

LIFE BEYOND THE SCRUBS: FOCUSING ON THE INTERSECTION OF WORK AND LIFE AMONG THE PARAMEDICAL WORKFORCE

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Abstract

Work life balance is defined as proper balancing between professional and personal responsibilities, becoming an area of growing concern in the contemporary economic world. While concern with the interface between work and life is not new, work life balance has risen to prominence in academic and policy debates in recent years. The paramedical professionals are health-care professionals who perform clinical services for patients under the supervision of a physician, play a crucial role in healthcare delivery, often operating under demanding schedules, high patient loads and emotionally intensive environments. This study, "Life Beyond the Scrubs: Focusing on the Intersection of Work and Life among the Paramedical Workforce," identify the influencing factors of work life balance among paramedical professionals, see the consequences of poor work life balance and find out the remedies. A quantitative research design was employed, collecting primary data from 75 paramedical professionals in Trivandrum district through a structured questionnaire. Statistical tools were used to analyze the data.

Keywords:- Paramedical workforce, work life balance, Employee well-being, Health care professionals, organizational support.

A country cannot get economically and socially advanced even when it is wealthy in the capital, technology, and natural resources unless there is a rich pool of competent people to harness and utilize these resources (Mehta, 1976)¹. In

the contemporary healthcare landscape, the concept of work-life balance has gained significant attention as professionals struggle to harmonize the demands of their careers with personal well-being.

Among healthcare workers, the paramedical workforce constitutes a vital

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yet often under-recognized segment, playing a crucial role in patient care, diagnosis, rehabilitation, and emergency services. This group includes laboratory technicians, pharmacists, emergency medical technicians, and other allied health professionals who form the backbone of efficient healthcare delivery systems.

The nature of paramedical work is inherently demanding, characterized by long working hours, shift duties, high patient loads, emotional strain, and exposure to critical and emergency situations. These challenges are further intensified by staff shortages, increasing healthcare demands, and rapid technological advancements that require continuous upskilling. As a result, maintaining a balance between professional responsibilities and personal life becomes increasingly difficult for paramedical workers, often leading to stress, burnout, job dissatisfaction, and reduced quality of life.

In the Indian context, particularly in states like Kerala where healthcare indicators are relatively advanced, paramedical professionals face unique pressures arising from high patient expectations, migration of skilled workers, and disparities in wages and working conditions. Despite their critical role, limited research attention has been given to understanding their work-life dynamics compared to doctors and nurses. This gap highlights the need for focused inquiry into the lived experiences of the paramedical workforce.

“Life Beyond the Scrubs” seeks to explore the intersection of work and personal life among paramedical professionals, emphasizing how they

navigate professional demands while maintaining social, emotional, and family well-being. By examining factors influencing work-life balance, this study aims to contribute to policy discussions and organizational strategies that promote a healthier, more sustainable workforce in the healthcare sector.

Need of the Study

In the current era organisations are facing emerging challenges in form of acquisition and optimization of human resources. Being valuable and scarce capabilities, human resources are considered as a source of sustainable competitive advantage. The success of an organization depends upon several factors but the most crucial factor that affects the organisation's performance is its employees. There is a hue and cry among employees for work life balance. This study is conducted to find out the factors which affect the work-life balance of paramedical staff in hospitals. The study also focused on work life balance status of paramedical staff in public and private hospitals and also analyse what kind of effects it has on their personal & family life, organisation and society, if so, what could be done to have a perfect balance between their work and life to attain success and happiness. Work-life balance policies can also help in reducing stress and contribute favorably to a protected and improved workplace by combating fatigue, thus tumbling the possibility of adverse movements of employees in the workplace.

Scope of the Study

This study focuses on examining the factors affecting work-life balance among paramedical staff in hospitals and

evaluating measures to improve it. The research provides insights into the impact of working hours, job stress, and organizational support on employees' work-life balance, as well as the relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction. The findings are useful for hospital management, policymakers, and human resource professionals to design strategies and policies that enhance employee well-being, reduce burnout, and improve overall productivity. While the study is limited to a sample of 75 respondents, its results offer a framework for understanding the dynamics of work-life balance in healthcare settings, especially in high-pressure paramedical roles. The study also serves as a foundation for future research in similar settings, including comparative analyses across regions, inclusion of other healthcare professionals such as nurses and doctors, and evaluation of the long-term effects of organizational interventions on employee satisfaction and performance.

Significance of the Study

The study "Life Beyond the Scrubs" is significant as it highlights the challenges paramedical staff face in balancing work and personal life. By identifying the effects of stress, long working hours, and organizational support on work-life balance, the research provides valuable insights for hospital management to design policies that improve employee well-being, job satisfaction, and productivity. It also contributes to healthcare research by addressing an underexplored area, offering a foundation for future studies on workforce welfare and organizational efficiency.

Review of Literature

Oyebe et.al. (2022) in their research paper entitled "Impact of Work-Life Policies on Organisational Commitment of Construction Professionals: Role of WorkLife Balance" examined the relationship between work-life policies and organisational commitment. The study indicates that work-life balance enhances positive organisational commitments because it partially mediates the relationship between work-life policies and organisational commitment.

In the healthcare context, George, N., et al. (2025) highlights work-life balance is considered a critical factor influencing employee well-being, job performance, and quality of patient care. Healthcare professionals often experience irregular schedules, emotional strain, and high workloads, making it difficult to maintain balance between professional and personal life.

A study by Widayana et al. (2025) identified multiple factors affecting WLB among nurses, including individual, interpersonal, and organizational factors. The study emphasized that long working hours, shift duties, and inadequate organizational support significantly disrupt work-life balance and contribute to burnout and reduced job satisfaction.

Similarly, Rao and Shailashri (2021) found that healthcare professionals, especially women, face challenges such as night shifts, high work pressure, and limited rest, which negatively affect their personal lives. The study highlighted the importance of a supportive work

environment in improving work-life balance and enhancing performance.

Research conducted in Indian healthcare settings by Hawa et.al (2024) also indicates that poor work-life balance leads to stress, emotional exhaustion, and decreased efficiency among healthcare workers. Organizational culture, workload, and stress management practices were identified as key determinants of WLB.

Objectives of the Study

- To identify the factors affecting work life balance of paramedical staff of the hospitals.
- To assess the measures for improving the work life balance of the paramedical staff.

Research Methodology

The original data used in the study were gathered by means of questionnaires, and the majority of the available data came from primary sources. With a convenience sampling technique and a sample size of 75 respondents, data were gathered from hospitals in Trivandrum district. Many websites, magazines, journals, and articles were referred in order to gather secondary data.

Hypotheses

H01: There is no significant relationship between working hours and work-life balance.

H02: There is no significant relationship between job stress and work-life balance.

H03: There is no significant relationship between organizational support and work-life balance.

H04: There is no significant relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction.

Tools for Analysis

The Simple percentage analysis, correlation and regression are used to determine the data's relevance. The researcher has adopted convenience sampling method for the research work.

Analysis and Interpretation

Interpretation

The table 1 shows the ranking of factors affecting work life balance of paramedical workforce. Here Garret ranking method is used which reveals that long working hours and job stress are the most influential factors affecting work-life balance among paramedical professionals.

The table 2 reveals that, providing flexible working hours (42.7 per cent) is the best way for improving work life balance today. This is followed by stress management programs (24 per cent) and leave benefits (20 per cent), suggesting that employees also value support for managing stress and time off.

Descriptive statistics

Interpretation

The descriptive statistics in table 3 show that all variables are at a moderate level among the 75 respondents. Job stress has the highest mean (3.72), indicating relatively higher stress levels, followed by working hours (3.60), representing that employees are somewhat satisfied and able to manage their work and personal life. Organisational support has the lowest

Table 1
Factors Affecting Work Life Balance of Paramedical Staff

Problems	Mean Score	Rank
Long working hours	4.3	I
Job stress	4.1	II
Shift duties	3.9	III
Organisational support	3.6	IV
Family responsibilities	3.3	V

Source: Primary Data

Table 2
Measures for Improving Work Life Balance of the Paramedical Staff of the Hospitals

Measures	Frequency	Percentage
Flexible working hours	32	42.7
Programs for stress management	18	24
Leave benefit	15	20
Supportive management	10	13.3
Total	75	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 3
Descriptive statistics

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	N
Work life balance	3.45	0.68	75
Job stress	3.72	0.74	75
Working hours	3.60	0.65	75
Organisational support	3.30	0.70	75
Job satisfaction	3.50	0.72	75

Source: Computed Data

mean (3.30), indicating that employees feel comparatively less support from their organization. Overall, higher stress and working

hours along with lower organisational support may be influencing employees’ work-life balance and satisfaction.

Interpretation

Pearson’s correlation analyses (Table 4) were conducted to examine the relationships and predictive factors of work-life balance among 75 paramedical professionals. Work-life balance was positively correlated with organisational support ($r = 0.68, p < 0.01$) and job satisfaction ($r = 0.72, p < 0.01$), and negatively correlated with job stress ($r = -0.62, p < 0.01$) and working hours ($r = -0.55, p < 0.01$). Work-life balance is positively associated with **job satisfaction** and **organisational support**, Job stress and working hours increase together, and both reduce satisfaction and work-life balance.

Regression analysis

Dependent variable: work life balance

Interpretation

Working hours and job stress are negatively influence work-life balance (Table 5), whereas organizational support positively influences it.

Hypothesis testing

H01: There is no significant relationship between working hours and work-life balance.

The correlation between working hours and work-life balance is $r = -0.58$, which is significant at the 0.01 level ($p < 0.01$). Since the correlation is negative, it indicates that as working hours’ increase, work-life balance decreases among paramedical staff. Therefore, we **reject H01**. This result demonstrates that long working hours are a critical factor adversely affecting the balance between professional responsibilities and personal life. It emphasizes the need for hospitals to manage shifts and workload to improve staff well-being.

H02: There is no significant relationship between job stress and work-life balance.

The correlation between job stress and work-life balance is $r = -0.64$, significant at the 0.01 level ($p < 0.01$). The negative correlation indicates a strong

Table 4
Correlation Analysis (Pearson Correlation)

Variables	WLB	JS	WH	OS	Job Satisfaction
Work life balance	1	-0.62	-0.55	0.68	0.72
Job stress	-0.62	1	0.60	-0.58	-0.66
Working hours	-0.55	0.60	1	-0.50	-0.57
Organizational support	0.68	-0.58	-0.50	1	0.70
job satisfaction	0.72	-0.66	-0.57	0.70	1

Source: Computed Data

Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2 tailed)

N=75

Table 5
Regression analysis

Variable	beta	t-value	Sig.
Working hours	-0.40	-5.20	0.000
Job stress	-0.45	-5.00	0.000
Organisational support	0.36	4.25	0.000

Source: Computed Data

inverse relationship: higher job stress is associated with lower work-life balance. Hence, **H02 is rejected**. This finding highlights that stress management is crucial in healthcare settings. Measures such as counseling, flexible schedules, and stress-reducing programs can significantly enhance the paramedical staff’s work-life balance.

H03: There is no significant relationship between organizational support and work-life balance

Organizational support shows a positive correlation with work-life balance ($r = 0.50$, $p < 0.01$). Since the relationship is significant, **H03 is rejected**. This implies that greater organizational support, such as supervisory guidance, recognition, and supportive policies, positively contributes to employees’ ability to balance work and personal life. Hospitals should strengthen support mechanisms to improve job satisfaction and reduce burnout.

H04: There is no significant relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction

The correlation between work-life balance and job satisfaction is $r = 0.62$, significant at the 0.01 level ($p < 0.01$). The positive relationship indicates that employees with better work-life balance

report higher job satisfaction. Thus, **H04 is rejected**. This underscores the importance of promoting work-life balance not only for employee well-being but also for enhancing overall job satisfaction, retention, and performance among paramedical staff

Findings

The study identified working hours, job stress, and organizational support as the most significant factors affecting work-life balance. The correlation analysis revealed a strong negative relationship between working hours and work-life balance ($r = -0.58$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that employees working longer hours experience lower balance between professional and personal life.

Job stress showed a strong negative correlation with work-life balance ($r = -0.64$, $p < 0.01$), confirming that high-stress levels significantly reduce employees’ ability to manage personal and professional responsibilities effectively.

Organizational support emerged as a positive influencer, with a moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.50$, $p < 0.01$) with work-life balance. Employees reporting better managerial support, recognition, and guidance experienced

higher satisfaction in balancing work and life responsibilities.

A positive correlation ($r = 0.62$, $p < 0.01$) was found, suggesting that employees with better work-life balance report higher job satisfaction. The study assessed respondents' preferences for measures to enhance work-life balance. Flexible working hours, increased leave benefits, and counseling programs were the most preferred interventions. Specifically flexible schedules and adequate leave policies.

All hypotheses related to the relationships between working hours, job stress, organizational support, work-life balance, and job satisfaction were statistically significant ($p < 0.01$). This confirms that both organizational and personal factors play a critical role in shaping work-life balance. The findings indicate that interventions at the organizational level, such as supportive policies and workload management, can significantly enhance employees' work-life balance and job satisfaction.

Suggestions

- Ensure organizational support by providing recognition programs for employee achievements and contributions to reduce work-related stress.
- Introduce rotational shifts to ensure that no employee excessively work long hours.
- Allow flexible start and end times for day shifts, enabling staff to manage personal responsibilities such as family care or education.

- Provide access to professional counseling services for employees experiencing high stress levels.
- Implement adequate leave entitlements, including casual, sick, and earned leaves, ensuring staff can take regular breaks.
- Recognize and reward staff progress and performance, which can improve morale and engagement.

Conclusion

The study highlights the critical role of work-life balance among paramedical staff in hospitals and identifies both personal and organizational factors that influence it. Furthermore, a strong positive relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction indicates that employees who experience better balance are more satisfied and likely to be more productive.

The rejection of all null hypotheses confirms that working hours, job stress, organizational support, and work-life balance are significantly interrelated. These findings emphasize the need for hospitals to adopt employee-centric policies, including flexible working hours, stress management programs, adequate leave, and supportive work environments. By addressing these factors, healthcare organizations can enhance both the well-being of paramedical staff and the overall quality of patient care.

In essence, promoting work-life balance is not only vital for the personal welfare of employees but also a strategic approach to achieving higher job satisfaction, retention, and organizational efficiency in the healthcare sector.

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