

A Study on Work-Life Balance with Special Reference to Gen Z Vs Millennials (in Palayamkottai)

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Abstract

Work-life balance is an essential aspect of modern professional life that aims to achieve equilibrium between career demands and personal commitments. In an era where work hours are becoming more flexible but also more demanding, maintaining a balance has become a priority for employees and organizations alike. Gen Z and Millennials represent a significant portion of today's workforce, and their unique values and expectations make them pivotal to the discourse on work-life balance. Work – life balance is the existence of a certain set of organizational conditions or practices. This definition frequently argues that a high Work-life balance exists when democratic management practices are used, employee's jobs are enriched, employees are treated with dignity and safe working conditions exist. This research is made in the aspect of studying the work life balance of GEN Z Vs Millennials

Keywords: *work life, Satisfaction, Involvement*

Introduction to Generational Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance has changed across different generations. Each generation faces its own challenges and opportunities in managing work and personal life. Earlier, most people worked in traditional office settings, but today many workplaces offer more flexible options. Because of this change, different generations have different views about work, stress, and personal life. Understanding these differences is important so that organizations can create policies that meet the needs of a diverse workforce.

Rapid technological growth and changes in society have also changed the idea of work-life balance. In earlier times, work was mostly limited to places like offices or farms. Today, with digital technology, work can be done from almost anywhere. At the same time, expectations about family life, gender roles, and career goals have also changed over the years. This chapter explains how work-life balance differs among generations and discusses the challenges each generation faces in maintaining a healthy balance between work and personal life. Generational work-life balance is also shaped by major historical events and changes in social values. For example, Millennials and Gen Z grew up during the rise of technology. Because of this, they often give more importance to flexibility, personal growth, and mental well-being in their work and life.

Statement of Problems

Work-life balance has become a buzzword, yet its implementation remains challenging, especially for different generations with distinct needs. Millennials, often characterized as work-centric and ambitious, may experience burnout due to excessive workloads. Gen Z, on the other hand, may struggle to find balance due to a different set of challenges, including technology dependence and mental health issues. This study aims to uncover how these generational differences play out in the context of Palayamkottai's workplaces.

Objectives of the Study

- To examine the relationship between monthly family income and the motivation to maintain a healthy work-life balance among Gen Z and Millennials in Palayamkottai.
- To explore the preferred methods used by Gen Z and Millennials in Palayamkottai to manage time effectively and maintain work-life balance.
- To identify the major challenges faced by Gen Z and Millennials in balancing personal and professional life in Palayamkottai.

Review of Literature

Greenhaus, J.H., and Beutell, N.J. (1985): "Sources of Conflict Between Work and Family Roles" Greenhaus and Beutell's research laid the groundwork for subsequent studies on work-life balance and influenced organizations worldwide to consider family-friendly policies as a critical part of employee welfare.

Priya, S., and Arjun, V. (2022): "Gender Disparities in Work-Life Balance: A Tamil Nadu Perspective" This research examines the gender-specific challenges faced by employees in Tamil Nadu regarding work-life balance. Priya and Arjun identify those women, particularly in dual-earner households, often face a double burden of professional and domestic responsibilities. They highlight cultural expectations that place a disproportionate share of caregiving and household duties on women. The study also explores how these disparities are reflected in job satisfaction, career progression, and overall well-being.

Hypothesis

In order to fulfill the above objective, the following null hypothesis is formulated.

H₀ 01(Null Hypothesis): There is no significant relationship between the monthly family income and motivations to maintain a healthy work-life balance.

Sample Type and Sample Size

The study was conducted among a sample of 111 respondents, selected using the convenience sampling method.

Analysis and Interpretation

Table No.1 The major challenges faced in balancing work and personal life of the respondents

S. No	Challenges in Work-Life Balance	Score Level					Weighted Score	Weighted Mean
		SA (5)	A (4)	N (3)	D (2)	SD (1)		
1	Long working hours impact personal relationships	54 (270)	37 (148)	15 (45)	4 (8)	1 (1)	472	4.25
2	Financial constraints make it difficult to relax	18 (90)	60 (240)	30 (90)	3 (6)	0 (0)	426	3.84

3	Lack of flexible working options creates stress	27 (135)	38 (152)	38 (114)	6 (12)	2 (2)	415	3.74
4	Responsibilities at home interfere with professional work	21 (105)	58 (232)	19 (57)	11 (22)	2 (4)	418	3.77
5	Job-related stress affects physical & mental health	38 (190)	36 (144)	24 (72)	11 (22)	2 (4)	430	3.87
6	Limited time for self-care due to work demands	28 (140)	39 (156)	33 (99)	10 (20)	1 (1)	416	3.75
7	Inability to disconnect from work-related communication	19 (95)	44 (176)	37 (111)	7 (14)	4 (4)	400	3.60
8	Lack of support from family or colleagues	20 (100)	42 (168)	27 (81)	16 (32)	6 (6)	387	3.49

Source: Primary Data

Scale: Above 3.85 = Strongly Agree, Above 3.75 up to 3.85 = Agree, Below or equal to 3.75 = Neither agree nor Disagree

Interpretation

Respondents strongly agree that long working hours (4.21) and job-related stress (3.87) are the biggest challenges to work-life balance. People agree that financial pressure (3.84), home responsibilities (3.77), and lack of time for self-care (3.75) also affect work-life balance, though less severely. Participants were neutral about flexible work options (3.74), disconnecting from work (3.60), and lack of support (3.49), suggesting these are less consistently seen as problems.

Table No.2.Methods to Manage Time Effectively to Ensure Work-Life Balance

S. No	Time Management Methods	(Always + Frequently)	Occasionally	(Rarely + Never)	Trend
1	Preparing a daily or weekly schedule	83.6%	12.2%	4.2%	Highly Adopted
2	Prioritizing tasks based on urgency	82.9%	13.7%	3.4%	Highly Adopted
3	Avoiding procrastination	75.5%	17.8%	6.7%	Moderately Adopted
4	Professional development without work pressure	82.1%	15.6%	2.3%	Highly Adopted
5	Allocating time for personal activities	84.1%	13.4%	2.5%	Highly Adopted
6	Delegating tasks to others when necessary	76.5%	17.8%	5.7%	Moderately Adopted
7	Reviewing progress on work-life balance	72.3%	21.6%	6.1%	Least Adopted
8	Using time-blocking techniques	79.9%	17.4%	6.7%	Moderately Adopted

Source: Primary Data

Scale-Higher Adoption is above 80%, Moderate Adoption is above 75 % up to 80 %,The least adoption is below 75%

Interpretation-Highly Adopted Strategies -Preparing a schedule (83.6%) and prioritizing tasks (82.9%) are the most widely used methods. Allocating time for personal activities (84.1%) shows strong adherence. Moderately Adopted Strategies Avoiding procrastination (75.5%) and delegating tasks (76.5%) are moderately followed. Using time-blocking (79.9%) is gaining traction but not universally adopted.

Least Followed Strategy-Reviewing work-life balance regularly (72.3%) has the lowest adoption rate, indicating people rarely evaluate their balance.

Hypothesis a relation between monthly family income and motivations

H0 01(Null hypothesis): There is no significant relationship between the monthly family income and motivations to maintain a healthy work-life balance.

Table No.3 Calculation of Chi-Square Value

O	E	O-E	(O-E)²	(O-E)²/E
2	2.78	-0.78	0.60	0.02
5	4.02	0.98	0.96	0.23
2	4.86	-2.86	8.17	1.68
3	2.16	0.84	0.70	0.32
5	4.37	0.63	0.39	0.08
3	2.94	0.06	0.003	0.001
4	4.25	-0.25	0.06	0.014
5	4.09	0.91	0.82	0.20
2	2.29	-0.29	0.29	0.12
4	4.42	0.42	0.17	0.03
10	8.02	9.18	18.17	2.26
11	11.58	0.58	0.33	0.02
10	11.13	1.13	1.27	0.11
6	6.29	0.29	0.08	0.01
12	12.03	0.03	0.0009	0.00007
3	4.25	-1.25	1.56	0.36
6	6.14	0.14	0.01	0.001
8	5.90	2.1	4.41	0.74
3	3.30	-0.3	0.09	0.027
6	6.38	0.38	0.14	0.021
Calculated Value				6.24

Chi-square Test:Degrees of freedom = (R-1) (C-1) = (5-1) (4-1)

= 4 x 3 = 12= **21.026 C < T so rejected**

Inference: Since the table value is smaller than the calculated value, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Result: There is no significant relationship between monthly household income and how GST affected your monthly household budget.

Findings

Most of the respondents are male with 57%.62% of the respondents are belonging to the Gen Z group (18-24). Most of the respondents are unmarried with 60%. Most of the respondents are under-graduate with 48.65%.43.24% respondents are students who do part-time job. Most of the respondents earn more than Rs40000 monthly with 25%. 62.16% of the respondents are from nuclear family. 52.25% respondents belong in the family of 2-4 members. Most of the respondents have only one earner in family. Averagely most of the respondents work for about 5.63 hours per day.

The type of work environment most of the respondents prefer is Flexible/Remote work with 43%, and the secondly preferred type is Fixed/Office-based work. 48% of the respondents prefer public transport. Since, it is cost-effective. Most of the respondents prioritize socializing with friends or family to unwind after work. The best motivation to maintain the work-life balance is the mental well-being. Long working hours impacting personal relationship is the toughest and the most difficult challenge that the respondents faced.

Lack of support from the family/colleagues is the least challenge faced by the respondents. The highly adopted technology for work-life balance is the mobile usage for work after official working hours. Social media was used moderately for both personal and professional purpose. Relying on digital tools to track work-life balance is leastly adopted. Healthy eating habits have the greatest impact on maintain energy and balance. Consuming caffeine or sugar have the least impact on work-life balance.

Providing flexible working hours is the highest-rated employer support initiative. Implementing wellness programs are the least-rated employer support-initiative. Meeting project deadlines is the highest-rated work stress factor by the respondents. Least of the

respondents has rated handling workplace conflicts as the work stress. Allocating time for personal activities shows the strong adherence among the respondents. Using the time-blocking is the moderately adopted strategy, but it is only adopted by few respondents and not universally. The least adopted strategy by the respondents is reviewing the work-life balance regularly. There is no significant relationship between monthly household income and how GST affected your monthly household budget.

Suggestions

Companies should support flexible work hours and remote or hybrid work to help employees balance professional and personal life. Workplaces should provide mental health support, fair workload distribution, and encourage employees to take paid leave without guilt. Organizations should limit work communication after office hours and offer skill development and financial wellness programs to reduce stress. Family-friendly policies such as parental leave and childcare support should also be provided. A comfortable ergonomic workspace and corporate wellness activities like yoga, meditation, and fitness programs can improve employee well-being. Social events and team gatherings should be encouraged to strengthen relationships. Mentorship programs and career development opportunities should be available to improve job satisfaction. Employees should also be educated on maintaining clear boundaries between work and personal life.

Conclusion

The study on work-life balance among Gen Z and Millennials in Palayamkottai shows clear differences in their priorities and approaches to balancing work and personal life. Millennials generally focus on career stability, growth, and financial security, sometimes sacrificing personal time. In contrast, Gen Z places greater importance on flexibility, mental well-being, and meaningful work, often preferring remote work and roles that provide autonomy and purpose. The research suggests that employers should understand these generational differences and adopt policies such as flexible work hours, hybrid work models, and mental health support. By addressing these needs, organizations can improve employee satisfaction, retain talent, and create a more motivated and productive workforce.

References

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