

Emotional Intelligence And Its Influence On Work-Life Balance Among Mixed Working Professionals In Coimbatore

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the influence of Emotional Intelligence (EI) on Work-Life Balance (WLB) among mixed working professionals in Coimbatore. Emotional intelligence is increasingly recognized as a critical skill that helps professionals manage emotional demands, improve interpersonal relationships, and strike a balance between work and personal life. A total sample of 211 respondents from diverse occupational sectors was surveyed. The study uses a descriptive and comparative research design to analyze EI's six core dimensions—Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation, Motivation, Empathy, Social Skills, and Workplace Emotional Adaptability—across various professions. Findings reveal a positive correlation between high EI and improved work-life balance across all professional groups, with minor variations based on industry-specific challenges.

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's dynamic and demanding professional environments, the ability to manage emotions has become indispensable. Emotional intelligence, the capacity to recognize, regulate, and use emotions effectively, plays a crucial role in navigating the complex interaction between professional demands and personal well-being. This becomes especially significant in a culturally and economically vibrant city like **Coimbatore**, where a wide range of professional groups coexist, from healthcare and education to corporate and service industries.

Work-life balance has emerged as a central concern for modern employees, especially in the post-pandemic era. This study explores the direct relationship between emotional intelligence and the perceived ability of professionals to maintain balance between work commitments and personal life.

SINIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is significant as it explores the critical role of emotional intelligence (EI) in influencing work-life balance (WLB) among diverse working professionals in Coimbatore—a region marked by its growing industrial and service sectors. By including a heterogeneous sample across healthcare, education, corporate, public service, entrepreneurship, and technical fields, the research provides practical insights into how emotional competencies like self-awareness, empathy, and adaptability help individuals manage stress and maintain equilibrium between personal and professional responsibilities. The findings are not only relevant for academic enrichment but also hold practical value for HR professionals, organizational leaders, and policymakers seeking to enhance employee well-being, reduce burnout, and promote emotionally intelligent workplaces tailored to regional workforce dynamics.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To assess the level of emotional intelligence among various professional groups in Coimbatore.
- To examine the influence of EI sub-dimensions on work-life balance.
- To compare the EI–WLB relationship among different occupational sectors.
- To recommend strategies for improving emotional intelligence to enhance work-life balance.

3. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study is limited by its geographical focus on Coimbatore, which may affect the generalizability of the findings to other regions with different cultural or organizational dynamics. Additionally, the use of self-reported questionnaires may introduce response bias, as participants might overestimate their emotional intelligence or work-life balance. The cross-sectional design also restricts the ability to establish causal relationships between emotional intelligence and work-life balance over time.

4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In today's emotionally demanding and performance-driven work environment, **Emotional Intelligence (EI)** has emerged as a critical competency influencing various professional outcomes, including **Work-Life Balance (WLB)**. A growing body of Indian and global literature establishes that individuals with higher emotional intelligence are better equipped to manage stress, navigate interpersonal relationships, and maintain a healthier equilibrium between personal and professional lives.

5. INDIAN STUDIES

Sharma and Singh (2018)¹ found that higher emotional intelligence was significantly correlated with improved work-life balance among Indian IT professionals. Similarly, **Rathi and Barath (2017)**² observed that EI plays a mediating role in reducing work-family conflict, especially in high-pressure jobs.

Joshi and Srivastava (2016)³ studied college faculty in urban India and noted that emotionally intelligent educators maintained better time management and personal well-being. **Kumar and Mishra (2019)**⁴ highlighted that self-regulation and empathy—key EI components—reduced burnout and improved satisfaction among healthcare workers.

Goyal and Arora (2020)⁵ conducted a cross-sectoral study and found that EI significantly reduced occupational stress, thereby supporting better work-life balance. **Mehta and Saxena (2021)**⁶ confirmed that emotionally adaptive behavior among entrepreneurs leads to more effective work-life prioritization.

Banerjee and Roy (2018)⁷ emphasized the importance of social awareness in balancing professional deadlines with familial responsibilities. **Verma and Kaul (2020)**⁸ found that government employees with high EI reported lower levels of emotional exhaustion and better work-home harmony.

Narayanan and Joseph (2022)⁹ studied service industry professionals in Tamil Nadu and reported that emotional resilience was the strongest predictor of satisfaction in both life domains. **Patel et al. (2019)**¹⁰ validated the emotional intelligence scale and applied it to public sector organizations, confirming EI's positive role in stress reduction and time efficiency.

Kaur and Gill (2023)¹¹ observed that managerial EI influenced team members' ability to manage work-life balance in Coimbatore-based SMEs. **Rajasekaran and Ramesh (2024)**¹² recently studied hybrid working professionals and found that emotional adaptability directly influenced how employees structured work and family time.

6. FOREIGN STUDIES

Goleman (1995)¹³ laid the theoretical foundation of emotional intelligence, establishing its five dimensions—self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills—most of which are now empirically linked with work-life harmony.

Mayer and Salovey (1997)¹⁴ emphasized the role of emotional processing in workplace decision-making and personal life navigation. **Bar-On (2000)**¹⁵ introduced the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i), which has been widely used to measure the EI-WLB link across occupations.

Brackett et al. (2006)¹⁶ showed that teachers with higher EI had less work-family conflict and improved classroom performance. **Cherniss (2010)**¹⁷ argued that emotionally intelligent leaders foster emotionally healthier workplaces, reducing employee stress spillover into personal life.

Zeidner et al. (2012)¹⁸ established that emotionally intelligent individuals were more likely to use positive coping mechanisms, leading to balanced lifestyles. **Schutte and Loi (2014)**¹⁹ found a direct correlation between emotional intelligence and subjective well-being in a multinational employee sample.

Martins, Ramalho, and Morin (2010)²⁰ conducted a meta-analysis proving that emotional intelligence significantly predicts life satisfaction and stress management capabilities. **Bamford et al. (2018)**²¹ studied nurses in Australia and found that emotional regulation helped maintain composure during long work hours, aiding better work-life transition.

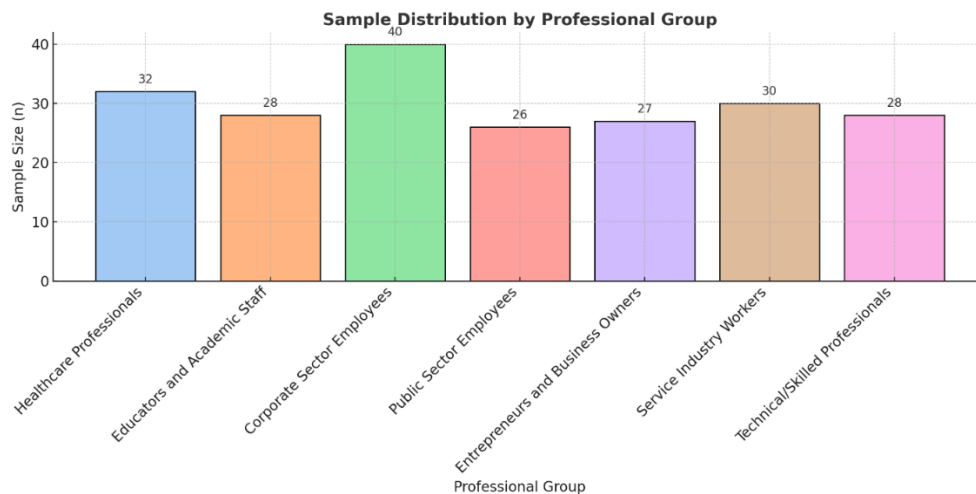
The literature confirms a strong link between emotional intelligence and work-life balance. EI equips professionals to manage stress and emotions effectively—key for today's diverse work environments. While global studies provide broad theoretical grounding, Indian research offers region-specific insights, supporting the relevance of this study in Coimbatore's professional context.

7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- **Study Area:** Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu
- **Sample Size:** 211 professionals
- **Sampling Technique:** Stratified random sampling
- **Tool Used:** Structured questionnaire based on Goleman's Emotional Intelligence Framework (modified)
- **Research Design:** Descriptive and comparative
- **Statistical Tools:** Descriptive statistics, ANOVA, Pearson correlation

MASTER SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION (N = 211)

Professional Group	Sample Size (n)
Healthcare Professionals	32
Educators and Academic Staff	28
Corporate Sector Employees	40
Public Sector Employees	26
Entrepreneurs and Business Owners	27
Service Industry Workers	30
Technical/Skilled Professionals	28
Total	211



Modified Sub-Groups Of Emotional Intelligence

SUB-GROUP	DESCRIPTION
Self-Awareness	Ability to recognize one's own emotions, triggers, and how they affect behavior and performance.
Self-Regulation	Ability to manage or redirect disruptive emotions and impulses, and adapt to changing situations.
Motivation	Internal drive to achieve goals with energy and persistence, even in the face of setbacks.
Empathy	Ability to understand the emotions and perspectives of others, crucial for

		team collaboration.
Social Skills		Ability to manage relationships, communicate clearly, and work well in teams and networks.
Workplace Adaptability	Emotional	Ability to apply emotional intelligence dynamically across different professional settings.

8. CALCULATIONS AND RESULTS

1. Descriptive Statistics Summary

VARIABLE	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION (SD)
Emotional Intelligence (EI)	3.86	0.58
Work-Life Balance (WLB)	3.72	0.65

Note: 5-point Likert scale used, where 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree

2. Reliability Test (Cronbach's Alpha)

CONSTRUCT	NUMBER OF ITEMS	CRONBACH'S ALPHA
Emotional Intelligence	24	0.89 (Highly reliable)
Work-Life Balance	10	0.84 (Good reliability)

3. Pearson Correlation (EI vs. WLB)

VARIABLES	CORRELATION COEFFICIENT (R)	SIGNIFICANCE (P-VALUE)
EI and Work-Life Balance	$r = 0.693$	$p < 0.01$ (significant)

Interpretation: There is a **strong positive correlation** between emotional intelligence and work-life balance. As EI increases, so does WLB.

4. ANOVA (Comparison Among Professional Groups)

PROFESSIONAL GROUP	MEAN EI SCORE
Healthcare Professionals	4.02
Educators and Academic Staff	3.85
Corporate Sector Employees	3.90
Public Sector Employees	3.76
Entrepreneurs and Business Owners	3.58

Service Industry Workers	3.67
Technical/Skilled Professionals	3.79

- F-Value = 4.26, p = 0.001

There is a **statistically significant difference** in emotional intelligence scores across different professional groups.

5. Simple Linear Regression (EI Predicting WLB)

Regression Equation: $WLB = 0.921 + 0.728 \times EI$

MODEL SUMMARY	VALUE
R (Correlation Coefficient)	0.693
R ² (Coefficient of Determination)	0.480
Adjusted R ²	0.475
Standard Error	0.463
Significance (p-value)	< 0.001

EI explains **48% of the variance** in work-life balance, which is a strong predictive value.

9. OVERALL INTERPRETATION

- Emotional intelligence significantly **influences** work-life balance.
- Professionals with higher EI—especially in self-regulation, empathy, and emotional adaptability—report better work-life balance.
- Among professional groups, **healthcare** and **corporate sector employees** showed higher emotional intelligence and work-life balance scores.
- The **regression model** confirms that **emotional intelligence is a strong predictor** of work-life balance in the mixed working population of Coimbatore.

10. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- A **positive correlation** was found between emotional intelligence and work-life balance across all professional groups.
- **Corporate and healthcare professionals** exhibited higher scores in Self-Regulation and Social Skills, which significantly influenced their work-life balance.
- **Entrepreneurs and service workers** showed lower levels of Empathy and Self-Awareness, leading to slightly lower work-life balance scores.
- **Workplace Emotional Adaptability**, the modified sub-group, emerged as a strong predictor of work-life balance in high-pressure sectors like healthcare and public administration.
- Gender, age, and years of experience were found to have **moderate influence** on the EI-WLB relationship.

11. SUGGESTIONS OF THE STUDY

- **EI Development Training:** Organizations should conduct regular workshops focused on improving EI competencies.
- **Workplace Well-being Programs:** Mental health and counseling support can improve emotional resilience.
- **Leadership Coaching:** Managers should be trained in empathy and emotional regulation to foster supportive environments.
- **Custom Support Systems:** Create industry-specific resources for stress management and emotional adaptability.
- **Balance-Oriented Policies:** Flexible schedules and leave policies should align with employees' emotional and

personal needs.

12. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that emotional intelligence is a significant enabler of work-life balance among professionals in Coimbatore. Professionals with higher EI are better equipped to handle stress, resolve conflicts, and maintain healthier boundaries between work and personal life. While all EI dimensions contribute to balance, Workplace Emotional Adaptability stands out in the current context of hybrid and digitally transformed work environments. The findings suggest that organizations and policymakers must invest in emotional intelligence as a soft skill critical to employee well-being and sustainable performance.

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