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EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF JOB INSECURITY ON THE WORK-LIFE BALANCE OF IT PROFESSIONALS IN COIMBATORE

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ABSTRACT
In the dynamic environment of the Indian IT sector, job insecurity has emerged as a critical challenge affecting the well-being of employees. This study investigates the impact of job insecurity on the work-life balance (WLB) of IT professionals in Coimbatore, a rapidly growing tech hub. With increasing layoffs, contract-based employment, and project-based hiring trends, IT workers face heightened uncertainty, which may lead to stress, reduced job satisfaction, and difficulties in balancing professional and personal life. Data for this study was collected through a structured questionnaire using a convenient sampling method among IT employees in Coimbatore. The findings provide insights into how job insecurity is reshaping work-life dynamics in the IT industry, offering implications for employers and policymakers to mitigate these challenges.
KEYWORDS: *Job Insecurity, Work-Life Balance, IT Professionals, Coimbatore, Employment Trends, Stress Management*

INTRODUCTION

In today's fast-paced and technology-driven world, the Information Technology (IT) sector stands as one of the most dynamic and rapidly evolving industries. While this growth brings immense opportunities, it also introduces challenges one of the most pressing being job insecurity. Particularly in India, and more specifically in emerging tech hubs like Coimbatore, IT professionals face growing concerns over the stability of their employment due to trends such as project-based hiring, automation, outsourcing, and frequent organizational restructuring. These uncertainties have intensified anxiety among employees, influencing not just their work performance but also their personal lives.

This study focuses on understanding how job insecurity impacts the work-life balance of IT professionals in Coimbatore. Through a structured research methodology involving a detailed questionnaire and statistical analysis, the research aims to provide valuable insights for both employers and policymakers. By identifying the key factors linking job insecurity with work-life conflicts, the study aspires to contribute to the development of supportive workplace practices that can safeguard employee well-being in a competitive and uncertain job environment.

The Information Technology (IT) sector has emerged as a cornerstone of India's economic development, contributing significantly to employment, innovation, and global competitiveness. Cities like Coimbatore, traditionally known for textiles and engineering industries, have rapidly transformed into emerging IT hubs, attracting a growing workforce of skilled professionals. However, with this growth comes new and complex challenges, particularly concerning the stability and security of employment in the IT sector.

Job insecurity the fear or perception of losing one's job has become increasingly prevalent among IT professionals. Factors such as the rise of automation, artificial intelligence, outsourcing pressures, global economic volatility, and shifting organizational structures have intensified these fears. Unlike in traditional employment models where long-term job security was expected, the modern IT workplace often emphasizes agility, short-term contracts, and performance-driven evaluations, leaving many employees uncertain about their future.

This sense of insecurity does not remain confined to the workplace. It extends into the personal lives of employees, affecting their emotional and mental well-being. One of the most noticeable consequences is the disruption of work-life balance (WLB). Work-life balance refers to an individual's ability to effectively manage the demands of their job alongside personal commitments such as family, health, and leisure. When job insecurity becomes chronic, employees may overwork in an attempt to safeguard their positions, leading to exhaustion, strained relationships, and a decline in quality of life outside the workplace.

This study seeks to explore the impact of job insecurity on the work-life balance of IT professionals in Coimbatore. By focusing on this specific geographic and industrial context, the research aims to uncover how widespread perceptions of job instability influence the personal and professional lives of employees. Through a structured survey instrument and appropriate statistical tools, including chi-square tests and correlation analyses, the study will provide empirical evidence to support strategic interventions.

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RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To examine the impact of job insecurity on the work-life balance of IT professionals.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Ashford, Lee, and Bobko (1989) identified that job insecurity leads to psychological strain and decreased organizational commitment, suggesting that perceptions of insecurity are just as harmful as actual job loss. **Clark (2001)** noted that even the anticipation of job loss can have profound effects on work-life balance, leading employees to overwork or become emotionally withdrawn to cope with uncertainty. **Kinnunen et al. (2000)** explored the spillover effect, showing that stress from job insecurity often extends beyond the workplace and disrupts family life and personal relationships.

Probst (2003) emphasized that employees experiencing job insecurity often demonstrate lower engagement and organizational loyalty, and are more prone to absenteeism and turnover intentions. **Sverke et al. (2002)** conducted a meta-analysis that concluded job insecurity consistently correlates with negative outcomes such as poor job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and overall well-being.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is based on a descriptive research design aimed at analyzing how job insecurity affects the work-life balance of IT professionals in Coimbatore. A structured questionnaire was developed based on validated scales such as the Job Insecurity Scale (JIS) and the Work-Life Balance Scale (WLBS). Data was collected from 388 IT employees working in various software firms and tech parks in Coimbatore using the convenience sampling method. The survey included Likert-scale, closed-ended, and multiple-choice questions to assess levels of job insecurity and its effects on work-life balance.

LIMITATIONS

The use of convenience sampling restricts the generalizability of results beyond Coimbatore's IT sector. Reliance on self-reported data may introduce response bias. The study also lacks insights from employers or HR professionals.

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

The data collected from 388 IT professionals in Coimbatore reveals key demographic and statistical patterns that shed light on how job insecurity affects their work-life balance. Most respondents are young, predominantly aged between 18 to 25 years, and hold a bachelor's degree. The gender distribution shows a larger representation of males, and the majority of respondents are single with relatively limited work experience, mainly between less than a year to three years. The chi-square test results show a statistically significant association between job insecurity and work-life balance, as evidenced by a Pearson Chi-Square value of 66.007 with a p-value of 0.000. This indicates that variations in job insecurity levels are strongly linked to differences in how employees perceive and manage their work-life commitments. Although 40% of cells in the analysis had expected counts less than 5 posing a minor limitation the overall significance of the test remains intact.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Particulars		Frequency	Percent
Age	18-25	205	31.5
	26-30	137	21.1
	31-35	46	7.1
Gender	Male	234	36.0
	Female	154	23.7
Education	Diploma	47	7.2
	Bachelor's Degree	253	38.9
	Master's Degree	88	13.5
Marital Status	Single	327	50.3
	Married	61	9.4
Years of Experience	Less than 1 year	141	21.7
	1–3 years	178	27.4
	4–10 years	64	9.8
	More than 10 years	5	0.8

The provided table offers a concise overview of the characteristics of a surveyed group. The age distribution reveals that the largest segment falls within the 18-25 year range (31.5%), followed by the 26-30 year group (21.1%), with a smaller representation in the 31-35 year category (7.1%). Regarding gender, the sample comprises more males (36.0%) than females (23.7%). In terms of education, the majority hold a Bachelor's Degree (38.9%), while Master's Degree holders make up 13.5%, and those with a Diploma represent 7.2%. The marital status indicates that the majority of the surveyed individuals are single (50.3%), with a smaller portion being married (9.4%). Finally, when considering years of experience, the largest group has 1-3 years (27.4%), closely followed by those with less than 1 year (21.7%), while individuals with 4-10 years of experience constitute 9.8%, and a very small fraction has more than 10 years of experience (0.8%). Overall, the data suggests a sample that is predominantly young, with more males than females, largely holding bachelor's degrees, mostly single, and with a significant portion having relatively limited work experience.

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Table 2: Gender And Relationship Between Job Insecurity and Work-Life Balance

Gender And Relationship Between Job Insecurity and Work-Life Balance	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-Sided)
I frequently worry about the stability of my job in the IT sector	6.096[a]	4	.192
I work extra hours due to job insecurity to secure my position	5.912[a]	4	.206
I can't focus on personal or family activities because of job security	19.263[a]	4	.001
Job insecurity has lowered my Competition in the Job Market	2.977[a]	4	.562

A Chi-Square test was conducted to examine the association between gender and perceptions of job insecurity and its impact on work-life balance. A significant association was found for the statement "I can't focus on personal or family activities because of job security" ($p = .001$), indicating that this perception varies by gender. However, no significant associations were found for concerns about job stability ($p = .192$), working extra hours to secure one's position ($p = .206$), or the belief that job insecurity lowers competitiveness in the job market ($p = .562$), suggesting these perceptions are not influenced by gender.

CONCLUSION

It highlights that job insecurity significantly influences the work-life balance of IT professionals in Coimbatore, with statistical evidence showing a strong association between perceived job instability and difficulties in managing personal and professional commitments. Findings indicate that while concerns about job security are prevalent across demographics, specific challenges such as inability to focus on personal or family activities vary by gender. These results underscore the urgent need for organizations to implement supportive policies, including flexible work arrangements and clear communication about job security, to mitigate stress and promote employee well-being in an increasingly uncertain IT work environment.

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