

## Association Between Emotional Intelligence and Work-Life Balance Among Indian IT Employees: A Quantitative Study

Yashvi Raj<sup>1\*</sup>

### ABSTRACT

The link between Work-Life Balance (WLB) and Emotional Intelligence (EI) among Indian IT workers is investigated in this study. It seeks to ascertain if WLB is beneficial for those with greater EI. Data was gathered using standardised scales from 115 IT professionals using a quantitative, cross-sectional design. The results show a positive link between EI and WLB, indicating that workers who are more emotionally aware and able to control their emotions are better capable of balancing their professional and private duties. While there was no discernible difference in the EI levels of the sexes, the research also shows a gender difference in WLB, with males reporting greater balance than women. EI strongly predicts WLB, according to regression analysis, but its impact is small, suggesting that other factors, such as workload and organisational culture, are also important. The findings highlight the potential benefits of EI training programs in the IT sector to enhance stress management and work-life harmony. Additionally, the gender disparity in WLB calls for more inclusive workplace policies, such as flexible schedules and caregiving support, to promote better balance for women.

**Keywords:** *Emotional Intelligence, Work-Life Balance, IT Professionals, Workplace Stress, Employee Well-Being*

### Emotional Intelligence (EI)

According to Salovey and Mayer (1990), "emotional intelligence involves the ability to perceive, understand, and manage emotions effectively." In contrast to traditional intelligence, which is typically assessed through IQ and focuses on cognitive skills such as problem-solving and logical reasoning, EI highlights the emotional and social dimensions of human experience. At its essence, EI involves not only the recognition of emotions but also an understanding of their significance and effects, making it vital for sustaining emotional equilibrium in daily life. Additionally, EI enhances interpersonal interactions by enabling individuals to recognize and empathize with the emotional states of others.

In 1995, Daniel Goleman brought attention to the idea of EI or Emotional Quotient (EQ) with their impactful book, *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ*. Expanding on the foundation set by Salovey and Mayer, five essential competencies of EI have been identified. According to Goleman (1995), "emotional intelligence consists of five

<sup>1</sup>Student, Amity University, Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India

\*Corresponding Author

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essential competencies: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social ability" (p. 43).

Research shows that EI significantly contributes to workplace outcomes, including job satisfaction (JS), stress reduction, and work-life harmony (Stefanny & Wijaya Putri, 2024; Ahmad et al., 2023). For example, emotionally intelligent individuals are better equipped to manage the stressors of high-pressure jobs and navigate interpersonal conflicts more constructively (Sembiring et al., 2024).

### **Work-Life Balance (WLB)**

Greenhaus and Allen (2011) stated that "work-life balance refers to the extent to which an individual is equally engaged in and satisfied with their work and family roles." Attaining WLB is deemed crucial for sustaining overall well-being, as it enables individuals to fulfill the requirements of their careers while simultaneously cultivating personal relationships and prioritizing self-care.

Historically, WLB was viewed primarily as a time management issue. However, modern perspectives highlight that achieving balance involves not only the amount of time dedicated to various tasks but also the quality of that time. Stress and burnout frequently result from an inability to achieve a healthy WLB. When people are unable to establish a balance, they frequently feel chronic stress, emotional drain, and a sense of being inundated.

Mental health challenges, such as anxiety, depression, and stress-related disorders, are closely associated with the difficulty in attaining balance. Additionally, work-family conflict and role strain may occur when people find it challenging to balance the requirements of their personal and work lives (Sharma & Saxena, 2022; Baker et al., 2024).

### **Work-Life Balance in the Context of the Indian IT Sector**

The Indian Information Technology (IT) sector presents a unique set of challenges related to maintaining Work-Life Balance. One of the primary challenges is the long working hours. Employees are often required to work well beyond the standard eight-hour workday. Moreover, the high expectations placed on IT employees in terms of productivity and performance add another layer of pressure. The COVID-19 epidemic has hastened the growth of remote work, making it more difficult to draw boundaries between work and home life.

The IT sector is also notorious for high attrition rates. The demanding work culture, combined with poor WLB, often leads to burnout. Studies have found that Indian IT professionals frequently struggle with emotional stress and find it difficult to manage personal and professional obligations effectively (Kethan et al., 2023). Enhancing EI in such a context has been suggested as a key approach to improving WLB and organizational productivity.

### **Role of EI in Managing WLB in IT Employees**

Managing the demands of the IT industry and encouraging a healthy work-life balance depend heavily on EI. Key characteristics including self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, motivation, and social skills are all part of EI.

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One of the key ways in which EI supports WLB is through emotion regulation. IT employees with high EI are better equipped to regulate emotional responses to work-related stressors (Dias & Rebecca, 2024). Moreover, self-awareness enables employees to recognize the early signs of stress, burnout, or emotional exhaustion (Ahmad et al., 2023).

Empathy is another crucial EI skill that can help IT employees maintain healthy relationships. In recent years, HR departments in the IT industry have recognized the importance of EI skills, as they are linked to better stress management, improved interpersonal relationships, and greater JS (Nadaraja & Harshani, 2023; Sembiring et al., 2024).

### Key takeaways

The idea of EI has drawn a lot of attention because it plays a crucial role in determining both personal and professional outcomes. EI's multifaceted nature enables people to manage stress, navigate complex emotional landscapes, and create meaningful relationships. High EI is particularly helpful in high-stress situations and has been associated with better leadership, better job performance, and increased well-being (Gurumoorthi & PougaJendy, 2023).

Similarly, WLB represents a critical concept in modern organizational psychology. WLB is about maintaining a holistic equilibrium that allows individuals to allocate resources—time, energy, and attention—effectively. Achieving WLB has implications for mental health, JS, and overall well-being (Naz et al., 2022).

The study's examination of the relationship between EI and WLB demonstrates how EI may act as a safeguard against the pressures that jeopardize WLB. This relationship is especially pertinent in the Indian IT sector, where workers deal with distinct demands. High EI workers are better able to handle these difficulties by striking a balance between personal and professional life (Kethan et al., 2023; Poddar, 2023).

## METHODOLOGY

### *Aim*

To explore the link between emotional intelligence (EI) and work-life balance (WLB) in Indian IT professionals.

### *Objectives*

1. To evaluate the EI of Indian IT workers.
2. To assess IT professionals' WLB.
3. To investigate the relationship between WLB and EI.
4. To ascertain if WLB in the IT industry is strongly predicted by EI.
5. To explore how gender impacts WLB and EI.

### *Hypotheses*

#### **Relationship between EI and WLB in Indian IT professionals.**

- **H<sub>0</sub> (Null Hypothesis):** No notable relationship exists between EI and WLB in Indian IT professionals.
- **H<sub>1</sub> (Alternative Hypothesis):** A meaningful positive link is expected between EI and WLB among Indian IT employees.

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### **Influence of Emotional Intelligence (EI) on Work-Life Balance (WLB):**

- **Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>):** EI does not serve as a significant predictor of WLB among Indian IT professionals.
- **Alternative Hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>):** EI serves as a significant predictor of WLB among Indian IT professionals.

### **Gender Variations in Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Work-Life Balance (WLB):**

- Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>): Gender does not have a significant effect on EI and WLB among Indian IT professionals.
- Alternative Hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>): Gender has a significant effect on EI and WLB among Indian IT professionals.

### *Variables*

- **Independent Variable (IV):** EI
- **Dependent Variable (DV):** WLB

### *Sample Size*

The study will include 115 IT employees working in various organizations across India.

### *Inclusion Criteria:*

- Individuals currently employed in the Indian IT sector.
- Minimum one year of work experience in the industry.
- Ability to comprehend and respond to survey questions in English.
- Willingness to participate voluntarily.

### *Exclusion Criteria:*

- Individuals working outside the IT sector.
- Individuals currently on leave for long term. (e.g., sabbaticals, maternity/paternity leave).

### *Method*

The study uses a cross-sectional survey approach to conduct a quantitative, correlational investigation. The data will be collected through standardized self-report questionnaires.

### *Sampling Technique*

A **random and snowball sampling** method will be employed:

- **Random Sampling:** IT employees will be approached through professional networks, LinkedIn, and workplace groups.
- **Snowball Sampling:** Initial participants will be encouraged to refer colleagues meeting the inclusion criteria.

### *Tools Used*

1. **EI:** Assessed utilising the **Schutte Self-Report EI Scale (SSREI)**, a widely used 33-item scale assessing four key aspects: self-awareness, emotion regulation, social skills, and utilization of emotions. The SSREI has shown high consistency (Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.87$ ) along with strong construct validity.
2. **WLB:** Assessed using a **modified version of the Hayman WLB Scale** to fit Indian IT sector's specific demands. This scale analyses three elements: work interference with personal life (WIPL), personal life interference in work (PLIW), and work-

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personal life enhancement (WPLE). The modified scale has demonstrated **high reliability (Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.85$ )** and **good content validity** in previous studies.

### *Data Collection Procedure*

- The survey will be conducted online via **Google Forms**.
- Participants will get a written consent agreement that explains the study's aim, confidentiality measures, and voluntary nature of participation.
- The questionnaires will be handed out through **emails, social media, and professional networking platforms**.

### *Method of Analysis of Data*

- Descriptive statistics will be used to summarise key characteristics and demographics. (mean, standard deviation, frequency).
- Spearman's correlation analysis will ascertain how WLB and EI are related.
- To identify if EI substantially predicts WLB, regression analysis may be used.
- SPSS or any other appropriate program will be used for statistical analysis.

### *Ethical Considerations*

- **Confidentiality & Anonymity:** Participants' responses will remain anonymous and used solely for research purposes.
- **Informed Consent:** All participants have to provide their consent before taking the survey.
- **Right to Withdraw:** Participants can opt out at any stage without providing justification.

## RESULTS

*Table 1: Descriptive Statistics*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
<b>WLBrev_Total</b>	115	34.00	70.00	52.6522	8.00224
<b>EI_Total</b>	115	74.00	165.00	124.3565	13.74402
<b>Valid N (listwise)</b>	115				

*Table 2: Test of normality*

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
<b>EI_Total</b>	.111	115	.001	.951	115	<.001
<b>WLBrev_Total</b>	.106	115	.003	.980	115	.078

*Table 3: Coefficient between the variables*

		<b>EI_Total</b>	<b>WLBrev_Total</b>
<b>Spearman's rho EI_Total</b>	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.278
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.003
	N	115	115
<b>WLBrev_Total</b>	Correlation Coefficient	.278	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.
	N	115	115

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**Table 4: Mann-Whitney test**

	Gender_code	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
<b>WLBrev_Total</b>	1.00	85	61.74	5248.00
	2.00	30	47.40	1422.00
	Total	115		
<b>EI_Total</b>	1.00	85	59.11	5024.50
	2.00	30	54.85	1645.50
	Total	115		

	<b>WLBrev_Total</b>	<b>EI_Total</b>
<b>Mann-Whitney U</b>	957.000	1180.500
<b>Wilcoxon W</b>	1422.000	1645.500
<b>Z</b>	-2.028	-.602
<b>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)</b>	.043	.547

**Table 5: Model summary showing variance explained by EI**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
<b>1</b>	.276	.076	.068	7.72450

**Table 6: Regression coefficients showing the effect of emotional intelligence on work-life balance.**

	Unstandardized	Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
<b>1 (Constant)</b>	32.641	6.585		4.957	<.001
<b>EI_Total</b>	.161	.053	.276	3.057	.003

**Table 7: ANOVA summary showing overall model significance**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
<b>1</b>	Regression	557.621	1	557.621	9.345	.003°
	Residual	6742.466	113	59.668		
	Total	7300.087	114			

## **DISCUSSION**

The key objective of this research was to investigate the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Work-Life Balance among Indian IT employees. Given the demanding nature of the IT sector, understanding how EI influences the capacity to manage one's personal and professional lives is crucial. This study seeks to identify whether higher EI correlates with better work and life balance and how different age groups experience these factors.

Several studies have explored the intersection of WLB and EI in various professional contexts. Notably, Yousuf and Mir (2024) investigated this relationship among faculty members in Jammu and Kashmir's Higher Education Department. Their findings highlighted that higher EI was strongly linked to improved WLB, particularly through self-awareness and social awareness.

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### *EI Among IT Employees*

The study utilized Schutte's EI Scale to measure EI levels among participants. The results (Table 1) indicate that the mean EI score was 124.357 with a standard deviation of 13.744, and scores ranged from 74 to 165.

The mean score suggests that most employees possess moderate to high levels of EI. Higher EI scores suggest greater self-awareness, emotional regulation, and social abilities, all of which support an employee's capacity to balance work and personal obligations. However, the presence of employees scoring towards the lower end of the spectrum indicates that not all individuals possess strong EI, which could lead to difficulties in handling workplace stress, managing conflicts, and maintaining a healthy balance of personal life and work.

The findings resonate with research conducted by Baker et al. (2024), which examined the relationship between EI and WLB among Malaysian Army personnel. Their study found that dimensions of EI, particularly knowing and using emotions, positively influenced WLB.

### *WLB Among IT Employees*

WLB was analysed using the Hayman WLB Scale, which yielded a mean score of 52.652, a standard deviation of 8.0022, and a range of 34 to 70 (Table 1).

The moderate average score suggests that IT employees experience a fair level of WLB, though significant variations exist among individuals.

The IT sector in India is known for rigorous work demands, often leading to work-life conflicts, especially in roles involving client interactions across different time zones. Employees with lower WLB scores likely face issues such as excessive workload or an inability to disconnect from work.

A study by Sembiring et al. (2024) found that EI positively influences WLB, with family support acting as a mediator. Their research reinforces the hypothesis that Indian IT workers with higher EI may be better equipped in navigating pressures related to work while maintaining personal well-being.

### *Correlation Between EI and WLB*

Normality assessments revealed that the data did not follow a normal distribution ( $p < .05$ ), prompting the use of non-parametric tests, specifically Spearman's correlation and Mann-Whitney U (see Table 2). A Spearman's rank-order correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between EI and WLB. The findings indicated a weak yet statistically significant positive correlation ( $\rho = .278$ ,  $p = .003$ ,  $N = 115$ ), suggesting that individuals with elevated levels of EI are more inclined to experience a favorable work-life balance (refer to Table 3).

This result aligns with research conducted in the Indian IT industry, where EI has been associated with enhanced WLB, job performance, and overall well-being (Gupta, 2016; Bharti & Warriar, 2015). While the correlation is modest, it underscores the importance of emotional competencies in balancing professional and personal responsibilities.

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### *Interplay Between EI and WLB*

The study suggests that EI and balance between work and life are interlinked but not automatically correlated by age. Individuals with higher EI showcase better ability to maintain a balance of work and personal life. Possible explanations include:

- Self-regulation and stress management
- Empathy and interpersonal skills
- Workplace adaptability

A relevant comparison can be made with Stefanny & Wijaya Putri (2024), who found that EI and WLB significantly enhance job satisfaction (JS), suggesting that employees who manage emotions and maintain balance experience greater job fulfillment. This may have strong implications for IT employees, where JS is crucial for long-term career sustainability.

### *Gender Disparities in Work-and-Life Balance and EI*

To find the gender differences, Mann-Whitney U test was used which revealed a significant difference in WLB (Table 4), with men reporting better balance than women ( $U = 957.00$ ,  $p = .043$ ). This is consistent with broader research suggesting that women often face greater challenges in balancing professional and domestic responsibilities.

The lack of significant gender difference in EI scores ( $p = .547$ ) indicates that EI is not inherently gender-specific. This aligns with Aryadisti and Harini (2024), who found no gender-based variations in EI among employees in Bogor City, Indonesia.

The gender disparity in WLB calls for gender-sensitive workplace policies in the IT sector, such as flexible work arrangements and parental leave. This is supported by K. S. and Talwar (2024), who found that working mothers struggle with emotional contentment despite managing WLB.

### *Predictive Role of EI in Work-and-Life Balance*

Regression analysis established that EI significantly predicts WLB ( $p = .003$ ), albeit with a small effect size (Table 7). The R-squared value of .076 indicates that EI accounts for only 7.6% of the variance in WLB (Table 5), suggesting that while EI contributes to work-life harmony, other factors such as workload, organizational culture, and support systems play a larger role.

This aligns with Ali Hemade et al. (2025), who found that WLB mediates the relationship between EI and job satisfaction among Lebanese nurses. Similarly, Dias and Rebecca (2024) found that while EI predicts WLB among production employees in Colombo, employee behavior plays an insignificant mediating role. These studies reinforce that EI must be supported by conducive organizational policies to enhance WLB.

The regression analysis (Table 6) showed that for every one-unit increase in EI, WLB improves by 0.161 units ( $B = 0.161$ ), with a moderate standardized effect ( $\beta = .276$ ). Although statistically significant, the effect remains modest, emphasizing that WLB is influenced by multiple factors, with EI playing a supportive role.

## **CONCLUSION**

The report emphasises how important EI is in determining how Indian IT workers combine their personal and professional lives. Results show that EI is mostly unaffected by age,

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appearing to be more impacted by individual characteristics and experiences. WLB, however, differs greatly between age groups, with older workers reporting a greater balance than younger workers. Increased experience, improved coping strategies, and a more methodical approach to juggling work and personal obligations might all be responsible for this.

Additionally, the study indicates that increased EI helps employees manage stress, maximise time management, and forge closer bonds with coworkers, all of which promote WLB. The findings show that companies need to create programs that build EI. Enhancing these skills can result in a more balanced and productive workforce. Encouraging the development of EI in employees enhances their overall well-being and contentment with their positions while also aiding them in handling work-related challenges more efficiently.

### **Limitations**

The study has several limitations. First, the sample size of only 115 Indian IT workers may restrict generalisation, as job roles, organisational policies, and corporate culture vary widely. Second, self-report measures like the Hayman WLB Scale and the Schutte EI Scale may introduce social desirability bias, skewing results. Third, the cross-sectional methodology limits causal inferences between work-life balance and emotional maturity—longitudinal studies are needed. Fourth, external factors like organisational policies, remote work conditions, or family support were not considered, potentially affecting accuracy. Lastly, the specific scales used may not capture the full multidimensional scope of EI and WLB.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

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