



GRIFFITH COLLEGE DUBLIN

## **An Analysis of the Indian and Irish IT work experience**

Research dissertation presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
**MSc in International Business Management**

Griffith College Dublin

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**28<sup>th</sup> August 2020**

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I certify that the dissertation entitled: **An Analysis of the Indian and Irish IT work experience**

submitted for the degree of **MSc in International Business Management** is the result of my own work and that where reference is made to the work of others, due acknowledgment is given.

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this dissertation to Bharati C. Salunke, my mother for trusting in me to get this far. Her support is key to each ramp, and her numerous sacrifices, rendered my master's pursuit possible. When the family was facing certain challenges, it took my commitment to help overcome these problems, she encouraged me to pursue my passion of completing my master's after 12 years of my working experience.

I dedicate this dissertation to my sister, who is my strength in all things great and small.

I dedicate this dissertation to my first lecturer Prof. Justin F. Keogan for his spirit of positivity and dedicated support through his magnificent teaching and lecturing experience in research.

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I feel profoundly grateful to you all. In all respects, we praise God for taking us this far.

## **Abstract**

### **An Analysis of the Indian and Irish IT work experience**

*Harshala C. Salunke*

**Purpose:** In this study it was shown that work-life balance which is a significant issue among IT professionals in both professional business and academic research differs country wise with the impact it has on individual's well-being. This research examines the impact of work and life balance of two such countries one being a developed country and the other a developing such that their synergies generate considerable economic impacts from investments in Information Technologies.

**Methodology:** The study has adopted a positivist approach using quantitative research methodology. Different tests such as One-way ANOVA, Two-way ANOVA and Chi-Square have been used for the study. The test analysis is performed using IBM SPSS tool and Microsoft excel. The primary data is obtained from employees working in the IT sector across various organizations and regions of India and Ireland. The research used convenience sampling followed by snowball sampling for the primary data collection.

**Findings:** The findings of this study demonstrated the underlying basis for the differences between the two countries by comparison of their empirical evidences. This was achieved by evaluating the determinants of work-life balance namely, psychological health, physical wellbeing, family wellbeing and organizational initiatives.

The findings of this research reflected the inadequate work-life balance arising from high levels of work and family tensions on family satisfaction. The study further established the negative impact of inadequate work-life balance on job satisfaction, social and personal well-being related to elevated levels of family to work conflicts. In differentiation of the economically developing nation and more developed nation, this research showed that IT employees in developing country have poor work-life balance. The implications from the results of demographic comparison of this study show that the underlying basis for this differentiation in impact of the Work-Life Balance (WLB) is due to the differences in cultures, facilitation services, community relations, population, and gender roles. Finally, the relationship of WLB and its determinants demographically, are evidently conclusive.

**Research Limitations:** In this study, findings are representative of the sample population size which might have affected the study outcome. In addition, impact of COVID-19 situation could have influenced the responses in the survey specially for the questions on family well-being. Mixed nationality population might have influenced the results of this study.

**Keywords:** work-life balance, professional life conflicts, personal life conflicts, professional life enhancements, personal life enhancements, cross-cultural, Strategic HRM

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## List of Acronyms

<b>Acronyms</b>	<b>Full forms</b>
ANOVA.....	Analysis of variance
BRIC .....	Brazil Russia India and China
COVID-19 .....	Coronavirus disease 19
DASS .....	Depression Anxiety Stress Scales
FEW .....	Family-to-Work Enrichment
FWC .....	Family-to-Work Conflict
G20 .....	Group of Twenty
GDP .....	Gross Domestic Product
GDPR .....	General Data Protection Regulation
HDI .....	Human Development Index
HR .....	Human Resource
ICT .....	Information's and Communication Technology
IT .....	Information Technology
OECD .....	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OED .....	Oxford English Dictionary
PWI-A .....	Personal Well-being Index-Adult
SD .....	Standard Deviation
SPSS .....	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
WFC .....	Work-to-Family Conflict
WFE .....	Work-to-Family Enrichment
WLB .....	Work-Life Balance

## **1 Introduction**

The opening chapter of this research gives a clear idea to the reader on the research subject, the nature and scope of the issues of balancing work and personal lives of Information Technology (IT) professionals in developed and developing countries, more especially, in Ireland and India. The reader is given a comparative overview of the countries' IT population, its economies, and their contribution of the IT sector to the overall economy. The chapter ends with a short reference to the research questions that reflect on the remaining chapters and the structure of the study.

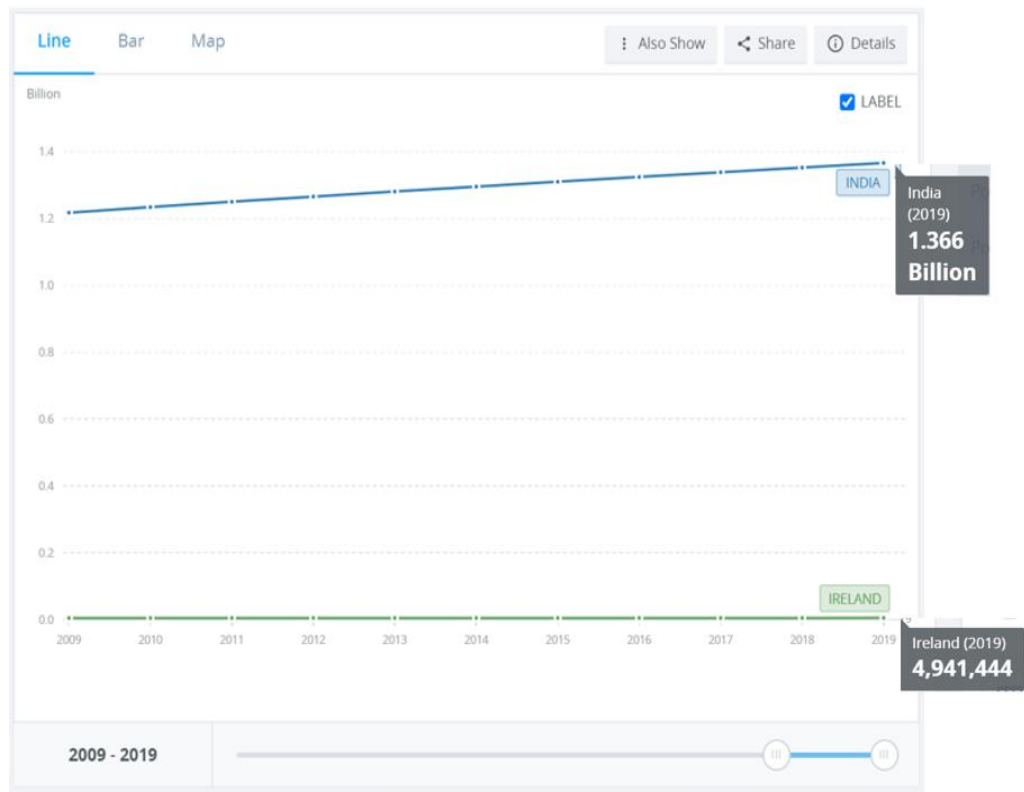
### **1.1 Overview**

The purpose of this research is to do a comparative study to examine the effect of work and life balance on the well-being of workers in the IT industry in India which is an emerging and developing country and Ireland which is a developed country.

Over the past 20 years, India and Ireland have emerged as dynamic influential countries. Where India is one of the worlds' fastest-growing economies, is a member of Group Twenty (G20), and BRIC groups of industrialized nations playing an important role in world affairs is considered a developing country with a Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.64 (Gates, 2012). Ireland is ranked as the third most developed country in the world that has an HDI of 0.942, where HDI is a scale set to quantify a country's human development in terms of education, life expectancy and health (United Nations Development Statistical Report , 2019).

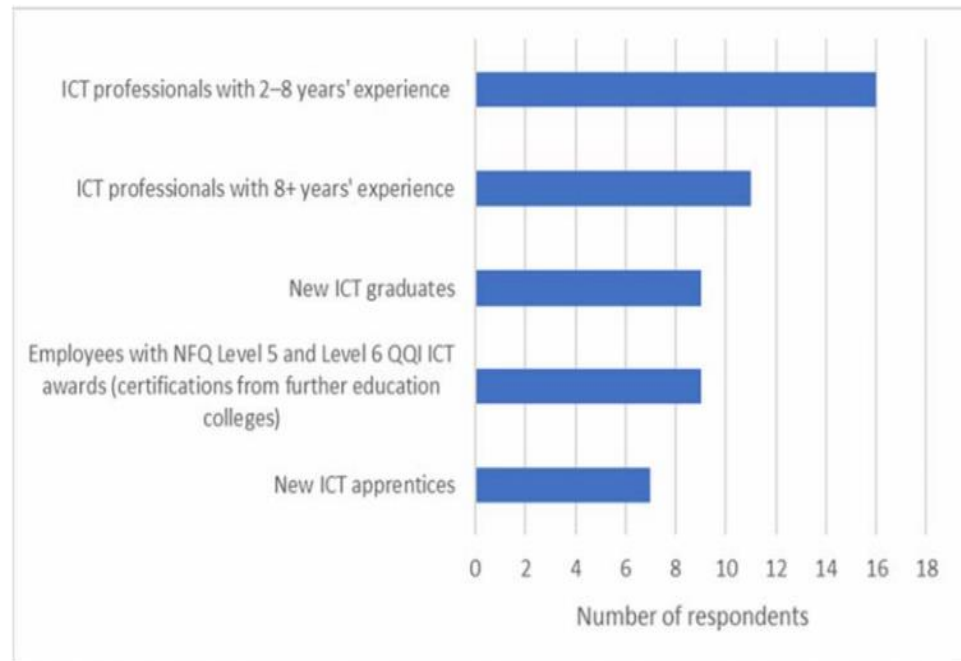
IT is seen as an engine to a broad-based growth in India. IT contribution of India to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is around 7.7% and by 2025 the contribution is expected to increase to 10% of India's GDP (ibef, 2020). The Government of India recognizes the IT sector as one of the major industries in India contributing to the economic development objective of the country (Kanchan, 2016). Like India, the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector is amongst the top three Irish growth industries contributing to the Irish economy. It is responsible for approximately 25% of Ireland's total turnover and 1/3 of Ireland's exports by values. Though there are similarities in both countries with IT sector as their major contributor to their economies, there are significant differences that could be noted with respect to

the total population, working population in IT, industrialization position of both countries and the differences in their legal structures.



*Figure 1: Population of India and Ireland in 2019 (World Bank Indicators, 2020)*

Figure 1 shows India's population was 1.366 billion in 2019 (World Bank Indicators, 2020). Out of which, approximately 4 million people had direct employment and more than 10 million had indirect employment in IT, which makes it approximately 1.06% of the total population in the year 2019. Whereas the population of Ireland was 4.94 million in 2019 (World Bank Indicators, 2020).



*Figure 2: Relative Demand for ICT Skills (IDA, 2020)*

In Figure 2 the forecasted demand for Information and Communications Technology (ICT) was approximately 117,060 as of 2020 (IDA, 2020), which is approximately 2.37% of ICT out of the total Ireland's population.

Despite Ireland being almost 47 times smaller in size compared to India, they have a much richer per capita income. It is a nation with fewer million inhabitants chosen as an unlikely pick for the EU economic and political maverick of 2018. The 'Celtic Tiger', had a property bubble burst after 2008, and was the first of the euro country to fall in recession. From then they recovered their economy, with a move to set low corporate tax levels thus giving homes to large multinational corporations like Microsoft, Google, IBM etc headquartered in Dublin. IT/ICT companies have majorly accounted for 90% of goods and services exports bringing foreign investment.

It is of interest to know that despite the progress of IT in each country many have decried the IT's boom as a global sweatshop production, with lines of code replacing garments (Singh, 2003). The labour-intensive task being a related concern in the profession. IT industry today faces many challenges and as a result IT industry job standards and work culture are vastly different from other traditional industries. The foremost problems are the facts such as working under pressure, working through time

zones, work demand due to increased competition and operating on real time, undefined flexible work hours (Banu *et al.*, 2014).

The other differences are with respect to the employment laws in both countries. Irish legal system and Indian legal system both exist in a common law jurisdiction, their employment laws are fairly contrasting. Ireland employment laws are regulated by an extensive statutory framework originated from European Community law. The employment regulations in India are sourced from the Constitution of India in 1950. Further, certain factors come into picture when applying the employment law in India which are related to employees' function, employer activity, and number of people employed in the organization (Debjani Aich and Kochhar & Co, 2020).

## **1.2 Research Purpose**

To cater to the economic ups and downs from the bygone days, organizations have been grappling with these challenging economic crises by slashing spending's, reducing employee count, and thereby increasing the workload on the others in the organization (O'Connell *et al.*, 2010 cited in Kluczyk, 2013). The well-being of employees who have been working have been negatively impacted by career instability (Scherer, 2009).

The ongoing global pandemic of Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) has pushed the world in an ambushed state foreseeing an economic recession. A Harvard economist asserted that the 2008 economic crisis is just a dry run for the foreseen recession (Goodman, 2020). Now, concerns are rising that the slowdown could be much more painful and long-lasting than originally expected, and if it does last long, it will surely be the mother of all economic crises. Figure 3 shows, strategists present the different ideas of the pandemic reflecting them to the curves of the letters associated with different activities of the economy.

V	U	Y	W	L
The virus is contained within the next few months with widespread and effective testing and maybe even a vaccine to prevent a second wave	The impact of the lockdown on the virus is slower and widespread and effective testing takes longer to implement	'Y' is similar to 'U', the impact of the lockdown takes longer.	'W' is similar to 'V' in that the lockdown ends but then the virus returns in winter	The persistence of the virus in the population requires some lockdown measures to be maintained for longer. Effective testing becomes difficult to implement resulting in a second wave
A quick rebound in the economy	The economic recovery takes time but takes place as confidence about containment and consumer spending return	The economic recovery is quicker for some sectors than others with a patchwork of policy responses in different sectors and different economies	After an initial recovery, the second wave results in a difficult and prolonged recession, or perhaps even depression (depending on public policy)	A difficult and prolonged recession, or perhaps even depression (depending on public policy)

Figure 3: Economic representation (Keogan, 2020)

Elucidating further on the ripple effect, a 16% reduction in ICT sector is indicated in the Euro area as seen in Figure 4.

**Indicative current reduction in economic activity as a result of the lockdown in the Euro area**  
Share of total Gross- Value Added (GVA)

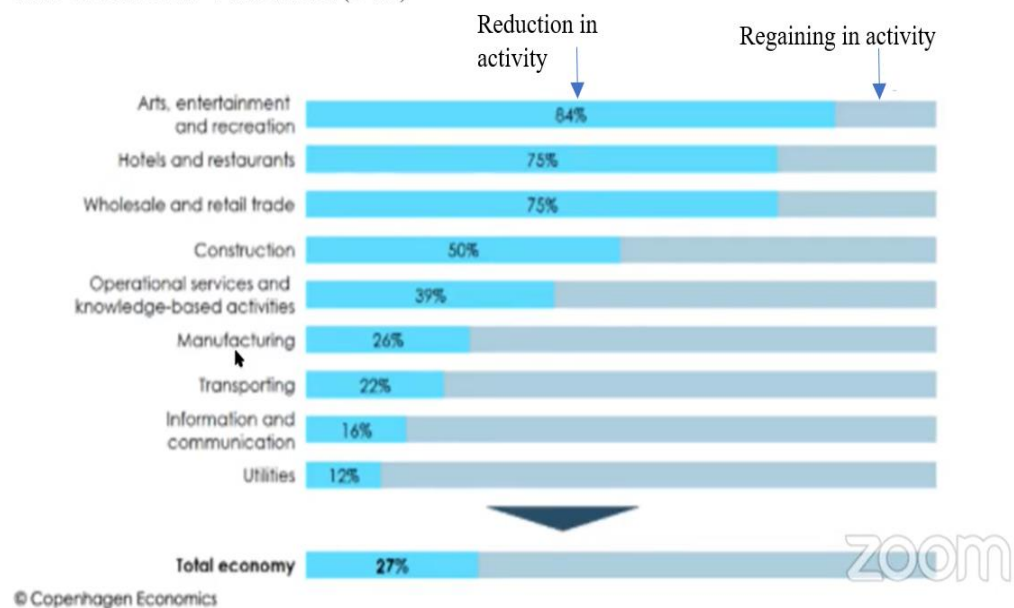


Figure 4: ICT reduction in EURO zone (Keogan, 2020)

This leads to a myriad of problems permanently impacting an employee’s wellbeing during or after the ‘new normal’. Many jobs would demand more hours of work from employees to sustain their jobs and to offset the stress on their families. (Wayman, 2010; Edwards & Rothbard, 2000).

Previous studies in Ireland have shown that 70% of employees experienced stress at work and only about 30% believed they had a good work-life balance (Quinlan, 2020). Prior research also shows the WLB ranking of Ireland has slid down amongst the OECD members, with women feeling the burden of work-work life more than ever. The study stresses on technology advancement creating an 'always-on' mindset thus proving increased technology to be a futuristic fantasy doing no good for humanity (Gorey, 2016).

Another novel study conducted with a survey of 2000 Indian working professionals showed detailed segments clearly defining boundaries between work and personal lives (Basu, 2019). 60% professionals rated their work-life balance from average to terrible, 75% of respondents said their workplace did not have WLB policies and 25% were not even aware of such a policy. The findings were remarkably significant, one third of young professionals found technology to interfere in managing work and family commitments. Demand in work such as meetings, calls, and trainings after work hours accounted as the second-highest problem related to the environmental context along with the negative attitude of supervisors towards WLB despite the policies. Lastly, half of the respondents confessed that the lack of WLB makes them or their family/ partners irritable or ill-tempered thus affecting their psychological health (Basu, 2019).

From the short review above, the results of WLB in both countries are not quite pleasing, the researcher can envision the manifold impact it will have with the current crisis if the employment laws are just rhetoric in reality.

The researcher is interested to investigate the determinants impacting the well-being of IT employees in both countries. There is a more specific need to conduct it in developing countries as much of the study has been performed in western and northern cultures, and some researchers have focussed to more basic job and life needs, such as poverty reduction (Ollier *et al.*, n.d.)

Moreover, the reason for a comparison between developing and developed country is to understand the relationship between degree of development of the country and the work-life outcomes. A study by Hill, Yang, Hawkins, & Ferris (2004 cited in Ollier *et al.*,n.d.) on 48 countries of West-Developing and West-Developed countries, have shown that degree of development may impact the family-work needs rather than on work-life outcomes. This motivates the researcher further to do a cross country

comparison to find the relations of developing and affluent countries impact on work-life research. The two countries specifically India and Ireland were of choice because the researcher was studying Ireland and the researcher's native country is India which made it easy for the primary data collection as well.

### **1.3 Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study is to show the difference in both countries in view of the impact on the IT professionals WLB. The researcher intends to evaluate the effects of work and life scenarios of IT professionals to present the practical findings of their psychological and personal health. These are directly associated with the work and family satisfaction of an individual, giving an extensive view of their balance of life.

In the researchers view the beneficiaries of this study are largely employees and employers. This study will contribute valuable knowledge to the Employment Legislation in the Republic of Ireland and to the Government of India, such that specific solutions can be tailored as per specific problems identified in this research. The findings of this research will help organizations revamp and align their policies and processes with an aim to provide discretionary effort to achieve company goals. In succession will enhance productivity of the company thereby contributing aptly to the overall economy of the country.

Previous studies on WLB in IT have almost exclusively focussed on women (Example. Bromet, Cohen & Schwartz, Dew, 1992 cited in Kluczyk, 2013), employees with parental status (Example. Frone *et al.*, 1997; Galinsky *et al.*, 1996 cited in Kluczyk, 2013) and one parent (Example. Barnett *et al.*, 2001 cited in Kluczyk, 2013). In Ireland, the year of last academic journal on WLB in IT was in the year 2013 by Kluczyk and, in India it was conducted in the year 2015 by Bharti and Warriar.

To the researcher's knowledge, no study to date has analysed the WLB issue in IT comparing two countries demographically. Moreover, a gap of 5 years in this field, motivated the researcher in analysing this challenging problem. The results allow the researcher as a beneficiary to address the research query as below.

*How the work and life balance impacts IT employee's wellbeing in a developing country in comparison to a developed country?*

## **1.4 Research Objective**

Two objectives were evolved to pilot this research.

1.4.1 *Objective 1:* To determine and analyse the factors of professional and personal lives affecting the WLB of IT professionals in both countries.

1.4.2 *Objective 2:* The researcher aims to understand the differences in WLB of IT professionals between India (developing nation) and Ireland (developed nation).

As this study adopts a positivist approach, the author intends to analyse the following hypotheses which are in line to the research question.

*Hypothesis 1:* There is a difference in work-life balance between women and men employees.

*Hypothesis 2:* There is a difference in work-life-balance of employees based on their designation level.

## **1.5 Structure of the Study**

This thesis is divided in five chapters. The composition of the first chapter gives an overview of India and Ireland and the contribution of their IT to the overall economy. In addition, the chapter discusses the research purpose and the rationale for the study.

The second chapter discusses the past literature and provides a detailed review on the research topic, which enables the reader to gain an in-depth understanding of the key issues of WLB and well-being.

The third chapter discusses the approach to data study, the reasoning for choosing testing methods, and the and tools and procedures used to analyse correlations between variables.

The fourth chapter assesses the data and sets out its interpretations. The findings of the present study are discussed in this section.

The fifth chapter provides future research and recommendations for practice. In addition, it also discusses the limitations and contributions of this study.

## **1.6 Summary**

The reader has been presented to the situation of IT sector in both countries and the issue of WLB. The chapter has introduced more salient issues driving the work and personal lives agenda and the research question which guides the remaining content of this inquiry.

## **2 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Overview**

The aims in this chapter are twofold. First to identify and justify the core subject of this study by critically reviewing the academic literature of previous studies. Secondly, it is the author's objective to examine the knowledge of previous theories about WLB from millennials to present generation found by comparative and contrasting evaluation of the previous academic literature.

To address the research objectives outlined earlier, this chapter provides a critical analysis of the previous academic literature. The following sections form the basis for the analysis of this literature review:

- Work- Life Balance
- Work-Life Interface – Conflict and Enrichment
- Influencers of Work-Life Balance

### **2.2 Work-Life Balance**

The etymology of the term Work-Life Balance was formulated in 1986 and interestingly, the literature about work life policies and procedures existed back to the 1930s (Meenakshi, 2013). The literature on WLB is composed of extensive definitions that has different significances for different people.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines Work-Life Balance as the idea that the demands of work and domestic life be balanced to optimize the wellbeing of employees and their families. Specifically, initiatives in this area are targeted at reducing excessive work hours (OED, 2002). While the definition seems complete in its immediate lexicological sense, this definition is ambiguous and difficult to render usable in any specific context.

The author identifies that evaluation of the measure of life balance, will help one address the issue successfully.

Another critique presented by Matuska and Christiansen (2008, p.11) defines life balance as “a satisfying pattern of daily activity that is healthful, meaningful, and sustainable to an individual within the context of his or her current life circumstances”. Further the literature states that in defining life balance, it refers to that which is: concerned with personal well-being and *needs satisfaction* which differs from the other positive constructs such as happiness and satisfaction of life.

Foreseeably, from the various definitions which differ, it makes work-life balance an elusive concept making it difficult to measure. Previous studies by Hill *et al.* (1998), Saltzstein, Ting & Saltzstein (2001), Felstead, Jewson, Phizacklea & Walters (2002, cited in Hayman, 2005) have contributed substantially to define and standardise the concept. These endeavours cannot be considered as conclusive because these have attempted to provide a conceptual definition, but the work has not led to a consensus as to how to measure the construct (Hayman, 2005). The variety and measures of WLB which are less consistent provide limited value for both the theoretical advancement of the construct and for practical Human Resource (HR) interventions (Brough, 2008).

Another point argued by Greenhaus & Allen (2006, cited in Grzywacz *et al.*,2007) is that the “balance” metaphor is widely used but rarely defined in specific terms. Further, another literature by Rose (2015) stresses that majority of WLB calculation methods focus on calculating the time pressure, which is a more practical way to determine the balance. Time pressure which refers to how rushed or pressed for time people feel daily. The underlying inference describes the work-life balance as an umbrella construct that provides a broad concept or idea to account for a set of diverse phenomena in management theory. Such an approach to measuring WLB gives minimal direction to the employment legislation for addressing the issue and making tactful decisions to solve the issue.

This research addresses the need for a progressive and useful concept that can be applied for management to model both time and balance with a view to encouraging employees to follow their lead, which has so far been lacking in scientific literature. The

author aims to focus on the calculation of variables influencing working hours with a comprehensible measure of life balance which would be a more functional construct.

### *2.2.1 Work-Life Balance Benefits*

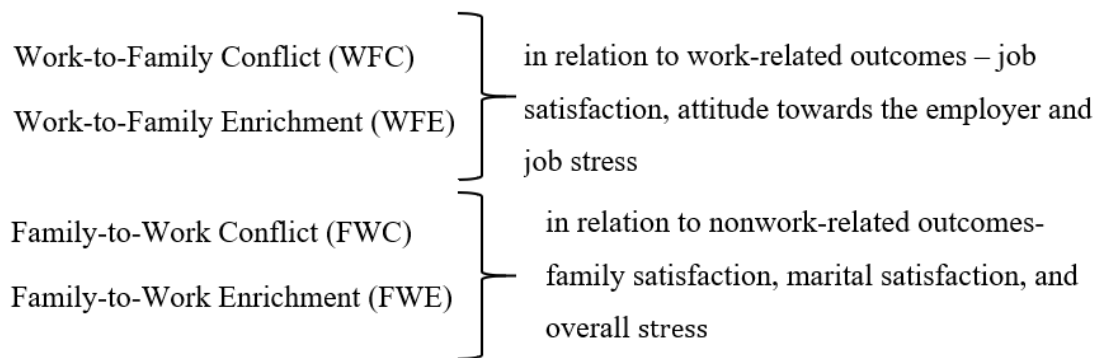
Understanding the benefits and the importance of WLB from an organization perspective in IT sector and overall economic development of the nation is equally important. Owing to the globalisation in IT industry, retention of talent is of special concern due to loss of expertise because of rapid technical innovation. Employee attrition has substantial costs and adverse effects for companies. Prior findings have found that the well-being of workers not only provides employees with greater social well-being, emotional well-being, career and family satisfaction, but also stimulates businesses by lowered absenteeism and attrition, increased productivity, performance and outcomes. (Grady *et al.*, 2008; Burke, 2000). Further, employers offering these incentives tend to recognize the relationship between a higher WLB and the maintenance of a skilled staff, and its effect on employee engagement and productivity (Ryan & Kossek, 2008 cited in Kluczyk, 2013).

Research has shown that work-life balance has also contributed to the industrialization or the economic growth of a country. Addressing work-life conflicts affects all aspects of the economy, such that if employees experience high levels of family and work conflicts such as caring for families and doing their job to the best of their ability it affects the labour supply and thus the demand and the overall economy (Boushey, 2016).

### **2.3 Work-Life Interface – ‘Conflict and Enrichment’**

There is an extensive literature presenting the various facets of work and family interface. Forsyth (1980) made a seminal contribution to the Taxonomy of Ethical Philosophy, arguing that there are four classes categorizing the ethical positions of people, such as Situationists, Absolutists, Subjectivists and Exceptionalists. Reiter (2007) indicated that the most important concept of work life satisfaction shared by situationists is the desire to make the right choices for individuals. The *situationist stratagem* offers a window of opportunity to explore what factors lead to the achievement of work-life balance, as the focus is on the individual in relation to his or her circumstances. For this dissertation, the conceptualization of WLB is considered, within the sense of a situationist view, as it incorporates the position of the dynamic relationship between the individual and the

qualities of the environment in which the individual is striving for harmony. Studies by Guest (2001, cited in Haddon, 2009) reveal that research has typically been performed at a single level, either at the individual, family, organizational or institutional level. In this dissertation a unified approach with the demands and resource attributes from job and family divisions are targeted comprehensively to operationalize the WLB effectively. Another research by Grzywacz (2007) proposes a 'component model' in which elements of work-family equilibrium, i.e. work-family enrichment and work-family conflict are calculated. Further, Frone (2003) suggested a fourfold taxonomy as a potential methodological paradigm for job and family discovery. The taxonomy accounts for two modes of contact between work and family (work for family involvement and family interference) and two consequences (conflict and facilitation) resulting in the following components



Work-to-Family Conflict captures the degree to which the responsibilities of work are incompatible with family life or vice versa (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985), whereas enrichment refers to the extent to which individuals' involvement in one domain benefits their participation in another life domain (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). The conflict approach assumes that combining work and family roles is demanding and therefore leads to conflict (Edwards and Rothbard, 2000). On the other hand, the enrichment approach emphasizes that family life can enrich work outcomes and vice-versa (Greenhaus and Powell, 2006). From this theory the researcher infers that, decreased conflict and increased enrichment in facilitation is derived when individual and environmental resources are adequate to meet the demands and, such an alignment is viewed between the work and non-work life resulting in positive physical and mental health outcomes.

## 2.4 Influencers of Work-Life Balance

This section discusses the factors affecting the workhours of an IT professional.

Previous studies have almost entirely based on how reduction and expansion of working hours vary in their effect on the individual's life and job satisfaction from influences that affect the time demand or rise in working hours. Interplay between work time and WLB remains relevant for businesses and their human resource policies (Holly *et al.*, 2012). The viewpoint taken in this study is in line with that of O'Driscoll, Brough, and Kalliath (2006) who indicated that the first step in the balance method is the study of stressors, it is important to understand the factors that influence working hours and build up time pressure (which causes conflict) and resources that can measure the intensity of the individual's job and life satisfaction (which can lead to facilitation). Following are the factors that affect the work hours of an individual which builds the time pressure (Haddon, 2009).

- Technological Advancement
- Demand Characteristic
- Resource Characteristic

### 2.4.1 Technological Advancement

One of the major reasons for the increasing concern of WLB is the technological advancement which has morphed the work and personal lives of working professionals into a single whole (Dash *et al.*, 2012). Furthermore, Lester (1999, cited in Dash *et al.*, 2012, p.52), argued that technology can help and hinder WLB by making work more accessible at all times of the day and night, enabling a more flexible approach to when and where to work. Most felt that the evolution of e-technology gives a greater degree of freedom and flexibility to work from anywhere anytime. Currie and Eveline (2010) intuit that there is more flexibility about when and where teleworkers work and experience poor physical and transient barriers between job and home. In comparison to the traditional workers, teleworkers are the ones who find it difficult to strike a balance between their personal and professional lives.

The findings from the study of Hill *et al.*, (1998) have done much to elucidate the impact of technology on work hours by leveraging a quasi-experimental design, where quantitative multivariate analyses revealed positive findings of flexibility, productivity, and work/life balance, however, it failed to support the perception of morale, teamwork and *work hours*. The researcher recognizes that technology creates a paradigm shift in

our working time and space. Technological advancement and competition have intensified the issue of *work-life imbalance*.

Challenger (2002) also asserted that technology at home was helpful for their work however, they came at a cost to their family life—conveying a gift and a revile. A new term coined that personifies this situation is—the ‘portable humanoid office’. The boundaries of independent jobs in various spheres of our lives are now disappearing. Further, Currie and Eveline (2010) use the term extensification to describe the spatial mobility of work. The author is interested in the spatialisation of work and how and when organization work extends to family and personal spaces. This question is of central interest as much recent research shows that policies of flexibility at work especially to maintain work-life balance could result in employees, particularly managerial and professional workers, taking work home to manage their workloads and being on call when needed. For these workers, the process of self-exploitation is often more apparent than exploitation by the employer as there are no fences between the work and personal time (Currie, 2010).

With the global pandemic, big companies are worrying about the national quarantines and a deteriorating business environment caused by the coronavirus. The researcher realizes the importance of time management when working remotely in IT profession especially during the times of crisis. On the other hand, a smart move by Google was to advice their employees on managing work and life amid a quarantine. Advices to have fixed places of work with rigid patterns and explicit times to start and stop work which would avoid work to be permeated in their homes to balance their lives (Hartmans, 2020).

IT is a profession that allows the flexibility to work from home, on weekends, and at nights proving it difficult to set the boundaries around their work. The researcher is in a view that, IT professionals need to create ‘mental fences’ to set limits on the amount of work they do for their employers and learn to create boundaries to keep technologies at bay. Currie *et al.* (2010) describes this as a shift from thinking of these domains as separate and distinct realms to thinking of them as on a continuum.

#### 2.4.2 Demand Characteristic

The factors critically composed from the literature about the demand characteristic of an individual that might influence the work hours has been described as systemic or psychological states related to role profile requirements, expectancy, and norms to

which employees must react or adjust through exerting physical or mental effort (Haddon, 2009). Further, work and family demands are typically associated with work-to-family and family-to-work *conflict* (Voydanoff, 2004).

Most employees who are border-crossers in the above context integrating work and home are the employees, whose work is portable using e-technologies and those who have greater autonomy in performing their work with minimal direct supervision. Such employees in an IT industry are playing roles at senior management levels such as leads and managers. The researcher recognizes they cannot easily detach their minds from their work and are least ready to isolate their spheres of work and nonwork lives. In contrast past literature has also revealed that it is not just about the requirement of their jobs but “two-thirds of higher-level professionals and managers admitted that they did so because they found their jobs interesting” (Edwards and Wacjman 2005, p.50).

An important association made by Perrons (2003) was that the new economy, operating internationally, allows increasing deregulation and the movement towards a 24/7 society with working hours now more flexible and longer. It is this availability of 24/7 which is an attribute of a manager's profile that leads to work-related stress and eventually disturbing the personal well-being of an employee resulting in an imbalance. This has been supported by the study of Tillson (1997) who presented surveys of managers in IT, where 88% reported elevated levels of stress and most reported pressure than they could ever remember (Cohen, 1997, cited in Cavanaugh *et al.*, 2000). Exceedingly in IT, managers are addressed as 'Manager as a Catalyst' as they are majorly seen in techno-functional roles performing dual duties. The main bases for this are increasing demand for the techno-functional roles in the industry and a high saturation at senior-level managers without an alternate skillset. Another important aspect is the cost-saving for employers. While the company's managers benefit tremendously from the company's WLB strategies, often they find it difficult, in reality, to achieve an acceptable work and life balance on the basis of the long-term management culture expectations coupled with competitiveness at the corporate level (Moore, 2007). Further their situation as described by Frame and Hartog (2003, p.360 cited in Moore, 2007) is that "Time is seen as a commodity; those who give more of their time are more likely to be valued than those who work fewer hours, and are perceived to be both less productive and less committed. This is instance to the viewpoint of Voydanoff (2004) who claims that

work-related expectations that have been attributed to work-family tension include long working hours and excessive working hours without notice, work insecurity, and work pressure. Thus, contributing to the work-related factors to the levels of conflict.

While most of the IT industries globally made this move pushing managers to adapt dual roles, many managers at present across the are concerned about their job security in the current economic situation. This current situation of job insecurity and the number of dependants in the family including the age of dependent; both individuals working and losing jobs are non-work-related factors that contribute to levels of *conflict*.

#### 2.4.3 Resource Characteristic

The factors critically composed from the literature of Valcour's (2007) resource and demand framework shows that resources are described as systemic or psychological assets that can be used to improve efficiency, minimize demands, or produce additional resources. Further the studies of Voydanoff (2004, cited in Haddon, 2009); Hill (2005, cited in Haddon, 2009) argues that work and family resources are more related to work-to-family and family-to-work *facilitation* and are less related to the work and family conflicts. Resources related to work which has contributed to a reduced work-family dispute are work autonomy and time autonomy. The author recognizes this as the degree to which employees can determine how they do their job and whether they have control over managing their job schedule. Voydanoff (2005) has also highlights the benefits of flexi work schedule which is a balancing act towards employees. Whereas Thompson, Poelmans, Allen & Andreassi (2007); Wayne *et al.* (2007) brings attention to the importance of support from the workplace for a balanced life.

In relation to the resource characteristic the researcher would like to throw light on another important factor which is complexity of work an individual handles in IT. Though this could be argued that personality types may perceive work complexity differently, complexity in one's work is a trait of sub conscientiousness which affects an individual's emotions.

From the authors experience working on complex projects in IT required one to put in extra hours to meet the deadlines due to the intricacy of their work, besides issues experienced were pre and post effects of emotional strain and burnout on task submissions. As rightly stated by Sweeney and Summers (2002, p.225) "a state of fatigue due to job demands". Employees working on such complex jobs, demand their

time due to the attention to detail, quality of work which comes from extensive research, and more studying hours. This leads to extensive exhaustion of an individual's mental and physical health.

The literature also revealed some interesting findings based on gender as a resource characteristic. In the interest of the current pandemic situation a mass shift to working from home has produced some domestic revelations. Women with children are struggling with their new, isolation workload, experiencing how easily apparent work-life equality has begun to fall away leading to higher stress levels for them (Tuohy, 2020). The study reveals that according to 2019 Household Income and Labour Dynamics data, women are doing many more hours of housework along with her full-time job (Tuohy, 2020).

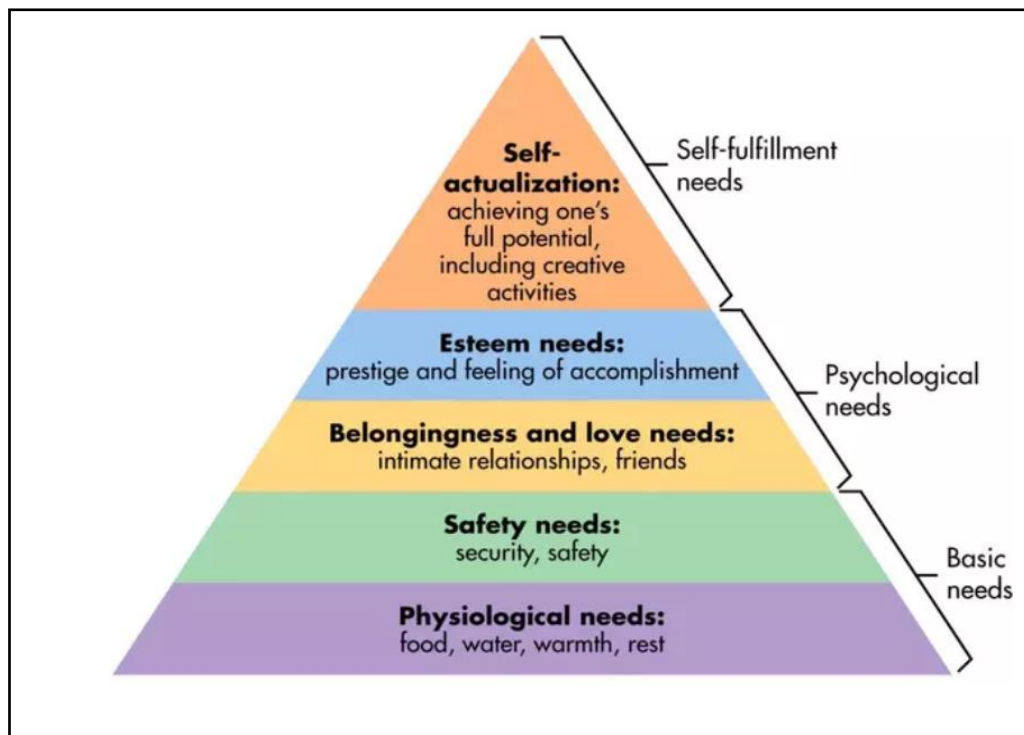
The author does not make a knowledge claim in this context, the above seems to be a societal expected convincing and concrete norm from the authors observation across the globe. Therefore, in this dissertation the researcher has shown interest to study the impact on genders. Based on the research analysis in this study the author will be in a better position to answer the research hypothesis with the backing of empirical data.

#### 2.4.4 Organization Initiatives

In a service industry like IT, individuals face challenges to an increasing extent due to demographic shifts. Challenges such as care duties or increased family responsibilities as individuals move through the course of life, so do the communities in which they are involved in. In this case, would organization policies increase the retention of these employees? Prior research by Pavalko and Henderson (2006) states that most plans do not offer any extra benefits, unpaid maternity leave increases their continuity of jobs. Some studies have also indicated policies such as maternity leave, healthcare, flexitime effect on labour market outcomes, loyalty to employers and other job outcomes. (Baum 2003; Kossek and Ozeki 1999; Ruhum 1998). On the contrary, the literature presented by Kossek (2005) shows limitations to draw conclusions of the impact of these policies. Further Wynn and Rao (2020) assert that one model of work policies does not fit for all employees specially in a consulting firm like IT. More recent survey by Kuehner-Herbert (2017) found that many employees are not aware of all the organization's benefits to help them or they are just not motivated to do anything about it. Moreover, the study showed top reasons why employees don't use them; employees don't use these as they are unaware of it, they don't know how to use them, they have no time to

use them, they are not interested in addressing their own well-being or get no support from their peers.

The author compares this to older studies of Maslow's 'Hierarchy of needs' by Abraham Maslow, 1943 (DiMaggio, 2019) or modified theory of wants and needs by Alderfer, or Self-Determination theory of Deci and Ryan that fuels the intrinsic motivation of an individual. The theory fits into the above context of understanding why individuals do not use them if they have them at their workplace. The theory explains that 'needs' get fulfilled by 'wants' and are to be achieved in their respective levels. The theory further suggests a lot about 'wants' which are choices and having those choices is empowering. The researcher infers that the 'want' to fulfil that need is also an individual's responsibility and his choice.



*Figure 5: Maslow's Theory of Hierarchy Needs (DiMaggio, 2019)*

In this study the researcher is interested to know if there exists organizational initiatives for the well-being of employees, if yes then to what extent have they been laid out, if they are laid out are they practically implemented, or is the situation contrary to that the organization initiatives are present but the employees are not using them just because they don't want to or they are unaware of it.

## 2.5 Impact of Structures on WLB

In this cross-national study between developing and developed countries the following section makes the reader aware of the country-level factors such as cultural dimensions, gender role ideologies that, impact on the work life practices.

### 2.5.1 Cultural dimension

Cultural values related to the connection between work and life are gender role ideologies, links between individuals and groups and time horizon in society (Hofstede, 1980). Concerning the relationships between individuals and groups. As stated by Celikkol *et al.* (2019), Individualism stresses self-sufficiency and self-control and collectivism identify themselves with the group which provides them safety, encourages to share, and cooperate and shape their behavior in accordance with group values. Moreover, the study by Richard Ball (2001) states theories of Adam Smith's notion of Invisible hand, Max Weber's (1930) asserting that collectivist culture impedes the economic development of a country and individualism facilitates it. Figure 6 clearly shows Ireland high in individualist culture compared to India which shows collectivist culture based on Hofstede's theory of cultural dimension.

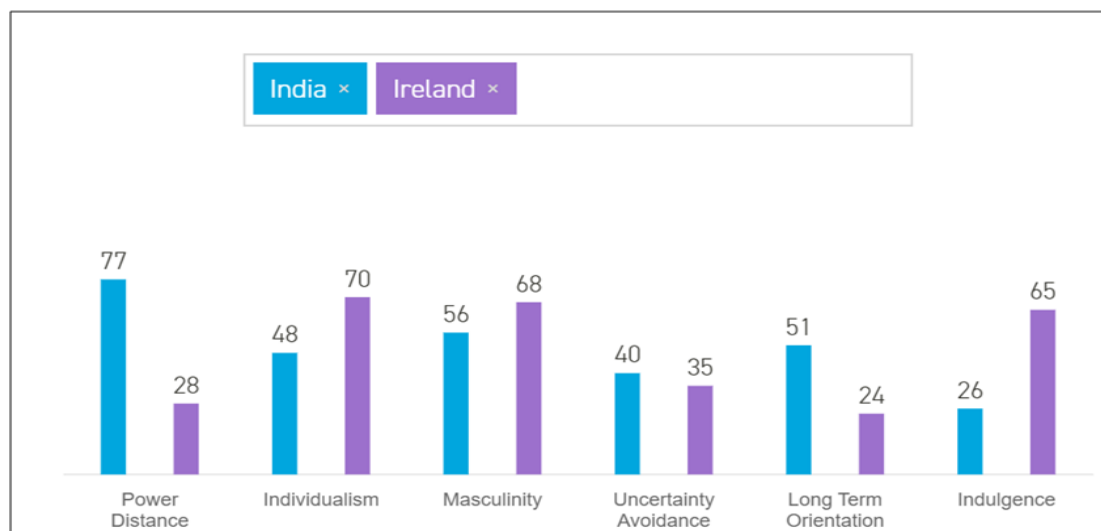


Figure 6: Individualism level in Ireland and India (Hofstede's Insights, n.d.)

### 2.5.2 Gender Role Ideologies

Gender role ideologies can be distinguished by Hofstede's (1980) masculinity-femininity cultural dimension. The theory identified male societies, centered on accomplishment, courage, praise and material prosperity, and feminine societies, based on teamwork, dignity, job stability, and quality of life. Further Ashforth *et al.* (2000)

theorized that in female cultures integration of roles is more evident in comparison to masculine cultures.

## **2.6 Conceptual Framework**

This chapter of the study discusses the conceptual framework evolved from the literature review. The researcher will focus on the theory that forms the basis for the development of the conceptual framework, defining the variables within the framework and their relations.

The conceptual framework has been majorly evolved from literature presented by Matuska and Christiansen (2008). The literature proposes a construct validity life balance model that suggests that everyday activity configurations should allow individuals to meet:

1. “Fundamental needs for continued biological health and physical safety.
2. Have fulfilling and self-affirming associations with others.
3. Feel engaged, challenged, and competent.
4. Create meaning and a positive personal identity.
5. Ability to organize time and energy in ways that enable them to meet important personal goals and renewal”

(Matuska and Christiansen, 2008, p.11).

Matuska and Christiansen (2008) proposed that the first four dimensions represent the *need-based dimensions* and the last one represents a *skill-based dimension*. The measure of life balance was constructed as congruence among both desired and actual time spent in activities, and equivalence in the degree of discrepancy between desired and actual time spent across activities that meet health, relationship, challenge/interest and identity needs.

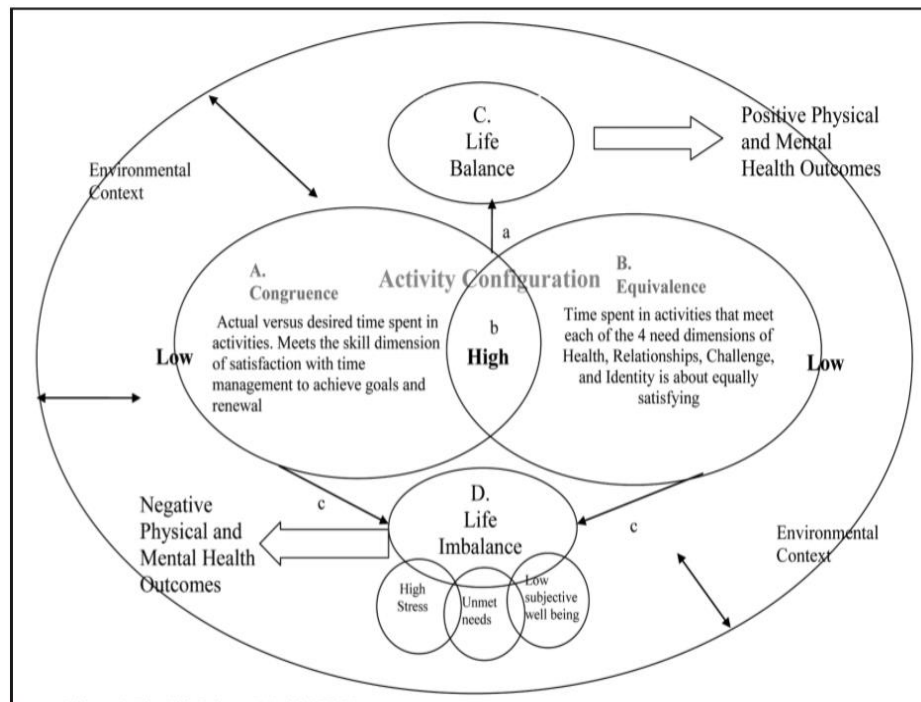


Figure 7: Life Balance Model (Matuska, 2008)

Figure 7. is the life balance model by Matuska (2008), showing the relationship between activity configurations, the environment, and dependent health outcomes. Life balance is best understood as, what people do is a representation of their lives and that certain configurations are considered balanced or imbalanced depending on whether their needs are met. The researcher would like to specify that if individuals show satisfaction with their activity configurations it could simply be a level of satisfaction than a life balance. The ‘balance’ has two components to it which are as follows:

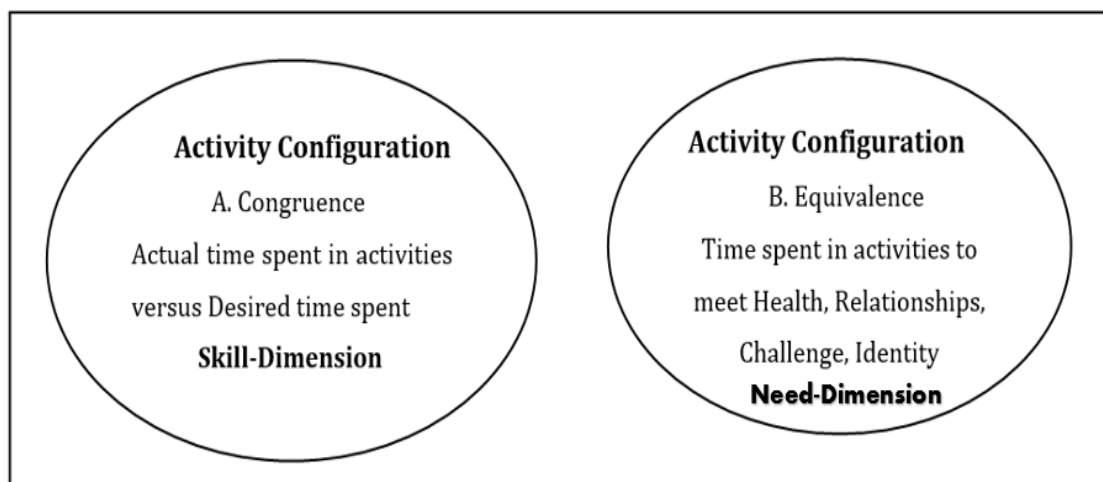


Figure 8: Components of Balance (Matuska, 2008)

## 1. Activity Configuration Congruence

The Activity Configuration Congruence is a component that determines the congruence based on one's actual and desired activities in daily life. If individuals report that the amount of time spent in most activities is *about right*, not too much or too little, then they would have high congruence. Implying that at the end of the day individuals should feel satisfied that their needs have been met and their goals have been achieved. This view of the study about spending the *right time* and not prescribing equal times for activity forms the premise of this research.

## 2. Activity Configuration Equivalence

The Activity Configuration Equivalence is the second component that determines the equivalence based on whether the individuals meet the 4 need dimensions listed in Figure 7. Individuals experience high equivalence when there is an estimated equal distribution of satisfaction with time across various activities that meets the need dimensions, thus resulting in positive physical and mental health outcomes. Further it shows both components are essential for a balanced life and when both congruence and equivalence are high, it leads to a Life balance (line a) resulting into positive physical and mental health outcomes. When both components are low it leads to a Life Imbalance (line c) resulting in negative physical and mental health outcomes such as high stress, unmet needs, and low subjective well-being. The bi-directional environmental context in the outer oval represents the relationship between the individuals and the environment which lead to a support or barrier of the environment such as physical, social, cultural, political, economic, and temporal.

It is important to realize that relationship between the individual and the environment is complex, such that an individual's presence and behavior affects the environment and, accordingly, the characteristics of the environment affects the emotions and behavior of the person (Shaw 2003, cited in Grzywacz *et al.*, 2007). However, the researcher recognizes that the best choice of activity for an individual's overall perception of a balanced life is not within his control. The factors of environmental context make it difficult to involve in the activities best suited. This framework of life balance explained, forms the basis of this study.

### 2.6.1 Operationalized Construct of WLB

This section discusses the operationalized construct of the WLB derived from the life balance model and a comprehensive literature review. From the extensive literature, the researcher has selected key variables to be analysed affecting the central subject of WLB.

In this dissertation the conceptual framework has been developed from the studies of Haddon (2009); (Holly and Mohnen, 2012) and (Matuska, 2012). The model of Haddon (2009) concentrated more on the factors affected by the environmental and personal demand and resource characteristics it missed the in depth flavour of the life balance concept segmenting it with clear boundaries of self and need dimensions of an individual. This essence of the concept of life balance was well explained by Matuska (2012) however, the framework only concentrated on the life balance and no context to the factors influencing these. While not pretending to have all the solutions, the framework in this research goes past previous research by combining many important elements that exist in other models however are not included together in the same form as those of the present. Figure 9. shows a framework with an integrated view in an attempt to ‘capture’ related facets of the WLB model.

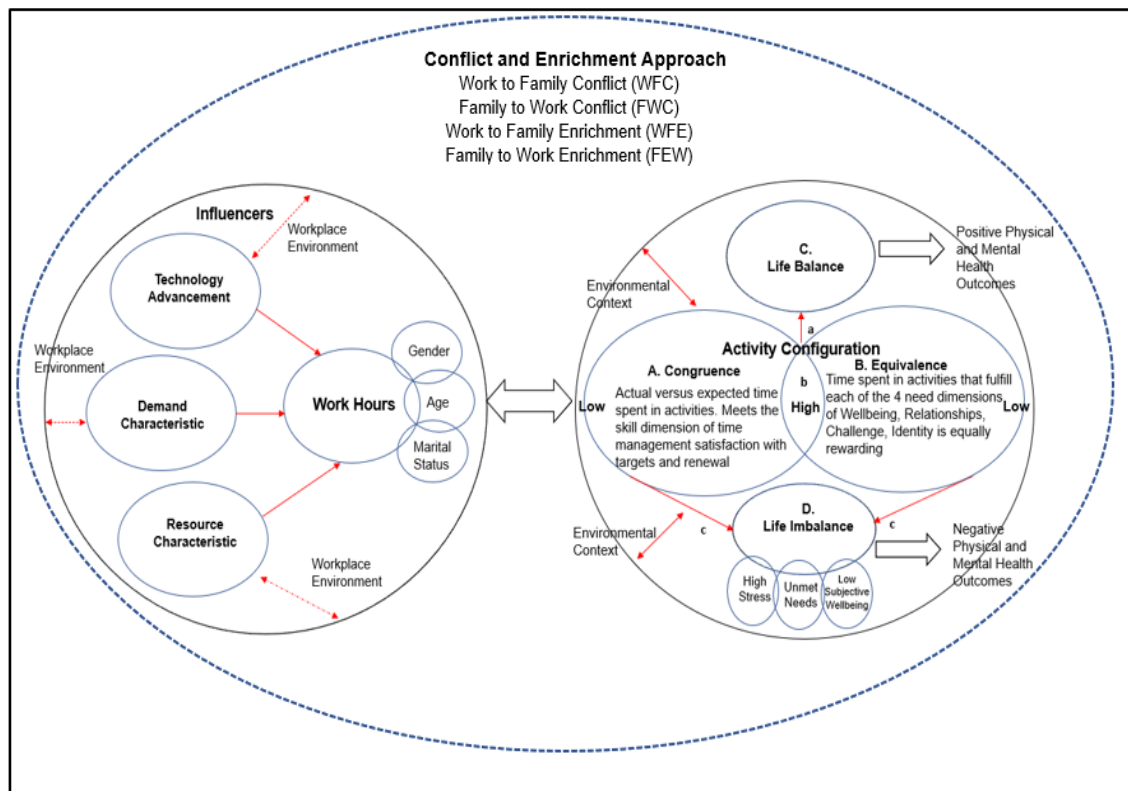


Figure 9: Operationalized Construct of WLB (Salunke, 2020)

In this research, the developed framework is laid on the four-fold taxonomy defined by Frone (2003). The components WFC, FWC, WFE, FWE are represented by a dashed line as it represents an 'off-stage' which forms the basis to evaluate this study. The influencing factors such as technological advancement, demand characteristic, resource characteristic is represented by the red solid lines showing a direct impact on the work hours spent across the demographics of employees in the IT sector. Another important element is the environment context and workplace environment represented by dotted lines; however, this is not the focus of the research but is recognized as part of it. The environmental context could include culture, structure, social practices, leadership, infrastructure, and so on. The solid red lines indicate the direct relations of the variables with each other. The unidirectional hollow arrows from Life Balance and Life Imbalance has been adopted from the concept of 'geofencing' which triggers an action when reached a set location. Here it triggers the negative and positive outcomes when an individual reaches the set locations of balance and imbalance.

## **2.7 Conclusion**

The researcher intends to use this developed framework and the emerged literature to address the objectives of this research. The literature presented by the author discussed factors affecting the WLB of employees which have mostly been conducted in developed countries like Sweden (Guizzo *et al.*, 2019, cited in Akerstedt *et al.*, 2001) and UK (Guizzo *et al.*, 2019, cited in Worthington, 2014). Although there are many studies the research has never been conducted for country comparison in this field. Overall, from the literature WLB is essential to the well-being of individuals, to the success of organizations and the workings of society (Grady *et al.*, 2008). Any competing demands of family and work life causes tension and has a detrimental impact on individuals wellbeing (Clark, 2000; Frone, 2000). Literature analysis studies have found that tensions caused by interaction between family and employment contribute to lower family life and job satisfaction and are adversely linked to WLB (Kalliath & Monroe, 2009 cited in Kluczyk, 2013). Good WLB and well-being can only be accomplished where there are no job tensions and people are comfortable with their family and job responsibilities. (Clark, 2000).

### 3 Methodology and Research Design

#### 3.1 Overview

This chapter begins with a study of the paradigms and their methodological positions. The philosophical views taken by the author supports the authors interpretation of the research goals set and planned for study into what is unknown. With respect to the specific analytical methods, study objectives an overview of the reasoning for the selected research process and data collection methodology concludes this chapter. Eventually, a segment on study ethics is discussed.

#### 3.2 Research Design

Saunders *et al.* (2009), asserted that research design is the most important aspect of the research process, which determines the process of identification, assessment, and application of research methods and techniques. The selection of research methodology, methods (techniques), and the tools (devices) used in the research are governed by the research paradigm and overall approach chosen. Research onion by Saunders *et al.* (2009) in Figure 10 highlights the philosophical domains chosen in this study.

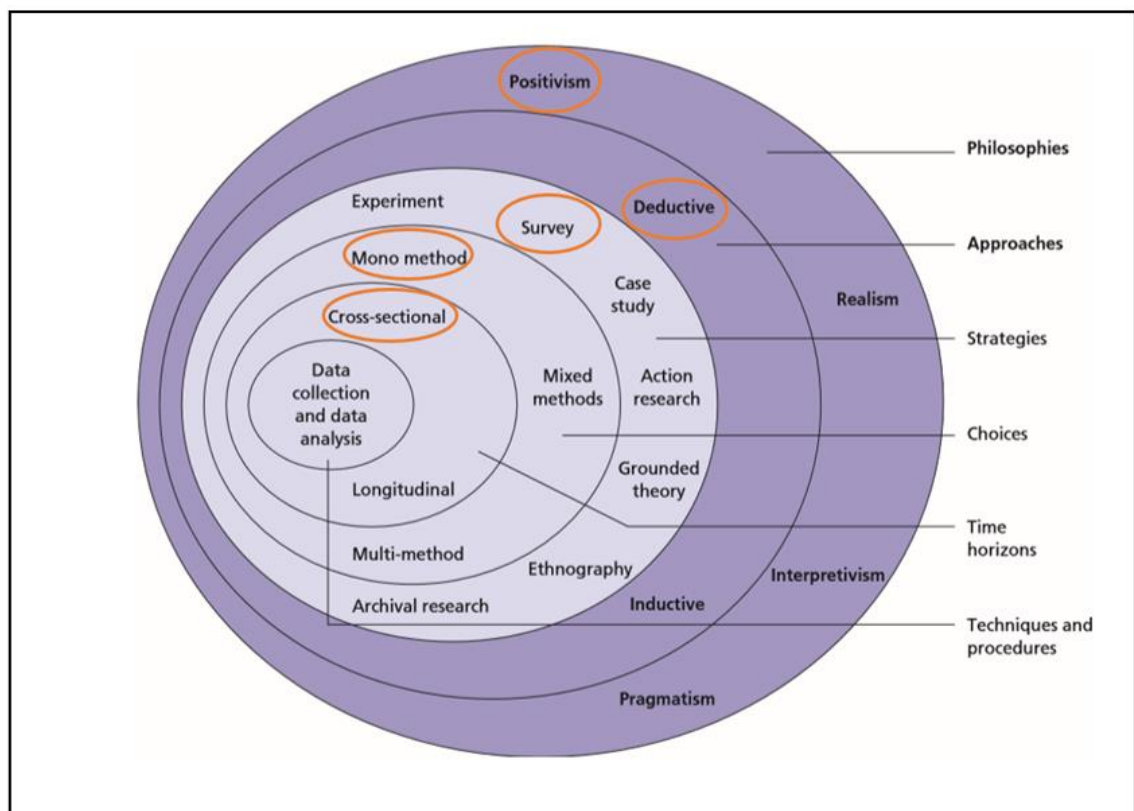


Figure 10: Research Onion (Saunders *et al.*, 2009)

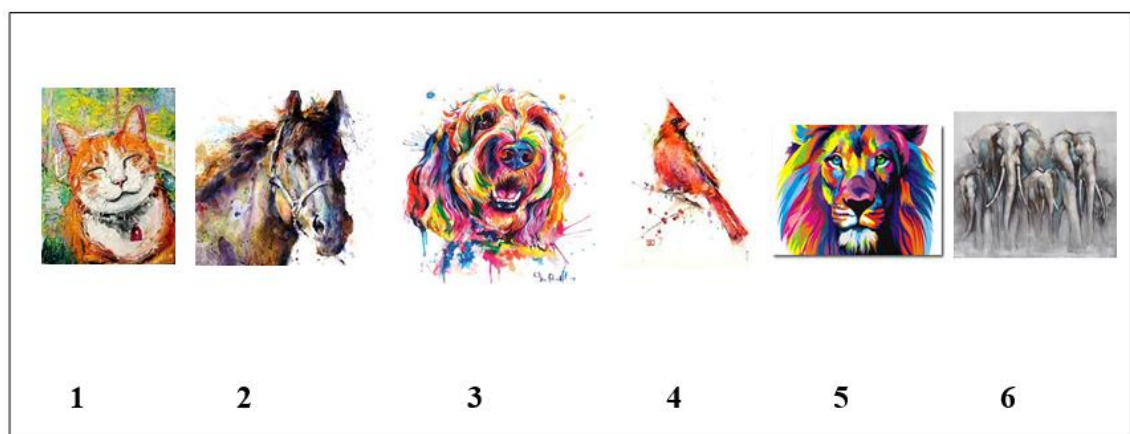
### 3.3 Research Strategy

In this study to achieve the research objectives and formulate the conflict and enrichment paths of an individual's life, quantitative research using a survey research strategy is used. Considering the philosophical influence of positivism on the research objective, quantitative method was chosen in this study (Saunders *et al.*, 2009, Collis & Hussey 2013). To quantify psychological health, personal and family wellbeing of participants on a large population could only be assessed by conducting a self-completion questionnaire with an instrumentation of a Likert scale. Adhering to the short timelines of this research, a mono method with a cross-sectional time horizon was adopted.

### 3.4 Research Philosophy

Huemer (2019) outlined 3 different characteristics of sense data to explain the philosophy of perception, which is perception makes us aware of things, it depends on the mind of the perceiver, and qualities we perceive from things around. Stress, productivity, needs, satisfaction, and happiness have been categorized here as a 'philosophy of perception'.

Gilbert (2004), asserted that happiness could be, natural- what we get as to what we wanted or synthetic -what we make when we don't get what we wanted. In his study empirical data with 'free choice' paradigm was used, such that a ranking scale amongst 6 subjects to rank 6 Monet prints as per their choice from most to the least was conducted.



*Figure 11: Choice before Synthesis (Gilbert, 2004)*

Most of them chose between 2 and 3. After 15 days when the same was reranked by them the one they took home they ranked it higher to the others. This is where they synthesized the happiness. “The one I got is really better than I thought and the one I did not get wasn’t that good”.



*Figure 12: Choice after Synthesis (Gilbert, 2004)*

This is the truth that shapes this research, like happiness, stress, unmet needs, productivity, satisfaction are all attributes of an individual’s mental and physical health conditions which gets synthesized over a period that belongs to them and is not known to any other. This study will focus to measure a quantifiable size of this synthesized perceived sensory experience of the individuals. This study will give the researcher a verified data (positive facts) received from the senses in the form of empirical evidences. Thus, positivism is based on empiricism in this study and certain perceptions such can happiness, stress can also be measured through positivism if we understand the difference between the ‘context’ and ‘extent’ of philosophy for these.

### **3.5 Research Approach**

This research adopted the deductive approach. Following the sequential stages of the deductive approach as per Robson (2002, cited in Saunders *et al.*, 2009) in this dissertation the researcher has transformed the existing theoretical framework and empirical generalizations to formulate the hypotheses and constructed conceptual framework. These themes WFC, FWC, WFE, and FWE forms the basis of the conceptual framework and deriving questionnaire from it for quantitative method. This approach was centred around using the empirical and descriptive data collected and analysed to test the existing theory provided in the literature review for conformity or a need for modification in existing theory if the results of this study bring new insights (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

In this research, quantitative measures have achieved the objectivity such that it solely determined the generalisability of the relation between employees need and skill dimension enabling the author to study the overall work life balance by analysing numerical data with statistical tests. The qualitative element of this research gathered by open-ended questions is in accordance with the research philosophy of this study where the researcher wants to understand the extent of the perception of the employee towards the issue. It gives an edge to determine the individual's perception of WLB reflecting the reality of the situation to an extent to be examined (Tashakkor and Teddlie 1998, cited in Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

### **3.6 Research Method**

This chapter discusses the overall research methodology which involves the choice, justification, and certain limitations of the decisions made towards sampling techniques, criteria for choosing participants in this study. The underlying designing of the questions involved critically evaluating them to study their validity and reliability, which was used to gather the primary sources of data.

#### *3.6.1 Sampling*

The primary aim of sampling is to select from a group of people to determine the features of the population as a whole (Collis & Hussey, 2009; Fisher, 2007). The researcher used Statista.com and other statistics sites to yield the total IT population number. Saunders *et al.* (2009) suggest that probability sampling may not be possible in market research, for which the alternative is non-probability sampling which inclines towards generalisation made with regards to the theory and not the population.

Primarily convenience sampling technique followed by snowball sampling was used for this research deducing from the flowchart of selecting non-probability sampling techniques as seen in Figure 13.

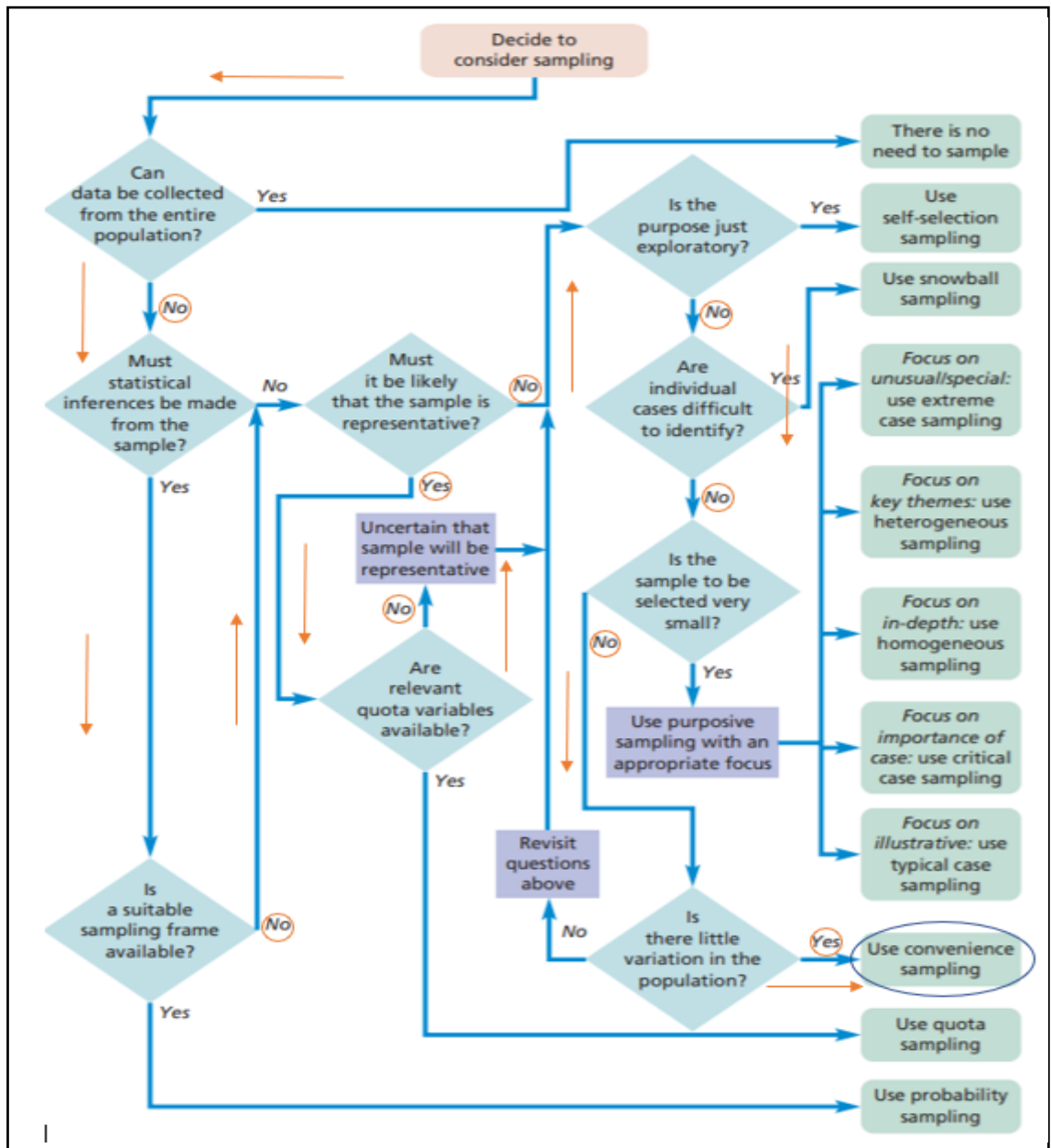


Figure 13: Sampling technique selection (Saunders et al.,2009)

In convenience sampling technique, individuals known and easy to approach by the author such as friends, colleagues, professionals were invited to participate in this research from social media platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook, Survey Circle and Reddit (Saunders et al., 2012; Fisher, 2007). Screening and consent questions were added at the start of the survey to segregate the IT population from the whole as these platforms were open to everyone. Additionally, snowball sampling was used to achieve

a definite mix of participants across countries, job profiles, genders, individuals with parental status.

A tactful choice was to have less open-ended questions in the long survey, as the participants may perceive it requires more time and effort than usual to answer a question thus giving short and unfulfilling answers. This could lead to low response rate due to the lack of participant motivation to complete the survey.

### 3.6.2 Participants

Employees with at least one year of full-time or part-time experience amongst various IT organisations in India and Ireland were invited to take part in this study. The selection for participation consciously represented the key characteristics of relevance to countries, gender, role profiles, parental status, marital status. An ideal sample size of 385 samples was derived using Qualtrics sample size calculator as seen in Figure 14. Considering approximately 1% of IT from Indian population and 2% of ICT from Irish population as per numbers of 2019. However, the collected data in this study comprised of 272 samples.

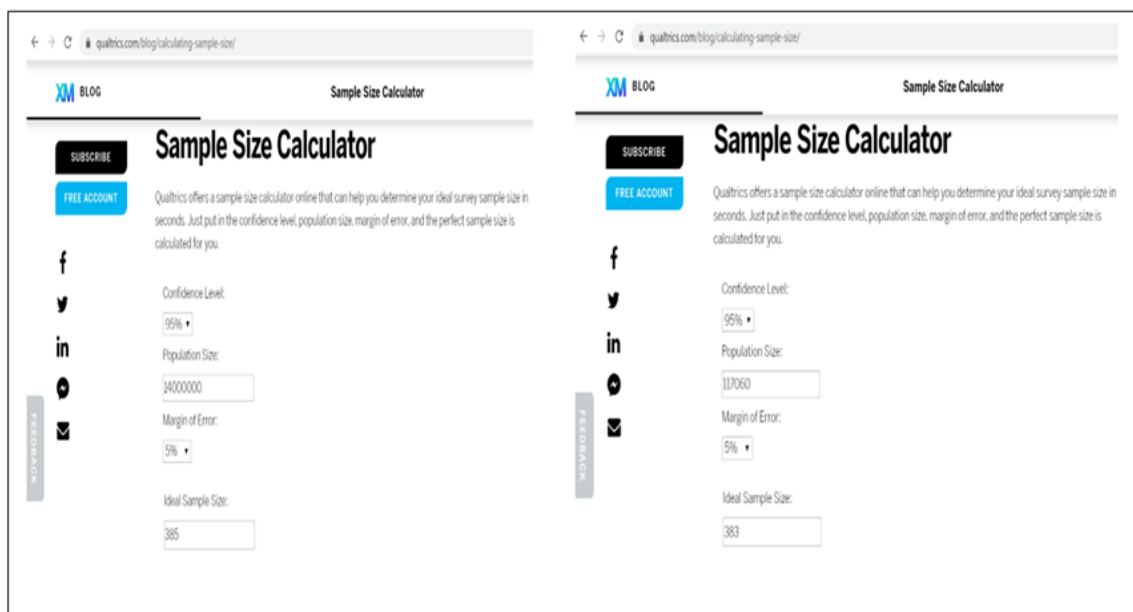


Figure 14: Ideal Sample size for IT population (Qualtrics, n.d.)

### 3.6.3 Questionnaire Design

Following Figure 15 shows the process of Questionnaire Design.

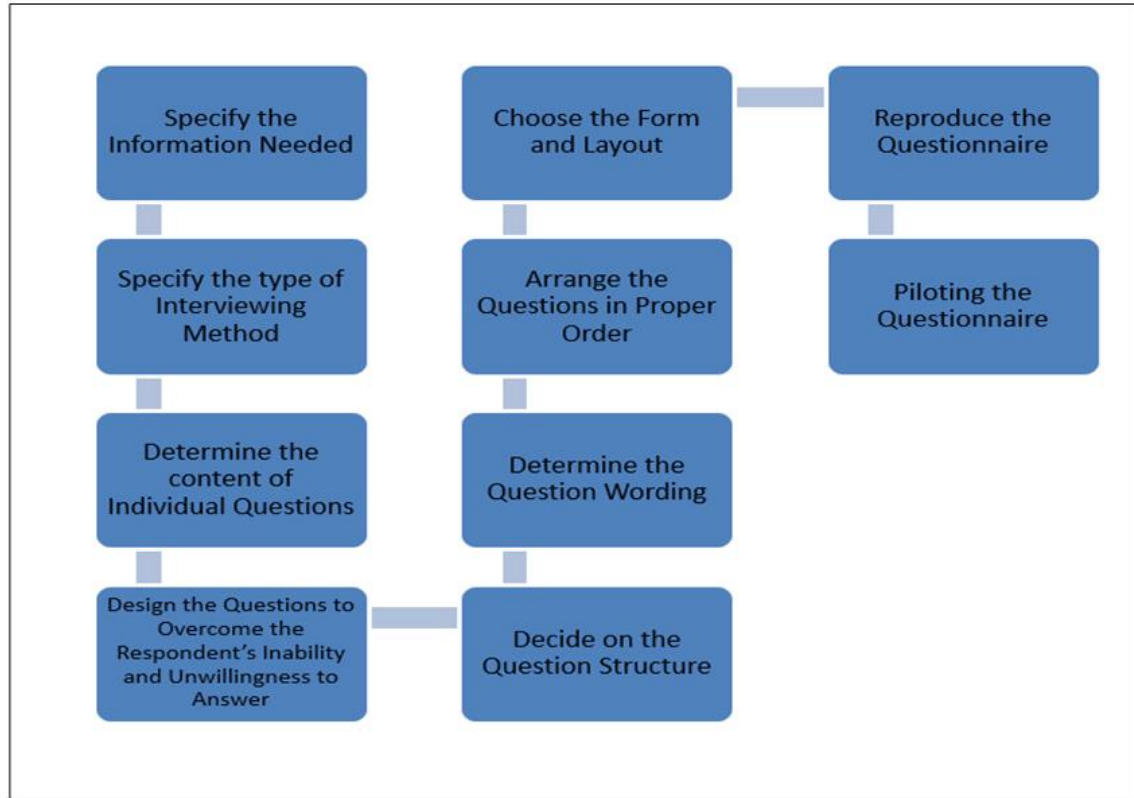


Figure 15: Questionnaire Design Process (Malhotra, 2006)

The structural build of the questions ensures accuracy in data collection to meet research objectives and simultaneously minimises errors in the research. The strength of the questionnaire lies in constructing valid and reliable questions. The author attempted to do a genuine selection of these questions based on the criteria that those questionnaires reliability and validity were already demonstrated in the past studies. The basis for selecting the questions was derived from the conceptual framework and literature review of this study. In a view to make the study more robust, rigorously organized, and for transparent method of collection, it had to be structurally fabricated and formulated.

### 3.6.4 Choosing Appropriate Likert Scale

The psychometric properties of the Likert scale are reliability, validity, and sensitivity (Cummins and Gullone, 2000). Saunders *et al.* (2009) has highly asserted the importance of validity and reliability of the questionnaire. Mitchell (1996 cited in Kluczyk, 2013) derives that reliability of the questionnaire allows consistency in the

collection of data, and Cronbach's alpha is one of the instrumentations for measuring the consistency of responses. A threshold of Cronbach's alpha 0.7 will prove the reliability of the responses. At the same time, internal validity is equally important as it allows the collection of data that proves the objectives of the study (Collis and Hussey, 2013).

As theorized by Saunders *et al.* (2009) elements of the validity of a questionnaire, the following considerations were made while constructing the questionnaire,

- Internal or measurement validity- assessing the questionnaire such that it represents the variables it intends to measure.
- Content validity - assessing whether the questions contained in the questionnaire properly addressed the topic of inquiry.
- Predictive validity- assessing the capacity of the questions to make reasonable predictions.
- Construct validity - assessing whether the measurement questions measure the claims inspected.

The researcher uses scales selected from previous studies under the criteria that their validity was examined with the Cronbach's alpha value being 0.7 and above. Based on this criterion the researchers selected for the construct of the questionnaire were as follows:

- Cohen, Kamark, & Mermlestein (1983) for psychological health scale.
- Matuska *et al.* (2012) with life balance scale.
- Kluczyk (2013) for productivity, work and family satisfaction, work and family conflict, work initiatives towards WLB.

The researcher identified from the literature that the number of scale points increases the scale sensitivity and has a direct effect on the validity of the questions. While Cummins and Gullone (2000) presents that scales in general are confined to reliability and convergent/divergent validity, which in itself, is dependent on reliability. This has drawn the focus to the fact that a smaller number of scales are advantageous to measure as compared to the larger scale. The pragmatic option for the researcher was to opt a 5-point scale with ascending order considering reducing the response time of participants while taking the large survey (Maeda, 2015).

### 3.6.5 Nature of Data – Questionnaire

In this study to draw statistical conclusions and make educated decisions on a course of action, the questionnaire consists of the following types of questions

- Open-ended questions – Unstructured questions.
- Rating questions- Likert scale questions
- Nominal questions – Categorical questions
- Dichotomous questions – Yes/No
- Demographic questions – Age, Gender

#### 3.6.5.1 Basis of Questions Design

In this section the researcher discusses the design of the specific questions which confirms its validity and reliability. In all the coded questions the high scores of the scale indicate a negative trend and low scores of the scale indicate a positive trend.

##### 3.6.5.1.1 Psychological Health Scale

In this study the Perceived Stress variable is measured using the stress subscale of the Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS21). The scale is designed to measure the emotional state or mental health of an individual with a Cronbach's alpha reliability of the DASS21 scale acceptable with an alpha value 0.81 (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995 cited in Matuska, 2012).

##### 3.6.5.1.2 Personal Well-being Scale

Personal Well-being Index-Adult (PWI-A) used questions on satisfaction related to an individual's thoughts of themselves to measure the subjective dimensions of *skill* and *need* explained in the components of Activity Configuration in life balance model to quantify the quality of life and personal well-being (International Wellbeing Group, 2006 cited in Matuska, 2012).

As this study is conducted in India and Ireland with different cultures and standard of living, the researcher decided to use this scale which has been tested for its reliability in *different countries*, this scale will demonstrate its robustness in this study which is one of the strengths of this questionnaire.

##### 3.6.5.1.3 Family Well-being and Organization Initiatives

Family satisfaction, work satisfaction, WFC and FWC were measured using appropriate likert scale as per Cronbach's alpha reliability theory. The productivity of individuals is measured to understand participant's view on productivity to be contributed to the

organization. Work-Life balance initiatives at workplace is measured to understand their availability and usage at the organizations to maintain an individual's WLB.

#### *3.6.5.1.4 Demographic Questions*

Demographic questions were designed to be asked at the start of the questionnaire to gain knowledge on the characteristics of the sample population and the end section consists of their overall feedback on the survey.

### **3.7 Collection Primary Data**

In this section the author discusses the methods of data collection process. Chalked out from the initial plan in the research strategy section, primarily a mono method of data collection was adopted via surveys, the self-completion online questionnaire with a cross-sectional design was required to be answered in absence of the researcher. Rubin and Babbie (2012) asserted that attempting a self-completion questionnaire in the absence of a researcher encourages the genuinity and honesty of respondents as this method allows anonymity.

The survey was conducted through Survey Monkey a General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliant tool for web-based surveys. The survey takes 20 minutes to complete. Participants were introduced to the questionnaire by a link in an email with the plain language statement which had the specifics as provided in Appendix – B or through a Weblink. Participants first provided informed consent, by answering the consent questions at the start of the survey. To increase the response rate a follow-up procedure was followed (Saunders *et al.*, 2012) for the ones who participated through the email link. All data captured through the Survey Monkey tool was extracted in excel for preparation of the codebook under data analysis in week 7.

#### *3.7.1 Sources*

A unit of analysis instructed by the research objectives, is a variable which is a representative of the listed conflict or enrichment approach (WFC, FWC, WFE, FEW) inscribed in a code in such a way that it can be decoded by the participants easily. In this quantitative method, primary data was collected by an online survey provided to participants. The secondary data used in this research involved information extracted from raw data, published summaries, statistics, journals, studies, theories and concepts derived from books, company policy documents of organizations available from their websites on the internet, archives, earlier research surveys on the same subject available

online. Audio/video scripts to understand the underlying history of the development of WLB policies in organizations. The primary data in this research was the main data source to address the overall research objectives of comparing both countries based internationally using the surveys and published official statistics including the demographic, social, and economic topics. The collection of data is restricted to cross-sectional horizon as the research timelines do not provide enough time to make observations over a period.

### *3.7.2 Access and Ethical Issues*

This research complies with all the research guidelines specified by the college ensuring consistency in the research process. All participants were informed about the participant's involvement in the study and expectations as outlined in the ethical plain language statement.

The secondary data used from journals, public statistical reports, earlier conducted surveys, company policies such as Human Resource development and progressive HR policies towards employee's welfare benefits, were easily accessible online. As observed by the author these have not been released in safe settings and do not have strong anonymity. Under this circumstance it is the ethical consideration of the data service provider more than the researcher and the need for ethical approval in such cases can be waived off.

The questionnaire does not ask any personal details that can cause risk to the participants. Participants were informed that a copy of the analysed result will be provided to them on request. Using SurveyMonkey® allowed the researcher to capture IP addresses of the participants. This information will only be revealed by the author, if necessary, to the examination panel during the final thesis presentation. Please be noted that this information will not be stated in the study and not be available to the public.

### **3.8 Pilot Study**

A pilot testing is aimed at refining the questionnaire to elude problems in answering questionnaire by participants in the survey, and to elude problems in capturing the data (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). This testing preceded before the actual distribution of the survey to the participants and the data collected was not used in the actual data analysis.

A preliminary analysis using the pilot testing was carried out in a staggered approach first with one participant, then 3 participants and then finally 5 participants such that after every test the researcher updated the questionnaire where relevant. The samples for

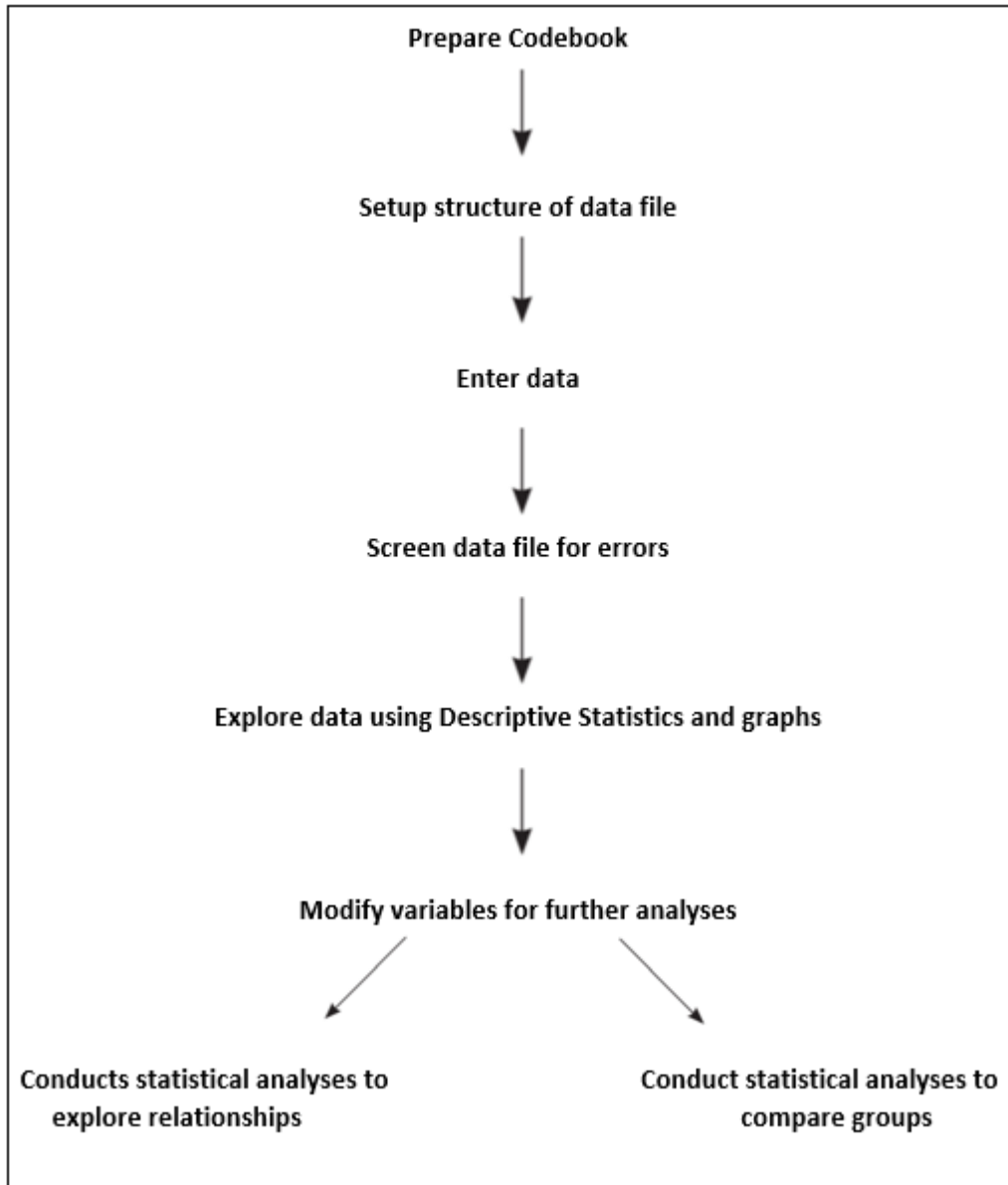
piloting were selected by the author based on their capability to scientifically and critically evaluate the questionnaire and were a mix from both countries with different roles within the organization from managers to team members, with a mix of gender and age, marital and parental status.

Total 9 participants took part in the pilot study, who were recorded on Zoom with their consent in the presence of the researcher in a view to demonstrate the participants experience in answering the questions, understanding the clarity of the questions, appropriateness of the layout, content coverage and monitoring the completion time of the questionnaire (Fink, 2009). Notes were taken in parallel by the researcher and participants were not interrupted while taking the survey. On completion of the survey, the author engaged with the participant to understand the difficulties faced while attempting the questions and the overall feedback on it. This testing assisted to prove the content validity assuring the questions, instructions, and scales were clear to participants. It enabled the author to get first-hand experience to check the directions of responses and show a pattern while analysing and most importantly making amendments to the questionnaire about the feedback received before testing with the final population of the sample. Details of the evidences of the piloting will be provided in the final dissertation if necessary.

### **3.9 Approach to Data Analysis**

Statistical analyses were conducted using a licensed version of IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 and Microsoft Excel to identify patterns and themes to be used when presenting detailed analysis. These tests were used to test the hypotheses dependent on the measurement type (nominal, ordinal, ratio), a number of variables (dependent, independent), and characteristics of the variable. As the data used in this study was nominal and scale data with two or more levels, the Chi-square test, One-way ANOVA and Two-way ANOVA was used to evaluate the differential and inferential questions. In addition, a test of normality and outlier was carried out to assess the correlation as per differences.

Step by Step approach to data analysis involved preparing data to enter into the IBM SPSS using the codebook. This process involved assigning numeric codes to each response before the file was imported to SPSS. For example, assigning codes to a closed-ended question response such as Yes coded as 1 and No coded as 0.



*Figure 16: Flowchart of Data Analysis Process (Pallant,2011)*

Type of response format has implications on statistical analysis (Pallant, 2011). In this study, the response format chosen (likert scale) or open-ended questions are designed in such a way that they will provide scores that are continuous, from low *through* high which is essential in the analysis of correlation. Once the data file was inspected to explore the nature of variables, descriptive statistical analysis was performed to address the description of the samples followed by inferential statistic techniques for making inferences of the sample population.

### **3.10 Conclusion**

This section of the chapter discussed the overall research strategy and approach taken by the researcher to conduct this study. Though the chosen method is positivism the researcher has attempted to capture the extent of their perception of the central subject as explained in the research philosophy. The researcher has carefully studied the research tools and techniques and selected them in line with the research method and approach to get the optimum results for this study for the objectives outlined.

Finally, the researcher has paid increasing attention to the demographic changes with an attempt to capture the effects of country-level conditions on the work-life of employees in IT sector. Collating the methodological approaches in this study the author has planned to carve out a study concentrating on untapped cultural and social dimensions and under-researched WLB constructs pushing for more systematic and integrated cross-national work and life studies.

## 4 Presentation and Discussion of the Findings

### 4.1 Overview

This chapter presents and explores the primary data obtained and analyzed based on the research methodology outlined in chapter 3. Descriptive statistics were calculated for all variables used in the analysis to achieve the features of the sample population (Pallant, 2011). Out of the total 272 participants, 190 participants provided their consent to participate in the study. Of which 106 were from India and 83 from Ireland. Table 1 shows the distribution of these participants based on age, gender, current level of job, marital and parental status.

*Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the sample population in India and Ireland*

Demographic Variables		India		Ireland	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>Number of Participants</b>	<b>Count</b>	65	41	55	28
<b>Age</b>	<b>18-28</b>	25	19	29	17
	<b>29-40</b>	35	19	22	10
	<b>41 and above</b>	5	3	4	1
<b>Job Level</b>	<b>Junior</b>	16	12	21	12
	<b>Mid</b>	36	25	23	15
	<b>Senior</b>	13	4	11	1
<b>Marital Status</b>	<b>Single</b>	32	19	36	21
	<b>Married/Co-habiting</b>	31	20	18	6
	<b>Separated/Divorced</b>	2	2	0	1
	<b>Others</b>	0	0	1	0
<b>Parental Status</b>	<b>With Children</b>	23	13	10	2
	<b>Without Children</b>	41	28	45	26

Following chart in Figure 17 depicts the demographic characteristics of the sample population in both countries.

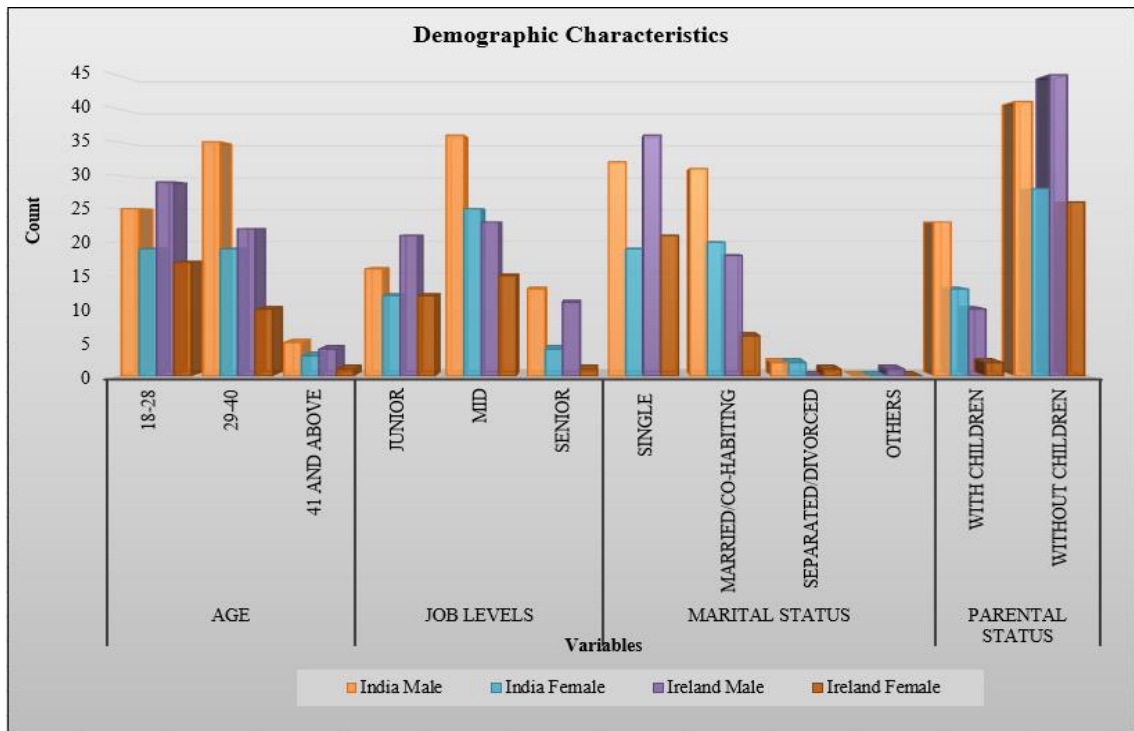


Figure 17: Demographic characteristics of Sample population in both countries

## 4.2 Data Analysis and Interpretations

The data analysis of the survey follows a 4-step process, beginning with data categorization of the questions based on the similar scale and weightage and ending with an emergent pattern uncovered with the usage of continuous comparative quantitative data interpretation methods to evaluate the study goals.

### 4.2.1 Psychological Well-being

#### Hypothesis 1:

**There is a difference in WLB between women and men employees.**

**There is a difference in WLB between IT employees in India and Ireland.**

**There is an interaction between country and gender in terms of WLB.**

To test these hypotheses, the researcher explored the effects statistically by using the data of Psychological Well-being questions 17 and 18. Table 2 summarises the data according to the gender and country based on number of observations, mean and Standard Deviation (SD).

Table 2: Data Analysis of Psychological Wellbeing based on Country and Gender

Dependent Variable: Psychological WellBeing				
Country	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
India	Male	4.91	1.380	58
	Female	5.17	1.430	41
	Total	5.02	1.400	99
Ireland	Male	4.46	1.588	46
	Female	4.65	1.413	26
	Total	4.53	1.520	72

To test whether there exists any difference in means between the groups, a two-way ANOVA analysis was performed. From the table the total average mean for India was higher as compared to Ireland. The SD was lowest for male employees in India and highest for the male employees in Ireland. The total number of observations were 171, largest for the male employees in India and lowest for the female employees in Ireland.

**Assumptions for Two-way ANOVA Analysis:**

To run the 2\*2 ANOVA test, the data should meet the fundamental assumptions of the model as follows

- ✓ There must be at least 2 independent variables with 2 levels with nominal or ordinal data values.
- ✓ There must be at least one scale dependent variable.
- ✓ There must be independent observations for each variable.
- ✓ There must not be any significant outliers in the data.
- ✓ The data must be approximately normally distributed.
- ✓ It should meet the condition of Homogeneity of Variances.

The analysis of Work-Life Balance according to gender and country was performed using the 2\*2 ANOVA. Where the comparison of the two groups (country and gender) with two levels each mainly compares the two independent groups according to the variations in the means of these groups and checks whether there exists any interaction between the two independent groups. Normality test was conducted across the independent groups to check whether the data is normally distributed. Owing to the robustness of ANOVA technique, even though the data is not normally distributed here, a two-way ANOVA analysis can be carried out, violating the normality principle (Blanca *et al.*, 2017). The distribution results are seen in Table 3.

Table 3: Test of Normality across Country and Gender

Psychological WellBeing	Country - Gender	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>b</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
	India - Male	0.177	58	0.000	0.945	58	0.011
India - Female	0.208	41	0.000	0.911	41	0.004	
Ireland - Male	0.178	46	0.001	0.928	46	0.007	
Ireland - Female	0.217	26	0.003	0.918	26	0.040	
Lilliefors Significance Correction							

Following the decision rule of normality test, the p-value as seen is less than 0.05, so the null hypothesis is rejected and concluded that the data is not normally distributed for the variable psychological wellbeing across the groups.

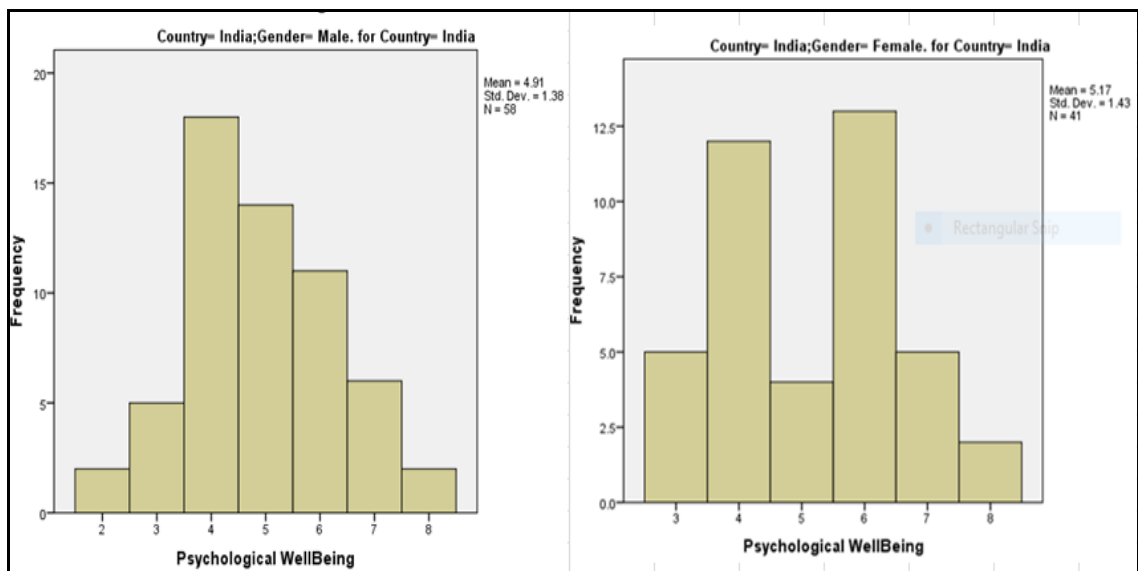


Figure 18: Data distribution in India

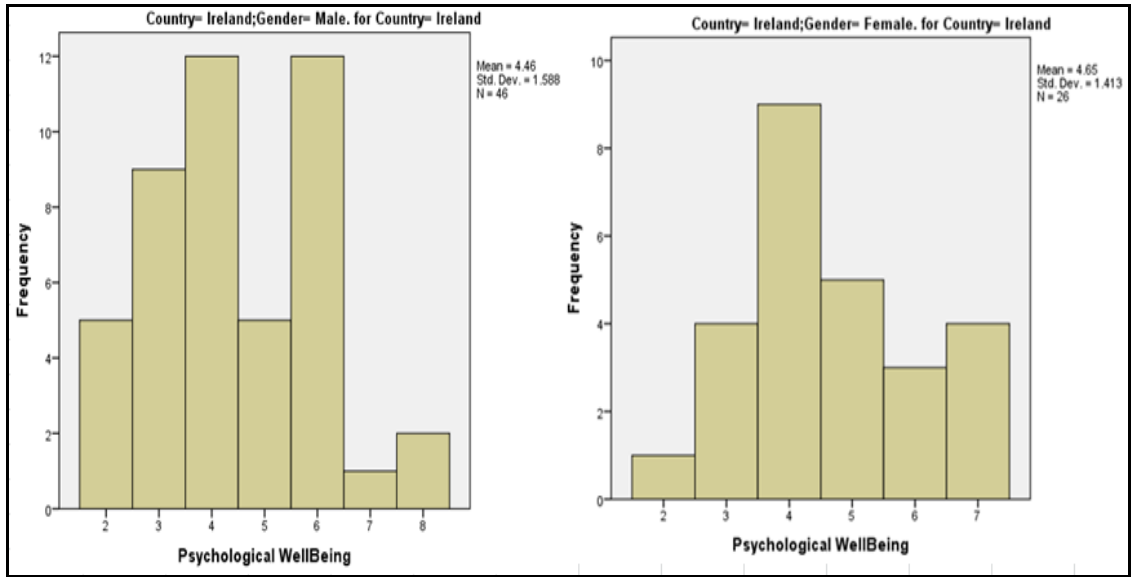


Figure 19: Data distribution in Ireland

The histograms in Figure 18 and 19 shows that the data is not normally distributed, which has also been shown by the Shapiro Normality Test significance value.

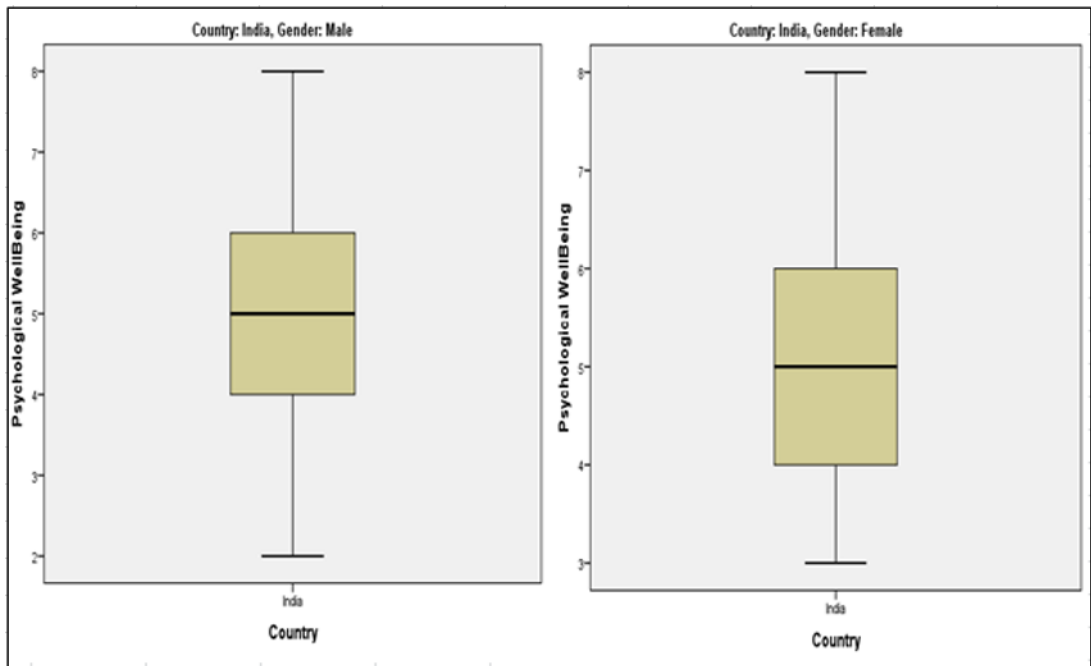
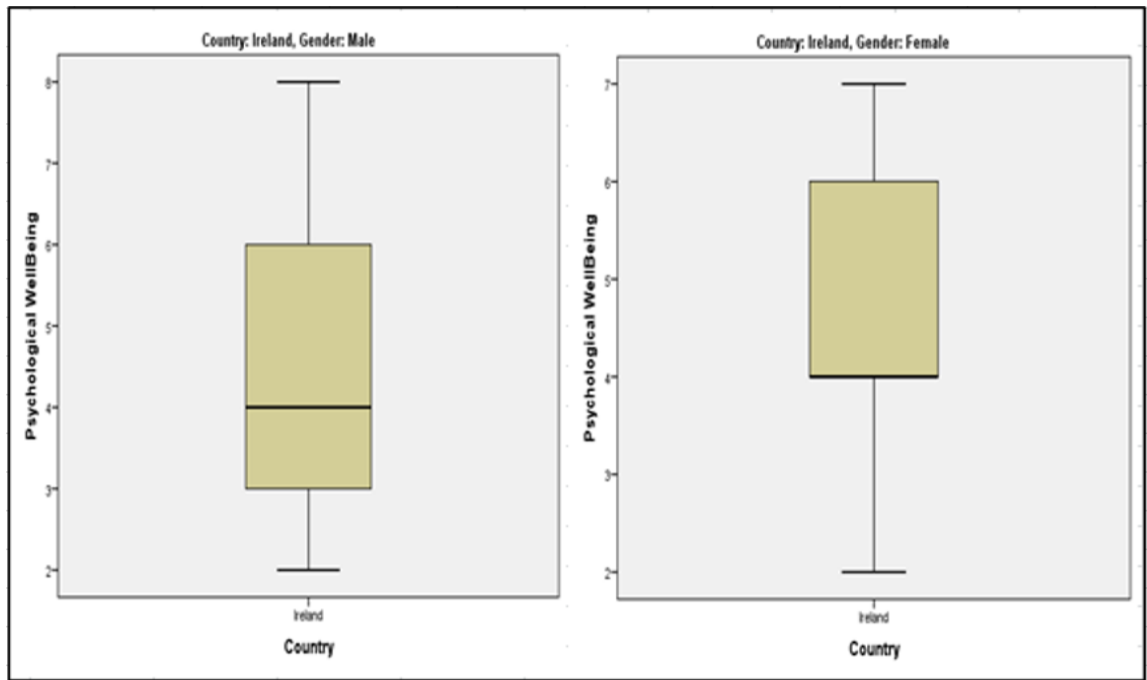


Figure 20: Box plot for Male and Female participants in India



*Figure 21: Box Plots for Male and Female participants in Ireland*

From the graphs plotted in Figures 20 and 21, it can be inferred that there are no significant outliers in the data across the groups and hence the data has met the assumption of no outliers. Table 4 provides the results of homogeneity test.

*Table 4: Levene's Test for Homogeneity of Variances*

<b>Dependent Variable: Psychological WellBeing</b>			
F	df1	df2	Sig.
0.898	3	167	0.444

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.  
a. Design: Intercept + Country + Gender + Country \* Gender

The p-value is 0.444 which is more than 0.05 and so the null hypothesis of equal variances cannot be rejected and thus data group has equal variance.

Table 5 shows the Two-Way ANOVA Analysis using Tests of Between-Subjects Effects.

*Table 5: Two-Way ANOVA Analysis using Tests of Between- Subjects Effects*

Dependent Variable: Psychological WellBeing								
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power <sup>b</sup>
Corrected Model	12.340 <sup>a</sup>	3	4.113	1.942	0.125	0.034	5.827	0.495
Intercept	3618.14	1	3618.144	1708.450	0.000	0.911	1708.450	1.000
Country	9.319	1	9.319	4.400	0.037	0.026	4.400	0.550
Gender	2.026	1	2.026	0.957	0.329	0.006	0.957	0.163
Country * Gender	0.035	1	0.035	0.016	0.898	0.000	0.016	0.052
Error	353.672	167	2.118					
Total	4327.000	171						
Corrected Total	366.012	170						

a. R Squared = .034 (Adjusted R Squared = .016)  
b. Computed using alpha = .05

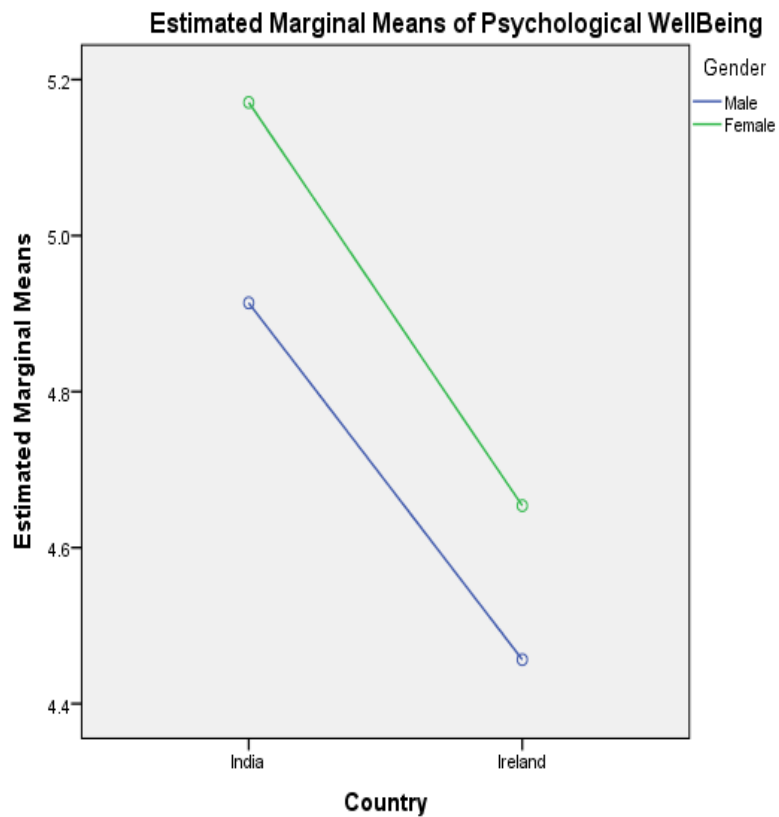
Statistical analysis using two-way ANOVA was performed to determine the effect of WLB on gender and country. The surveyed participants were segregated into groups as per their gender and the country they work from.

From the results seen in Table 5, it can be inferred that the main effect of country is statistically significant with a test statistic (p-value) of 0.037 with  $F(1,167) = 4.4$  with partial  $\eta^2$  (eta-square) = 0.026 and observed power = 0.550.

The main effect of gender is insignificant as the test statistic (p-value) is 0.329 which is  $> 0.05$  with  $F(1,167) = 0.957$  with partial  $\eta^2$  (eta-square) = 0.006 and observed power = 0.163.

The test statistic (p-value) of interaction effect between country and gender is 0.898 which is  $> 0.05$ , therefore there is an insignificant interaction effect with  $F(1,167) = 0.016$  with partial  $\eta^2$  (eta-square) = 0.000 and observed power = 0.052. The power and the effect size of the main effects and interaction effect were significantly weak.

The following graph depicts the Mean of Psychological Well-being (Y-Axis) according to the country (X-Axis) separated by genders.



*Figure 22: Mean of Psychological Well-being based on country and gender*

From the graph the mean is highest for the female population in both countries and lowest for the male population. As the lines are parallel to each other it is noticeable that there is no significant interaction among the two independent variables and main effect exists according to the country.

#### 4.2.1.1 Overall View on Psychological Well-being

The researcher analysed the data of questions 14, 16 and 19 of psychological well-being to examine the overall psychological well-being of participants. Figure 23 shows the overall view of psychological well-being in both countries in terms of the control they have over the important things in life, workload management and work hours productivity.

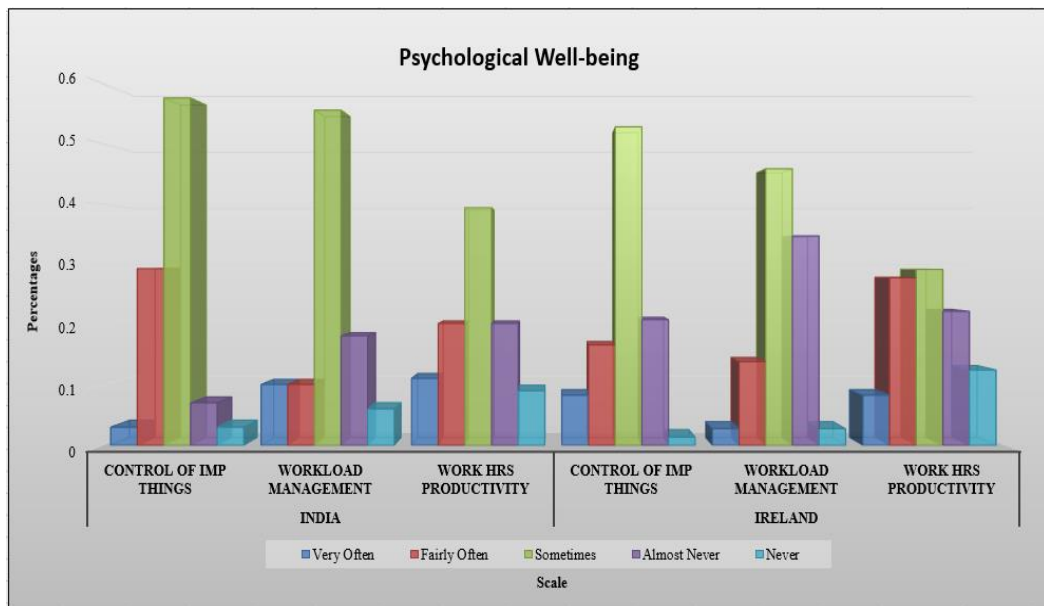


Figure 23: Overall view on Psychological Well-being

#### Work Demand and Pressure

As seen in the bar chart in Figure 23, out of the total samples in both countries, around 55% employees indicated ‘Sometimes’ they were unable to control the important things in their lives, whereas 2% indicated they were able to control the important things in their lives. In Ireland 77% employees indicated they were unable to control the important things compared to almost 89% employees in India. Overall, in both countries 51% of the employees were ‘Sometimes’ able to manage their workload whereas 4% were ‘Never’ able to manage their work. In Ireland, 62% employees indicated that they were able to manage the workload compared to 77% employees in India.

## Work Hours and Productivity

When it comes to knowing that employees need to work extra hours to be more productive, the data presented in Figure 22 shows overall in both countries 35% of employees stated ‘Sometimes’ they felt they need to work more hours to be more productive, whereas almost 9% stated ‘Very Often’ they felt they need to work more hours to be productive and 10% felt they do not need to work more to be more productive.

Whereas 70% employees in India and 65% employees in Ireland feel they need to work more hours to be more productive.

### 4.2.2 Personal Well-being and Identity

To evaluate if there is a correlation between gender and stress levels, and between country and stress levels the Chi-square test of Independence was conducted examining the data of personal well-being questions 26 and 27.

The hypotheses to test these variables were as follows

- H0: There is no relationship between the two variables.
- H1: There is a relationship between the two variables.

### Chi-Square test based on Country and Stress level

The following tables shows the Chi-Square test results based on gender and stress level.

Table 6: Chi-Square test based on Country and Stress Level

<b>Country * Stress Disorder Cross tabulation</b>					
			<b>Stress Disorder</b>		<b>Total</b>
			<b>No Stress</b>	<b>Have Stress</b>	
<b>Country</b>	<b>India</b>	Count	86	11	97
		Expected Count	85.8	11.2	97
		% within Country	88.7%	11.3%	100.0%
		% within Stress Disorder	59.3%	57.9%	59.1%
	<b>Ireland</b>	Count	59	8	67
		Expected Count	59.2	7.8	67
		% within Country	88.1%	11.9%	100.0%
		% within Stress Disorder	40.7%	42.1%	40.9%
<b>Total</b>	Count	145	19	164	
	Expected Count	145.0	19.0	164.0	
	% within Country	88.4%	11.6%	100.0%	
	% within Stress Disorder	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	0.014 <sup>a</sup>	1	0.906		
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	0.000	1	1.000		
Likelihood Ratio	0.014	1	0.906		
Fisher's Exact Test				1.000	0.547
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.014	1	0.906		
N of Valid Cases	164				

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.76.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

From the results obtained in the above tables, the data revealed that the Pearson Chi-Square p-value is 0.906 which is greater than 0.05 so the null hypothesis has been rejected. Therefore, according to the Chi-Square analysis, there is no relationship between the country and stress level of employees.

### Chi-Square test based on Gender and Stress Level

The following tables show the Chi-Square test results based on gender and stress level.

Table 7: Chi-Square test based on Gender and Stress Level

Gender * Stress Disorder Cross tabulation					
			Stress Disorder		Total
			No Stress	Have Stress	
Gender	Male	Count	86	12	98
		Expected Count	86.6	11.4	98.0
		% within Gender	87.8%	12.2%	100.0%
		% within Stress Disorder	59.3%	63.2%	59.8%
	Female	Count	59	7	66
		Expected Count	58.4	7.6	66.0
		% within Gender	89.4%	10.6%	100.0%
		% within Stress Disorder	40.7%	36.8%	40.2%
Total	Count	145	19	164	
	Expected Count	145.0	19.0	164.0	
	% within Gender	88.4%	11.6%	100.0%	
	% within Stress Disorder	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	0.103 <sup>a</sup>	1	0.748		
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	0.005	1	0.942		
Likelihood Ratio	0.104	1	0.747		
Fisher's Exact Test				0.808	0.476
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.103	1	0.749		
N of Valid Cases	164				

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.65.  
b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

From the results obtained in the above tables; the data revealed that the Pearson Chi-Square p-value is 0.748 which is greater than 0.05 so the null hypothesis has been rejected. Therefore, according to the Chi-Square analysis, there is no relationship between the gender and stress level.

### Stress Disorders based on Gender and Country

The bar chart in Figure 24 presents the percentages of employees who suffer stress related disorders based on gender and country which resulted from examining the data related to question 26 of the survey.

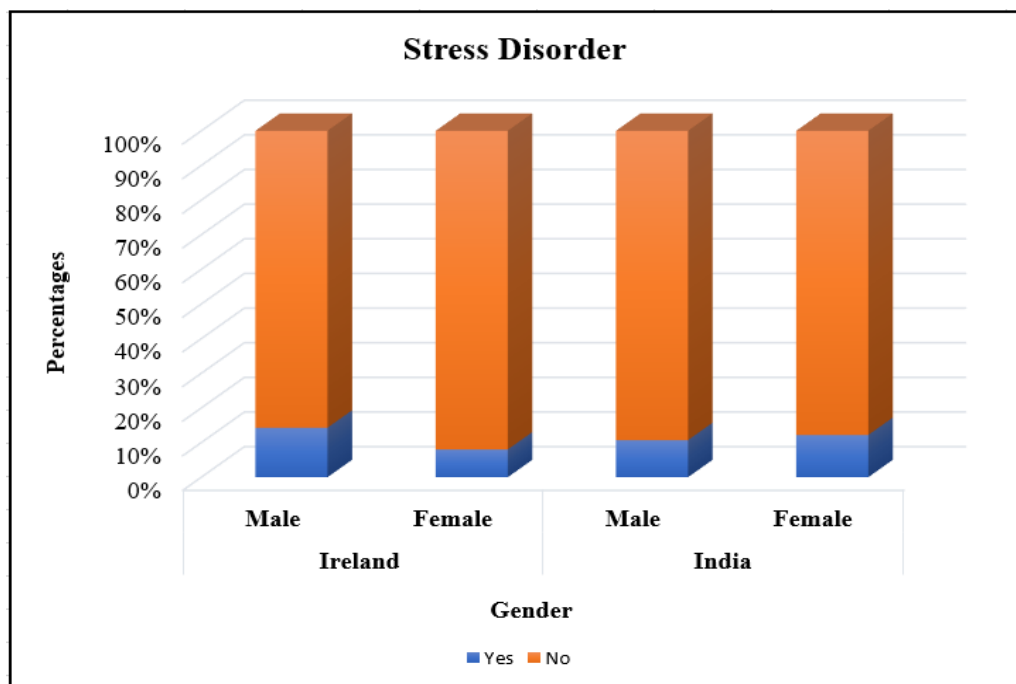
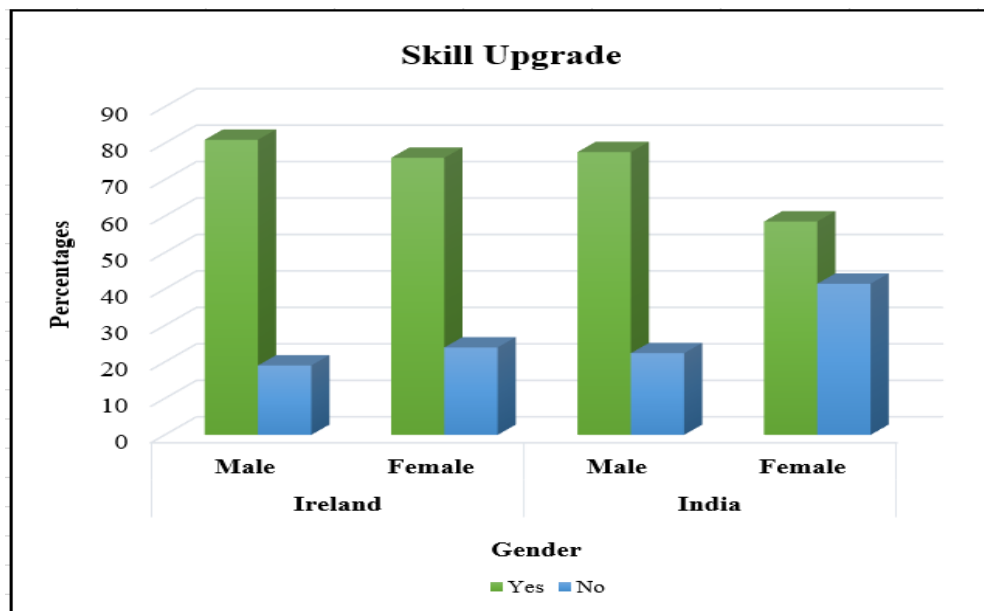


Figure 24: Stress disorders based on gender in Ireland and India

Out of the total participants in Ireland 14% male employees suffer stress related disorders compared to 8% female employees. Whereas, in India 12% females suffer stress disorders compared to 10% male employees. In the earlier conducted Chi-square analysis, there was no significant association seen between the gender and stress level, however the researcher found a non-statistical significance between gender and stress levels. The non-significant results show the stress disorders are high within males in Ireland and females in India.

### **Skill Upgrade Ability Country wise**

The following bar chart in Figure 25 illustrates the percentages of male and female employees in both countries who feel that they can upgrade their skillsets in their current jobs.



*Figure 25: Skill upgrade ability based on gender and country*

Out of the total participants in Ireland, 80% males compared to 76% female employees can upgrade their skillsets in their current jobs. Whereas 77% males in India compared to around 58% female employees indicated that they can upgrade their skillsets in their current jobs. Amongst both the countries, Ireland indicate higher percentage of employees who feel they can upgrade their skillsets compared to the responses of employees in India.

## Personal Well-being - Skill and Need Dimensions

To evaluate the personal well-being, skill and need dimensions are the core of the Activity Configuration in the Life model discussed in Chapter 2 of this research, the data of questions 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25 were analysed to test this variable.

Figure 26 illustrates the activities of personal well-being across gender in India.

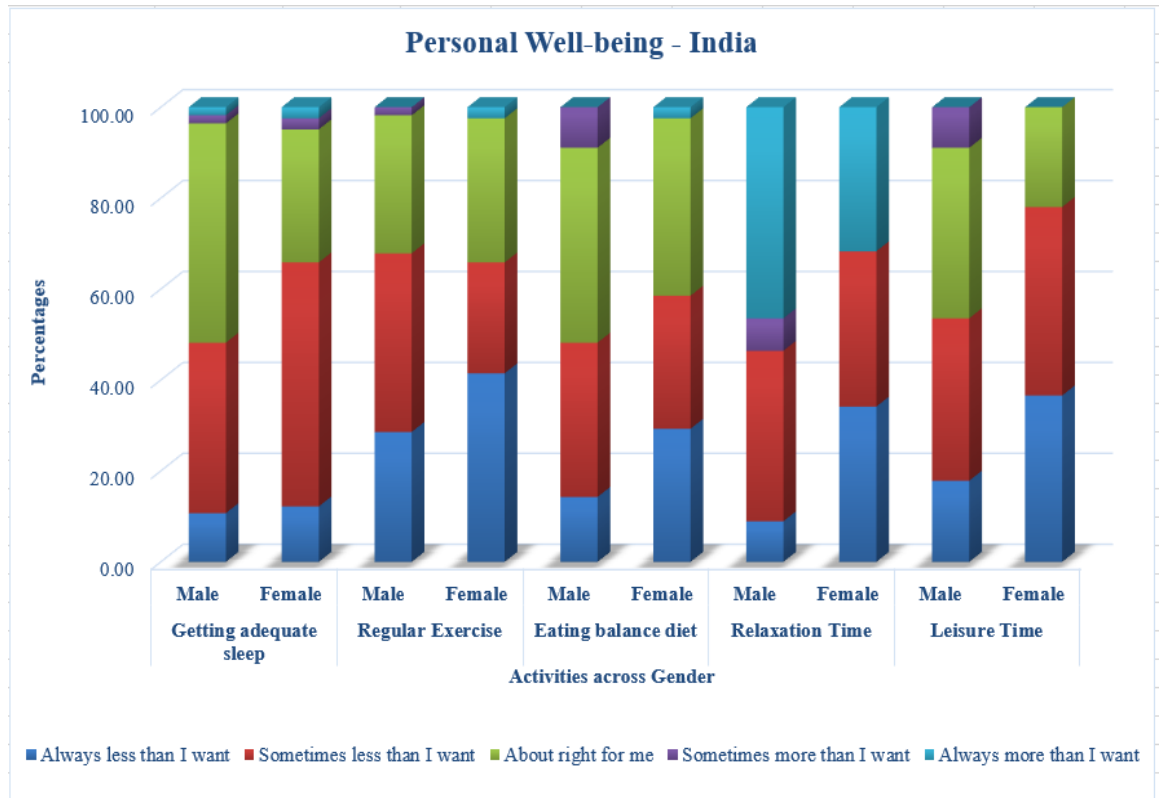


Figure 26: Stacked column chart with activities of personal well-being across gender

Of the total participants in India, following are the observations as per activities carried out by genders.

**Getting adequate sleep** - 48% males get right amount of sleep compared to 29% females. Whereas almost 10% males and 12% females are deprived of adequate sleep.

**Regular Exercise** - Almost 30% of males and females get the right amount of regular exercise. However, there is a high percentage of females almost 41% who do not get regular exercise compared to 28% males.

**Eating a balanced diet** - 42% males and 39% females have a balanced diet, and 33% males which is the highest have less balanced diet compared to females.

**Relaxation Time** - 46% males have more relaxing time compared to 31% females. However, 34% females being the highest have no time to relax.

**Leisure Time** - Likewise, 41% females have less leisure time. Overall, the relaxation or leisure time percentages for females are low compared to males.

Figure 27 illustrates the activities of personal well-being across genders in Ireland.

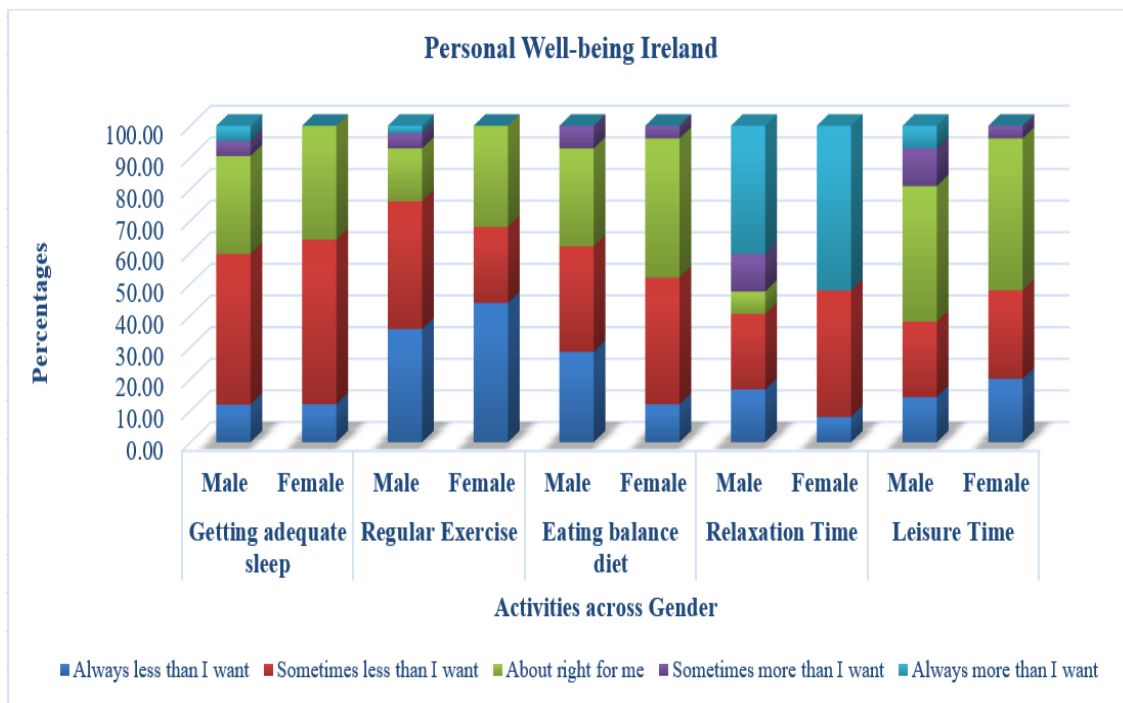


Figure 27: Personal well-being activities across genders

Of the total participants in Ireland, following are the observations of the activities carried out by genders.

**Getting adequate sleep** - 30% males get right amount of sleep compared to 36% females. Whereas almost 47% males and 52% females are deprived of adequate sleep sometimes.

**Regular Exercise** - Almost 16% males and 32% females get the right amount of regular exercise. However, there is a high percentage of females almost 44% who do not get regular exercise compared to 35% males.

**Eating a balanced diet** - 30% males and 44% females have a balanced diet, however 40% females which is the highest have less balanced diet compared to 33% males.

**Relaxation Time** - Only 7% males have about right time to relax compared to 0% females. And 16% males which is the highest have no time to relax compared to 8% females.

**Leisure Time** – In contrast to the above, 42% males compared to 48% females have about right leisure time. Overall, the relaxation time is less for males and leisure time is less for females in Ireland.

#### 4.2.3 Family Well-being

To determine and analyse that employees with children experience greater stress leading to increased work to family conflicts affecting their WLB compared to employees without children. Data gathered for family wellbeing questions 30 and 31 were examined to test this objective.

#### Work-to-Family Conflict

Figure 28 shows the family wellbeing of participants with children and without children measured in terms of work-to-family conflict.

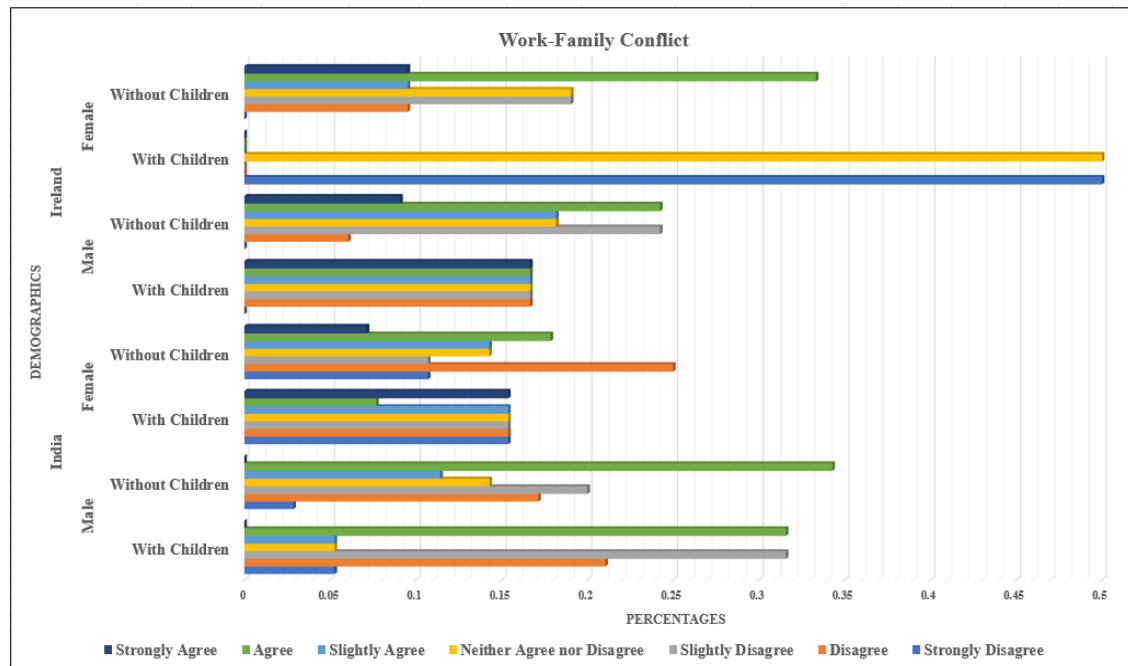


Figure 28: Work-to-Family conflict on care duties of employees in both countries

Out of the total participants in both countries, 50% employees with children and 42% employees without children in Ireland have indicated that they have about the right balance to adjust their working schedule to attend family needs. With 3% employees without children and 25% employees with children indicated they have work-family conflicts where they find difficulty in adjusting their work to cater to the family needs. It is evident that the percentage of employees with children experience higher work-family conflicts compared to the ones without children.

In India 37% of employees with children and almost 42% without children have indicated that they have the right balance to adjust their work to cater to family needs. However, in comparison to Ireland, 50% employees with children have indicated sometimes they have difficulty to cater to the family needs.

### Family-to-Work Conflict

The stacked column chart in Figure 29 shows the results of family-to-work conflict of employees with children and without children in both countries.

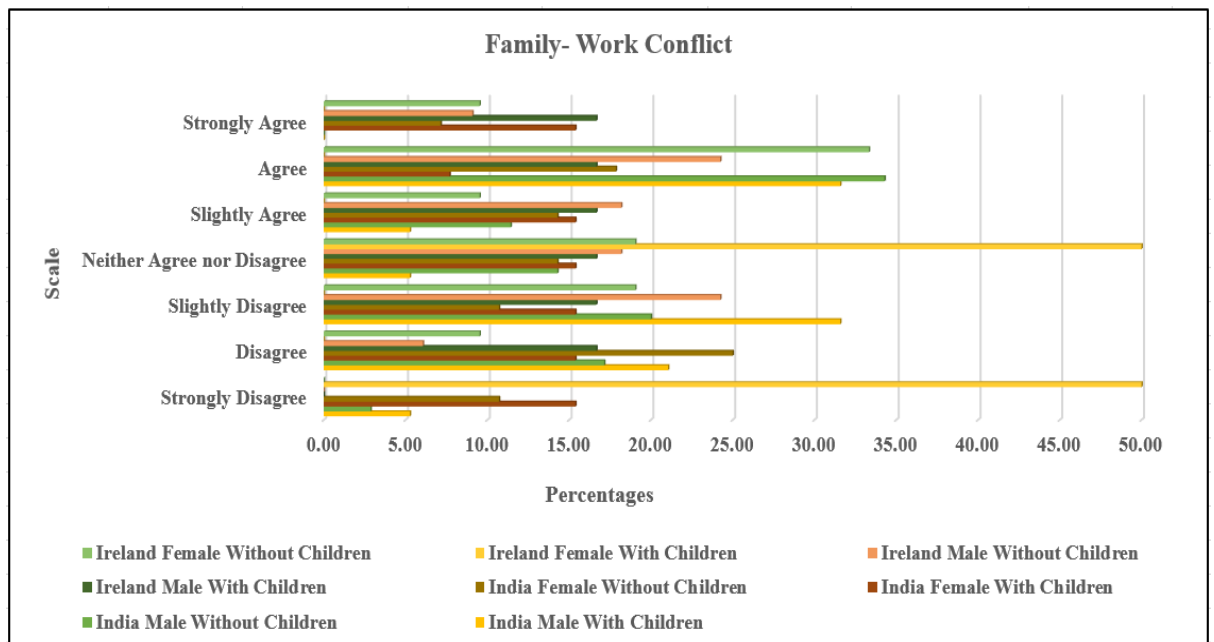


Figure 29: Family-to-Work conflict on care duties of employees in both countries

58% male employees in India and 33% male employees in Ireland with children have disagreed towards family-work conflicts due to care duties. Whereas 37% male employees in India and 50% male employees in Ireland, with children, agree towards family-work conflicts due to childcare duties.

46% female employees in India and 50% female employees in Ireland, with children, have disagreed towards family-work conflicts. And 38% female employees in India and 0% female employees in Ireland, with children, have agreed towards family-work conflict.

#### 4.2.4 Work-Life Balance Initiatives by the Organization

##### Organization Initiative Practice

In this section the data of questions 32, 33 and 34 were analysed to inspect the organization initiative practices.

The pie charts seen in Figure 30 outlines the percentages of employees who have discerned the state of their organizations initiatives to balance an employee's work and life.

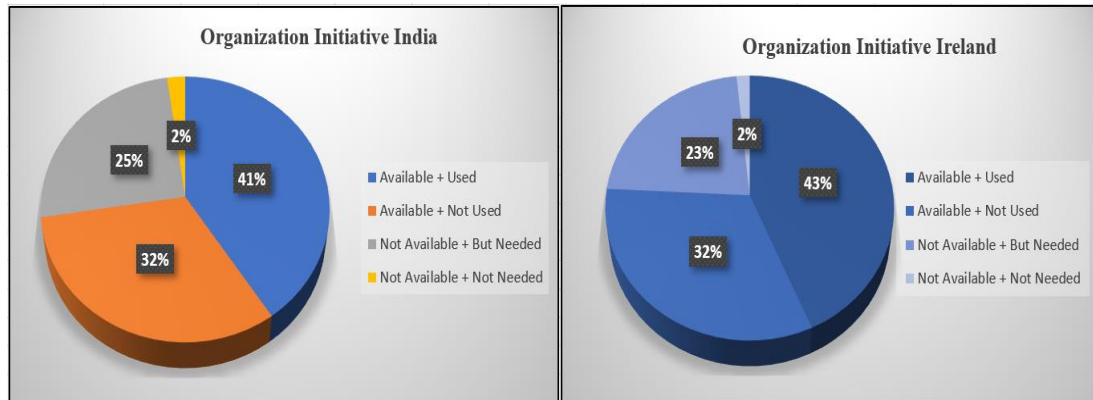


Figure 30: Organizations initiatives in both countries

The percentages of availability and usage of initiatives in organizations amongst the two countries show 2% difference, with Ireland being at 43% and India at 41%. 32% of employees stated there were no initiatives in their organizations and were not needed to balance their work and life. However, 23% employees in Ireland and 25% employees in India stated no initiatives were available but were needed in their organizations.

##### Work Hours Satisfaction

The line chart in Figure 31 displays the percentages of workers in both countries who are satisfied and not satisfied with their regular working hours.

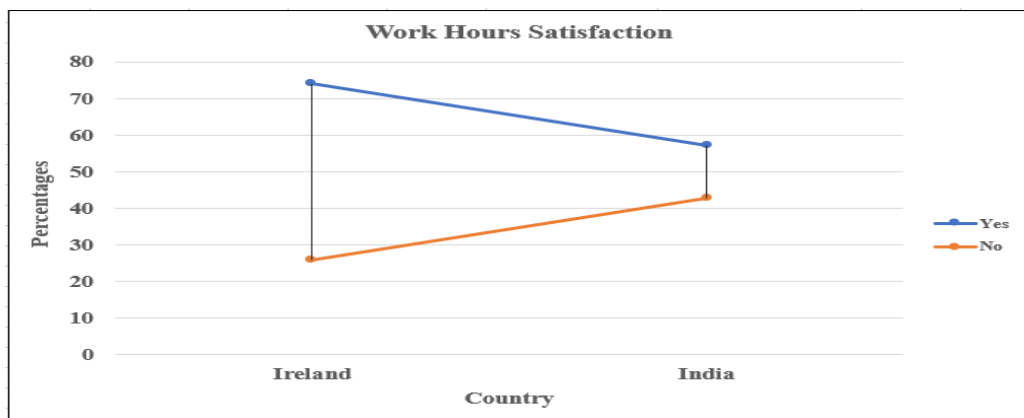


Figure 31: Work hours satisfaction in both countries

Out of the total participants, 74% employees in Ireland and 57% employees in India are satisfied with their work hours. Whereas, 25% employees in Ireland and 42% employees in India are not satisfied with their work hours. Overall, work hours satisfaction of employees within Ireland is higher compared to employees in India.

### Work Flexibility

The chart in Figure 32 displays the work flexibility of the employees in India and Ireland.

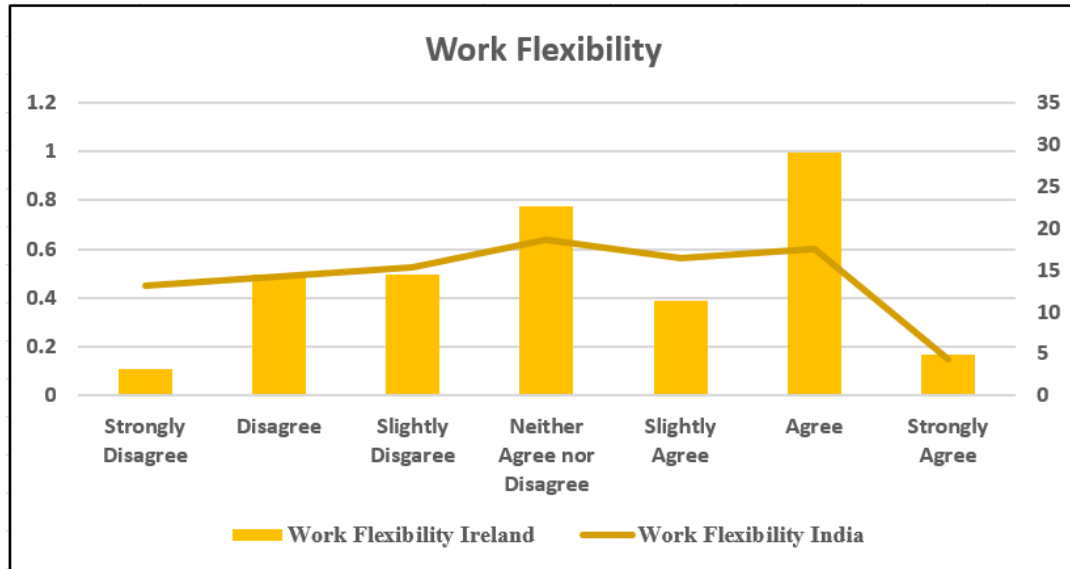


Figure 32: Work Flexibility in India and Ireland

It is observed that the employees in Ireland have more work flexibility as compared to India. Around 45% of employees agree that they have work flexibility in their organisation in Ireland and 38% agree on the same in India. 32% of employees in Ireland and 42% employees in India disagree, that they have flexibility at work. The percentage of employees who neither agree nor disagree on this are 23% and 19% in Ireland and India respectively.

### Hypothesis 2: There is a difference in WLB of employees based on their designation level.

To test this hypothesis questions 15 and 20 related to psychological well-being were analysed. The analysis of the impact on WLB based on an employee's job level in the organisation is conducted using the One-way ANOVA technique. The comparison of three levels namely, senior, mid and junior level is conducted using One-way ANOVA

test that mainly compares the independent groups according to the variations in the means of these groups.

Table 8: Descriptive Statistics based on employee job levels

<b>Descriptive Statistics</b>			
<b>Work-Life Balance</b>			
<b>Job Level</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Junior Level	53	4.74	1.389
Mid-level	92	4.78	1.282
Senior Level	26	4.62	1.329
Total	171	4.74	1.317

Table 8 illustrates that the average mean of all three groups is nearly the same. The SD is lowest for mid-level employees and highest for junior level. The number of observations is largest among the mid-level employees and lowest for the senior level.

**Assumptions for One-Way ANOVA:**

To run the one-way ANOVA test, the data should meet the fundamental assumptions of the model as follows

- ✓ There should be no significant outliers in the data.
- ✓ There must be at least one independent variable with 2 or more levels with nominal or ordinal data values.
- ✓ There must be at least one scale dependent variable.
- ✓ There must be independent observations for each variable.
- ✓ The data must be approximately normally distributed.
- ✓ It should meet the condition of Homogeneity of Variances.

Test of Normality was conducted along with the histograms for all three designation levels to determine whether the data was normally distributed and to check if there were any outliers. Due to the unique feature of robustness of ANOVA, even if the data is not normally distributed still a one-way ANOVA analysis is performed, violating the normality and outlier’s assumption (Blanca *et al.*, 2017).

Table 9: Test of Normality on Designation Levels

Work-Life Balance	Designation Level	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
	Junior Level	0.198	53	0.000	0.923	53	0.002
	Mid-level	0.186	92	0.000	0.939	92	0.000
	Senior Level	0.178	26	0.033	0.936	26	0.110

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 9 shows the tests of normality on designation levels. Where Shapiro-Wilk normality test results are preferred over Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test, as the past literature proves that the results obtained by the Shapiro-Wilk test are more powerful as compared to the other normality tests (Saculinggan and Balase, 2013).

As per the decisions rule of Shapiro-Wilk normality test, the test statistic (p-value) is  $> 0.05$  for only senior level group (0.110) and therefore the null hypothesis of data being normal is accepted for the senior level employees. For the junior and mid-level groups the test statistic (p-value) is  $< 0.05$  (0.002 and 0.000 respectively) so the null hypothesis has been rejected and concluded that the data is not normally distributed.

Following histograms for junior and mid-level designations explains the spread of data for this hypothesis.

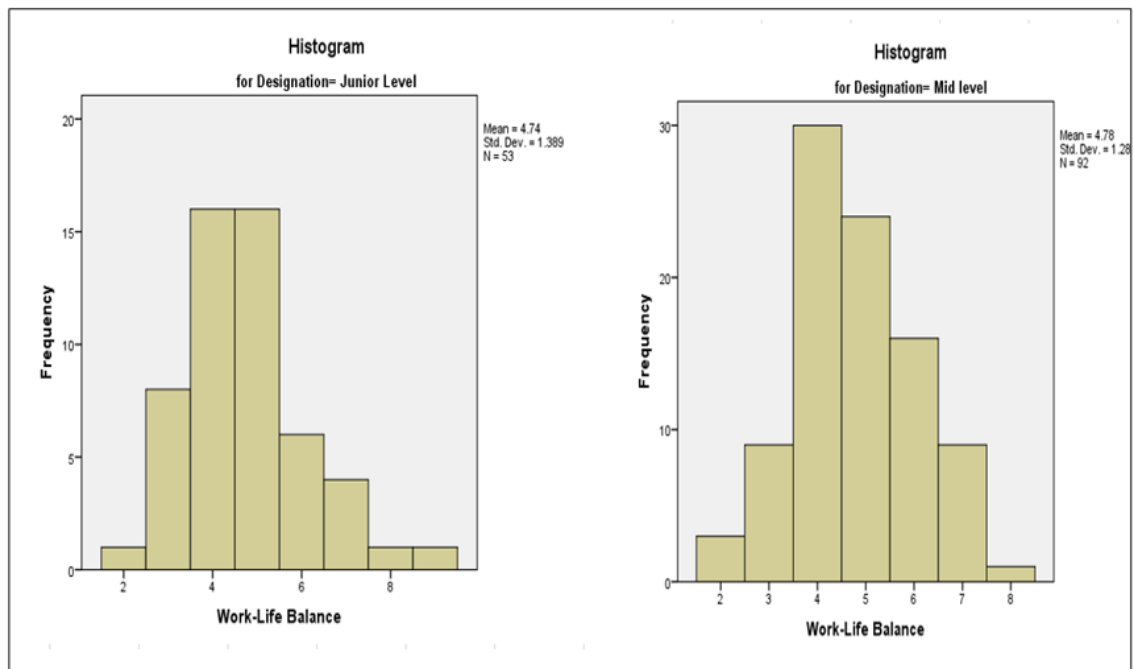


Figure 33: Data distribution for Junior and Mid-level employees

Following histograms for senior-level designation explains the spread of data for this hypothesis.



Figure 34: Data distribution for Senior-Level employees

From the above three histograms it can be inferred that the data for junior level and mid-level groups are not normally distributed however, for senior level employees the data is approximately normally distributed.

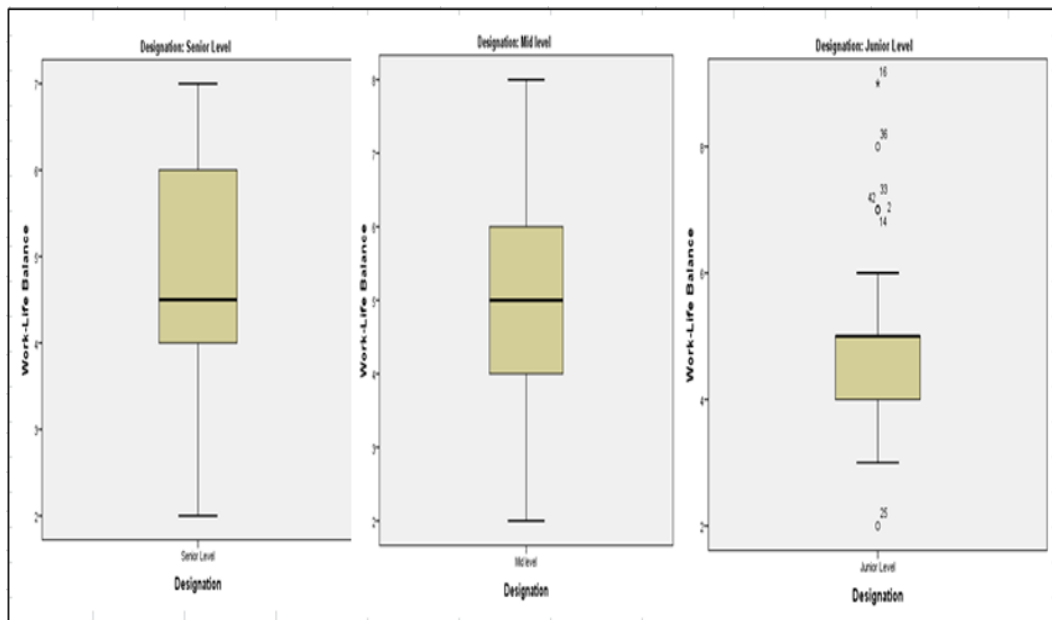


Figure 35: Box plots based on designation levels

From the graphs plotted in Figure 35, the senior and mid-level employee's data has no significant outliers and therefore meets the no outlier assumption, while junior level employee's data do have few outliers and does not meet assumptions for the test.

Table 10 shows the results of Levene's Test for homogeneity of variances.

*Table 10: Levene's Test for Homogeneity of Variances*

<b>Work-Life Balance</b>			
<b>Levene Statistic</b>	<b>df1</b>	<b>df2</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
0.037	2	168	0.963

From the results obtained in Table 10, the p-value is 0.963 which is more than 0.05 and so the null hypothesis of equal variances cannot be rejected and therefore, all three employee level groups have met the assumption of homogeneity of variance.

Table 11 represents the One-Way ANOVA analysis performed to analyse the impact on WLB of employees based on their designations.

*Table 11: One-way ANOVA Analysis*

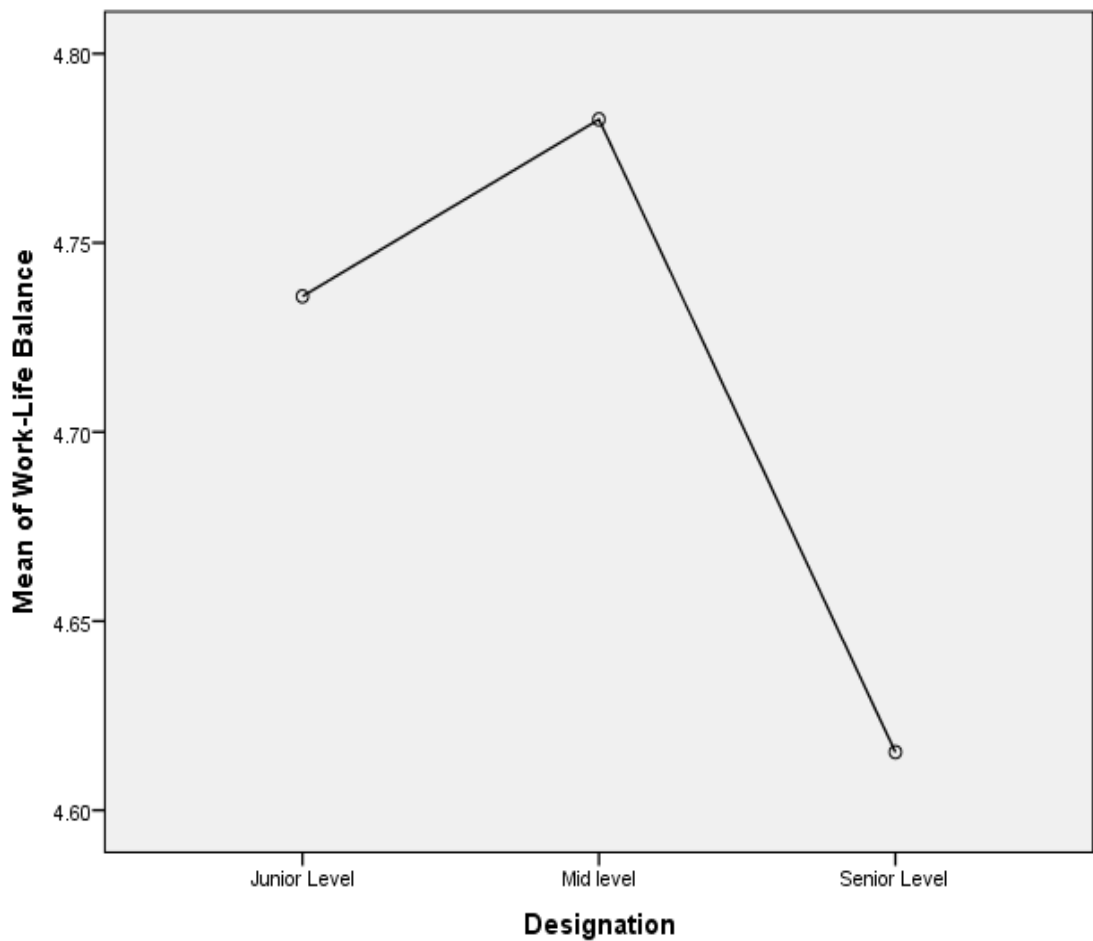
<b>ANOVA</b>						
<b>Work-Life Balance</b>						
<b>Group Categorization</b>	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Observed Power<sup>b</sup></b>
Between Groups	0.57	2	0.285	0.16	0.85	0.075
Within Groups	294.108	168	1.751			
Total	294.678	170				

The hypothesis for One-Way ANOVA is as follows:

- H0: There exists no difference in WLB according to the employee designation.
- H1: There exists difference in WLB according to the employee designation.

A one-way between groups ANOVA was performed to examine the impact on WLB of the employees' as per their designations in the organization. The surveyed participants were divided into three groups (senior-level, mid-level, and junior-level) according to their designations at work. The Means and SDs for the WLB are as seen in Table 11. From the results, the data reveals no statistically significant difference in the WLB of the employees according to their designation:  $F(2,170) = 0.163$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.850$  and  $\text{observed power} = 0.075$ .

Following graph provides the Mean of Work-Life Balance (Y-axis) according to the Employee designation (X-axis).



*Figure 36: Mean plot of WLB based on employee designation levels*

Graph reflects that the mean is highest for the mid-level employees, which is evident as the number of participants in the survey are highest in this group. The mean is lowest for senior-level employees.

### **4.3 Findings and Discussion**

In this section, the researcher presents and discusses the findings, and compares the findings with the past literature. The researcher will eventually demonstrate how those findings will contribute to the benefits of WLB to organizations and the overall development of a country.

#### *4.3.1 Objective of Analysis*

The objective of this analysis is to determine the impacts of work and life balance on the well-being of IT workers in India and Ireland. Psychological well-being, personal well-being, family well-being and organization initiative are the four main variables measuring the WLB. This research aims at analysing how the correlations between these variables could establish a connection between the WLB and the well-being of individuals. Two hypotheses were proposed and tested using Two-way ANOVA, Chi-Square test and One-way ANOVA.

##### *4.3.1.1 Psychological Well-being*

This was the first variable defining an individual's WLB. Findings from this research show the comparisons of India and Ireland's work pressure and demand that leads to distress and concludes their overall well-being. The results demonstrated two things. First the work pressure and demand of work is higher in India as compared to Ireland. Second, higher percentage of employees in India feel they need to work more hours to be more productive in comparison to Ireland. High work pressure, demand of work and the need to work more hours to be more productive shows unmet skill level of success with time management in order to reach targets and a regeneration that contributes to inconsistency. (Matuska, 2008). Clearly the overall psychological wellbeing of Indian employees is poor in comparison to Irish IT employees.

The results in this research are in line with the previous study by Matuska (2008) which shows the correlation between psychological health as a skill and need dimension with high equivalence resulting into a life balance by emphasizing the connection between WFC, FWC and psychological distress (Netemeyer *et al.*, 1996 cited in Kluczyk, 2013). The two-way ANOVA results show that there is a significant effect country wise on WLB, which means that the WLB of the employees in India and Ireland differs significantly.

##### *4.3.1.2 Personal Well-being and Identity*

This was the second variable defining an individual's WLB. Findings from non-statistical analysis in this research have shown relation between genders and countries towards personal health in terms of stress disorder. The results confirm that India and Ireland both indicate moderate levels of stress disorders, moreover males in Ireland and females in India experience more stress disorders. However, the results obtained from

inferential statistics i.e. Chi-square show no degree of association of stress level with country and gender.

The current study has also shown the skill dimension upgrade ability in both countries, from the results obtained employees in Ireland have more opportunities to upgrade their skills compared to India and in both countries male employees can upgrade their skills in comparison to female employees. Thus, getting an opportunity to upgrade the skillsets is a positive trait which contributes to enhance the personal wellbeing of an individual. This result ties well with the results obtained by the study of Matuska (2008) which states that the structural model for life balance depends on skill and need dimension which predicts that lower the stress and higher the need satisfaction contributes to positive personal wellbeing.

With respect to the need dimension representing the measure of the time spent in their daily activities, in both countries' women have indicated less personal well-being compared to men. From the findings we can conclude that employees in India have lower personal wellbeing compared to Irish IT employees.

#### *4.3.1.3 Family Well-being*

Family well-being is the third variable in this study. Findings from this research have shown that in terms of whether employees can adjust their working schedule to attend to their family needs in both countries, employees in India with children experience higher work to family conflicts compared the ones without children. The findings obtained for Indian IT employees are in accordance with findings reported by past studies of Frone *et al.*(1992); Greenhaus & Beutell (1985), which states that employees with dependent duties such as elder care and children experience higher work-family conflicts than employees without such care. Further children have been recognized as one of the more impacting factors on work-family conflict as per Grzywacz & Marks (2000). However, in comparison to Irish employees with children, Indian employees with children experience lower work to family conflict.

With respect to the family-to-work conflicts such that family-related strain does not interfere with an employee's ability to perform job-related duties, higher percentage of employees in India have indicated conflicts in comparison to Irish employees. By comparing the genders in both countries, the results show that higher percentages of female employees have experienced this conflict compared to males.

#### 4.3.1.4 Organization Initiative

Interestingly a novel finding from this study was that both countries are remarkably same on their thought of initiatives being 'available and not been used' by employees. Secondly, findings show that a small number of employees in both countries indicated that there are 'no initiatives by organization and that they are needed'. The researcher recognizes from the many studies and personal experience of being associated with IT sector that policies are mandatory and are wide in variety laid in line with organization objectives. So, a small number of this findings does not surprise the author. Organizations see them as part of legislation that needs to be complied with, others make use of them as tools to achieve organizational objectives and as part of their strategy to recruit and retain high quality staff (CEB, 2008).

As per the researcher the first novel finding could mean two things. Firstly, either the initiatives are available, and the employees are not using them out of their own choice or being unaware of it (Maslow's theory of wants and needs). Secondly, it could be that initiatives are available, but they are present only for the sake of organizations being compliant with the employment legislations and are not practically implementable. This assumption made by the author, is supported partly in this study by the findings of leave policy in India (Summary of Open-ended questions section) stating Indians have leave policies present but cannot avail them as per their needs due to environmental pressure most of the time. That there is always a lack of 'relation' between inherent problems at the macro, corporate and individual levels (Maxwell and McDougall, 2004).

Overall, India experiences the issue slightly more in comparison to Ireland. In addition, Indian employees are not satisfied with their working hours and experience low work flexibility.

The results from One-way ANOVA show that there is no significant difference on the impact of WLB on employees based on their designations, therefore hypothesis 2 was not supported and it contradicts with the study of Cohen (1997, cited in Cavanaugh *et al.*, 2000) which concluded that the senior level (managers) face higher stress levels.

#### *4.3.1.5 Summary of Qualitative Data*

This section of the research explores to understand the extent of the perception of their work and life which is in line with research philosophy detailed in Chapter 3.5. In this section the researcher analyzes the open-ended questions data of the survey.

##### *4.3.1.5.1 Perception of Long Work Hours*

The results of the research showed that on an average Indian employee work 40-50 hours per week compared to Ireland where the average working hours per week is 35-40 hours. The ideal preferred working hours stated by employees in India is between 35-40 hours whereas employees in Ireland stated the ideal preferred hours is 30-40.

The results of this study now provides evidence to the study of Voydanoff (2004) who claims that work-related expectations that have been attributed to family-work tension include long working hours and excessive working hours without notice, work insecurity, and work pressure. Thus, contributing to the work-related factors to the levels of conflict. In addition, the results of the present study show India has long work hours and high family-to-work conflicts which is in line with the study of Voydanoff (2004).

##### *4.3.1.5.2 Adequate Sleep Hours*

The results of open-ended data in this study show that on an average Indian employee sleeps 7 to 8 hours whereas in Ireland the average sleep hours is between 5 to 7 hours.

##### *4.3.1.5.3 Perception of Involvement to Personal and Family well-being*

The results of the questions ‘How do you spend quality time with family and friends?’ and ‘How do you spend time outside work hours?’ was particularly to understand the extent to which they involve themselves towards family or personal enhancement respectively.

From the detailed review of the responses, key findings emerged such that Indian employees showed dimensions of collectivism preferring activities that involved group interests for both questions. Whereas the Irish employees favoured the activities with relative importance to individual or taking care of themselves. Following were the responses that showed significant dimensions of individualism and collectivism considering the question on how they spend their time outside work hours.

Indian employee – *“Just being with family during these uncertain times is a blessing in itself! Even if we’re all busy with our work during the day, we spend our evenings together after work. Asking/telling each other about how the day went, cooking together, playing some games, watching movies/series, doing some random activity like karaoke, dance & more. Can’t go out freely these days to meet friends so we generally video call at night.”*

Irish employee – *“Studying to sharp my skills and acquiring new ones, playing video-games, watching movies and tv series on streaming services, playing acoustic guitar”*

The results of this study are in line with the study of Celikkol *et al.* (2019); Hofstede’s (1980) and (Richard Ball, 2001) showing Individualism and Collectivism and its relation to the industrialization.

#### *4.3.1.5.4 Perception of Organization Initiatives*

The results show that majority of the organizations in India conduct fun at work activities, cultural events, team outings, day care and mindfulness and fitness sessions. Whereas in Ireland organizations have concentrated more on flexible work hours, work from home, compressed work week in summers, social events and career workshops, charity runs, mindfulness sessions and monthly excursions.

With the leave policies in India, many employees stated concerns that the policies are on paper, and that there are restrictions in taking them as hierarchical approvals are needed. Overall, the leave policy seemed considerable but there are employees who have stated they would prefer few amendments in the policy to make it more usable. Whereas the employees in Ireland many stated that they were quite happy with the leave policy and that it was a fair process in place with no peculiar concerns.

The qualitative data of organization initiatives in both countries are almost similar except the leave policies as seen here. The quantitative analysis gave a holistic picture of the issues of organization initiatives and the qualitative data gathered by open-ended questions further identified the specific issues of ‘leave policy’ of the organization initiatives. Therefore, the researcher recognizes the importance of open-ended or qualitative data within the survey to meet the research goal in-depth than the quantitative method alone.

#### 4.3.1.5.5 *Participants Suggestion*

The suggestions provided by participants could be useful for future studies to broaden the scope by doing more in-depth research on the initiatives by organizations and government towards employment policies in IT.

Few interesting comments by Indian employees provided were as follows

*“Do add health care related initiatives for the employees (considering the current pandemic). How does a company handle this situation for the employees”.*

Although this study was not based on the time of crisis, the effect on WLB at these periods would be important to capture in future studies.

In addition, another response from an Indian employee was to *“Conduct a surveys exploitation of employees, need for IT union in India”.*

Equally, the suggestions provided by employees in Ireland highlights the important factor of environment context as below.

*“Maybe questions about what transport you get to work, how long it takes from home to work and work to home. How many people are in your team or you are the only one who do what you do in the company. If you speak with them often at work or you work mostly of the time by yourself. If you have any perks in your job. If you have little things for free in your office like fruits, coffee, etc. In my humble opinion those questions are all about work balance life.”*

## **4.4 Conclusion**

This study focussed on the differences in WLB between India and Ireland. One out of two hypotheses established for this research was partially supported. The findings from the tests are consistent with past studies for psychological wellbeing, personal wellbeing and family wellbeing however were contradictory to the past studies for senior level managers facing higher stress levels.

This study identified demographic aspects impacting WLB. The findings of this study indicate negative results between WLB and the well-being of workers in developing country. In specific, negative impacts of psychological health, family to work conflicts, work satisfaction and work flexibility. Therefore, lower work satisfaction may lead to increased employee frustration with the company, lower commitments, productivity,

and lower family satisfaction can affect performance at work (Hill, 2005). On a broader level, impacting the overall economy of the country.

From the findings of this study the researcher concludes that Irish IT employees experienced better WLB compared to Indian employees which the author infers that the employment laws in developed country is more robust, supportive of the employees and practically implemented compared to developing country.

However, the author wishes to throw light on certain observations which might influence the WLB according to the country.

Firstly, the researcher observed that work to family conflict is lower in India compared to Ireland and the researcher identifies that the major contributing factor in this could be the domestic help services which are easily available and cheap in India which is a drawback in Ireland. This observation is consistent with the prior studies by Stock *et al.*, 2015; Allen *et al.*, 2015 that shows the relation between the support individuals receive towards home duties in collectivist and individualist cultures and its impact on work to family conflicts.

The second observation with respect to family to work conflicts is, higher in India in comparison to Ireland and the researcher relates this to the family structures, community demands in both countries in addition to the long work hours evident in the results of this study. Such that Indians live in joint families compared to more population of Irish living nuclear, community pressure due to cultural differences which is more evident in Indian communities compared to Irish has largely impacted the WLB. In collectivist cultures, stronger family ties leads to family-to-work interventions resulting into family-to-work conflicts (Allen *et al.*, 2015).

The third observation by the researcher in regards to stress disorder is that, Indian female employees face higher stress disorder compared to Indian male employees, this finding can be related to the fact that female employees are doing dual duties are more occupied with family responsibilities which is in line with the study of Ashforth *et al.* (2000) and Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimensions. The author was unable to make this comparison for Ireland as the female respondents were less in comparison to male respondents.

Lastly, the researcher identified that population can be a major impacting factor in the IT employment policy making. For example, during pandemic time the IT employees in Ireland who were laid off were supported by the Irish government with prescribed jobseekers' allowance which is not possible in India due to the large population size.

## **5 Concluding Thoughts on the Contribution of this Research, its Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research**

### **5.1 Implications of Findings for the Research Questions**

The findings derived from the primary data produced some interesting results discussed in the earlier chapters. The findings of this study have a variety of realistic consequences in both countries that will help workers, businesses, executives and organizations providing higher awareness of the value of a balanced compromise of work and life needs and the impact on people's well-being and on the success of IT organizations.

From the employee's point of view, this study gives a clearer description of the importance of managing employment and family aspirations in identifying environments that have a detrimental impact on their well-being and recommends access to family-friendly services that can improve their job and family happiness and overall well-being.

From an organization's viewpoint, this study has provided managers with a greater look into the interaction between the WLB and the well-being of workers and the influence it has on the overall success of workers and business. This knowledge is valuable in the creation and execution of WLB techniques for organizations.

### **5.2 Contributions and Limitations of the Research**

#### *5.2.1 Contributions and Strengths of the Research*

The principal contribution of this research is the cross-national comparison of the impacts on WLB of IT employees in India (developing) and Ireland (developed) countries which has not been conducted in any of the past studies. Second novel contribution of this study is comparison based on demographics encompassing gender roles, care realms and job levels which was lacking in the area of comparative work-life studies. The third contribution is that the study identifies factors like cultural differences, family structures, community demands, social structures, and facilities and services available to the employees which impacts the WLB of employees in both countries which has not been evaluated in past studies.

Lastly, this study has identified that the legal structures governing the labour regulations on working hours, holidays and national policies on employment, healthcare, leaves,

care realms and education plays a significant role towards the degree of industrialization of a nation largely ignored by previous studies. It leads, thus, to the untapped potential for interpretation and clarification of studies on the future of WLB research.

### *5.2.2 Limitations of the Study*

First and foremost, limitation to this study is the survey response rate. Of the 272 surveys attempted by participants, 190 were returned with their consent and eligibility to participate, resulting in a return rate of 69%.

Based on the responses received the author monitored the responses during data collection to maintain an equal distribution of demographics across country, gender, and job level designations. However, the author recognizes the mismatch of sample sizes with respect to the demographics during analysis. Percentage approach was used for analysing the data due to uneven sample size across groups. Considering the diverse categories of organizations in the IT industry chosen to gather data for this research, and the above limitations of sample size. In this study, the findings are representative of the sample population and not of the total population of IT employees to derive generalisability.

The researcher recognizes that the sample population size can also affect the statistical influence of a study. The results obtained from the inferential statistics had a low power and effect size due to small sample size which might have impacted the study outcome. However, here the limitation was that the author could not strive for a broad sample size considering the manpower and the time needed. To conduct quality research and make the objectives achievable a sample size of 190 participants in total was considered from both countries. The reason to analyse the data between the range of 100-190 was chosen to be the ideal size as, statisticians state that too small or too large sample sizes are not recommendable as both have limitations that can cause a trade-off on the findings from the study. Samples that are too small may prevent the findings from being extrapolated, whereas too large samples may amplify the detection of differences, emphasizing statistical differences (Faber and Fonseca, 2014).

Using a non-probability sampling approach, there was no mechanism in place to make sure that everybody in the survey had a fair chance of being selected (McNabb, 2013).

This research focused on the data obtained from a sample of self-reports made up of a variety of questions. The results could have been skewed due to the limited biased responses (Groves & Peytcheva, 2008 cited in Kluczyk, 2013). Participants who offered

to take part in this study may have a greater interest in the WLB subject than those who did not participate in the study. Due to the COVID-19 situation the IT employees were working from home which might have an influence on answering the survey.

Mixed nationality population was considered for the research which might have influenced the results of this study. For example, the priorities of Indians working from Ireland and Indians working from India would differ.

## **5.2 Recommendations for Practice**

The strong empirical findings shows that stress disorders, work and family conflicts, low work satisfaction, overtime, are all related to impaired balance of work and life making it obvious for organizations to take substantial initiatives towards the influencers of these effects. Some employers can adopt organizational practices to ensure they are supporting their employees to get the balance right, placing importance on encouraging managers to focus on productivity and quality of task rather than the hours, managers to reconsider time off for employees as per their needs, increase support for parents such as laws for advantage of tax savings by providing childcare vouchers, similarly support employees by reducing their costs by providing food vouchers that can be deducted costs from their salary towards tax savings, offer health insurance plans for employees and their families, offer remote working with set time boundaries, regular review of workloads to understand work pressure and balance stress within team. Specially in India, family-friendly policies such as part-time work, flexiplace/teleworking, term time working, force majeure leave which are not present should be bought to practice.

These tailored experiences will result in a healthier work life balance of organizations which will be phenomenal.

## **5.3 Recommendations for Future Research**

This section discusses some of the recommendations with respect to the research methodology and the extend of the subject for future research.

To increase the significance of the findings, future study into a broad sample population is recommended (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). Study to be conducted across different organisations with a bigger sample size to understand in-depth characteristics of the employment in developed and developing countries.

Pure nationality samples to be considered for comprehensible results between the two countries.

Probability sampling (random sampling) to be chosen with a view to increasing the generalizability and significance of the findings that will represent the entire population.

In future studies, mixed methods should be conducted such that semi structured interviews will capture more in-depth important topics emerging from the patterns evident in interviews, which can be facilitated to build detailed and focussed survey. For example, in-depth information to be gathered in interviews or focus groups with employees, HR, senior management on the data for the topic of organization initiative which yielded similar results in both countries in this study.

The present study covered themes of WFC and FWC the future research could include the enrichment themes WFE and FWE to perform a cross comparison for accurate results on family well-being.

Workplace environment and environmental context factors should be part of future work as suggested by the participant in the present study.

Due to the globalization of individuals in IT, it would be interesting to do a cross-national comparative research in the field of work-life that comprises the impacts of country context factors on WLB of employees and organizations.

The present study focussed on the impacts of WLB on the demographics across two countries encompassing gender roles, care realms and job levels specifically. The future studies could extend to cross-nationals to capture the impacts of structure, culture, legal, social, and economic practices to explain the WLB at employee and company level.

The overall interest of the researcher was to find if the impact on WLB of employees would increase the overall productivity in the IT sector and if could help in improving the economy of the nation driving it to better industrialization situation in comparison to developed countries. The future study could capture the findings of the impacts on the WLB and the productivity numbers to see if there is a correlation between them.

Owing to the current situation of COVID-19, future study could be conducted on the WLB during crisis to find out the effectiveness and robustness of the employment regulations of the country.

#### **5.4 Final Conclusion and Reflections**

The author is hopeful that the results of this study will give new insights to the organizations, employees and employment legislation of developing countries to ponder on the initiatives that could be taken to improve the balance of work and life within the IT industry.

The author is optimistic that it could bring some insights about the WLB of developing countries where the IT industry being a major contributor to the economy is extremely important towards potential growth of a nation.

From the philosophical positions justified in this study and the past literature the researcher is of the view that a high number of participants of the IT sector from the developing country providing valuable insights and, agreeing to participate in the study that focuses on WLB, is the first step towards the betterment of the WLB of IT employees and organization growth within the developing nation.

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## Appendices

### *Appendix A – Email to Participants*

Dear Participant,

I am a postgraduate student at Griffith College, Ireland and this research is a part of my master's program. As a principal researcher I would humbly congratulate you that you have been selected as the participant for this study.

The research focuses on the impacts of work-life balance on the wellbeing of IT employees working in India and Ireland. This mail is attached with the following

**A. Plain Language Statement** which informs you what is expected from you as a participant and the benefits of this research. Your participation is voluntary and entirely confidential. It provides a contact of the Ethical Committee officer for reporting any unethical conduct during the research undertaken.

**B. Informed Consent Form** - This is a form through which you Agree to participate in this study. If your answer is No to any of the questions in this form, please notify me by replying to this mail. If all answers to the questions are Yes, request you to reply to this email that you provide your consent to be a part of this study.

**C.** To take the **survey** please click on the below link.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/6RVSRGD>

The full questionnaire should take approximately twenty minutes to complete. No personal data will be collected.

The findings of the research will be included in my final dissertation. The results of this research will be provided to you on request.

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact me on

Mobile: 0894028230

Email: [harshala29@gmail.com](mailto:harshala29@gmail.com)

Best Regards,

Harshala C. Salunke



## **Plain Language Statement for Research Participants**

### **Introduction and Purpose of the Research Study**

The research working title is '*IT Work-Life Balance: A Brief Quantitative Analysis of the Indian and Irish experience, Contribution towards a Balancing Act for IT Employees*'.

This research is designed to examine how the practices and culture of an organization affect an IT employees Work-Life Balance.

The research is being conducted by Harshala C. Salunke, a MSc International Business Management student in the Graduate Business School, Griffith College, Dublin.

Harshala Salunke can be contacted at [harshala29@gmail.com](mailto:harshala29@gmail.com)

### **Details of Involvement in the Study**

You will be required to fill an online survey posted via SurveyMonkey site where you will be kept anonymous from the researcher.

You will be asked to answer questions about your work, personal well-being, family wellbeing as well your attitude towards other activities and goals.

The survey can be completed within about 20 minutes.

It is possible that the researcher may request a follow up survey so preliminary contact details will be requested as optional.

Surveys will be conducted for the 2020/21 academic year.

### **Potential Risks to Participants**

This questionnaire is unlikely to evoke discomfort or other complications.

Yet, if you feel any distress, you may close the browser to discontinue with the survey.

### **Benefits (Direct or Indirect) to Participants**

Although you may not benefit personally from your participation, this study may uncover practices and procedures at workplace that could improve the personal and family well-being of IT employees.

### **Procedures to Protect Confidentiality of data**

Every effort will be made to respect the participants anonymity.

The data collected will be analysed by the principal researcher alone.

Participants IP addresses will be protected which is asked in the demographic section, this is to safeguard against ethical challenges in the study.

Subsequent analysis of the data will be held by the principal researcher and stored in secure location (personal laptop of principal researcher)

### **Data Destruction**

It is planned that the data collected from surveys will be destroyed within six months from initial date of collection which is likely to be within one month after the approval and successful completion of the dissertation.

### **Voluntary Participation**

You may tick the checkbox for the consent question posted at the beginning of the questionnaire if you agree to the terms of participation. You have the right to withdraw from the research study at any point, you may close the browser to discontinue with the survey window in case of withdrawing. There will be no penalty for withdrawing before all stages of the research study have been completed. However, once you submit at the end, your responses cannot be withdrawn because all answers will be anonymous.

### **Additional Information**

The sample size estimated is to be around 100 for the online surveys. All participants will be IT employees based in Ireland and India.

This research has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee of Griffith College, Dublin. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research and you wish to discuss with an independent person, please contact:

Dr. Garrett Ryan,  
Griffith College Research Ethics Committee  
South Circular Road, Dublin 8, Ireland  
Mail: garrett.ryan@griffith.ie  
Tel: +353 1 4163324

## Appendix C – Informed Consent Form



GRIFFITH COLLEGE DUBLIN

### Research Participant Informed Consent Form

#### Research Study

The research working title is '*IT Work-Life Balance: A Brief Quantitative Analysis of the Indian and Irish experience, Contribution towards a Balancing Act for IT Employees*'. The research is being conducted by Harshala C. Salunke, a MSc International Business Management student in the Graduate Business School, Griffith College, Dublin.

#### Purpose of the Research

The advent of technology, the role of an individual and his work complexity has affected an individual's work and life balance. The study aims to generate new insights into establishing a range of practical balanced work hour policies. There has been limited research done to explore and compare the cultural perspectives of individuals work and life balance and organizational welfare policies between two countries. This study aims to generate new insights into the area of Work Life policies for IT employees.

#### Confirmation of requirements as highlighted in the Plain Language Statement

As stated in the Plain Language Statement, a follow up survey will be requested if needed, based on feasibility and time where a semi-structured interview will be conducted via voice call, which the researcher will request to record (audio only).

#### Participant – Please complete the following (Circle Yes or No for each question)

<i>I have read the Plain Language Statement (or had it read to me)</i>	<i>Yes/No</i>
<i>I understand the information provided</i>	<i>Yes/No</i>
<i>I have had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study</i>	<i>Yes/No</i>
<i>I have received satisfactory answers to all my questions</i>	<i>Yes/No</i>
<i>I am aware that my interview will be recorded</i>	<i>Yes/No</i>
<i>I am aware that a transcription of my interview will be made</i>	<i>Yes/No</i>
<i>I may aware that I can withdraw from the Research Study at any point</i>	<i>Yes/No</i>
<i>I am aware that my real name will not be disclosure in the study</i>	<i>Yes/No</i>

Participant has the right to withdraw from the research study at any point. There will be no penalty for withdrawing before all stages of the research study have been completed.

#### Procedures to Protect Confidentiality of data

Every effort will be made to respect the participants anonymity. The data collected will be analysed by the principal researcher alone. Participants' actual names will be protected, and pseudo names will be used if direct references are required. Interview notes and/or transcripts and subsequent analysis of the data will be held by the principal researcher and stored in secure location (personal laptop of principal researcher).

**Signature**

I have read and understood the information in this form. My questions and concerns have been answered by the researcher, and I have a copy of this consent form. Therefore, I consent to take part in this research project

**Participants Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name in Block Capitals:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Witness:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

An Analysis of Work-Life Balance of the Indian and Irish IT work experience

1. Agreement Forms ('Plain Language' and 'Informed Consent')

**Dear Participant,**

I am a postgraduate student at Griffith College, Dublin and this research is an important part of completing my master's program.

**Purpose of the Research**

My research focuses on Work-Life Balance of IT employees working in India and Ireland respectively. This study aims to generate new insights into an individual's Work-Life Balance in IT/ITES sector. All participants taking part should be IT/ITES employees based in Ireland or India. This research has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee of Griffith College, Dublin.

**Details of your Involvement in the Study**

You will be asked to answer questions about your work, personal and family well being. The survey will not take more than 10 minutes. You have the right to withdraw from the research at any point of time. Please exit the browser to discontinue with the survey window. However, once you submit the survey, your responses cannot be withdrawn as they remain anonymous.

You will get a chance to introspect on your choices towards attaining a work-life balance. This study may uncover practices and procedures within organizations that could improve the well-being of IT employees.

**Data Confidentiality**

Every effort has been made to respect your anonymity and privacy. The data provided by you will be collated with the data by other participants and the subsequent analysis of the data is stored in a secure location and accessed/ published by me for research purposes only. Any data collected from the survey will be destroyed within six months.

**Disclaimer**

Although this questionnaire is unlikely to evoke any discomfort, if you do feel

uncomfortable you may discontinue with the survey. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, feel free to discuss it with the Research Ethics Committee at Griffith College.

Dr. Garrett Ryan,  
Griffith College Research Ethics Committee  
South Circular Road, Dublin 8, Ireland  
Tel: +353 1 4163324  
garrett.ryan@griffith.ie

I would strongly encourage you to answer all the questions. Please feel free to contact me at harshala29@gmail.com for any clarifications.

Best Regards,  
Harshala S

\* 1.

I have read and understood the agreements.

Yes  No

\* 2.

I have had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study.

Yes  No (Reach out to harshala29@gmail.com for questions)  Not Applicable (Please choose this if you have No questions)

\* 3.

I am aware that I can withdraw from the Research Study at any point of time during the survey.

Yes  No

\* 4.

I am aware that I would be kept anonymous in the study.

Yes  No

2.

Using the options answer the basic demographic questions.

\* 5.

Are you at least 18 (and above) and consent to take part in this survey?

Yes  No

\* 6.

Are you working or have worked as an IT/ITES employee in India or Ireland respectively ?

Yes  No

\* 7.

Which country do you work from?

India  Ireland

\* 8.

Gender

Male  Female

\* 9. Age

18-28

29-40

41 (and above)

\* 10.

What is your current level in your job?

Junior/ Entry Level

Mid Level Management

Senior/ High Level Management

\* 11.

Marital Status

Single  Married/ Co-habiting  Separated/ Divorced  Others

\* 12.

Do you have children?

No

Yes

\* 13.

How many hours per week do you work? (Full time)

### 3. Psychological Health Scale

In this study Psychological Health scale is designed to measure the perceived stress variable, the emotional state or mental health of an individual. Using the scale from 'Very Often' to 'Never' and 'Much more than usual' to 'Not at all' please indicate how often have you felt a certain way based on your overall experience.

14.

How often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?

Very Often	Fairly Often	Sometimes	Almost Never	Never
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15.

How often have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal issues?

Very Often	Fairly Often	Sometimes	Almost Never	Never
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

16.

How often have you felt difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them?

Very Often	Fairly Often	Sometimes	Almost Never	Never
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17.

How much sleep have you lost being worried about work?

Much more than usual	Rather more than usual	No more than usual	Not at all
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

18.

Have you constantly felt under pressure due to your work?

Much more than usual	Rather more than usual	No more than usual	Not at all
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

\* 19.

How often have you felt like you need to work more hours to be more productive?

Very Often	Fairly Often	Sometimes	Almost Never	Never
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

\* 20.

How often have you felt that you have achieved work-life balance?

Very Often	Fairly Often	Sometimes	Almost Never	Never
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>


#### 4. Personal Well being and Identity Scale

In this study Personal Well being scale measures satisfaction related to an individual's thoughts of themselves to measure the subjective dimensions of skill and need to quantify the quality of life and personal well being. Using the scale from 'Always less than I want' to 'Always more than I want' please indicate in context of "I do this activity".

21.

Getting adequate sleep

Always less than I want      Sometimes less than I want      About right for me      Sometimes more than I want      Always more than I want




How many hours do you sleep?

22.

Getting regular exercise

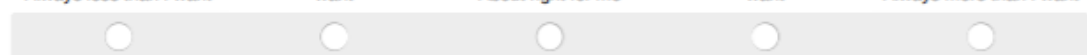
Always less than I want      Sometimes less than I want      About right for me      Sometimes more than I want      Always more than I want



23.

Eating a balanced diet

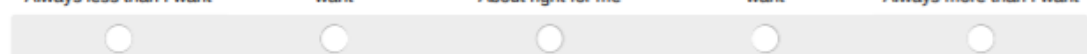
Always less than I want      Sometimes less than I want      About right for me      Sometimes more than I want      Always more than I want



24.

Getting time to relax


Always less than I want      Sometimes less than I want      About right for me      Sometimes more than I want      Always more than I want



\* 25.

Leisure time


Always less than I want      Sometimes less than I want      About right for me      Sometimes more than I want      Always more than I want



\* 26.

Do you suffer from any stress-related disease?

Yes      No



\* 27.

Are you able to upgrade your skill sets in your current job?

Yes      No



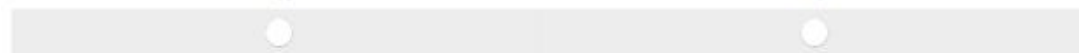
**5. Family Well being Scale**

**In this study Family Well being relates to family satisfaction. The scales measure the interference of work and family of individuals. Using the scales from 'Always less than I want' to 'Always more than I want' and 'Strongly Disagree' to 'Strongly Agree' please indicate your answers in context of "I do this activity".**

\* 28.

Are you able to spend quality time with your friends, family?

Yes No




If yes how do you spend the quality time with family or friends, please specify

\* 29. How do you spend time outside working hours?

\* 30.

Do you feel that you can adjust your working schedule to attend to your family needs?  
(Child/Elder care, Sickness etc)

Always less than I want      Sometimes less than I want      About right for me      Sometimes more than I want      Always more than I want



\* 31.

Family-related strain does not interfere with my ability to perform job-related duties

Strongly Disagree      Disagree      Slightly Disagree      Neither Agree nor Disagree      Slightly Agree      Agree      Strongly Agree



**6. Work-Life Balance Initiatives by the Organization**

**In this study the Work-Life Balance Initiative questions focus on the workplace initiatives taken by the organizations to maintain an individual's work and life balance. Consider Work-Life Balance as the balance between the time you spend in the work activities and non work activities. Using the scale indicate your answers.**

32.

Does your organization take initiatives to manage work-life of its employees?

Available + Used	Available + Not Used	Not Available + But Needed	Not Available + Not Needed
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please mention a few (Fun at Work, Monthly excursions, Day care at work etc)

33.

Due to work-related duties, I do not have to make changes to my plans for family activities.

			Neither Agree nor				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

34.

Are you satisfied with the working hours of the organization?

	Yes					No
	<input type="radio"/>					<input type="radio"/>

If No, how many hours ideally would you prefer working in a week?

35.

Do you think that if employees have good work-life balance the organization will be more effective and successful?

	Yes					No
	<input type="radio"/>					<input type="radio"/>

\* 36.

What do you think about the leave policy of your company? Please elaborate

**7. Your Feedback**

Please provide your feedback if any.

\* 37.

How would you rate the overall quality of this survey?



\* 38.

Any specific Comments/ Suggestions?

8. Thank you for your Participation.

***Don't Get So Busy Making a Living That  
You Forget to Make a Life***

***-Dolly Parton***

For SurveyCircle users ([www.surveycircle.com](http://www.surveycircle.com)): The Survey Code is: A8XU-LJ83-YP2B-27GW

Appendix E – Responses on SurveyMonkey

surveymonkey.com/dashboard/?ut\_source=header

<b>OPEN</b> <b>An Analysis of Work-Life Balance of the Indian and Irish IT work experience</b> Created: 06/18/2020   Modified: 08/26/2020	139 Responses	70% Completion rate	6 mins Typical time spent	⋮ Options
<b>OPEN</b> <b>An Analysis of Work-Life Balance of the Indian and Irish IT work experience</b> Created: 06/15/2020   Modified: 07/28/2020	137 Responses	70% Completion rate	6 mins Typical time spent	⋮ Options
<b>OPEN</b> <b>An Analysis of the Indian and Irish IT work experience</b> Created: 06/09/2020   Modified: 06/14/2020	5 Responses	60% Completion rate	10 mins Typical time spent	⋮ Options
<b>OPEN</b> <b>An Analysis of the Indian and Irish IT work experience</b> Created: 03/19/2020   Modified: 06/06/2020	3 Responses	100% Completion rate	20 mins Typical time spent	⋮ Options
<b>OPEN</b> <b>Copy of An Analysis of the Indian and Irish IT work experience</b> Created: 06/06/2020   Modified: 06/06/2020	1 Response	100% Completion rate	12 mins Typical time spent	⋮ Options

## Appendix F – Operationalizing the Data

### Two-Way ANOVA – SPSS Data View

Hypothesis 1 Psychological.sav [DataSet2] - IBM SPSS Statistics Data Editor

File Edit View Data Transform Analyze Direct Marketing Graphs Utilities Add-ons Window Help

Visible: 5 of 5 Variables

	Country	Gender	Question4	Question5	PsychologicalWellE eing	var	var	var	var	var	var	var	var
1	0	1	4	4	8								
2	0	0	3	3	6								
3	1	1	3	3	6								
4	0	0	3	4	7								
5	1	0	1	2	3								
6	1	0	3	3	6								
7	0	1	3	3	6								
8	0	1	2	2	4								
9	1	0	1	3	4								
10	0	1	3	3	6								
11	0	0	2	2	4								
12	0	0	2	2	4								
13	0	1	2	2	4								
14	1	0	2	3	5								
15	0	1	1	4	5								
16	0	0	2	3	5								
17	0	1	4	3	7								
18	0	0	4	3	7								
19	1	0	2	2	4								
20	0	0	2	3	5								

Data View Variable View

Print IBM SPSS Statistics Processor is ready

### SPSS – Variable View

Hypothesis 1 Psychological.sav [DataSet2] - IBM SPSS Statistics Data Editor

File Edit View Data Transform Analyze Direct Marketing Graphs Utilities Add-ons Window Help

	Name	Type	Width	Decimals	Label	Values	Missing	Columns	Align	Measure	Role
1	Country	Numeric	12	0		[0, India]...	None	12	Right	Nominal	Input
2	Gender	Numeric	12	0		[0, Male]...	None	12	Right	Nominal	Input
3	Question4	Numeric	12	0	Question 4	None	None	12	Right	Nominal	Input
4	Question5	Numeric	12	0	Question 5	None	None	12	Right	Nominal	Input
5	Psychologic...	Numeric	12	0	Psychological ...	None	None	12	Right	Scale	Input
6											
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22											

Data View Variable View

Print IBM SPSS Statistics Processor is ready

## ChiSquare – SPSS Data View

Chi-square data.sav [DataSet1] - IBM SPSS Statistics Data Editor

File Edit View Data Transform Analyze Direct Marketing Graphs Utilities Add-ons Window Help

Visible: 3 of 3 Variables

	Country	Gender	StressDisorder	var	var	var	var	var	var	var	var	var	var	var
1	0	1	0											
2	0	0	0											
3	1	1	0											
4	0	0	0											
5	1	0	0											
6	1	0	0											
7	0	1	1											
8	0	1	1											
9	1	0	0											
10	0	1	1											
11	0	0	0											
12	0	0	0											
13	0	1	0											
14	1	0	1											
15	0	1	0											
16	0	0	0											
17	0	1	0											
18	0	0	0											
19	1	0	0											
20	0	0	0											
21	1	1	0											

Data View Variable View

IBM SPSS Statistics Processor is ready

## SPSS – Variable View

Chi-square data.sav [DataSet1] - IBM SPSS Statistics Data Editor

File Edit View Data Transform Analyze Direct Marketing Graphs Utilities Add-ons Window Help

	Name	Type	Width	Decimals	Label	Values	Missing	Columns	Align	Measure	Role
1	Country	Numeric	12	0		[0, India]...	None	12	Right	Nominal	Input
2	Gender	Numeric	12	0		[0, Male]...	None	12	Right	Nominal	Input
3	StressDisor...	Numeric	12	0	Stress Disorder	[0, No Stres...	None	12	Right	Nominal	Input
4											
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22											

Data View Variable View

IBM SPSS Statistics Processor is ready

## One-Way ANOVA – SPSS Data View

Hypothesis 2 Data.sav [DataSet3] - IBM SPSS Statistics Data Editor

File Edit View Data Transform Analyze Direct Marketing Graphs Utilities Add-ons Window Help

Visible: 2 of 2 Variables

	Designation	WLB	var	var	var	var	var	var	var	var	var	var	var	var	var
1	1	7													
2	2	4													
3	1	4													
4	2	5													
5	1	4													
6	1	4													
7	1	7													
8	1	4													
9	0	4													
10	0	7													
11	1	5													
12	0	4													
13	1	5													
14	0	4													
15	1	5													
16	0	5													
17	2	6													
18	2	6													
19	0	6													
20	2	4													
21	0	5													

Data View Variable View

IBM SPSS Statistics Processor is ready

## SPSS Variable View

Hypothesis 2 Data.sav [DataSet3] - IBM SPSS Statistics Data Editor

File Edit View Data Transform Analyze Direct Marketing Graphs Utilities Add-ons Window Help

	Name	Type	Width	Decimals	Label	Values	Missing	Columns	Align	Measure	Role
1	Designation	Numeric	12	0		(0, Junior L...	None	12	Right	Nominal	Input
2	WLB	Numeric	12	0	Work-Life Bala...	None	None	12	Right	Scale	Input
3											
4											
5											
6											
7											
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21											
22											

Data View Variable View

IBM SPSS Statistics Processor is ready