

## Work-Life Balance and Job Stress among Gig Workers

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### Abstract

The gig economy has transformed employment dynamics, offering flexibility while introducing new challenges related to work-life balance and job stress. This study examines the work-life balance and job stress among food delivery gig workers in Tirupattur, focusing on key factors such as work-hour flexibility, financial stability, work-life conflict, social support, and mental and physical health. A quantitative research approach was employed, utilizing a survey-based method with structured questionnaires. Data were collected from 99 gig workers selected through simple random sampling. Findings indicate that a significant portion of respondents lack work-hour flexibility, financial stability, and social support, contributing to increased stress and work-life conflicts. Moreover, statistical analysis reveals significant relationships between job stress, work-life balance, and factors like domicile, qualification, and years of experience in gig work. The study highlights the need for targeted interventions, including financial literacy programs, flexible work policies, wellness initiatives, and social support mechanisms, to enhance the well-being of gig workers. Addressing these issues will not only improve workers' quality of life but also contribute to greater productivity and job satisfaction in the gig economy.

**Keywords :** Work Hours Flexibility, Financial Stability, Work-Life Conflict, Social Support, Mental and Physical Health

### Introduction :

“Life is like riding a bicycle; to keep our balance we must keep moving” said the great scientist Albert Einstein. While riding a bicycle if there is an imbalance and if the rider is unable to control he may fall down. This is true in the case of all the employees who are struggling with work-life balance issues in their livelihood. Over the past few decades, a dramatic change had occurred in the labor market and demographic profiles of employees. Relative to the working environment, organizations are demanding an increase in employee flexibility and productivity. The traditional “job for life” has changed into an economic environment of instability and job uncertainty. As a result of these demographic, employment and organizational trends, both men and women have experienced an increase in demands from the family and work domains. Work-life balance is a broad and complex phenomenon. In general work life balance refers to the effective management of multiple responsibilities at work, at home and in the other aspects of life. It is an important issue for both the organizations and employees. In the current economic scenario, organizations are hard pressed for higher productivity and need employees with improved work-life balance as an employee with better work life balance will contribute more dramatically towards the organization growth and success.

The way of research can be decided by studying the research material or literature. One acquires important guidance as to which projects to include in the research and what types of

variables to apply while undertaking research. Further, knowledge can be achieved by looking at the studies undertaken earlier. As per scientific rule, research is undertaken to gain more novel information than principles achieved by earlier researcher or to review such principles. It is essential to look at earlier studies to identify the ignored variables and to avoid the repetitions. The aim of the present chapter is to observe the studies undertaken in the past about the work-life balance and job stress and their effects across various professions and demographics. Hyman and Summers (2004) classified seven major problems which are associated with current practices over work-life balance these are unevenness of adoption across different sectors and organizations, lack of formalization of policies at organizational level, restricted employee voice over the introduction and implementation of policies, policies are primarily to meet business needs rather than those of employees, there is no evidence of reduction in working hours. Lewis & Humbert (2010) suggested in his study that the most important form of flexible work arrangement used in the organizations are four days a week is double edged and complex in its effects. It supports mothers, but at a cost because of gendered assumptions. Despite a commitment to flexibility and “work life Balance”, the gendered construction of the ideal worker and ideas of competence conflated with hegemonic masculinity, remain powerful. Krishna reddy et al (2010), in his study said that work stress is usually conceptualized as work role ambiguity. Each has the potential to affect WFC with respect to role conflict, the more conflict among work roles the greater the chances that stress will spill over and cause negative behavior that interfere with fulfilling family roles also found that the age of the children was positively correlated with FWC among the working women. Five factors that are considered to contribute to work life balance are assessed. A.V.G Narayanan (2012), in his study found that Work place rigidity is the first and most important factor which affects more on the life of employees than the work. Secondly family circumstances are the second highest factor loading in work life balance. Personal commitments have rigorous impact on matching work than the life. And it is impossible to shift or share the work of one person to another in some peculiar situation. A person has to manage work and life equally. life without, work without life is impossible to everyone. Komal saeed et al (2014) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between work life balances, job stress and job satisfaction among university teachers. A sample of 171 has been taken as random sampling. The results show that a significant and positive correlation exists between work life balance and job satisfaction.

### Methodology

The aim of the study work-life balance and job stress among gig workers in Tirupattur.

- To investigate employees work hours flexibility.
- To evaluate the financial stability of gig workers.
- To understand the work-life conflicts among gig workers.
- To know the social support of the gig employees.
- To understand the mental and physical health of the gig employees.

## Hypotheses

1. There is a significant difference among domicile of the respondents and overall Work-Life Balance and Job Stress.
2. There is a significant difference among qualification of the respondents and overall Work-Life Balance and Job Stress.
3. There is a significant relationship between the years of experience respondents working in Gig work and overall Work-Life Balance and Job Stress.

**Research Design:** This study employs a quantitative research approach with a descriptive research design. The purpose of the study is to describe the current state of work-life balance and job stress among gig workers in Tirupattur. The research uses a survey-based method for data collection, utilizing structured questionnaires to gather quantitative data from participants.

**Universe & Sampling:** The universe of the study comprises of food delivery gig workers of Tirupattur district. In total there are 150 food delivery agents pertaining to swiggy and zomato . The researcher selected 65% from the total population using Simple random sampling. This resulted in 99 respondents being selected for the study.

**Tools for data collection:** The researcher employed questionnaire to gather the data from Tirupattur Gig employees. The research was employed in the Likert scale to examine the Work-Life Balance and Job Stress among Gig Workers. Likert scale is employed as a measure to calculate the average sum of the questionnaire answers across the individual questions being administered. The reliability of the tool was found to be .681 Cronbach's alpha.

**Result and Discussion:** It can be understood that less than two fifth (39.4%) of the respondents have Work Hours Flexibility. Majority (60.6%) of the respondents have no Work Hours Flexibility. This shows that Majority (60.6%) of the respondents have no Work Hours Flexibility. It states that more than half (56.6%) of the respondents have low knowledge on Financial Stability. Then more than two – fifth (43.3%) of the respondents have high knowledge on the Financial Stability. This shows that more than half (56.6%) of the respondents have low knowledge on the Financial Stability. It ensures that more than half (58.6%) of the respondents have low knowledge on Work-Life Conflict. It also states that more than two fifth (41.4%) of the respondents have high knowledge on Work-Life Conflict. It makes us clear that more than half (58.6%) of the respondents have low knowledge on Work-Life Conflict.

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents based on overall Work-Life Balance and Job Stress

Overall Work-Life Balance and Job Stress	Low	Percentage	High	Percentage
Work Hours Flexibility	60	60.6	39	39.4
Financial stability	56	56.6	43	43.4
Work-life conflict	58	58.6	41	41.4
Social support	56	56.6	43	43.4
Mental and physical	51	51.5	48	48.5

It states that Less than majority (56.6%) of the respondents have low knowledge on Social Support. Then more than Two – fifth (43.3%) of the respondents have high knowledge on the Social Support. This shows that less than majority (56.6%) of the respondents have low knowledge on the Social Support. It ensures that more than Half (51.5%) of the respondents have low knowledge on Mental and Physical Health. Then less than Half (48.5%) of the respondents have high knowledge on Mental and Physical Health. It clearly states that more than Half (51.5%) of the respondents have low knowledge on Mental and Physical Health. It states that more than half (54.5%) of the respondents have low knowledge on Work-Life Balance and Job Stress. Then it states that more than two – fifth (45.5%) of the respondents have high knowledge on Work-Life Balance and Job Stress. It makes clearly that more than half (54.5%) of the respondents have low knowledge on Work-Life Balance and Job Stress.

**Table 2. One-way analysis of variance among Domicile of the respondents and Work-Life Balance and Job Stress**

Factors		Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Statistical Inference
Overall Work Hours Flexibility	Between Groups	36.447	2	18.223	2.47 6	P>0.05 0.089 Not Significant
	Within Groups	706.462	96	7.359		
	Total	742.909	98			
Overall Financial Stability	Between Groups	219.282	2	109.641	13.6 13	P<0.05 .000 Significant
	Within Groups	773.223	96	8.054		
	Total	992.505	98			
Overall Work-Life Conflict	Between Groups	20.291	2	10.146	1.05 9	P>0.05 .351

	Within Groups	919.891	96	9.582		Not Significant
	Total	940.182	98			
Overall Social Support	Between Groups	40.247	2	20.124	2.498	P>0.05 .088 Not Significant
	Within Groups	773.409	96	8.056		
	Total	813.657	98			
Overall Mental and Physical Health	Between Groups	27.803	2	13.901	1.903	P>0.05 .155 Not Significant
	Within Groups	701.369	96	7.306		
	Total	729.172	98			
Overall Work life Balance and Job Stress among Gig Workers	Between Groups	731.478	2	365.739	4.115	P<0.05 .019 <b>Significant</b>
	Within Groups	8531.633	96	88.871		
	Total	9263.111	98			

The presented table 2. shows that there is a significant difference among domicile of the respondents and the overall Work-Life Balance and Job Stress. It's also clear that there is no significant difference between the respondents' family type and Work Hours Flexibility, Work-Life Conflict, Social Support Mental and Physical Health. It's also clear that there is significant difference among domicile and Financial Stability.

**H1:** There is a significant difference among domicile of the respondents and overall Work-Life Balance and Job Stress.

**H0:** There is no significant difference among domicile of the respondents and overall Work-Life Balance and Job Stress.

**Results:** The F - test is applied and it is found that there is significant difference among domicile of the respondents and overall Work-Life Balance and Job Stress. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

**Table 3. One-way analysis of variance among Qualification of the respondents and Work-Life Balance and Job Stress**

Factors		Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Statistical Inference
Overall Work Hours Flexibility	Between Groups	16.211	2	8.106	8.156	P<0.05 0.001 <b>Significant</b>
	Within Groups	726.698	96	7.570		
	Total	742.909	98			
Overall Financial Stability	Between Groups	144.155	2	72.078	6.669	P<0.05 .002 <b>Significant</b>
	Within Groups	848.350	96	8.837		
	Total	992.505	98			
Overall Work-Life Conflict	Between Groups	114.689	2	57.345	5.461	P<0.05 .006 <b>Significant</b>
	Within Groups	825.492	96	8.599		
	Total	940.182	98			
Overall Social Support	Between Groups	83.110	2	41.555	0.749	P>0.05 .476 Not <b>Significant</b>
	Within Groups	730.546	96	7.610		
	Total	813.657	98			
Overall Mental and Physical Health	Between Groups	11.199	2	5.600	5.351	P<0.05 .006 <b>Significant</b>
	Within Groups	717.972	96	7.479		
	Total	729.172	98			
Overall Work life Balance	Between Groups	929.011	2	464.506	4.115	P<0.05 .019

and Job Stress among Gig Workers	Within Groups	8334.100	96	86.814		<b>Significant</b>
	Total	9263.111	98			

The presented table 3. shows that there is a significant difference among qualification of the respondents and the overall Work-Life Balance and Job Stress. It's also clear that there is a significant difference among qualification and Work Hours Flexibility, Financial Stability, Work-Life Conflict, Mental and Physical Health. It's also clear that there is no significant difference among qualification of the respondents and Social Support.

**H1:** There is a significant difference among qualification of the respondents and overall Work-Life Balance and Job Stress.

**H0:** There is no significant difference among qualification of the respondents and overall Work-Life Balance and Job Stress.

**Results:** The F-test is applied and it is found that there is significant difference among qualification of the respondents and overall Work-Life Balance and Job Stress. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

**Table 4. Correlation between the number of years of the respondents working and overall, Work-Life Balance and Job Stress**

Variable	Correlation Value	Statistical inference
Work Hours Flexibility	.209*	P>0.05 <b>Significant</b>
Financial Stability	.217*	P>0.05 <b>Significant</b>
Work-Life Conflict	.588**	P>0.05 <b>Significant</b>
Social Support	.369**	P>0.05 <b>Significant</b>
Mental and Physical Health	.348**	P>0.05 <b>Significant</b>
Overall Work life Balance and Job Stress among Gig Workers	.525**	P>0.05 <b>Significant</b>

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

According to the above table 4. , states that there is a significant relationship between the years of experience respondents working in Gig work and Work-Life Balance and Job Stress. It is also evident that there is a significant relationship between the number of years respondents working in Gig work and the study's dimensions which include Work Hours Flexibility, Financial Stability, Work-Life Conflict, Social Support, Mental and Physical Health, Overall Work-Life Balance and Job Stress.

**H1:** There is a significant relationship between the years of experience respondents working in Gig work and overall Work-Life Balance and Job Stress.

**H0:** There is no significant relationship between the years of experience respondents working in Gig work and overall Work-Life Balance and Job Stress.

**Result:** The correlation test was applied with the variables and it was evident that there is significant relationship between the years of experience respondents working in Gig work and overall Work-Life Balance and Job Stress. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected by the researcher.

**Suggestion :**

In order to enhance the welfare of food delivery gig workers in Tirupattur, a number of major recommendations can be made. Firstly, considering the low level of awareness of financial security among most respondents, it would be advisable to provide workshops or awareness programs on financial literacy. These programs would teach gig workers about budgeting, saving, and financial planning, which would eventually enhance their financial welfare. Further, given that most of the respondents indicated a lack of flexibility in work hours, employers like Swiggy and Zomato could implement more flexible working hours to enable gig workers to have more balance in their professional and personal lives. Such flexibility could contribute to lower stress levels and better job satisfaction.

Another essential aspect is work-life conflict, in which most of the respondents indicated low awareness. To counter this, employers may institute support systems like counseling, peer support groups, and more definitive policies regarding time off, to enable gig workers to better balance work and life. Likewise, the study finds that a majority of workers have low social support, which may be enhanced by facilitating social networks among gig workers. Peer interaction or mentorship programs platforms might encourage community building, thereby minimizing isolation feelings.



In addition, encouraging mental and physical health initiatives is necessary, as most workers are not aware in this regard. Employers can provide wellness programs, including stress management sessions or gym memberships, to promote healthier living. Periodic surveys and feedback systems may also be introduced to ensure employers stay attuned to the changing needs of gig workers, creating a constant feedback loop for enhancing workplace conditions.

Moreover, technology-based solutions, like software that assists employees in scheduling and establishing limits on work hours, could significantly support work-life balance. Last but not least, employers can join hands with gig workers to learn about the challenges and co-design policies that enhance better work conditions. Reward schemes for good work behavior and engagement in well-being programs could further incentivize employees to pay special attention to their mental and physical well-being. Longitudinal studies on the long-term impacts of work-life balance and job strain might also shed important light on this, leading to policies beneficial for the long-term well-being of gig workers. These ideas, if made a reality, would not just make the working conditions for gig workers better, but also better their quality of life overall.

### **Conclusion :**

In summary, the research identifies pressing issues among gig workers in food delivery in Tirupattur, including their work-life balance, job strain, and financial literacy gaps relating to financial well-being, work-life conflict, social support, and mental as well as physical health. Evidence indicates that the majority of the gig workers lack adequate awareness and resources to best manage these features of their existence. Thus, employers such as Swiggy and Zomato need to develop focused interventions catering to these loopholes, i.e., introducing financial literacy workshops, encouraging flexible work hours, offering mental and physical health benefits, and nurturing social connections. Regular feedback tools and technology may also enable gig workers to schedule and take care of themselves in a more efficient manner. By addressing these sectors, the employers can promote job satisfaction, stress reduction, and overall improvement of the standard of living among the gig workers, which indirectly helps the gig workers and also the companies for which they work.

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