Natural Resources for Human Health
eISSN: 2583-1194

Original Research

Received 18 July 2026
Revised 24 Aug 2026
Accepted 10 Sep 2026

Natural Resources for Human Health 2026, Vol. 6 (21s): 288–299

KEYWORDS:
Emotional Intelligence, Work-Life Balance, IT Professionals, Hypothesis Testing, Chennai

Impact Of Emotional Intelligence on Work-Life Balance among It Professionals – A Hypothesis-Based Study with Reference to it Professionals in Chennai

Ms. S. Radhika[1], Dr. S. S. Yaamini Priya[2]

[1]Research Scholar & Assistant Professor, Faculty of Management Studies, Dr. M. G. R. Educational and Research Institute, Chennai – 600095
E-Mailid: radhika12mba@gmail.com
[2]Research Supervisor & Professor, Faculty of Management Studies, Dr. M. G. R. Educational and Research Institute, Chennai – 600095
E-Mail id :yaaminipriya.1986@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: Emotional Intelligence (EI), the ability to recognise, understand and regulate one's own emotions and those of others, has increasingly been linked to the way employees manage the competing demands of work and personal life. The Information Technology (IT) industry, with its tight delivery schedules, long working hours, client-driven deadlines and rapidly changing work environment, offers a suitable setting for examining this relationship. This hypothesis-based study examines Emotional Intelligence and Work-Life Balance (WLB) among 300 IT professionals in Chennai. Seven null hypotheses were formulated and tested using data collected through a structured questionnaire covering five dimensions of Emotional Intelligence (Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation, Motivation, Empathy and Social Skills) and three dimensions of Work-Life Balance (Work Interference with Personal Life, Personal Life Interference with Work, and Work-Personal Life Enhancement). Percentage analysis, mean, median and mode, the independent samples t-test, one-way ANOVA, two-way ANOVA and the Mann-Whitney U test were applied. The hypotheses relating to gender differences in EI and WLB, the main effects of gender and marital status on WLB, and the difference in WLB by marital status were rejected, whereas the hypotheses relating to work experience and the gender × marital status interaction were not rejected. The findings offer practical implications for human resource practices aimed at strengthening emotional competencies and improving work-life outcomes among IT employees.

1. INTRODUCTION

The information technology industry is one of the largest employers of skilled workers in India, and Chennai has emerged as a major IT hub with a large number of multinational and local technology companies. Professionals in this sector regularly face tight project deadlines, rotating shifts, interaction with clients in different time zones and a continual need to upgrade their skills, all of which can blur the boundary between professional and personal life.

Work-Life Balance refers to an individual's ability to meet the demands of work and of non-work life without excessive conflict between the two. Emotional Intelligence, popularised by Goleman and grounded in the ability-based model of Salovey and Mayer, involves the capacity to perceive, understand, regulate and use one's own emotions and those of others. Employees with higher Emotional Intelligence are generally better at managing stress, communicating effectively, setting boundaries and recovering from setbacks, which are skills that are likely to be relevant to balancing work and personal responsibilities.

The present study therefore examines Emotional Intelligence and Work-Life Balance among IT professionals in Chennai and tests a set of hypotheses on whether these variables differ according to gender, marital status and length of work experience.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Rani and Mekhala (2016) examined emotional intelligence and occupational role stress among IT sector employees in Chennai. Using a sample of 340 respondents, the study reported that demographic variables such as age, gender and occupation contributed to differences in EI and concluded that developing EI could support better work-life balance.

Source: https://indianjournals.com/article/ajrssh-6-12-073

Pradhan and Mangaraj (2019) reviewed research published during 2000–2019 on emotional intelligence and work-life balance. Their review of 16 selected articles identified important research issues and opportunities and provides a foundation for understanding EI as a personal resource that may support the management of work and personal demands.

Source: https://indianjournals.com/article/sjdm-19-4-005

Nanda and Randhawa (2020) reviewed literature on emotional intelligence, work-life balance and work-related well-being and proposed a mediation model. Their framework connected EI with job satisfaction, work engagement and job stress, positioning WLB as a possible mediator between EI and work-related well-being.

Source: https://doi.org/10.4038/cbj.v11i2.62

Hari Babu and Binu Sahayam (2024) specifically examined work-life balance and emotional intelligence among employees in IT sectors in Chennai. The study is directly relevant to the present topic because it focuses on the same occupational context and geographic setting.

Source: https://doi.org/10.14391/ajhs.27.71

Raj (2025) studied the association between emotional intelligence and work-life balance among 115 Indian IT professionals using a quantitative cross-sectional design and standardised scales. A positive association was reported and regression analysis showed that EI predicted WLB, although the effect was relatively small. Workload and organisational culture were highlighted as additional influences.

Source: https://doi.org/10.25215/1303.110

Yousuf et al. (2026) (Yousuf, Mir, Seghal and Bhat) reviewed literature on emotional intelligence and work-life balance for 2010–2024, considering methodological developments and changing workplace conditions linked to communication technologies and artificial intelligence. The study indicates that the EI–WLB relationship continues to evolve with changes in work practices.

Source: https://gipublisher.com/index.php/bhss/article/view/7

Research Gap

Earlier studies have examined EI and WLB mainly through correlational or review-based approaches. Fewer studies have tested, within a single framework, whether EI and WLB differ by gender, marital status and experience among IT professionals in Chennai using both parametric and non-parametric tests. The present study addresses this gap through a set of formally stated hypotheses.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To assess the levels of Emotional Intelligence and its components (Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation, Motivation, Empathy and Social Skills) among IT professionals.
2. To assess the levels of Work-Life Balance and its dimensions among IT professionals.
3. To analyse the differences in Emotional Intelligence and Work-Life Balance between male and female IT professionals.
4. To find out whether there is a significant difference in Work-Life Balance among different levels of work experience.

5. To examine the individual and combined effect of gender and marital status on Work-Life Balance.
6. To compare Work-Life Balance between married and unmarried IT professionals using a non-parametric test.

4. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

In line with the objectives, the following null hypotheses (H0) were formulated and tested at the 5% level of significance. The alternative hypothesis (H1) in each case states that a significant difference or effect exists.

Table 4.1: Hypotheses of the Study

No.	Null Hypothesis (H0)	Statistical Test
H01	There is no significant difference in Emotional Intelligence between male and female IT professionals.	Independent samples t-test
H02	There is no significant difference in Work-Life Balance between male and female IT professionals.	Independent samples t-test
H03	There is no significant difference in Work-Life Balance among IT professionals with different levels of work experience.	One-way ANOVA
H04	There is no significant main effect of gender on Work-Life Balance.	Two-way ANOVA
H05	There is no significant main effect of marital status on Work-Life Balance.	Two-way ANOVA
H06	There is no significant interaction effect of gender and marital status on Work-Life Balance.	Two-way ANOVA
H07	The distribution of Work-Life Balance scores is the same for married and unmarried IT professionals.	Mann-Whitney U test

Decision rule: If the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted; if the p-value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is not rejected.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 Research Design

The study follows a descriptive and analytical design. It measures the levels of Emotional Intelligence and Work-Life Balance and tests hypotheses on their variation across the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

5.2 Area of the Study

The study covers IT professionals employed in companies based in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

5.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The minimum sample size was determined with the formula suggested by Cochran (1977). A sample of 300 IT professionals was selected through convenience/purposive sampling, covering employees of different designations and experience levels, both male and female, working in IT and IT-enabled companies in Chennai.

5.4 Tool for Data Collection

A structured questionnaire was used, consisting of three parts: (a) a demographic section on gender, age group, marital status, educational qualification, experience, designation and income; (b) an Emotional Intelligence scale of 15 items covering five

dimensions (Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation, Motivation, Empathy and Social Skills) with three items each; and (c) a Work-Life Balance scale of 12 items covering three dimensions (Work Interference with Personal Life, Personal Life Interference with Work, and Work-Personal Life Enhancement) with four items each. All items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). Interference items were reverse-scored so that a higher score always indicates a more favourable outcome.

5.5 Statistical Tools Used

1. Percentage analysis to describe the demographic profile of the respondents.
2. Mean, median, mode and standard deviation to describe the central tendency and spread of EI and WLB scores.
3. Independent samples t-test to compare EI and WLB scores between male and female respondents (H01, H02).
4. One-way ANOVA (F-test) to compare WLB scores across work experience groups (H03).
5. Two-way ANOVA to examine the main and interaction effects of gender and marital status on WLB (H04, H05, H06).
6. Mann-Whitney U test, a non-parametric alternative to the t-test, to compare WLB between married and unmarried respondents (H07).

6. DATA ANALYSIS AND HYPOTHESIS TESTING

6.1 Percentage Analysis – Demographic Profile

Table 6.1 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of the 300 respondents across the demographic variables.

Table 6.1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	180	60%
	Female	120	40%
Age Group	21–25 years	63	21%
	26–30 years	111	37%
	31–35 years	80	26.7%
	Above 35 years	46	15.3%
Marital Status	Married	175	55%
	Unmarried	125	45%
Educational Qualification	UG (B.E/B.Tech/B.Sc)	144	48%
	PG (M.E/M.Tech/MBA/MCA)	110	36.7%
	Professional Certification/Other	46	15.3%
Work Experience	Less than 3 years	82	27.3%

Natural Resources for Human Health
eISSN: 2583-1194

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
	3–6 years	101	33.7%
	6–10 years	71	23.7%
	More than 10 years	46	15.3%
Designation	Junior/Associate	117	39%
	Senior Executive/Team Lead	109	36.3%
	Manager & Above	74	24.7%
Monthly Income	Below Rs.40,000	83	27.7%
	Rs.40,001 – 70,000	97	32.3%
	Rs.70,001 – 1,00,000	76	25.3%
	Above Rs.1,00,000	44	14.7%

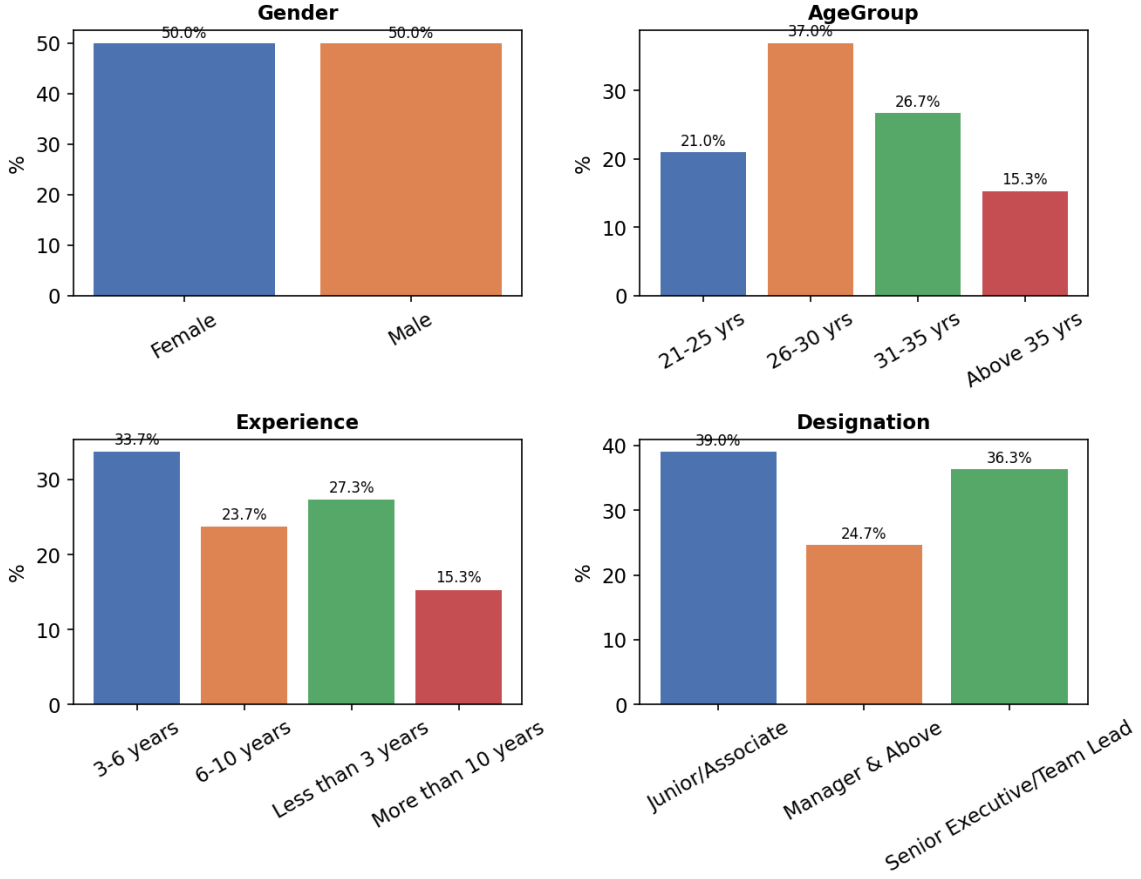


Figure 6.1: Percentage Distribution of Key Demographic Variables

Interpretation: Men formed the majority of the sample (60%, 180 respondents) and women 40% (120). The 26–30 age group was the largest (37%), followed by 31–35 years (26.7%), so most respondents were between 26 and 35 years. Married respondents were 175 (55%) and unmarried 125 (45%). In terms of education, 48% held undergraduate degrees and 36.7% postgraduate degrees. Respondents with 3–6 years of experience formed the largest group (33.7%). By designation, Junior/Associate employees were the largest group (39%), followed by Senior Executives/Team Leads (36.3%) and Managers and above (24.7%). The Rs.40,001–70,000 income bracket was the largest (32.3%). The sample thus consisted mainly of male, married, well-educated professionals aged 26–35 years with moderate experience and middle incomes.

6.2 Mean, Median and Mode

Table 6.2 gives the mean, median, mode and standard deviation of overall EI, overall WLB and their dimensions on a 1–5 scale, where higher scores indicate more favourable levels.

Table 6.2: Descriptive Statistics of EI and WLB

Variable	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation
Overall Emotional Intelligence	3.00	3	2.73	0.55
Self-Awareness	3.00	3	3	0.86
Self-Regulation	2.99	3	3	0.86
Motivation	3.00	3	3	0.84
Empathy	2.99	3	3	0.85
Social Skills	3.01	3	3	0.85
Overall Work-Life Balance	3.00	3	3	0.30
Work Interference with Personal Life (reverse-scored)	3.00	3	3	0.82
Personal Life Interference with Work (reverse-scored)	3.00	3	3.25	0.81
Work-Personal Life Enhancement	2.99	3	3	0.83

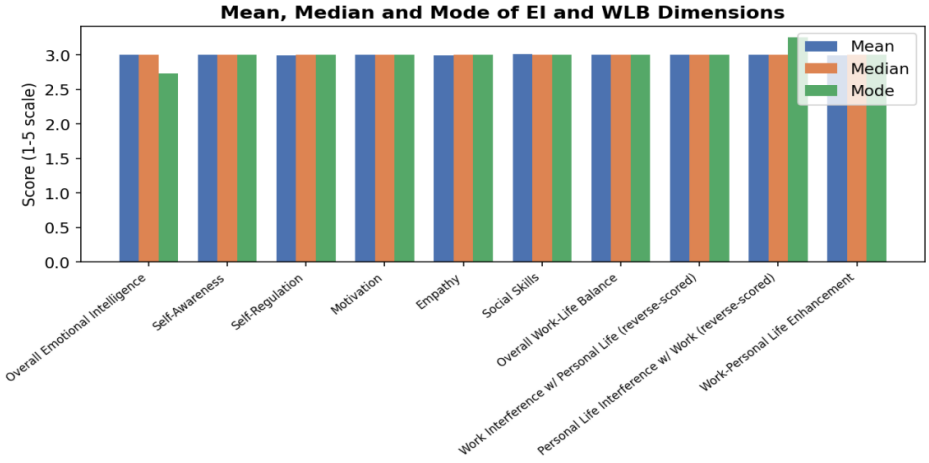


Figure 6.2: Mean, Median and Mode of EI and WLB Dimensions

Interpretation: For both Emotional Intelligence and Work-Life Balance, the mean, median and mode lie close to the midpoint of the scale, indicating roughly symmetric distributions without marked skewness. Among the EI dimensions, Social Skills (3.01)

is marginally the highest. Among the WLB dimensions, Work-Personal Life Enhancement (2.99) is marginally the lowest, suggesting that respondents find positive spill-over from work into personal life slightly harder to experience than avoiding negative interference.

6.3 Independent Samples t-Test – Gender-wise Comparison (H01 and H02)

H01: There is no significant difference in Emotional Intelligence between male and female IT professionals.

H02: There is no significant difference in Work-Life Balance between male and female IT professionals.

Table 6.3: Independent Samples t-Test – Gender-wise EI and WLB

Variable	Male Mean (SD)	Female Mean (SD)	t-value	p-value	Hypothesis Decision
Emotional Intelligence (H01)	2.92 (0.54)	3.07 (0.56)	-2.409	0.0166	Rejected ($p < 0.05$)
Work-Life Balance (H02)	3.05 (0.30)	2.94 (0.28)	3.219	0.0014	Rejected ($p < 0.05$)

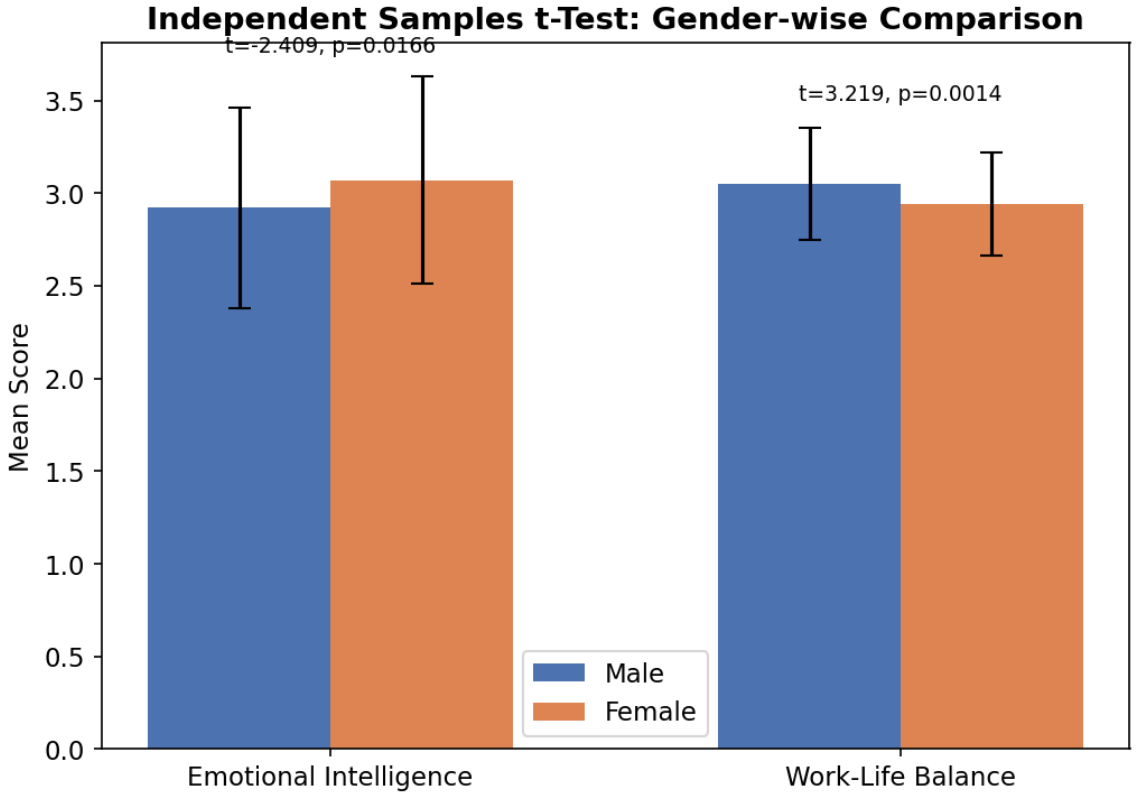


Figure 6.3: Gender-wise Mean Comparison of EI and WLB

Interpretation: For Emotional Intelligence, t = -2.409 and p = 0.0166, which is below 0.05; H01 is therefore rejected. Female respondents (mean = 3.07) have slightly higher EI than male respondents (mean = 2.92). For Work-Life Balance, t = 3.219 and p = 0.0014, which is below 0.05; H02 is therefore rejected. Male respondents (mean = 3.05) report somewhat higher WLB than female respondents (mean = 2.94). This is consistent with earlier findings that women, even with comparable or higher emotional competencies, often carry a greater share of domestic responsibilities in demanding professional settings, which can limit their work-life balance.

6.4 One-Way ANOVA – Work-Life Balance by Work Experience (H03)

H03: There is no significant difference in Work-Life Balance among IT professionals with different levels of work experience.

Table 6.4(a): Group Statistics – WLB by Work Experience

Experience Group	N	Mean WLB	Std. Deviation
Less than 3 years	82	3.02	0.30
3–6 years	101	3.03	0.28
6–10 years	71	2.97	0.30
More than 10 years	46	2.94	0.33

Table 6.4(b): One-Way ANOVA Result

Source	Df	F-value	p-value	Result	Hypothesis Decision
Between Groups (Experience)	3, 296	1.189	0.3139	Not significant ($p > 0.05$)	Not rejected

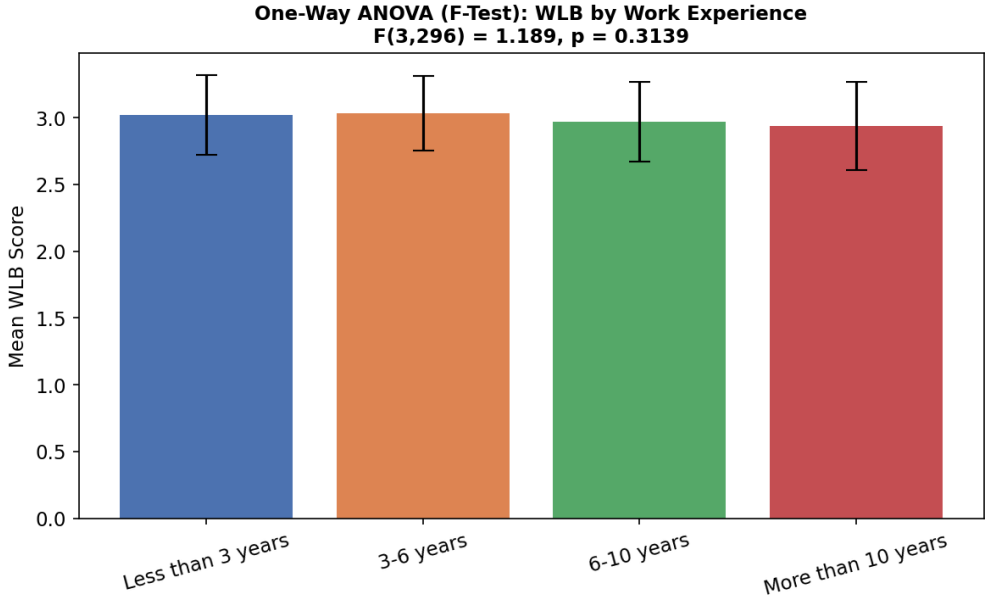


Figure 6.4: One-Way ANOVA – Mean Work-Life Balance across Work Experience Groups

Interpretation: The F-test gives F(3, 296) = 1.189 and p = 0.3139, which is greater than 0.05. H03 is therefore not rejected. The mean WLB scores are similar across the four experience groups, with a slight decline among professionals with more than 10 years of experience. In this sample, work experience alone does not lead to statistically significant differences in Work-Life Balance.

6.5 Two-Way ANOVA – Work-Life Balance by Gender and Marital Status (H04, H05 and H06)

H04: There is no significant main effect of gender on Work-Life Balance.

H05: There is no significant main effect of marital status on Work-Life Balance.

H06: There is no significant interaction effect of gender and marital status on Work-Life Balance.

Table 6.5(a): Two-Way ANOVA Summary

Source of Variation	SS	Df	MS	F	p-value	Hypothesis Decision
Gender (A) – H04	0.890	1	0.890	10.729	0.0012	Rejected
Marital Status (B) – H05	0.954	1	0.954	11.504	0.0008	Rejected
Gender × Marital Status (A×B) – H06	0.079	1	0.079	0.957	0.3288	Not rejected
Error	24.554	296	0.083			
Total	26.478	299				

Table 6.5(b): Cell Means of WLB

Gender	Married	Unmarried
Male	3.01	3.09
Female	2.87	3.02

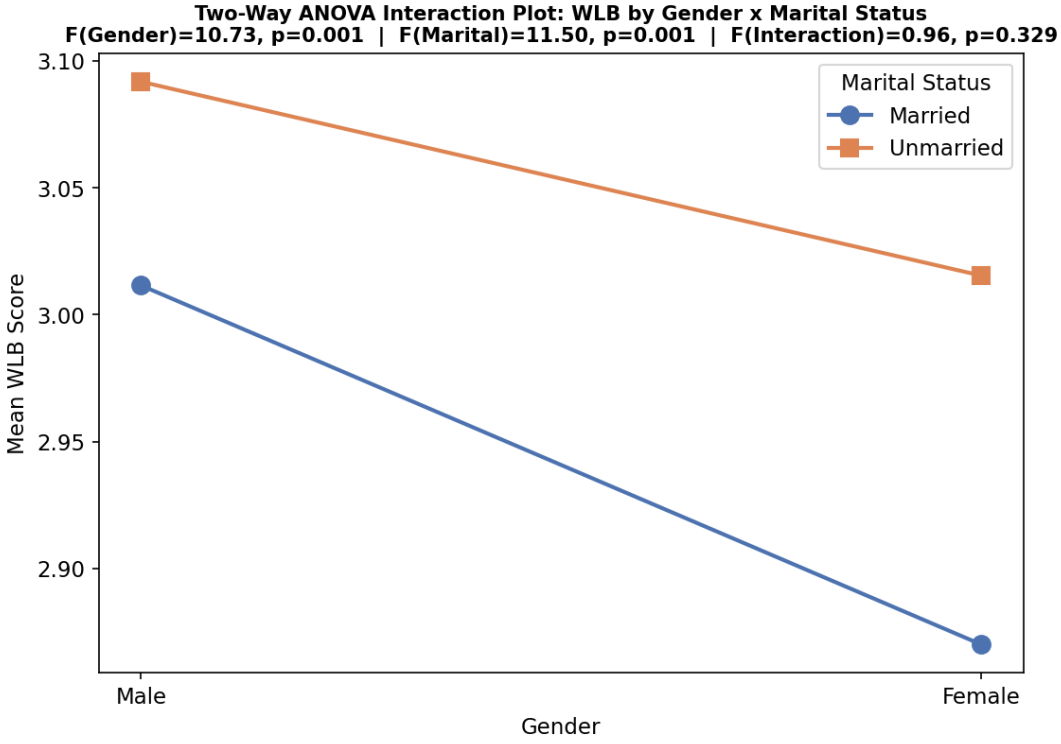


Figure 6.5: Two-Way ANOVA Interaction Plot – WLB by Gender and Marital Status

Interpretation: The main effect of gender is significant (F = 10.729, p = 0.0012), so H04 is rejected: male professionals report higher WLB than female professionals. The main effect of marital status is also significant (F = 11.504, p = 0.0008), so H05 is rejected. As the cell means show, unmarried respondents score higher on WLB than married respondents among both men (3.09 vs 3.01) and women (3.02 vs 2.87). The Gender × Marital Status interaction is not significant (F = 0.957, p = 0.3288), so H06 is not rejected; the effect of marital status on WLB is broadly similar for men and women, as the near-parallel lines in Figure 6.5 indicate.

6.6 Mann-Whitney U Test – Work-Life Balance by Marital Status (H07)

H07: The distribution of Work-Life Balance scores is the same for married and unmarried IT professionals.

Table 6.6: Mann-Whitney U Test – WLB by Marital Status

Marital Status	N	Mean Rank	U-value	p-value	Hypothesis Decision
Married	150	132.87	8605	0.0004	Rejected ($p < 0.05$)
Unmarried	150	168.13			

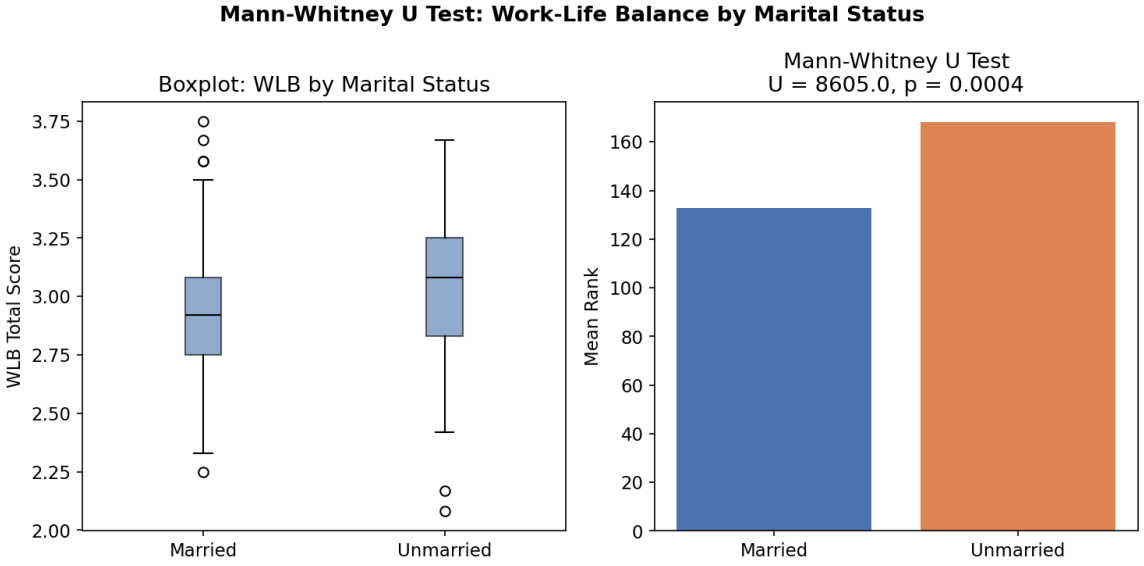


Figure 6.6: Mann-Whitney U Test – Boxplot and Mean Rank Comparison of WLB by Marital Status

Interpretation: The Mann-Whitney U test gives U = 8605 and p = 0.0004, which is below 0.05; H07 is therefore rejected. The mean rank of unmarried respondents (168.13) is higher than that of married respondents (132.87), indicating that unmarried professionals have higher WLB scores. This agrees with the cell means of the two-way ANOVA and confirms, through a distribution-free method that does not assume normality, that marital status is significantly associated with Work-Life Balance.

6.7 Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Table 6.7: Summary of Hypotheses and Decisions

No.	Hypothesis (H0)	Test	p-value	Decision
H01	No difference in EI between male and female	t-test	0.0166	Rejected
H02	No difference in WLB between male and female	t-test	0.0014	Rejected

No.	Hypothesis (H0)	Test	p-value	Decision
H03	No difference in WLB across experience groups	One-way ANOVA	0.3139	Not rejected
H04	No main effect of gender on WLB	Two-way ANOVA	0.0012	Rejected
H05	No main effect of marital status on WLB	Two-way ANOVA	0.0008	Rejected
H06	No gender × marital status interaction on WLB	Two-way ANOVA	0.3288	Not rejected
H07	Same WLB distribution for married and unmarried	Mann-Whitney U	0.0004	Rejected

7. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. The sample was predominantly male (60%) and was concentrated in the 26–30 age group and the 3–6 years experience group.
2. The mean scores of both Emotional Intelligence and Work-Life Balance were close to the midpoint of the five-point scale, with mean, median and mode nearly equal.
3. Hypothesis H01 was rejected: female professionals showed significantly higher Emotional Intelligence than male professionals ($p = 0.0166$).
4. Hypothesis H02 was rejected: male professionals reported significantly higher Work-Life Balance than female professionals ($p = 0.0014$).
5. Hypothesis H03 was not rejected: Work-Life Balance did not differ significantly across work experience groups ($p = 0.3139$).
6. Hypotheses H04 and H05 were rejected: gender and marital status each had a significant main effect on Work-Life Balance, while H06 was not rejected, showing no significant interaction between them.
7. Hypothesis H07 was rejected: the Mann-Whitney U test confirmed a significant difference in Work-Life Balance by marital status, with unmarried professionals scoring higher.

8. SUGGESTIONS

1. IT organisations can include structured Emotional Intelligence training covering self-regulation, stress management and empathetic communication in employee development programmes, particularly for male employees, who had comparatively lower EI scores.
2. Because of the significant gender gap in work-life balance, measures such as flexible working hours, predictable rosters and childcare support can help narrow the gap, especially for women.
3. Married employees reported lower work-life balance, so organisations should recognise family responsibilities and extend flexible working arrangements and family-support policies to them, while ensuring that wellness policies reach all employees regardless of marital status.
4. HR teams can use the five-factor Emotional Intelligence framework of this study to design competency-based training modules that address each dimension separately.
5. Regular, anonymous pulse surveys on work-life balance can be used to monitor the effectiveness of policy interventions over time.

9. LIMITATIONS AND SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The study is confined to IT professionals in Chennai and uses a sample of 300 respondents selected through convenience/purposive sampling, so the findings may not be generalisable to other cities or sectors. The hypotheses tested group differences in EI and WLB; future studies may test the direct relationship between EI and WLB through correlation and regression analysis, and may include variables such as workload, organisational culture and remote working.

10. CONCLUSION

This hypothesis-based study examined Emotional Intelligence and Work-Life Balance among 300 IT professionals in Chennai. Of the seven null hypotheses tested, five were rejected and two were not rejected. Emotional Intelligence and Work-Life Balance differ significantly by gender, and marital status has a significant bearing on Work-Life Balance, a result confirmed by both parametric and non-parametric tests. Work experience, on the other hand, does not significantly affect Work-Life Balance, and there is no significant interaction between gender and marital status. These findings underline the importance of emotional competencies in how IT professionals handle the demands of a fast-paced industry and point to practical levers such as EI training, flexible work arrangements and inclusive wellness policies for improving work-life outcomes.

REFERENCES

[1] Cochran, W. G. (1977). Sampling Techniques (3rd ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

[2] Goleman, D. (1995). Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ. New York: Bantam Books.

[3] Greenhaus, J. H., & Beutell, N. J. (1985). Sources of conflict between work and family roles. Academy of Management Review, 10(1), 76–88.

[4] Greenhaus, J. H., Collins, K. M., & Shaw, J. D. (2003). The relation between work-family balance and quality of life. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 63(3), 510–531.

[5] Kaiser, H. F. (1974). An index of factorial simplicity. Psychometrika, 39(1), 31–36.

[6] Mann, H. B., & Whitney, D. R. (1947). On a test of whether one of two random variables is stochastically larger than the other. Annals of Mathematical Statistics, 18(1), 50–60.

[7] National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM). Strategic Review Reports on the Indian IT-BPM Industry.

[8] Salovey, P., & Mayer, J. D. (1990). Emotional intelligence. Imagination, Cognition and Personality, 9(3), 185–211.