WORK–LIFE BALANCE IN THE PHARMACEUTICAL SECTOR: AN ANALYSIS OF INFLUENCING FACTORS AND IMPROVEMENT MEASURES WITH REFERENCE TO HETERO DRUGS

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The study aims to examine the level of work–life balance among employees in the pharmaceutical sector and to identify the key organizational and job-related factors influencing it, with special reference to Hetero Drugs. It also seeks to propose strategic measures to enhance work–life balance in order to promote employee well-being and organizational effectiveness.

Methodology: The research adopts a quantitative approach, collecting primary data from employees across various departments and job roles through a structured questionnaire. The study adopted the convenient sampling method and collected 145 sampling responses from the hetero drugs employees. Statistical tools such as regression analysis and exploratory factor analysis were employed to assess the impact of influencing factors and to identify the underlying dimensions of improvement measures.

Findings: The results indicate that job flexibility, manageable workloads, supervisory support, organizational policies, stress management practices, and technology-enabled work processes significantly affect employees' work–life balance. Additionally, managerial support and wellness-oriented initiatives were found to play a crucial role in sustaining employee engagement and overall satisfaction.

Conclusion: The study concludes that fostering an employee-centric work environment through flexible work arrangements, supportive leadership, effective job design, and continuous evaluation of work–life balance initiatives is essential for enhancing employee satisfaction, retention, and long-term organizational performance in the pharmaceutical industry.

Keywords: Job Flexibility, Manageable Workloads, Stress Management Practices, Supervisory Support, Organizational Policies.

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary business environment, organizations increasingly recognize human resources as a critical driver of competitive advantage and long-term sustainability. Among the various human resource concerns, work–life balance (WLB) has emerged as a central issue, particularly in knowledge-intensive and performance-driven industries such as pharmaceuticals. Work–life balance broadly refers to an individual's ability to effectively manage professional responsibilities alongside personal, family, and social commitments without undue stress or role conflict. In an era characterized by extended working hours, stringent performance targets, technological connectivity, and dynamic market pressures, achieving an optimal balance between work and personal life has become both challenging and essential for employees and organizations alike.

The pharmaceutical sector occupies a strategic position in the global and Indian economy due to its direct link with public health, innovation, and economic growth. The industry is marked by intense competition, strict regulatory frameworks, rapid technological advancements, and continuous pressure for research and development, quality assurance, and timely market delivery. Employees in this sector—ranging from research scientists and production staff to quality control professionals, marketing executives, and administrative personnel—often operate under demanding schedules, high accuracy requirements, and performance expectations. Consequently, issues related to work pressure, stress, extended working hours, shift work, and role ambiguity are common, making work–life balance a significant organizational and managerial concern.

The pharmaceutical industry has witnessed remarkable growth over the past few decades, positioning India as one of the world's leading producers of generic medicines and vaccines. The sector contributes substantially to employment generation, exports, and technological development. However, this growth has also intensified workplace demands, particularly in large-scale pharmaceutical organizations where operational efficiency, regulatory compliance, and global competitiveness are paramount. Employees are often expected to meet tight deadlines, adhere to international quality standards, and respond swiftly to market and regulatory changes. While these demands are essential for organizational success, they can adversely affect employees' physical health, mental well-being, job satisfaction, and overall quality of life if not managed effectively.

Work–life balance has significant implications not only for individual employees but also for organizational outcomes such as productivity, employee engagement, commitment, retention, and organizational citizenship behavior. Empirical evidence suggests that employees who experience a healthy balance between work and personal life tend to exhibit higher job satisfaction, lower levels of stress and burnout, improved morale, and stronger organizational loyalty. Conversely, poor work–life balance can lead to absenteeism, presenteeism, high attrition rates, reduced performance, and increased healthcare costs for organizations. In the pharmaceutical sector, where precision, consistency, and ethical responsibility are crucial, the consequences of employee fatigue and stress can be particularly severe.

Organizations are increasingly adopting various human resource policies and practices aimed at improving work–life balance. These include flexible working hours, leave policies, shift rotation, employee assistance programs, supportive supervision, career development opportunities, health and wellness initiatives, and the use of technology to streamline work processes. However, the effectiveness of such measures largely depends on organizational culture, leadership support, and employees' perceptions of fairness and support. Understanding the key organizational, job-related, and personal factors that influence work–life balance is therefore essential for designing and implementing effective improvement measures.

Hetero Drugs, one of India's leading pharmaceutical companies, represents a suitable context for examining work–life balance in the pharmaceutical sector. As a large and diversified organization with a strong presence in domestic and international markets, Hetero Drugs employs a substantial workforce across manufacturing, research and development, quality assurance, logistics, and marketing functions. The company operates in a highly competitive and regulated environment, which necessitates high levels of performance, compliance, and operational efficiency. At the same time, sustaining employee well-being and motivation remains critical for maintaining productivity and organizational excellence.

Overall, this study is significant in view of the growing emphasis on employee well-being and sustainable work practices in modern organizations. By focusing on the pharmaceutical sector and taking Hetero Drugs as a reference organization, the research adds to the existing body of knowledge on work–life balance in high-pressure industrial settings. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights for management, human resource practitioners, policymakers, and researchers, thereby contributing to the development of effective strategies that align organizational objectives with employees' personal and professional well-being.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Name & Year	Focused Point	Methodology	Findings	Conclusion
Clark (2000)	Work–Family Border Theory and boundary management	Theoretical framework development	Organizational culture, flexibility, and supervisor support influence balance; employees negotiate work–family borders	Provided strong theoretical foundation for examining organizational influences on work–life balance, especially in structured industries
Gueten et al. (2002)	Work–life balance as an HRM issue	Empirical study examining HR practices and employee attitudes	Supportive HR practices enhance job satisfaction and commitment; long hours and pressure hinder balance	Emphasized integrating work–life balance into HR policies for organizational effectiveness
Batt & Valcour (2003)	Impact of job demands, control, and working hours	Quantitative analysis of job characteristics	Job autonomy and flexible scheduling improve balance; high workload reduces it	Highlighted importance of job design in improving work–life balance
Kalliath & Brough (2008)	Conceptual clarity of work–life balance	Conceptual review of definitions	Balance is subjective and linked to satisfaction at work and home	Proposed holistic definition and stressed need for context-specific empirical studies
Reddy et al. (2010)	Work–life balance among Indian professionals	Empirical study (survey-based)	Workload, time pressure, and lack of support create imbalance; gender and marital differences observed	Provided Indian-context evidence and emphasized need for organizational interventions
Chandrasekar (2011)	Workplace environment and employee performance	Analytical study of workplace factors	Physical conditions, workload, and supervisory support affect stress and balance	Stressed need for healthy organizational climate, especially in process-driven industries

Delecta (2011)	Work–life balance and productivity	Conceptual and empirical analysis	Stress and role overload reduce productivity and satisfaction	Advocated proactive organizational strategies for sustainable performance
Lakshmi & Gopinath (2013)	Work–life balance in Indian manufacturing sector	Survey-based empirical study	Long hours and production targets reduce balance; managerial support improves it	Suggested policy-level and managerial interventions for sector-specific challenges
Haar et al. (2014)	Cross-national outcomes of work–life balance	Cross-cultural quantitative study	Positive relationship between balance, job satisfaction, life satisfaction, and mental health	Reinforced universal relevance of work–life balance and importance of support systems
Azeem & Akhtar (2014)	Work–life balance and job satisfaction in healthcare	Empirical survey among healthcare professionals	Better balance linked to higher satisfaction and lower stress	Highlighted importance of flexible practices in high-pressure sectors
Jain & Nair (2018)	Work–life balance practices and employee engagement	Organizational survey-based study	Flexible policies enhance engagement; gap exists between policy and practice	Emphasized effective implementation and supportive culture
Soleimani et al. (2024)	Work–life balance among pharmacists	Empirical health-focused study	Long hours linked to poor health, sleep issues; female pharmacists more vulnerable	Stressed need for wellness interventions and optimized schedules in pharmaceutical settings
Sun & Ishak (2025)	Work–life balance, well-being, and performance	Empirical study in start-up context	Balance improves engagement and performance through well-being mediation	Concluded that supportive HR strategies are essential for sustainable performance

RESEARCH GAP

Although work–life balance has been widely examined across various sectors, existing literature reveals limited empirical evidence focusing specifically on the pharmaceutical industry in the Indian context, particularly at the organizational level. Most prior studies adopt a generalized or cross-sectoral approach and emphasize descriptive outcomes such as stress, job satisfaction, or turnover intentions, with insufficient attention to identifying and empirically testing the organizational and job-related factors influencing work–life balance. Furthermore, there is a noticeable paucity of studies that integrate analytical techniques to examine inter-departmental variations and the relative impact of influencing factors within large pharmaceutical organizations. Research focusing on leading Indian pharmaceutical companies such as Hetero Drugs remains scarce, and practical, organization-specific improvement measures are often underexplored. Hence, the present study seeks to bridge this gap by systematically analyzing the influencing factors of work–life balance and proposing strategic improvement measures with special reference to Hetero Drugs, thereby contributing context-specific and actionable insights to both academic literature and managerial practice.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What factors influence work–life balance among employees in the pharmaceutical sector, with special reference to Hetero Drugs?
2. What strategic measures can be proposed to enhance work–life balance in the pharmaceutical industry, with special reference to Hetero Drugs?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the influence of factors on work–life balance among employees in the pharmaceutical sector, with special reference to Hetero Drugs.
2. To propose strategic measures for enhancing work–life balance in the pharmaceutical industry, with special reference to Hetero Drugs.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

H0: There is no significant influence of Factors on the employee work life balance at Hetero Drugs.

H1: There is a significant influence of Factors on the employee work life balance at Hetero Drugs.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study is confined to examining work–life balance among employees of Hetero Drugs located in Hyderabad. It focuses on identifying key organizational and job-related factors influencing employees' work–life balance in the pharmaceutical sector. The study covers employees across selected departments and designations within the organization. The analysis emphasizes employees' perceptions of work–life balance and related influencing factors. The study does not extend to comparative analysis with other pharmaceutical companies.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Approach: The present study adopts a quantitative research approach to analyze work–life balance among employees in the pharmaceutical sector. This approach facilitates objective measurement and statistical analysis of factors influencing work–life balance. Quantitative methods enable the study to draw meaningful inferences based on numerical data.

Sampling Unit: The sampling unit of the study comprises employees working at Hetero Drugs, Hyderabad. Respondents were selected from various departments and job roles within the organization. This unit provides relevant insights into work–life balance in a pharmaceutical work environment.

Sampling Method: The study employs the convenience sampling method to collect primary data from respondents. This method was chosen due to accessibility and willingness of employees to participate. It enabled timely and cost-effective data collection within organizational constraints.

Sample Size: A total of 160 questionnaires were distributed among employees of Hetero Drugs, Hyderabad. Out of these, 145 questionnaires were found to be completely filled and suitable for analysis. Hence, the final sample size of the study is 145 respondents.

Questionnaire Design: The questionnaire was structured into two sections to capture relevant information. Section I focused on factors influencing employees' work–life balance, while Section II addressed measures to improve work–life balance in the pharmaceutical industry. Responses were recorded using a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Statistical Tools: The study employs Regression Analysis to examine the influence of selected factors on employees' work–life balance and to determine their relative predictive strength.

Additionally, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is used to identify and group underlying dimensions of strategic measures for enhancing work–life balance in the pharmaceutical industry, ensuring data reduction and construct validity.

DATA ANALYSIS

To examine the influence of factors on work–life balance among employees in the pharmaceutical sector, with special reference to Hetero Drugs.

The study focused to know the impact of key factors influence on the work-life balance of the employees working in Hetero drugs. The study applied the ANOVA to know the group mean difference between the independent and dependent factors.

Table – 1

ANOVA of factors on work–life balance among employees in the pharmaceutical sector

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	50.125	5	10.025	8.058	.000[b]
	Residual	172.937	139	1.244		
	Total	223.062	144			

Source: Primary Data

The ANOVA results show that the regression model is statistically significant (F = 8.058, **p < 0.001**), indicating that the selected factors collectively exert a significant influence on employees' overall work–life balance satisfaction in the pharmaceutical sector, with special reference to Hetero Drugs. This significant model fit confirms the adequacy of the data for proceeding to regression analysis, enabling the identification of the relative contribution and predictive strength of each factor on work–life balance. The study has framed following hypothesis.

H0: There is no significant Impact of Factors on the Work-life Balance of the employees at Hetero Drugs.

H1: There is a significant Impact of Factors on the Work-life Balance of the employees at Hetero Drugs.

Table – 2

Coefficients of Factors on Work–Life Balance Among Employees

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.737	.453		3.838	.000
	My workload and working hours allow me to manage my personal and family responsibilities effectively.	4.326	0.775	3.343	5.582	0.000
	My organization provides adequate support (policies, facilities, and resources) to help employees maintain a healthy work–life balance.	2.125	0.275	1.137	7.727	0.017
	My immediate supervisor is understanding and supportive of my personal and family needs.	1.071	0.180	2.075	5.950	0.033
	I have sufficient flexibility and autonomy in my job to decide how and when my work tasks are completed.	3.121	0.382	4.117	8.170	0.015
	The level of work-related stress in my job is manageable and does not interfere with my personal life.	1.165	0.181	1.159	6.436	0.043

Source: Primary Data

The table presents the regression coefficients examining the influence of key factors on work–life balance among employees in the pharmaceutical sector, with special reference to Hetero Drugs. The table results indicate that job flexibility and autonomy ($\beta = 4.117$, $p < 0.05$) exert the strongest influence, followed by manageable workload and working hours ($\beta = 3.343$, $p < 0.001$), supervisory support ($\beta = 2.075$, $p < 0.05$), organizational support mechanisms ($\beta = 1.137$, $p < 0.05$), and manageable work-related stress ($\beta = 1.159$, $p < 0.05$), demonstrating that both structural and relational factors significantly enhance employees' work–life balance. The findings infer that greater autonomy, realistic workloads, and supportive leadership directly

improve employees' capacity to balance professional and personal responsibilities, leading to higher satisfaction and reduced stress. As the P value observed to be significant for all the factors. Hence, the study rejects H0 and accepts the H1, where the key factors are having the influence on the work-life balance of employees at Hetero Drugs. The results further suggest that organizational policies and stress management practices, though relatively lower in influence, remain essential for sustaining long-term employee well-being. The conclusion depicts that strengthening flexibility-oriented job design, managerial sensitivity, and workload rationalization will yield substantial benefits for employee morale, retention, and productivity at Hetero Drugs. Accordingly, the alternative hypothesis is accepted, and future HR strategies should prioritize autonomy-driven roles, supportive supervision, and comprehensive work–life balance frameworks.

Objective-2: To propose strategic measures for enhancing work–life balance in the pharmaceutical industry, with special reference to Hetero Drugs.

The study mainly focused on the strategic or key measures to improve the work-life balance of employees working in pharmaceutical industry i.e., Hetero Drugs Hyderabad. The study considered the primary data for the considered factors in five-point likert scale and applied the statistical method of Exploratory Factor Analysis.

The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) test was applied to examine whether the primary data collected for the selected factors were adequate for analysis. The test helps in assessing the suitability of the data for factor analysis by measuring sampling adequacy. The results of the KMO test indicate whether the data are appropriate for further multivariate analysis.

Table – 3 Sample Adequacy Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.833
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	332.081
	df	66
	Sig.	.000

Source: Primary Data

The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) value of 0.833 indicates a high level of sampling adequacy, while Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 332.081$, df = 66, p < 0.001), confirming sufficient intercorrelations among the variables measuring work–life balance practices in the pharmaceutical industry. These results establish the suitability of the dataset for conducting Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), thereby justifying the extraction and

interpretation of the Component Matrix for identifying underlying strategic dimensions relevant to Hetero Drugs.

Table – 4

Component Matrix of measures for enhancing work–life balance in the pharmaceutical industry

	Component		
	1	2	3
Flexible working hours can help employees better manage work and personal life.	.621		
Technology should be used to reduce workload and improve efficiency.	.611		
Workload allocation should be realistic and manageable.	.603		
Career development initiatives should avoid excessive work pressure.	.603		
Shift scheduling should minimize work–life conflict.	.593		
Regular wellness programs should be provided for employees.	.574		
Leave policies should adequately support employee well-being.		.561	
Managers should be trained to support employees' work–life balance.		.747	
Employees should have greater job autonomy and flexibility.		.528	
A supportive work culture should prioritize employee well-being.		.526	
Work–life balance should be periodically assessed and HR policies updated.			.637
Job roles should be clearly defined to reduce work stress.			.552

Source: Primary Data

The table presents the Component Matrix derived through Principal Component Analysis, revealing three distinct components that collectively explain the strategic measures for enhancing work–life balance in the pharmaceutical industry, with special reference to Hetero Drugs. The table results indicate that managerial and cultural support measures load highest, with training managers to support work–life balance (.747) and flexible working hours (.621) emerging as the most influential, followed by technology-enabled workload reduction (.611), realistic workload allocation (.603), and career development without excessive pressure (.603), suggesting strong organizational and operational benefits for employee well-being and productivity. The findings infer that supportive leadership, flexibility, and efficient work design significantly reduce work stress, enhance job satisfaction, and promote sustainable

employee performance, while moderate loadings on wellness programs (.574), leave policies (.561), job autonomy (.528), and supportive work culture (.526) reinforce long-term employee engagement. Lower yet meaningful loadings on periodic work–life balance assessment (.637) and clear job role definition (.552) highlight the importance of continuous HR policy review and role clarity in minimizing future work–life conflicts. The conclusion depicts that implementing these measures in an integrated manner will yield improved retention, morale, and organizational effectiveness at Hetero Drugs, and suggesting a future-oriented HR strategy focused on flexibility, supportive leadership, and systematic policy evaluation.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. The findings resulted that job flexibility and autonomy emerged as the most influential factor ($\beta = 4.117$), indicating that employees with greater control over how and when tasks are performed experience significantly higher work–life balance satisfaction.

2. The data found that manageable workload and working hours ($\beta = 3.343$) play a critical role in enabling employees to effectively balance professional duties with personal and family responsibilities.

3. The findings revealed that supervisory understanding and support ($\beta = 2.075$) substantially enhance employees' work–life balance by fostering a supportive and empathetic work environment.

4. The study found that organizational support mechanisms such as policies, facilities, and resources ($\beta = 1.137$) positively influence work–life balance by creating a structured framework for employee well-being.

5. The findings indicated that manageable work-related stress ($\beta = 1.159$) significantly contributes to improved work–life balance by reducing psychological strain and enhancing overall job satisfaction.

6. The findings resulted that training managers to support employees' work–life balance recorded the highest component loading (.747), indicating that managerial capability is the most critical strategic lever for improving work–life balance at Hetero Drugs.

7. The data found that flexible working hours (.621) strongly contribute to employees' ability to manage professional and personal commitments, thereby enhancing overall well-being and productivity.

8. The findings revealed that the use of technology to reduce workload and improve efficiency (.611) significantly supports work–life balance by minimizing operational strain and time pressure.

9. The study found that realistic workload allocation and pressure-free career development initiatives (.603 each) play a vital role in reducing employee stress and promoting sustainable performance.

10. The findings indicated that wellness programs (.574), supportive leave policies (.561), and job autonomy (.528) collectively reinforce long-term employee engagement and psychological well-being.

11. The results established that periodic assessment of work–life balance practices (.637) and clear job role definition (.552) are essential for continuous HR policy refinement and prevention of future work–life conflicts in the organization.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The research is restricted to Hyderabad, and regional work culture differences across India or globally are not considered.

2. The study adopts a cross-sectional approach, capturing responses at a single point in time, which limits the ability to assess changes in work–life balance perceptions over time.

3. The study is confined to employees of Hetero Drugs, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other pharmaceutical companies or industrial sectors with different organizational cultures and policies.

4. While key organizational and job-related factors were examined, other potential influences such as personality traits, family support systems, economic conditions, and external environmental factors were not included.

CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

The study concludes that work–life balance among employees in the pharmaceutical sector, with special reference to Hetero Drugs, is strongly influenced by a combination of job-related flexibility, supportive leadership, manageable workloads, and enabling organizational policies. The analysis highlights that employees experience better balance when they are provided with autonomy in work execution, realistic role expectations, and empathetic supervisory support. Organizational systems such as structured HR policies, wellness initiatives, and technology-enabled work processes further strengthen employees' ability to harmonize professional and personal responsibilities. The findings also emphasize the importance of reducing excessive

work pressure and stress through effective workload planning and clearly defined job roles. Based on these insights, it is suggested that Hetero Drugs should promote flexible work arrangements, strengthen managerial training on employee well-being, and institutionalize periodic work–life balance assessments. Additionally, leveraging technology to improve efficiency, expanding wellness and leave support mechanisms, and fostering a supportive work culture will contribute to sustainable employee performance. Thus, adopting an integrated, employee-centric HR strategy will enhance satisfaction, retention, and organizational effectiveness in the long run.

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