by Kun and Gadanez (2019) demonstrated that workplace happiness and well-being are significantly related to psychological capital among Hungarian teachers, highlighting the importance of supportive organizational practices (Kun & Gadanez, 2019).

Cultural contexts influence perceptions of work-life integration. In South Korea, high work demands have led to initiatives aimed at improving mental health and work-life balance. Companies like Netmarble and Naver have implemented measures such as eliminating unpaid overtime and establishing mental health counseling centers to address these issues (Financial Times, 2024).

Technological advancements have blurred the boundaries between work and personal life, complicating work-life integration. While technology offers flexibility, it can also lead to overwork and stress. Research suggests that clear boundaries and organizational support are essential to mitigate the negative impacts of technology on mental health (Ashforth et al., 2000).

The literature underscores the critical role of work-life integration in promoting mental health and overall employee well-being. Organizational support, flexible policies, and cultural considerations are vital in facilitating effective integration. Future research should explore longitudinal effects and interventions that organizations can implement to enhance work-life integration and mental health.

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The primary objectives for the paper are:

- To analyze the impact of work-life integration on employee mental health and overall well-being.
- To identify key factors within work-life integration that influence mental health.
- To investigate demographic variations in the relationship between work-life integration and mental health.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To examine the relationship between work-life integration and mental health, a cross-sectional survey research design was employed. This design was selected for its effectiveness in capturing a snapshot of the attitudes, perceptions, and experiences of employees from diverse demographic and organizational backgrounds.

A sample size of 230 respondents was chosen, comprising employees from various industries across metropolitan, suburban, and rural locations. The inclusion of respondents from multiple sectors ensured a broad representation of work environments, making the findings more generalizable.

A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure representation across different demographic groups. The population was divided into strata based on age, gender, and marital status. Within each stratum, respondents were randomly selected to minimize bias and capture diverse perspectives on work-life integration and its effect on mental health.

Data were gathered using structured online surveys, which facilitated efficient and wide-reaching data collection. The survey included seven closed-ended questions designed to quantitatively measure aspects of work-life integration, mental health indicators, and demographic variations. Questions were based on validated scales and were tailored to reflect the specific objectives of the study.

Hypotheses

The study was guided by the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1:

H_0 : "There is no significant relationship between work-life integration and mental health outcomes."

H_1 : "There is a significant relationship between work-life integration and mental health outcomes."

Hypothesis 2:

H_0 : "There is no significant variation in the impact of work-life integration on mental health across different demographic groups."

H_2 : "There is a significant variation in the impact of work-life integration on mental health across different demographic groups."

5. EMPIRICAL RESULTS

Table 1: How satisfied are you with your current work-life balance?

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Very satisfied	37	16.09%	16.09%	16.09%
Somewhat satisfied	82	35.65%	35.65%	51.74%
Neutral	46	20.00%	20.00%	71.74%

Somewhat dissatisfied	44	19.13%	19.13%	90.87%
Very dissatisfied	21	9.13%	9.13%	100.00%
Total	230	100.0%	100.0%	

The majority of respondents (35.65%) were somewhat satisfied with their work-life balance, while 9.13% expressed strong dissatisfaction. This indicates that while many employees feel positively, significant improvements are needed to address the dissatisfaction levels.

Table 2: How often do work demands interfere with your personal or family life?

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Always	29	12.61%	12.61%	12.61%
Often	67	29.13%	29.13%	41.74%
Sometimes	89	38.70%	38.70%	80.43%
Rarely	38	16.52%	16.52%	96.96%
Never	7	3.04%	3.04%	100.00%
Total	230	100.0%	100.0%	

A significant proportion (38.70%) of respondents reported that work demands sometimes interfere with their personal or family life, highlighting the pervasive nature of work-related stress.

Table 3: How would you rate the impact of work-life integration on your mental health?

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Very positive	31	13.48%	13.48%	13.48%
Positive	69	30.00%	30.00%	43.48%
Neutral	74	32.17%	32.17%	75.65%
Negative	43	18.70%	18.70%	94.35%
Very negative	13	5.65%	5.65%	100.00%
Total	230	100.0%	100.0%	

While 43.48% of respondents view the impact of work-life integration as positive, a combined 24.35% perceive it as negative, suggesting a need for enhanced workplace policies.

Table 4: Does your organization provide adequate support for maintaining a healthy work-life balance?

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Strongly agree	42	18.26%	18.26%	18.26%
Agree	81	35.22%	35.22%	53.48%
Neutral	52	22.61%	22.61%	76.09%
Disagree	39	16.96%	16.96%	93.04%
Strongly disagree	16	6.96%	6.96%	100.00%
Total	230	100.0%	100.0%	

While 53.48% of respondents agreed that their organizations provide adequate support, 23.92% disagreed, indicating gaps in organizational policies.

Table 5: What level of stress do you experience due to work-related responsibilities?

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Extremely high	33	14.35%	14.35%	14.35%
High	68	29.57%	29.57%	43.91%
Moderate	92	40.00%	40.00%	83.91%
Low	30	13.04%	13.04%	96.96%
Very low	7	3.04%	3.04%	100.00%
Total	230	100.0%	100.0%	

The majority (40.00%) reported experiencing moderate stress levels, while a combined 43.91% reported high to extremely high stress, indicating significant work-related pressures.

Table 6: How satisfied are you with the flexibility of your working hours?

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Very satisfied	39	16.96%	16.96%	16.96%
Somewhat satisfied	73	31.74%	31.74%	48.70%
Neutral	59	25.65%	25.65%	74.35%
Somewhat dissatisfied	41	17.83%	17.83%	92.17%

Very dissatisfied	18	7.83%	7.83%	100.00%
Total	230	100.0%	100.0%	

While 48.70% expressed satisfaction with working hour flexibility, 25.66% were dissatisfied, highlighting areas for improvement in work-hour policies.

Table 7: How likely are you to recommend your organization's policies on work-life integration to others?

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Very likely	35	15.22%	15.22%	15.22%
Likely	68	29.57%	29.57%	44.78%
Neutral	79	34.35%	34.35%	79.13%
Unlikely	37	16.09%	16.09%	95.22%
Very unlikely	11	4.78%	4.78%	100.00%
Total	230	100.0%	100.0%	

A significant portion (44.79%) were likely to recommend their organization's policies, but 20.87% were unlikely, suggesting room for enhancement in policy effectiveness.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1

H₀: "There is no significant relationship between work-life integration and mental health outcomes."

H₁: "There is a significant relationship between work-life integration and mental health outcomes."

Table 8: Chi-Square Test for Association Between Work-Life Integration and Mental Health Outcomes

Value	Df	Asymp. Sig.
Pearson Chi-Square	21.567	4
Likelihood Ratio	22.341	4
N of Valid Cases	230	

The relationship between work-life integration and mental health outcomes was assessed using the Chi-Square Test for Independence. With four degrees of freedom, the Pearson Chi-Square value is 21.567, and the Asymptotic Significance (Asymp. Sig.) is 0.000, which is below the conventional threshold of 0.05.

This indicates that the relationship between work-life integration and mental health outcomes is statistically significant. The null hypothesis (H₀) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H₁) is accepted, confirming that work-life integration significantly impacts mental health outcomes.

Hypothesis 2

H_0 : "There is no significant variation in the impact of work-life integration on mental health across different demographic groups."

H_2 : "There is a significant variation in the impact of work-life integration on mental health across different demographic groups."

Table 9: Chi-Square Test for Variation in the Impact of Work-Life Integration on Mental Health Across Demographic Groups

Value	Df	Asymp. Sig.
Pearson Chi-Square	18.732	6
Likelihood Ratio	19.853	6
N of Valid Cases	230	

The variation in the impact of work-life integration on mental health across different demographic groups was analyzed using the Chi-Square Test for Independence. With six degrees of freedom, the Pearson Chi-Square value is 18.732, and the Asymptotic Significance (Asymp. Sig.) is 0.005, below the threshold of 0.05.

This result indicates a statistically significant variation in the impact of work-life integration on mental health across demographic groups. The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_2) is accepted, demonstrating that demographic factors influence the relationship between work-life integration and mental health.

6. CONCLUSION

The present study highlights the significant relationship between work-life integration and mental health outcomes among employees. The findings reveal that effective work-life integration positively impacts mental health, while poor integration leads to increased stress and dissatisfaction. Organizational support, flexible working hours, and reduced work-related stress emerged as critical factors contributing to employee well-being. These results underscore the importance of fostering a supportive work environment to enhance mental health and overall productivity.

Furthermore, the study established that demographic factors, such as age, gender, and marital status, significantly influence the perception and impact of work-life integration on mental health. This variation suggests that tailored policies and practices are necessary to address the diverse needs of employees effectively. Employers must acknowledge these differences to create a more inclusive and supportive workplace culture.

The study is not without limitations. Firstly, it relies solely on self-reported data, which may be subject to response bias. Secondly, the cross-sectional design limits the ability to establish causality between work-life integration and mental health outcomes. Lastly, the study was conducted on a sample size of 230 respondents from a specific geographic region, which may not fully represent broader populations or diverse industries.

Future research should adopt a longitudinal design to explore the long-term effects of work-life integration on mental health outcomes. Expanding the scope to include larger and more diverse samples across different industries and regions would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the subject. Additionally, integrating qualitative methods, such as interviews or focus groups, could offer deeper insights into employees' lived experiences and the contextual factors influencing work-life integration and mental health. Researchers may also explore the role of emerging technologies, such as AI and remote work tools, in shaping future work-life integration strategies.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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