

# Examining the relationship between the Role of Personality Traits and Work-Life Balance

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## Abstract

The aim of the paper is to analyse the significance of work life balance factors of IT Sector of NCR on the basis of their personality traits. This study is based on primary method of data collection.. Data was collected through questionnaire method of 350 employees working in IT sector. Questionnaires was based on demographic characteristic, work- life factors and personality traits. First the Big five Personality traits were analysed, then ANOVA was used to measure significance between BFP and work-life factors. Results suggest that agreeableness were the most balanced one trait while other traits faced challenges and conflict in managing work and life. Secondly in the analysis it was determined that there was significant relation between personality and work and life balance factors. This means personality is one of the important factor that directly or indirectly affects work and life. This findings will help organization in managing employee work-life interface for maximizing individual and organizational outcomes by knowing their personality trait. The study is limited to the only employees of NCR so results cannot be generalized.

**Keywords:** Big five Personality (BFP), Work-life, work-family, personality, organization culture, work family conflict.

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## Introduction

Technology has enabled companies to utilize email, computers and cell phones that allow employees to work even outside the physical limits of an office, which has brought work life balance into focus. As a result, employees' personal lives are affected, as they are busy even at home attending and completing office assignments, resulting in less focus on family and hampering personal life, resulting in work-life conflict. If work life balance is not maintained properly, this can result into stress which directly affects employee's health. It is inevitable that an employee will burn out if he works in a stressful environment. (Sharma & Nayak, 2016)

### *Work life balance*

Work-life balance means total harmony between work and life. It is giving equal and "balanced" attention to both work and life. It means optimal utilization of resources both for work and life and living a life of growing prosperity, stress-free culture with peace of mind and still achieving maximum results with minimum pain.

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Lotte Bailyn, a pioneer researcher, concluded in 1993 that work-life balance does not have a blueprint. In order to accommodate the individual needs and concerns of workers in a manner consistent with their special circumstances, employers and employees need to work together. Despite more than a decade later, Halpern (2005) claims that work-life balance remains one of our society's primary social challenges.

### *Personality*

Personality is related to ones' trait of thinking, behaving and dealing with a particular situation, it affects our behavior in many situations.

Guest (2002) defines personality as an extent which influences the perception of every individual to balance

work and family. When life becomes increasingly complex and everyone tries to find a healthy balance, personality traits can work for or against them. Highly organised people who are perfectionists and have a need for control—you know who you are—often find themselves in risk of burning out as they struggle to keep their life in order.

Personality is one of the key factors in managing work and life. The meaning of work life may differ from person to person depending on their personality. Each one of us has different priorities, responsibilities, and ability to manage which inherently define our personality (Godin, 2011 and Chatman, 1999). The key finding balance is to identify where the stress is within work or life and a seeking remedy to get rid of it balances your work and life.

The five-factor model is the most commonly used model to describe individual differences in personality (Costa & McCrae, 1985; Goldberg, 1981). McCrae & John (1992) describes the Big Five Personality (BFP) traits as extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness, and neuroticism. McCrae & Costa, (1991) found the big five personality traits are formed by organizing hundreds of personality test proposed by the different theorist. According to McCrae & John, (1992) the one who is extraversion being active, assertive, energetic, enthusiastic, outgoing and talkative. Agreeableness is characterized as cooperation, likeability, forgiveness, kindness, sympathy and trust. Goldberg, (1992) description of conscientious includes achievement orientation, dependability, orderliness, efficiency, organization, playfulness, responsible, and hardworking-ness. Mischel & Shoda, (1990) describes the openness as intelligence, unconventionality, imagination, curiosity, creativity, and originality. According to Lounsbury and Gibson (2004), neuroticism is emotionally stable, secure, and resilient. Emotional Stability also includes behavioral and emotional traits that are negative. People with neuroticism experience things like depression, anger, unpleasant situation.

An individual's capacity to establish and sustain a healthy work-life balance can be significantly influenced by their personality features. Work-life balance is the harmony between one's obligations in the

workplace and those in their personal life, which may include their family, friends, hobbies, and self-care. Various personality qualities can affect how people approach their personal and professional life, affecting their decisions, actions, and general well-being. Various personality qualities might impact work-life balance in the following ways:

#### *Conscientiousness:*

People who have high levels of conscientiousness are usually well-organized, industrious, and responsible. They frequently make specific goals and strive assiduously to accomplish them. While having this attribute might help a someone do well at work, it may also make it challenging for them to prioritise personal time above work. Conscientious people may need to set limits and schedule time for leisure and relaxation in order to achieve work-life balance.

#### *Extraversion:*

Extraverted people are frequently sociable, extroverted, and active. While they could take pleasure in chatting with coworkers and participating in team activities, they might find it difficult to find time by themselves to recharge. In the middle of their hectic schedules, they may benefit from intentionally setting out quiet times for themselves.

#### *Neuroticism (Emotional Stability):*

People with high levels of neuroticism may feel greater stress and worry, notably at work. This could make it more difficult for them to switch off from work-related worries when spending time with friends and family. To maintain a better work-life balance, using coping mechanisms like mindfulness and stress management skills may be useful.

#### *Agreeability:*

People who score well in agreeability frequently place a great value on collaboration and pleasant relationships. Although this is good for collaboration, they could find it difficult to turn down extra work or overtime. Work can't intrude on personal time if assertiveness training and learning to say no when necessary are done.

*Openness to Experience:*

People with high levels of openness are receptive to novel concepts, adventures, and difficulties. While this can result in a more exciting work atmosphere, it might also give rise to a propensity for people to get too preoccupied with job-related duties, leaving less time for leisure activities. Achieving greater balance can be facilitated by establishing clear boundaries and making time for personal interests.

This study is structured in five sections. First structure deals with the defining the meaning of two concepts personality and work-life balance and how these are related to each other. The second section presents the reviewing various literature on personality and work-life which helped in knowing the research gap from which objective and rationale of the study were formed. Third section relates to the methodological part, which includes data collection, sample size, sampling method and technique used in data collection. The fourth section represents the findings of quantitative studies. And last fifth section comprises of limitation and a conclusion of the study.

**Review of Literature**

The past, researchers to work-life balance focused on situational factors rather on personality variables which affect an individual's ability to balance work and life (Godin, 2011). Similarly, in the study of Frone et al, (2003) role characteristic played a potential source in managing work and family, but it also states that personality is emerging as one of the causes of work-family conflict. In a study of Cain, (2015) personality influences individual behavior which makes a sense that personality has an effect on one's ability to balance work and life roles. Similarly, in a study by Matthews & Deary (1998) the Big five personality traits validate the impact of behavior styles and perceiving the objective settings at different spheres of life.

Few kinds of research (Blanch & Aluja, 2009, Carlson, 1999, Wayne et al, 2004) examined the role of personality with work-family rather than on work-life. In a research by Goldwyn, (2011) personality is used as one of the factors that contribute how overloaded people

feel and, thus, the effect on work-life balance is indirect. Studies of Bruck and Allen, (2003); Carlson, (1999) and Wayne et al., (2004) define a direct association between personality and work-life balance. In a study by Barrick, Mount, & Li, (2013) suggest that individual's role and behavior at work combined with the five-factor model of personality traits describe how traits and work attribute jointly impact work outcomes.

Another important factor of work-life balance which is studies from almost 20 years is work and family conflict. When while making a balance situation results in stress and conflicting manner is called work-family conflict. Work-family conflict refers to "a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect" (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). This construct is based on the role stress and inter-role conflict theories (Kahn et al., 1964). work variables such as job involvement, job stress or work support were more related to WIF, and antecedent family variables such as family stress or family support were more related to FIW (Witt & Carlson, 2006) Despite the large amount of research works devoted to WFC in the past 20 years , there has been a paucity of studies on the interplay of personality dimensions with a few notable exceptions. For instance negative affectivity and a lesser extent type A behavior, have been consistently related with WF (Michel & Clark, 2009).

The 2010 study by Higgs and Lichtenstein looked at the connection between personality and values, which are crucial for supporting long-term organisational effectiveness and expansion. It demonstrates that the link is considerably more intricate and involved than has previously been hypothesised. Secondly, according to a Department of Labour research from 2004 on management assistance, maintaining a healthy balance between work and life is crucial for both companies and employees. An employee's growth may be significantly impacted by the attitude of their boss and supervisor (Nayak & Sharma, 2018).

The literature above indicate there is an apparent need to explore whether or not personality affects work-life balance as less research has investigated till now (Eby et al., 2005; Byron, 2005; Cain, 2015).

**Objective of the study**

On the basis of reviewing literature, the current study is based on identifying BFP trait of respondents and its significance on work-life balance factors. The objective of the current study are:

- To study the relationship between BFP traits and job factors.
- To study the relationship between BFP traits and current job challenges.
- To study the relationship between BFP traits and Family interference with work.
- To study the relationship between BFP traits and Work interference with family.
- To study the relationship between BFP traits and organization culture.

*The hypothesis of the study are:*

H1: There is significant relationship between BFP traits and job factors.

H2: There is significant relationship between BFP traits and current job challenges.

H3: There is significant relationship between BFP traits and Family interference with work.

H4: There is significant relationship between BFP traits and Work interference with family.

H5: There is significant relationship between BFP traits and organization culture.

## **Methodology**

This is a quantitative study that deals with identifying the personality traits and its significance on work life

balance factors. The primary method of data collection was selected for the study. Primary data methodology incorporated with developing questionnaire based on identifying personality trait and work life balance issues. Geographical area was NCR and collection of data was done from IT sector. The employees from IT industry represented different organizational positions and different stages of family building and thus had different responsibilities. The sample size of 350 respondents was collected. The interviews were recorded with permission by the respondents. Convenience sampling was used to select respondents with more than 3 years of experience was considered for the study. The data were collected through a mailed questionnaire.

The first section of the questionnaire was based on demographic characteristics like name, age, marital status and number of children. Then it's followed by close ended questions based on job expectation, present job parameters, family interference with work, work interference with family and organizational culture. Last section dealt with question based on personality. To examine the quantitative results of the study Anova was used using spss.

## **Data analysis and findings**

The data for the present study were gathered from working professional. It is represented in table 1. The sample consisted of all 350 respondents from IT organization. Among them 211 were male and 139 were female. The sample represents working professionals from age group 20 to 55 years. Regarding marital status, number of children, and employment status 150 respondents were unmarried and 199 were married and one was divorcee. Among the married respondents 182 had at least a child. On the same data personality traits of respondents were identified 66 believed to possess extraversion, 58 agreed on openness, 64 agreed on agreeableness, 96 were conscientiousness and 66 were neuroticism.

**Table 1: Variables and Number of respondents.**

Variables	No of Respondents
<b>Gender :</b>	
Male	211
Female	139
<b>Age</b>	
20-30	89
31-40	119
41-50	97
51-55	45
<b>Marital Status:</b>	
Married	199
Unmarried	150
Divorcee	1
No of children	182
<b>BFP traits:</b>	
Extraversion	66
Agreeableness	64
Conscientiousness	96
Openness	58
Neuroticism	66

As shown in table 2, it was found that there is significant relationship between BFP traits and current job challenges, family interference with work and organization culture as the level ( $p > .05$ ) indicates a significant difference. The statistical significance is

found to be in the directions hypothesised. The results support hypotheses H1, H3 and H5. On the other hand no significant relationship was found between BFP and job factors and work interference with family the level ( $p < .05$ ) indicates no significant difference.

**Table 2: BFP traits on work-life balance factors**

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig
Job Factors	Extraversion	66	3.6240	.61902	.174	.952
	Openness	58	3.5690	.55299		
	Agreeableness	64	3.5511	.53621		
	Conscientiousness	96	3.5540	.56996		
	Neuroticism	66	3.5799	.65648		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>3.5740</b>	<b>.58532</b>		
Current job Challenges	Extraversion	66	2.9063	.70781	2.365	.042
	Openness	58	3.0916	.63070		
	Agreeableness	64	3.1116	.56298		
	Conscientiousness	96	3.1875	.60602		
	Neuroticism	66	3.1790	.65961		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>3.1031</b>	<b>.63789</b>		
FIW	Extraversion	66	3.1742	.78443	2.966	.020
	Openness	58	3.1897	.72443		
	Agreeableness	64	2.8750	.65918		
	Conscientiousness	96	3.0599	.72615		
	Neuroticism	66	2.8788	.63737		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>3.0350</b>	<b>.71768</b>		
WIF	Extraversion	66	2.9318	.72529	1.906	.109
	Openness	58	3.0647	.76743		
	Agreeableness	64	2.7031	.80039		
	Conscientiousness	96	2.8698	.73088		
	Neuroticism	66	2.9129	.68849		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>2.8914</b>	<b>.74533</b>		
ORG Culture	Extraversion	66	2.8220	.74132	4.865	.001
	Openness	58	2.9741	.82144		
	Agreeableness	64	3.1797	.70355		
	Conscientiousness	96	2.8854	.71259		
	Neuroticism	66	3.4015	1.37133		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>3.0393</b>	<b>.91376</b>		

The results of the study indicate that agreeableness was the only personality trait which was not associated with any work life balance factor. The results supports the characteristics of agreeableness which refers to its kind, sympathy and cooperative nature. So, the factors related to job, current challenges at job, interference at both ends and organization culture don not have any effect agreeableness personality trait. In such study where job

factors are study structural variables an indispensible role then personality trait (Wyne et al. 2004).

While extraversions in BFP had more weightage for job factor (mean= 3.6240) as they had highest mean value as compared to other traits. Job factors were related to expectation an employee have from his job. The results indicate that extraversions had more expectation from

their job as compared to other BFP. As these employees advances on excitement and are more enthusiastic. Similarly, conscientiousness showed emphasis towards facing more challenges towards current job (mean=3.1875) . The reason for this can be such employees are more organized in their work might be due to this quality they face challenges towards job. Openness towards family interference with work (mean= 3.1742) and work interference with family (mean=3.0647). It further indicates that openness had conflict stage both at work and family ends with higher mean value. Lastly, Neuroticism was associated to organization culture (mean= 3.4015).

### Limitation/ scope for future work

The limitations of the study are:

- This study is limited to only IT sector so results cannot be generalized.
- Limitation of time and money was another factor for the study.
- The biasness of respondents cannot be examined while filling the questionnaire.

In this study personality trait and work life balance factors were covered. More factors like enrichment, life-style and health can be covered for future work with both qualitative and quantitative aspects. The situational factor that causes these conflicts and stress can also be covered.

### Conclusion

Realising that striking a healthy work-life balance is a dynamic process that calls for self-awareness and flexibility is crucial. Personality qualities serve as a starting point, but people may learn to use their advantages and control their weaknesses to strike a balance that works for their particular needs and situations. Setting boundaries that are clear, prioritising self-care, using time management techniques, and asking for help from coworkers, friends, and family may all be part of this. The five dimensions of work family balance were analysed in the present study with the BFP traits. Examining the relationship between both

the variables was a unique addition to the study. Agreeableness personality trait was found to influence work-life balance more significantly higher than any other personality trait. While the study shows significant relationship between three factors i.e challenges at current job, family interference with work and job culture. This represents that personality is one of the important factor that directly or indirectly affects work and life. This study will help organization and employees in knowing how different personality trait react to work-life balance factors. The findings of the study indicate that the personality traits describing psychosocial maturity are likely to preceding factors for successful functioning in adulthood roles (e.g., Caspi et al., 2005; Hogan & Roberts, 2004), such as achieving favourable balance between work and family lives. Limited literature is available on personality and maintaining work-life balance. This research will add to the existing literature by knowing how personality traits and qualities of an individual help in managing work-life balance.

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