

An Empirical Study on the Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Work Life Balance of Nurses Employed in Private Sector Hospitals

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ABSTRACT

Healthcare sector features a variety of challenges on daily basis as a result of the complex and uncertain environment that prevails in their everyday activities. Overcoming these challenges is essential for employees who wish to strike a healthy balance linking job demands and personal lives. The direction of current study is to examine the impact on employees' emotional intelligence and their ability to maintain a positive work balance in healthcare sector particularly in hospitals. The research was executed at three private hospitals in Visakhapatnam, and a total of 284 staff nurses were surveyed utilizing the questionnaire over the course of the study. SPSS 20 was used to do data analysis. The most significant results of the study suggest that staff nurses working in the hospitals that were evaluated have abilities in emotional intelligence, and these hospitals provide initiatives that promote work-life balance. Findings of multiple regression analysis showed respondents' emotional intelligence has a substantial bearing on the degree with which they are able to strike a healthy equilibrium between their professional and personal lives. Through this study it is inferred that more focus should be given to enhance the emotional intelligence of nurses and to widen the purview of offered work life balance initiatives in healthcare sector, particularly in hospitals where employees come in contact with patients.

KEYWORDS

Healthcare, Emotional Intelligence, Work-Life Balance, WLB Initiatives, Hospitals, Nurses

1. INTRODUCTION

Our healthcare system is supported by nurses. Nursing's involvement in health services in terms of assistance, preventative support, treatment, care, and rehabilitative services is critical to the system's effective functioning. Nursing has generally been regarded as a noble, altruistic, and hard vocation. Nurses treat patients without hesitation, whether they are terminally sick or recuperating from a disease. Nurses, in collaboration with doctors and their units, care for patients at their most vulnerable state, creating hope in patients. Patient contentment is critical in any health institution. Together with the therapy for a patient's health condition, receiving attention and care from the nursing personnel is critical to a swift recovery. At this point, nursing personnel labour tirelessly work to offer the necessary attention and meet patient's demands. The nursing profession serves as a key interface between the patient and the healthcare provider. As a result, emotional intelligence and well-being of nurses are critical for patient satisfaction and nurses' commitment to their organisations. Emotional Intelligence (EI) is expressed as "the category of Social Intelligence that encompasses the capacity to monitor one's self and other individual's emotions and feelings, to distinguish between them, and to apply this knowledge to guide one's thoughts and behaviour", (Mayer & Salovey, 1997) expanded on this description to include "the capacity to properly identify emotions, acquire and express emotions to aid cognition, comprehend emotions, have emotional knowledge, and introspectively control emotions to facilitate cognitive and affective progress." Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to produce beneficial results in one's self and other individual's lives. Joy, positivity, and improved job performance in work as well as in personal life are among the favourable outcomes. EI is increasingly recognised as a key determinant in the workplace in terms of organizational outcomes (Devi, 2012). Every person is able to accomplish personal and career objectives if they own higher EI, which also boost performance at work (Yadav N. , 2011)

Work-life balance is a critical component in all job sectors over the last decade, as families with double career, exceeding work expectations, and extended hours of work have become mainstream. As a result of such workplace trends, assisting individuals in achieving an equilibrium across career and personal life is becoming more prominent. Work-life balance or unbalance, is strongly connected to quality of individual's life, has emerged as a critical problem for both management and employees (Hilbrecht et.al., 2008). Because work-life conflict is found to have several detrimental repercussions on individuals (Bohle et.al., 2004;). Work-life balance does have an active or passive influence on worker's performance on job (Kim, 2014)and, a mismatch like that may be detriments organization's efficiency. Work-life balance (WLB) is defined (Greenhaus & Allen, 2006) as certain level to which individuals are engaged in work and personal life in a balanced way. It is an excellent balance of work and personal life, with neither impeding with the other. When an individual joins the workforce, one's ability to balance work and social duties becomes an important factor in how one experiences (Yadav, et al., 2017) The work environment has changed so dramatically in the last two decades that striking a balance between job and family life has become increasingly difficult (Baldiga (2005); Katz (2007); McCann (2008). Job-life balance has a number of negative consequences for employees, including decreased work performance (absenteeism, demoralisation), unpleasant psychological conditions (emotional exhaustion, dissatisfaction, despair, hostility), and physiological and somatic problems (ulcers, headache). Thus, more research studies are needed in identifying elements that may enhance the WLB of staff nurses employed in hospital settings. This research specifically looks at impact of EI on WLB nurses in private hospital settings.

The objectives for the study are stated below:

- To examine the impact of EI on WLB among staff nurses employed in private sector hospitals
- To measure the level of EI among nurses working in private sector hospitals
- To ascertain work-life balance initiatives in hospitals taken for study

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Emotional Intelligence

EI is elucidated by researchers as ability for adaptively identify emotion, exhibit emotion, manage emotion, and deal with emotions. EI is vital to the success of any individual's endeavor. According to studies, the impact of EI is around 80%, whereas the intellectual quotient is approximately 20%. Scientists have confirmed that individuals with high EI will readily adjust to new situations and contribute to organization's success (Ameen, Almari , & Isaac, 2019). It is commonly established organization's strategic leadership will emerge with this crucial EI attribute. EI also is mentioned as competency required to succeed in 2020. Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation, Motivation, Empathy, and Social Skills are the independent dimensions that comprise the EI component. These factors are based on Daniel Goleman's EI Model, which contains two key factors: personal and social factor. Personal ability are self-awareness, self-regulation, and motivation, whereas social ability are empathy and social skills. (Gupta, 2016). The significance of EI may be appreciated from the findings of the (Baldiga, 2005)study, which states that a higher the degree of EI lays the path for decreased pressure and stress generated by a demanding work place. In this regard, (Gohm & Clore, 2002) proposed a novel concept where EI in the work has an ability to lessen exhaustion in jobs with burnouts. Schwartz (2011) discovered that feeling on constructive emotions at work had a greater beneficial effect on job attitudes as well as higher returns. Accordingly, a person's capacity to govern as well budget work time is critical for meeting diverse role expectations (Valcour & Hunter, 2005). Thomas & Ganister (1995) discovered a low level of time management related to work leads to a weaker ability to adequately meet unplanned personal needs, and hence such persons are more adverse. According to Lenaghan et.al.,(2007) controlling emotion is crucial in attaining balance in work-family tussle. Akintayo (2010) believes that emotionally intelligent individuals are able to handle the challenges of work-family stressors and disputes in a better way. Individuals with higher EQ are highly motivated at work and at home, and they have lower stress in daily lives. EI is an important aspect in building and maintaining equilibrium on both career and family life (Shylaja & Prasad, 2017). According to Goleman (1995), American psychologist who pioneered emotional intelligence, has established five fundamental components, as shown in Figure 1:

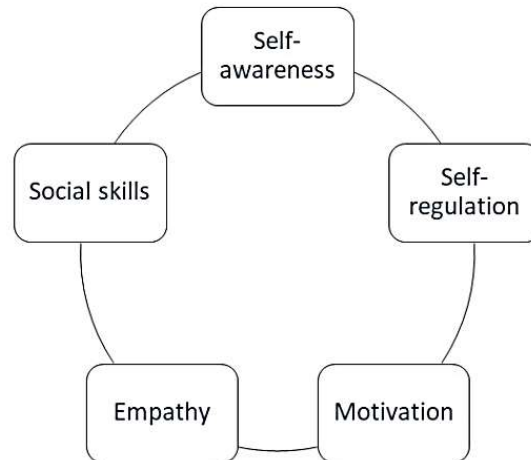


Figure 1: Components of Emotional Intelligence

Self-awareness is knowing how your moods and emotions influence others. Self-regulation involves controlling impulses, moods and thinking before acting. Internal (or intrinsic) motivation is pursuing goals for personal purposes, not for a reward as the opposite to external impulse, Empathy is the ability to understand others' motives, which is crucial for working teams. Social skills include relationship management and collaboration. Psychological research suggests that knowing and managing emotions improves life and work. EI involves self-awareness, control, tenacity, enthusiasm, self-motivation, compassion, social dexterity. The attributes of real-life achievers: healthy relationships and career success. Character, self-discipline, benevolence, and empathy are the foundations of a thriving society

Work- Life Balance

Because of economic situation and societal needs, the role of work has shifted all around the world. Work was once a concern of need and survival. The nature of "work" has altered over time, so is the composition of the workforce. Work is still necessary in today's world, but it should also be a matter of self-fulfilment. Work-life balance is an umbrella term that encloses efficacious prioritisation of "work" (career goals and aspiration) on but one hand with "life" (joy, relaxation, home, and spiritual development) on both. "Lifestyle harmony" and "quality of work life" are related but broader terms. "Work-life balance is a word used to describe workplace policies that recognise and try to assist employees' requirements in attaining a healthy balance of their personal and work lives." WLB is a difficult topic for employers in all routes of the careers, and it is piqued the curiosity of studies. According to Voydanoff (2005), WLB is reported as a worldwide assessment of family, work capacities to fulfil the needs of both work – home, and therefore the individual participates appropriately in both spheres. WLB, according to (Greenhaus & Allen, 2006) is the level of fit linking an individual's capacity to happiness in task of work and personal world to life's desires. The genesis of WLB studies may get traced back to examining women with many roles. WLB, first referred to as work and family conflict. WLB is an important force in contemporary work interactions, particularly in 24 hours operational businesses such as health care staff that work at night-time and in shift work. The conflict model emphasises that individuals develop psychological conflicts as a result of excessive demand in all parts of life.

Individual WLB aspects are gathered and formed based on organisational, social, and employee personal life factors. Independence, mental and physical health, and EI are used to define individual aspects impacting WLB. Organizational elements impacting WLB in individuals are flexible responsibilities, WLB initiatives, work aids, work stress, uncertainty, job role aspects Aldholay et.al,(2018). Factors of society that influence WLB is defined mostly in terms of social supports. This involves parental responsibility for children in the family, as well as other socioeconomic criteria such as level of knowledge, employee rank, wages, work type, age, gender, marriage and parental status, family nature (Delecta, 2011). The model developed by Pareek & Purohit (2010) may be utilised to understand the aspects that contribute to WLB. It is made up of six components: societal need, individual needs, timekeeping, collaboration, pay and reward, and work itself. Figure 2 portrays the dimensions of WLB.

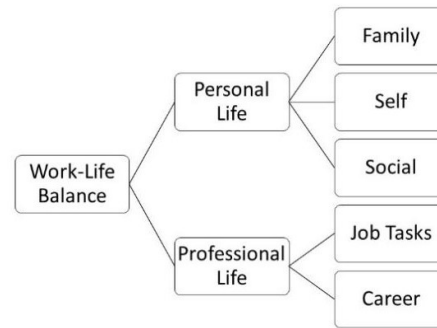


Figure 2: Components of Work-Life Balance

Employee satisfaction Saif et.al., (2011), work commitment positively affects WLB (Amarakoon & Wickramasinghe, 2010). Organizations are introducing methods to promote workers' work-life balance because they understand its impact on performance. Increased work schedule contentment (Nelson & Tarpey, 2010), schedules which are flexible (Tausig & Fenwick, 2001), and virtual office, working remotely Hill et.al., (1998). All these variables favourably affect work-life balance. Other negative aspect that affects work-life balance should also be considered such as emotional intelligence (Jyothi & Jyothi, 2012). Negative effects of work-life balance has been studied extensively. Work overload (Hill C. H., 2012), job pressures (Chiang et. al., (2010), and technological advances may negatively affect work-life balance (Sylvain, 2011). Reductions in compensation, incentives, health benefits, and company sponsored training will impair employees' WLB.

Emotional Intelligence and Work-Life Balance

WLB conundrum, which involves balancing personal and career is constantly disrupted by components of "human emotions." The emotion is intrinsic character that must be conveyed through various systems of the body based on situation requirements. Numerous studies have shown that possessing EI helps a person cope with everything with a stability and maturity, and to have a good attitude practically all of the time. As a result, possessing EI is critical for every individual, importantly nurses. As employees, nurses are continuously dealing with others, both in and out of the work. This is especially true for staff nurses. Handling so many responsibilities, nurses must have EI in order to manage with the individuals around them in the same time attending to their own emotions. It aids them to sort what is essential and execute their efforts (Sharma, 2014). In establishing the research framework, this study employs Goleman's paradigm. Research by Kumarasamy et.al., (2016), achieving WLB is critical by eliminating work and non-work tensions through a balance of diverse responsibilities and duties. Employees with high emotional intelligence outperform their peers, experience less stress and burnout, and are better able to reconcile job and family life. Thus, increased awareness of the effects of today's tough work environment, excellent research on work-life balance concerns has been met (Shylaja & Prasad, 2017). Based on research "Impact of EI on WLB in the Indian IT Sector", the primary intention of their study is to comprehend role of EI in the work-life balance of Bangalore-based IT workers.

According to study conducted with a sample size of 80 IT professionals, EI strongly contributes to employee WLB (Rashmi Bharti, 2015). There established constructive and crucial relationship which influence of WLB on work environment satisfaction, that is confirmed and predicted by previous studies. In addition, the interventions its impact of EI on WLB and its fulfilment is assessed. Male and female teachers have different perspectives of EI and WLB. It demonstrates the gender disparity in respondents' perspectives. In three of the examples, there is not much significance in difference between married and single participants based on career fulfilment. This study underlines the point of view that firms should aim to increase employees' emotional intelligence in order to assist them in balancing work-related and personal duties and obstacles (Memon, Khaskhely, & Pitafi, 2020).

3. STUDY'S HYPOTHESES AND MODEL

The hypothesis for the present study is developed after extensively reviewing literatures and framing the objectives:

H1: Nurses employed in hospitals possess emotional intelligence

H2: The hospitals considered for the research have measures/initiatives to promote WLB

H3: EI (self-awareness, self-management, empathy, self-motivation and social skills) has a positive impact on WLB of staff nurses.

Based on the above-mentioned hypotheses, a model is developed for the study which is represented in Figure 3:

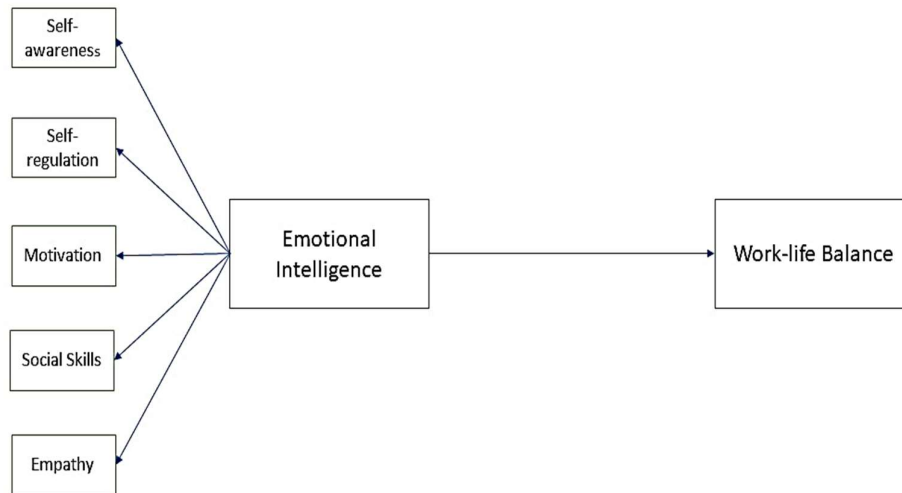


Figure 3: Conceptual model for the impact of EI on WLB of nurses

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Sample of the Study and Respondent’s Profile

The population of the research was chosen from private hospitals in Bangalore. Three hospitals agreed to participate in the survey. A total of 284 staff nurses were surveyed using a questionnaire, and the respondents were determined using a random sampling technique. Sixty-four percent of the 284 nurses are female, while 35.3 percent are male. 18.5 percent hold a diploma, 74.2 percent has a undergraduate degree, and 7.4 percent hold post-graduation degree. Their hospital employment experiences were as follows: 22.7 percent have fewer than three years of job experience, 39.5 percent have 3-5 years, and 37.8 percent have more than five years. They ranged in age from 25 to 45. 67.1 percent were married, 32.9 percent were unmarried, and 74% of married nurses had at minimum one kid.

4.2 Measures and Tools

To gather the needed data, the study utilised a questionnaire which included the following sections: The first section dealt with demographic information on the sample population (gender, work experience, educational level, age, marital and parental information). The other 2 parts, on the other hand, employed a Likert 5-point scale of acceptability from 1 "strongly disagree" to 5 "strongly agree." Second section comprises questions used to assess the independent variable (EI). Goleman's (1998) five (5) dimensions were used by the researcher (self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, empathy and social skills). EI has 5 components and 25 items(Luthans, 2012). The final section of the scale included items designed to assess the dependent variable (Work life balance). WLB was examined using 15 questions about employees' personal and work lives, as established in the literature and prior research. The work-life balance measure used in this research is a 15-item measure based from a scale prepared by Fisher-McAuley et.al.(2003), later updated by Hayman, (2005). A total of 300 questionnaires were sent, with 290 returned; after removing missing and inconsistent questions, 284 were analysed statistically.

5. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

5.1 Validity and Reliability

The study examined questionnaire's face validity. Face validity examines the measure's capacity to assess what it is intended to measure, as well as the extent to which the questions appropriately represent the factors under review. Reliability is linked to internal consistency and connection between questions that assess each item. It assesses the instrument’s strength and the likelihood of obtaining consistent findings if study is redone (Zikmund, 2003). Saunders et. al., (2013), says most often used metric of internal consistency is Cronbach alpha. As a result, Cronbach alpha is calculated for every variable. Results shown in table below demonstrate that Cronbach alpha values are greater than 0.70. By Sekaran (2003) questionnaire utilised is trustworthy.

Table 1. Cronbach’s alpha results

| Variables | Cronbach’s alpha |
|------------------|------------------|
| Self-awareness | .76 |
| Self- motivation | .82 |

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Self-management | .84 |
| Social Skills | .85 |
| Empathy | .78 |
| Work-life Balance | .77 |

5.2 Descriptive Statistics

For each question in the instrument, the arithmetic mean and standard deviation were computed. Table 2 displays overall means of EI components in decreasing list, as well as WLB question' total means. The exhibited mean, all of which are more than 3, suggest that surveyed staff nurses have Emotional Intelligence (EI) abilities, which are offered by WLB.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics results / N= 284

| Variables | Total no. of questions | Total Arithmetic Mean |
|--------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Emotional Intelligence | | |
| Social skills | 5 | 4.1679 |
| Empathy | 5 | 4.1330 |
| Self- awareness | 5 | 4.0936 |
| Self-management | 5 | 3.7380 |
| Self- motivation | 5 | 3.6288 |
| Work-life balance drives | 15 | 3.8165 |

5.3 Hypotheses Testing

One sample t- test was performed to examine first and second hypotheses. The following will be the rule for accepting hypotheses: The hypothesis is confirmed if the t significant level is lesser than P =0.05, and it is declined if the t significant level is larger than 0.05.

Table 3: One-Sample T test

| Emotional Intelligence components | Test Value =3 | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|-----|----------------|-----------|---|---|
| | T value | Df | Sig (2-tailed) | Mean Diff | Lower (95% confidence interval of diff) | Upper (95% confidence interval of diff) |
| Social Skills | 32.820 | 284 | .000 | 1.1679 | 1.1087 | 1.2451 |
| Empathy | 35.195 | 284 | .000 | 1.1330 | 1.0687 | 1.1992 |
| Self-motivation | 25.042 | 284 | .000 | 1.0936 | 1.0111 | 1.1763 |
| Self-management | 13.187 | 284 | .000 | 0.7380 | .6278 | .8301 |
| Self-awareness | 10.862 | 284 | .000 | 0.6288 | .5167 | .7430 |

Table 3 demonstrates that all Emotional Intelligence (EI) components have t sig levels smaller than 0.05, all computed values of t higher than tabular value (1.962) - 0.95 confidence and (n-1) (284) (df). The hypothesis will be acceptable based on the preceding rule. This demonstrated that nurses had the capacity for emotional intelligence. The findings in Tables 2 and 3 demonstrated that the nurses chosen for this research have enough social skills for forming excellent relationships and interacting effectively with patients and co-workers. They also have strong problem-solving and persuasion abilities, as well as a greater level of empathy. They recognise the thoughts, suffering of others and respond using empathy to mitigate the harmful effects of job stress. They may motivate themselves to reach their own and the organization's goals, as well as encourage others to develop and achieve their goals. Therefore, H1 is accepted.

Table 4. One sample T test

| Work Life Balance | Test Value=3 | | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------|-----|-----------------|-----------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | t | Df | Sig. (t-tailed) | Mean Diff | 95% confidence interval diff Lower | 95% confidence interval diff Upper |
| | 26.312 | 284 | .000 | .91677 | .8482 | .9851 |

WLB initiatives, t significant value = 0.000, which is less than the p value 0.05; T calculated value is 26.312, that is greater than its table value - confidence of 0.95; 284 (df)= 1.962 is demonstrated in Table 4. Taking into account the results that were presented, hypothesis 2 is supported. The findings indicated that the hospitals that were surveyed have WLB initiatives. These initiatives include the implementation of flexible hours and schemes for children care, as well as the facilities for necessary assistance to employees to help them plan schedule and

give autonomy and independence to prioritise their responsibilities in a manner that is acceptable.

To test the third hypothesis, multiple regression was used. The following guidelines will govern decisions based on the outcomes of this hypothesis: If sig value of F calculated is lower than p value =0.05, the model is regarded acceptable for testing the regression, and interaction between variables is linear; the hypothesis is confirmed if T computed significant value is lower than p value =0.05 (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2013). Table 5 displays ANOVA findings, regression coefficients and summary of model. The correlation value R=.502 in the table indicates that EI has a moderate statistically positive effect on nurses' WLB. The R2 value is.252, while the dependent variable variance percentage is explained by the by R2 of independent variable. However, the obtained result indicates that the impact of EI accounts for 25.2 percent of the variation in WLB attainment.

Table 5: Multiple Regression

| ANOVA & Summary of Model | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-------------|-------|-------|
| F | F Sig | R2 Adjusted | R | R2 |
| 18.731 | 0.000 | 0.232 | 0.502 | 0.252 |
| Co-efficient | | | | |
| IV | B | Beta | T | T Sig |
| Self awareness | .195 | .327 | .867 | .387 |
| Self-management | -.013 | -.029 | -.052 | .957 |
| Self-motivation | .007 | .008 | .102 | .921 |
| Empathy | .134 | .125 | 2.097 | .036 |
| Social Skills | .213 | .214 | 3.623 | .000 |

Table 5 also shows the computed value of F, which is 18.731 at 0.000. Model is acceptable for regression analysis, and relationship between primary variables is linear, according to this result. The F sig (0.000) value showed minimum examined sub-independent variables had a substantial impact on nurses' WLB. The following Emotional Intelligence (EI) categories have t sig values: self-awareness (.387), self-management (.957), self-motivation (.921), empathy (.036), and social skill (0.000). According to specified criteria, the results show that self-awareness, self-management, and self-motivation have no statistically significant effect on WLB because their sig values are greater than 0.05. Furthermore, findings demonstrate two sub variables, empathy, social skills, have a impact on WLB because their t sig lower than 0.05. The standardised coefficient Beta values, that are 12.5 percent and 21.4 percent, support this impact. Beta value depicts the influence that each predictor variables will have on dependent variable, providing researchers with a foundation for comparing the effects of independent variables (Nathans et al. ,2012).

6. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is concluded that foundation of hospital achievement is quality of health care services provided. Furthermore, it is shown that lucrative continuation and image of private sector hospitals are founded on healthcare quality, that is related with most important part of human existence that is health. Furthermore, it is a key competency and a means of sustaining competitive advantage. As a result, hospitals are focusing on health care quality to beat competition and surpass patients' expectations in order to keep existing customers and attract more in future. According to research of Kumar & Chakraborty (2013); (Yang et. al.,(2017); Mohammad, Al-Zeaud, & Batayneh (2011). Parand et. al., (2014) aforesaid objectives would be accomplished if hospital administration focuses on staff and patient satisfaction. This is due, in part, to the reality that the health service does not rely just on employees' expertise and technical abilities, but also on employees' desire to spend more time, labour, emotions, and compassion when delivering health care to patients. According to the findings of Eid (2016); Yadav N (2011), job satisfaction of employees with WLB is the cornerstone to exceptional conduct and patient care. Findings of Peters et. al., (2010); emphasized need of assisting health care staff with WLB activities to increase performance productivity. Studies agree that management's capacity to recognise, understand workers' hardships help acceptance of formalised WLB programmes in healthcare entities. The foremost purpose of current study is to look into influence of EI on WLB. It also looked at the WLB initiatives conducted in the hospitals for employee’s well-being. The findings supported the findings of Thorat & Dharwadkar (2016); Shylaja & Prasad(2017) that EI has significant impact on WLB. Their research established a direct link between EI and achieving WLB, whether at individual or management level. Furthermore, similar to findings of Nasurdin & O’Driscoll (2012) organisational initiatives and policies were shown to be critical in improving the link between the studied variables.

On the basis of result, it may be concluded that EI is a significant element which may impact WLB of staff nurses. The empathy, social skills aspects of EI possess a substantial impact on the WLB of nursing personnel. Nonetheless, in the study, self-management, self-awareness, and motivation also substantially influenced WLB of nurses working in a private sector hospital. Organizations and management should place more emphasis on

designing, devising, and implementing better work-life balance policies. They should also grasp the significance of emotional intelligence, as this will improve employee performance and lead to improved outcomes. In light of the aforesaid results, the following are suggested: Training programs should be established to promote a culture that encourages WLB, hence decreasing work-life dispute for nursing professionals. Employers and employees must work together to find solutions that promote flexible schedules. Adopting innovative approaches to increase productivity while protecting employees' psychological well-being is of primary concern. Organizations should take the effort to increase their workforce's emotional intelligence through training, conferences, workshops and seminars, which will in turn provide patient satisfaction, enhances employee commitment and improves organizational effectiveness.

Limitations and directions for further research: The study population is restricted to nursing staffs who are employed in three chosen private sector hospitals in Bangalore. The same research may be carried out in the form of a comparison study comparing hospitals run by the government and those run by the private sector. Another limitation is that the primary data is gathered through the use of a standardised questionnaire that the participants will be responsible for administering to themselves, qualitative considerations will not be factored. It is also recommended to include a variable that acts as a moderator or mediator, since this will assist progress the field of study in the years to come.

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