“Flexible work arrangements and their impact on women’s job satisfaction and quality of life: The mediating role of work-life balance”

AUTHORS	Jamunarani H. S. Rajeena Syed

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Jamunarani H.S. (India), **Rajeena Syed** (India)

FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS AND THEIR IMPACT ON WOMEN'S JOB SATISFACTION AND QUALITY OF LIFE: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Abstract

The study aims to examine the influence of flexible work arrangements (FWAs) on women's job satisfaction, work-life balance, and quality of life, focusing on the mediating role of work-life balance and the moderating role of job demands. A cross-sectional questionnaire survey was conducted from March to November 2024 among women in domestic companies in Bengaluru, India. This study surveyed 592 women professionals from small- and medium-sized domestic firms across IT, finance, healthcare, retail, and service sectors. Respondents, engaged in flexible or hybrid work roles at various job levels, were selected for their direct experience with flexible schedules, making them well-positioned to assess impacts on job satisfaction, work-life balance, and quality of life. The results demonstrate that FWAs have significant direct effects on job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.211$, $p < 0.001$), work-life balance ($\beta = 0.477$, $p < 0.001$), and quality of life ($\beta = 0.34$, $p < 0.001$). Additionally, work-life balance positively influences both job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.352$, $p < 0.001$) and quality of life ($\beta = 0.342$, $p < 0.001$). Mediation analysis reveals that work-life balance partially mediates the relationships between FWAs and job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.168$, $p < 0.001$) as well as FWAs and quality of life ($\beta = 0.163$, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, job demands are shown to moderate the relationship between FWAs and work-life balance ($\beta = 0.15$, $p = 0.001$). The findings have highlighted the need for flexible work arrangements that enhance women's overall work-life integration and well-being.

Keywords flexible work arrangements, women, job satisfaction, quality of life, work-life balance

JEL Classification J16, J22, J28, J81, I31

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Jamunarani H.S., Research Scholar, Department of Commerce, School of Economics and Commerce, CMR University, India. (Corresponding author)

Rajeena Syed, Dr., Associate Professor, Department of Management, School of Economics and Commerce, CMR University, India.

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INTRODUCTION

In the evolving landscape of employment, flexible work arrangements (FWAs) have become a defining feature of contemporary work structures. Examples of remote work, flexible time, compressed workweeks, and blended models are gaining popularity in all industries to manage employee well-being, organizational flexibility, and changing social expectations (Ng & Clercq, 2021). These have been prompted by technological innovation, transformations in the labor market, and more recently by global disruptions that reset the parameters between work and personal life (Clark, 2000; Clark et al., 2021).

However, the increase in workplace flexibility has not led to uniformly positive outcomes. Although FWAs are typically viewed as solutions to enhance work-life integration, their actual impact is uneven across different geographies, cultures, and organizational settings (Hao et al., 2016). In much of the world, and particularly in developing economies, the infrastructure and support institutions, as well as gender structures, make it difficult for flexible work policies to be effective (Aura

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& Desiana, 2023; Wang & Cheng, 2024). Women in particular remain subject to disproportionate burdens in sharing multiple roles with paid career demands often crossing into unpaid caregiving tasks. Consequently, the assumed flexibility benefits do not necessarily translate into improved well-being or job satisfaction (Allen et al., 2013).

In India, patriarchal norms and rigid professional structures often limit the effectiveness of FWAs for women; the extent to which FWAs actually promote the overall well-being of women is an under-researched area (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Cities like Bangalore, while having rapidly modernizing industries, also exhibit the pulls between forward-thinking policy and conventional expectations of women's roles. Women in organizational work in domestic settings can find structural and cultural limitations interfering with the efficacy of FWAs in advancing their life quality and job satisfaction (Bharadwaj et al., 2022).

The core issue, then, is determining whether flexible work arrangements, although ubiquitous, align with the practical realities experienced by women in high-demand workplace settings with limited organizational resources. The topic holds global significance while warranting localized attention, with important implications for gender equity, organizational policy development, and the advancement of inclusive workplace practices.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Flexible work arrangements (FWAs) have become essential organizational practices, providing employees control over where and when to work. These arrangements, remote work, flextime, and compressed workweeks, are placed in the job demands-resources (JD-R) model as organizational resources to help counteract demands and promote well-being in employees (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). FWAs apply specifically to women who bear disproportionate caregiving and domestic responsibilities. Various studies confirm that FWAs promote autonomy, diminish work-family conflict, and increase job satisfaction (Allen et al., 2013; Davidescu et al., 2020). Nevertheless, their effects differ by context and depend on organizational support, job redesign, and cultural norms (Kossek et al., 2006; Wang & Xie, 2023).

Work-life balance (WLB) is also often studied as an intervening construct in the link between FWAs and employee outcomes. In many developing countries, however, women face additional constraints due to a lack of childcare infrastructure and cultural expectations, making work-life balance more difficult to achieve (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011). FWAs can support better WLB through time management and scheduling conflict reduction (Allen et al., 2013; Rastogi et al., 2018). However, not all of the findings are consistent. Literature warns that FWAs can also develop an "always-on" culture of work, amplifying psychological distress and blurring the line between job life and personal life (Yusaini et al., 2023). This dichotomy suggests that further research is necessary to understand how WLB functions as an intervening construct in various contexts.

Job satisfaction, as the extent to which employees feel satisfied with their job, is interlinked with FWAs and WLB. Meta-analysis identifies FWAs as increasing job satisfaction by providing employees with control and decreasing family responsibilities (Gašić & Berber, 2023; Sekhar & Patwardhan, 2023). This is particularly evident in organizations with weak managerial support or unclear work boundaries, which can lead to employee dissatisfaction despite the presence of flexible policies (Toropova et al., 2021). Beyond that, job satisfaction is also reinforced if employees feel supported for their WLB, which suggests the presence of a mediation effect. Moreover, job satisfaction is closely tied to perceptions of fairness, autonomy, and recognition factors that can be directly influenced by how flexibly and equitably work arrangements are implemented (Toropova et al., 2021). For women balancing professional and domestic responsibilities, satisfaction often hinges on whether

flexibility translates into genuine support rather than increased workload or expectations.

Quality of life encompasses not only workplace well-being but also emotional, physical, and environmental well-being. Both WLB and job satisfaction have been related to quality of life in recent studies. Greenhaus et al. (2003) show how positive WLB enhances quality of life, and Bakker and Demerouti (2007) explain how job resources like flexibility enhance life quality through the reduction of stress. Empirical studies in developing nations also indicate that work flexibility enhances psychological well-being and everyday life satisfaction (Aura & Desiana, 2023; Hanklang et al., 2018). Thus, assessing quality of life in flexible working conditions includes not only occupational performances but more generally a series of individual well-being measurements, and indeed particularly for women who are living in highly complex socio-professional conditions.

High job demands may disproportionately affect women who are already balancing substantial unpaid domestic responsibilities, compounding stress and reducing the effectiveness of FWAs. The JD-R model suggests that job demands can drain employees' resources, including in flexible environments, thereby offsetting the positive impacts of FWAs on well-being and WLB (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Others have found that high job demands diminish disengagement from work ability, which constrains the efficacy of FWAs in application (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Jiang et al., 2023). This complements new findings to suggest that job demands can moderate the FWA–WLB relationship. Additionally, job demands not only strain personal resources but may also inhibit the ability of employees, especially women, to fully leverage the benefits of flexible work arrangements, making the examination of their moderating role both timely and essential (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

Despite growing global attention to flexible working arrangements, the literature continues to focus predominantly on Western organizational contexts, where organizational support systems and gender structures differ significantly from those in emerging economies (Kossek et al., 2006; S. Wang & Cheng, 2024). For women working in India, workforce participation is shaped not only by organizational policies but also by societal and cultural dictates deeply rooted and frequently limiting perceived and real benefits of flexibility (Sekhar & Patwardhan, 2023). Additionally, while certain articles depict FWAs as empowerment and productivity devices (Davidescu et al., 2020; Gašić & Berber, 2023), others are critical of blurring boundaries, exacerbating burnout, and unequal accessibility (Yusaini et al., 2023). These contradictions suggest the need for contextualized research that considers cultural, organizational, and gender factors in examining the real-world effects of FWAs. Apart from that, the JD-R conceptualization, while most dominant, was scarcely employed to address flexible working within Indian organizational settings, especially with women workers achieving a balance between caregiving duties and professional needs.

Moreover, while flexible working arrangements and their relationships with employee outcomes are highly studied, there is relatively little overlap of such viewpoints, particularly those rooted in gender, culture, and design of work, into satisfaction and quality-of-life research. Although managerial attitudes and organizational support are important predictors of success for FWAs (Beauregard & Henry, 2009; Shirmohammadi et al., 2022), such considerations are often lacking in satisfaction with one's job and quality-of-life analyses. To some degree, the literature available also tends to conceptualize FWAs with a binary work-life mindset, with limited consideration for the rich processes by which women negotiate intersecting responsibilities and identities within different contexts of employment (Wang & Xie, 2023). In India, in particular, the intersection of informal caregiving responsibility, limited childcare resources within institutions, and firmly set working schedules can add stresses even within nominally flexible working arrangements (Aura & Desiana, 2023). By implication, there is a call for further contextual, in-depth research that critically examines the social and organizational contexts that shape women's experiences of flexibility.

In spite of increasing research on FWAs, significant gaps exist. Most of the current research on FWAs has been from Western settings with less attention on women in developing econo-

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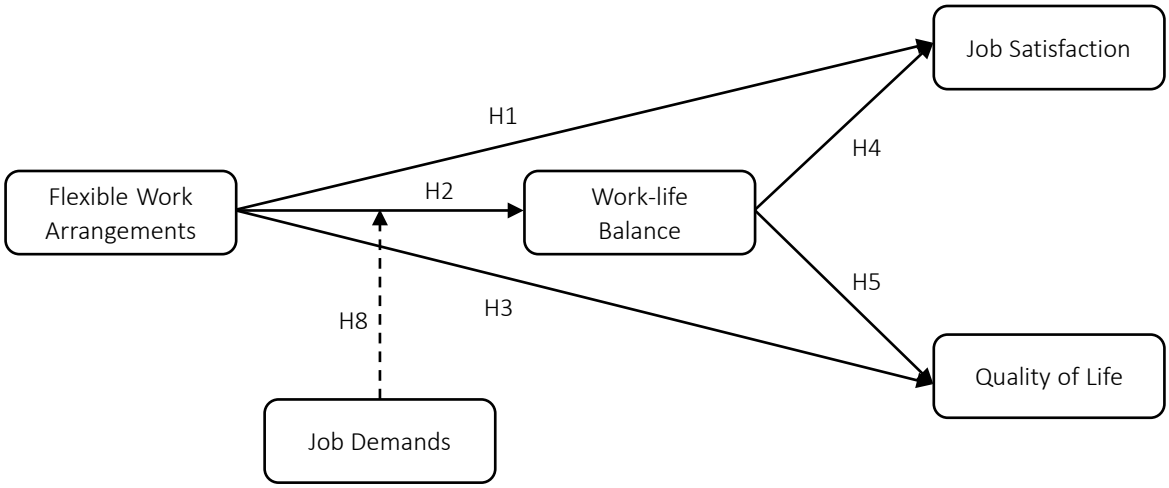

Figure 1. Research model

mies, especially high-demand workplaces. In addition, although WLB is often talked about as a needed outcome following FWA, its mediating effects in FWA outcomes have not been examined fully in culturally specific and gender-sensitive research. In the same vein, the moderating effect of job demands on the efficacy of flexible work is also an under-researched field of inquiry, particularly in the Indian organizational context.

This study aims to examine the impact of flexible work arrangements on women's job satisfaction and quality of life, with particular attention to the mediating role of work-life balance and the moderating effect of job demands. The relationships between the constructs are tested by the following hypotheses. The research model is presented in Figure 1.

H1: Flexible work arrangements have a significant impact on job satisfaction.

H2: Flexible work arrangements have a significant impact on work-life balance.

H3: Flexible work arrangements have a significant impact on quality of life.

H4: Work-life balance has a significant impact on job satisfaction.

H5: Work-life balance has a significant impact on quality of life.

H6: Work-life balance mediates the association between flexible work arrangements and job satisfaction.

H7: Work-life balance mediates the association between flexible work arrangements and quality of life.

H8: Job demands moderate the association between flexible work arrangements and work-life balance.

2. METHODOLOGY

The research employed cross-sectional survey methodology to examine the impact of flexible work arrangements (FWAs) on work-life balance, job satisfaction, and life quality of women workers in domestic enterprises in Bangalore city in India. The city of Bangalore was chosen because it is an important employment hub, and it has seen the growing implementation of flexible work policies in its diverse business environment. The survey was spread over half a year between March 2024 and November 2024 to allow for an equitable distribution of responses for various industries and positions.

The survey was conducted online through a self-report survey. Purposive sampling was employed in targeting female employees under some sort of flexible work organization. Inclusion was ensured in terms of being presently employed in domestic

firms (non-MNCs) and being currently involved in remote, mixed, or flexible environments. A total of 2,000 survey questionnaires were distributed electronically via emails, women's professional networks, and organizational contacts, out of which 592 responses were collected, resulting in an overall response rate of 29.6%. The demographic profile of the respondents is presented in Table 1.

Before survey participation, the purpose of the research and informed consent were communicated to the respondents through the survey platform. Anonymity was ensured, and confidentiality was maintained at all stages. No identifiable personal information was gathered. The research involved minimal risk and, as such, did not need formal approval by the affiliating university's guidelines for ethics boards. Ethical considerations for voluntary research participation, privacy, and protection of information were strictly adhered to.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics

Demographic factor	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age Group (Years)	Under 25	148	25.00
	25–34	236	39.86
	35–44	118	19.93
	45–54	59	9.96
	55 and above	31	5.23
Marital Status	Single	207	34.96
	Married	325	54.89
	Divorced	47	7.93
	Widowed	13	2.19
Education Level	High School	53	8.95
	Diploma/ Certification	118	19.93
	Bachelor's Degree	325	54.89
	Master's Degree	83	14.02
	Doctorate or Higher	13	2.19
Industry Sector	IT	107	18.07
	Finance	123	20.78
	Data Entry/ Call Center	191	32.26
	Healthcare	106	17.90
	Retail/E-commerce	65	10.97
Job Role	Entry Level	207	34.96
	Mid-level	237	40.03
	Managerial	89	15.03
	Senior leadership	47	7.93
	Freelance/ independent	12	20.20
Experience in Years	Less than 1	83	14.02
	1 to 3	207	34.96
	4 to 6	177	29.89
	7 to 10	83	14.02
	Above 10	42	7.09
Employment Type	Full time	325	54.89
	Part-time	106	17.90
	Contractual	118	19.93
	Freelance	43	7.26
Work arrangement	Fully-remote	142	23..98
	Hybrid	325	54.89
	On-site	125	21.11

The questionnaire was constructed using validated scales from prior literature. The items were selected to align with the constructs of interest and ensure internal consistency. The FWAs scale was adopted from the study of Jiang et al. (2023). It includes four items: shorter work week, working hours flexibility, remote work, and working shifts. Job demands were measured on five items: work speed, hard work, physical effort, decision-making, and job certainty, adopted from Palvimo et al. (2023). Satisfaction of job, personal satisfaction, meaningfulness, and personal responsibility statements are used to measure job satisfaction (Malik, 2015). Quality of life is also measured by four items: physical domain, psychosocial domain, social relationship domain, and environmental domain (Hanklang et al., 2018). Items measuring WLB were adopted from the works of Aman-Ullah et al. (2024) and Lekchiri and Eversole (2021): healthy lifestyle, fulfilled responsibilities, the time between tasks, flexible work time, and time management.

All the constructs were scored on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree). The utilization of these well-established instruments helps ensure comparability across previous studies and the content validity of the measures. The choice of these items was predicated on their proven association with the constructs and applicability in the background of Indian working women. A questionnaire can be seen in Appendix A. This analysis utilizes wholly new survey data not previously used in other published works. The findings are unique and specific to the present research.

Participants included women workers who are currently working for domestic (non-MNC) firms that are based in Bengaluru across IT, fi-

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nance, data services, healthcare, and retail sectors. The sectors were chosen because there was a widespread acceptance of flexible work regimes during the post-pandemic period. The chosen firms included both medium and small firms that had adopted flexible work arrangements. The firms were selected with considerations toward accessibility to respondents, relevance to answer statements in this study, and voluntariness to participate in academic research. However, firm names are not disclosed to maintain confidentiality. The respondents had entry-level to senior-level jobs and were required to have at least six months of working experience in flexible, remote, or hybrid settings. The reason behind selecting such a condition was that respondents should have enough firsthand knowledge to efficiently evaluate the influence of flexible work arrangements on job satisfaction, work-life balance, and quality of life.

The domestic companies in this study operate in sectors that are central to India's growing urban economy. IT firms offer services such as software development and technical support, while finance companies encompass local banks, microfinance institutions, and accounting services. Data services and call centers handle customer support, data entry, and routine processing tasks. Healthcare companies range from diagnostic labs to clinics and wellness centers, providing essential outpatient care. Retail and e-commerce businesses are involved in product sales, logistics, and customer service, both online and in physical stores. These industries were chosen because they commonly employ women and are increasingly adopting flexible work practices.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The relationships among FWAs and WLB, job satisfaction, and quality of life of women employees working in domestic companies in Bangalore have been analyzed using PLS-SEM in SmartPLS 4. The analysis was undertaken as a two-tier process: evaluation of the measurement model followed by the evaluation of the structural model to assess hypotheses.

The first step of the analysis was the measurement model, which is essential for the assurance of quality and reliability of the constructs used in the study. The main indicators of model quality include outer loadings, reliability, validity, and convergent validity, presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Reliability and validity

Construct	Item Code	Outer loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE
Flexible Work Arrangements	FWAs1	0.878	0.882	0.883	0.739
	FWAs2	0.86			
	FWAs3	0.843			
	FWAs4	0.858			
Job Demands	JDs1	0.556	0.88	0.876	0.691
	JDs2	0.827			
	JDs3	0.923			
	JDs4	0.9			
	JDs5	0.895			
Job Satisfaction	JS1	0.856	0.889	0.89	0.75
	JS2	0.864			
	JS3	0.867			
	JS4	0.877			
Quality of Life	QOL1	0.844	0.891	0.893	0.753
	QOL2	0.855			
	QOL3	0.863			
	QOL4	0.908			
Work-life Balance	WLB1	0.837	0.922	0.922	0.764
	WLB2	0.833			
	WLB3	0.867			
	WLB4	0.908			
	WLB5	0.922			

The outer loading for each indicator was checked to determine the strength of the relationship between each indicator and its latent variable. As pointed out by previous researchers, an outer loading of at least 0.707 threshold is acceptable (Hair et al., 2014) because the amount of variances explained by this level in the constructs is sufficient. All the indicator loadings are within the threshold limit; item JDs1 is reflecting less indicator loading of 0.556. Being over the minimum values set for an outer loading value of 0.40 and not affecting either the AVE or the general convergent validity, it remains retained. With respect to constructs' internal consistencies, assessment using both Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability indices was done. Both (Nunnally, 1978) confirm that for measurements, values beyond the range of 0.70 indicate satisfactory internal consistencies and measures. Next, the AVE for each construct was calculated, and a threshold of 0.50 or more was considered sufficient. An AVE of 0.50 or above implies that at least 50% of the variance of its indicators is explained by the construct, which establishes convergent validity (Hair et al., 2019).

Following that, the discriminant validity has been checked to ensure that the constructs are separate and not overlapping, meaning each construct is empirically different from the other. One of the general approaches to test the discriminant validity in PLS-SEM includes the heterotrait-monotrait ratio. In this respect, the HTMT ratio indicates the level of correlation between the different constructs. This corroborates that the discriminant validity is established when an HTMT value is 0.85 or lower (Henseler et al., 2015). All HTMT values in this present study were well below this cutoff point (Table 3), meaning that there was not too much overlap between constructs, and each indeed differed from the others.

Table 4. Inner VIF for CMB

Constructs to random variable	VIF
Flexible Work Arrangements → Random	1.417
Job Demands → Random	1.068
Job Satisfaction → Random	1.373
Quality of Life → Random	1.143
Work-life Balance → Random	1.536

Common method bias can be a potential threat to self-reported data. The study thus follows the procedure of connecting all the constructs to a random variable and calculating the variance inflation factor for each path. Since all these VIF values are below the generally accepted threshold of 3.3, as suggested by Kock (2015), there are no significant problems of common method bias (Table 4).

After the confirmation of the measurement model, this study further estimated the structural model to test the hypothesized relationships among the constructs. This involved the assessment of the path coefficients and their respective significances through bootstrapping procedures using a resample size of 5,000. The path coefficients indicate the strength and direction of relationships, and their significances were evaluated based on the *t*-values and *p*-values.

R^2 describes the explanatory power of the model: the share of variance in dependent variables explained by independent ones. The greater values of R^2 are suggestive of a good model fit. The R^2 values are 0.247 for job satisfaction, 0.355 for quality of life, and 0.296 for WLB; thus, all three constructs have a moderate explanatory power. The Adjusted R^2 values, accounting for the number of predictors, are very close to the R^2 values: 0.244, 0.353, and 0.292, respectively, which means that the model fits well and is not overfitting. It is considered that, overall, the model accounts for a respectable amount of variance in the dependent variables, achieving its highest explanatory power for quality of life.

Table 3. HTMT results – Discriminant validity

Constructs	FWAs	Job Demands	Job Satisfaction	Quality of Life
Job Demands	0.167			
Job Satisfaction	0.445	0.258		
Quality of Life	0.586	0.222	0.467	
Work-life Balance	0.582	0.114	0.51	0.574

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Table 5. Hypotheses testing – Path coefficients

Hypotheses	Path relationship	β	t-statistics	p-values
	Direct Effects			
H1	Flexible Work Arrangements → Job Satisfaction	0.211	4.461	0
H2	Flexible Work Arrangements → Work-life Balance	0.477	11.456	0
H3	Flexible Work Arrangements → Quality of Life	0.34	8.053	0
H4	Work-life Balance → Job Satisfaction	0.352	7.79	0
H5	Work-life Balance → Quality of Life	0.342	8.052	0
	Mediation			
H6	Flexible Work Arrangements → Work-life Balance → Job Satisfaction	0.168	6.686	0
H7	Flexible Work Arrangements → Work-life Balance → Quality of Life	0.163	6.657	0
	Moderation			
H8	Job Demands x Flexible Work Arrangements → Work-life Balance	0.15	3.36	0.001

The structural model (Table 5) confirms a significant positive association between FWAs and job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.211$, $t = 4.461$, $p < 0.001$), thereby supporting H1. This indicates that when women are offered flexibility in work hours, locations, or schedules, they report higher levels of job satisfaction. This finding aligns with previous studies, such as those by Davidescu et al. (2020) and Aura and Desiana (2023), which emphasize that FWAs not only alleviate work-family conflict but also promote autonomy. For Indian employees, especially female employees in in-home companies, FWAs are crucial to juggling caregiving functions with professional duties. The study underlines that FWAs are not only benefits but core elements to raise satisfaction in gendered work cultures (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011).

The analysis reveals a strong and statistically significant relationship between FWAs and WLB ($\beta = 0.477$, $t = 11.456$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H2. This suggests that flexible arrangements substantially enhance women's ability to manage work and personal responsibilities effectively. This observation is supported by previous research (Allen et al., 2013; Rastogi et al., 2018), which highlights that FWAs eliminate scheduling conflicts, facilitating improved integration across workplace and family aspects (Beauregard & Henry, 2009). For Indian women working in companies where caregiving and household responsibilities usually weigh disproportionately upon them, such flexibility becomes absolutely essential. It facilitates time allocation efficiently in multiple roles, minimizing stress arising from role conflict.

Whereas Kossek et al. (2006) reported that flexibility can blur boundaries between work and home, the current findings indicate that in high-responsibility family situations, gains from FWAs far outweigh such threats. The high β coefficient also indicates a high sensitivity of work-family balance to flexibility in this group. The findings, therefore, reiterate that FWAs play a crucial role in promoting improved work-family balance, especially among women with multiple roles in cultures with high levels of traditionalism (Greenhaus et al., 2003). The outcome validates the significance of FWAs as a strategic policy tool to promote women's welfare, as well as productivity.

The results indicate a significant positive effect of FWAs on quality of life ($\beta = 0.34$, $t = 8.053$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H3. This suggests that flexibility in work arrangements contributes not only to professional satisfaction but also to overall well-being. This concurs with S. C. Clark (2000) and Hwang et al. (2024), who indicated that workplace flexibility enhances emotional health as well as physical health by alleviating time-causing stress as well as facilitating better control over day-to-day routines. For female employees of Indian businesses, who often face high personal and professional demands, FWAs provide a means to ensure balance, relaxation, and personal growth, all of which directly influence the quality of life. The robustness of this analysis indicates that FWAs are not workplace amenities; they are drivers of well-being for female employees working in high-strain environments.

The findings show a significant positive relationship between WLB and job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.352$, $t = 7.79$, $p < 0.001$), validating H4. This implies that women who experience a better balance between their work and personal lives are more satisfied

with their jobs. This supports Greenhaus and Allen (2011) in their argument that equilibrium in roles decreases stress but increases workplace satisfaction. The findings support that for Indian women, proper WLB enabled by supportive organizational systems directly leads to increased job satisfaction. Working in an environment where family needs frequently clash with career objectives, having a balance wherein both can be managed with ease seems to drive satisfaction to a great extent (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Therefore, organizations in a desire to increase the level of women's engagement and morale should ensure policies that actively promote work-life integration.

The analysis supports H5, showing a significant positive relationship between WLB and quality of life ($\beta = 0.342$, $t = 8.052$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that women who manage their professional and personal lives effectively experience greater overall well-being. This finding is consistent with Greenhaus et al. (2003), who found that balanced role management produces enhanced physical, emotional, and social health. The impact of this outcome holds a specific pertinence to Indian society, in which females encounter extreme demands in both arenas. The better utilization of time, lower stress, and higher personal satisfaction that a balanced situation provides, as a key indicator of quality of life, supports this conclusion. The outcome underscores that, in addition to job outcomes, WLB also positively impacts females' broader life satisfaction, highlighting its strategic value in workplace wellness programs.

H6 is supported, with mediation analysis showing that work-life balance partially mediates the relationship between FWAs and job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.168$, $t = 6.686$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that FWAs influence job satisfaction both directly and indirectly through improved WLB. This partial mediation supports the mechanism identified in earlier research (Gašić & Berber, 2023; Greenhaus & Allen, 2011), in which FWAs increase job satisfaction by initially alleviating role conflict, then raising levels of satisfaction. Within the present context, Indian women benefit from FWAs not only due to inherent scheduling autonomy but also because such flexibility allows for more seamless management of home and work, which in turn satisfies their needs (Stefana et al., 2021). These findings emphasize the importance of WLB as a mechanism through which FWAs have their impact. For practitioners, it reaffirms that flexibility policy success hinges on whether or not such policies truly facilitate work-life integration.

The study supports H7, showing that WLB partially mediates the effect of FWAs on quality of life ($\beta = 0.163$, $t = 6.657$, $p < 0.001$). This implies that FWAs improve quality of life not only directly but also indirectly by enhancing individuals' ability to manage work and personal roles. This concurs with earlier research (Shirmohammadi et al., 2022; Hwang et al., 2024), which indicates that flexibility leads to greater life satisfaction when it occurs in conjunction with the successful integration of work and life. For the Indian context, where caregiving roles often leave employees with less time to devote to other aspects of life, balancing seems to hold the key to overall well-being. The outcome reaffirms the position of WLB as a decisive mechanism connecting workplace flexibility with quality of life outcomes. From an organizational perspective, it indicates that it can increase the overall payoff from FWAs by promoting practices that promote balance.

H8 is supported, with a significant interaction effect ($\beta = 0.15$, $t = 3.36$, $p = 0.001$), indicating that job demands moderate the relationship between FWAs and WLB. Specifically, the positive impact of FWAs on WLB becomes stronger as job demands increase. This finding converges with job demands-resources (JD-R) theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007, 2018), which asserts that job resources such as FWAs prove to be most useful to workers under stress. In this study sample, females working in high workload and high-paced environments subjectively experience greater gains from flexible working arrangements in terms of a better-balanced life.

Figure 2 depicts this moderation. It reveals that under high demands (green line), the positively sloping relationship between FWAs and WLB reflects greater benefits. Under low demands (red line), however, the impact of FWAs on WLB declines. This indicates that FWAs serve as a vital buffer during demanding work situations. Thus, this interaction prompts organizations to evaluate the extent of job demands by job and rank flexibility choices.

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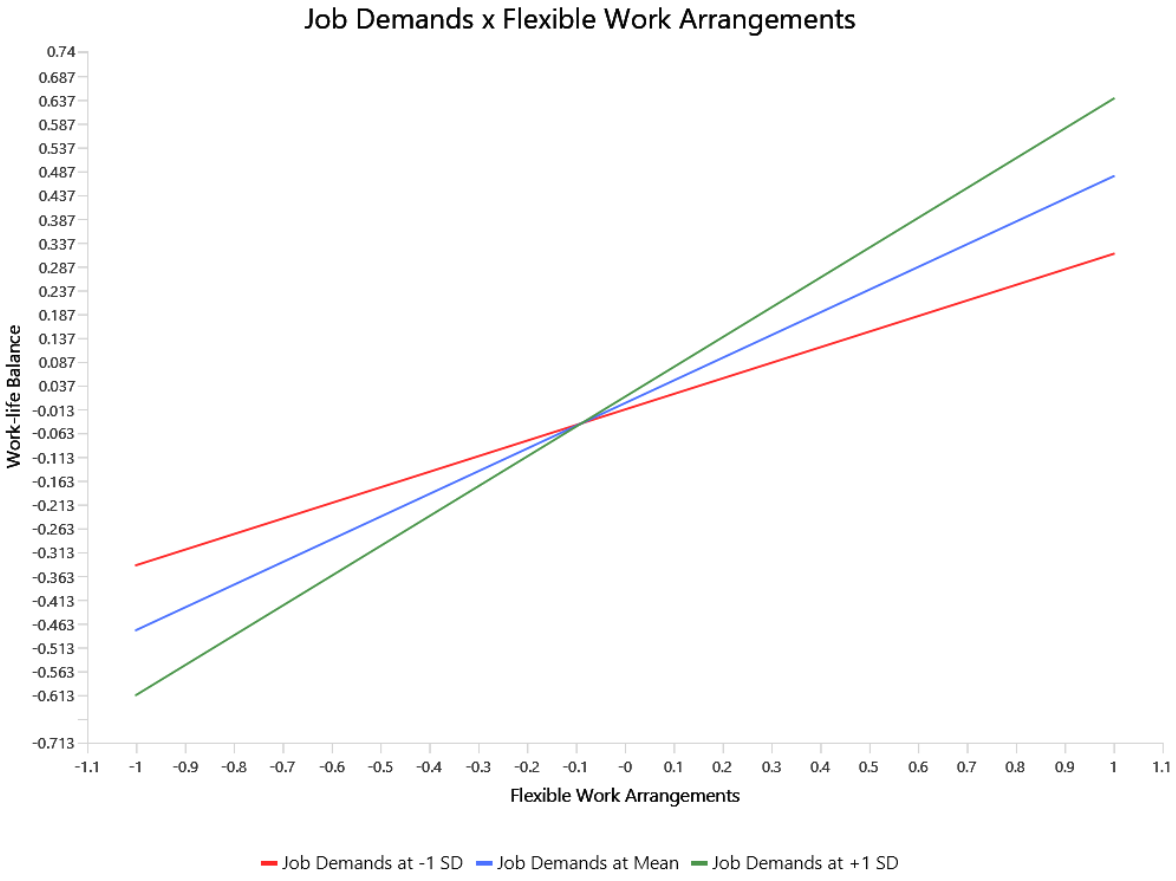

Figure 2. Moderating role of job demands in the relationship between flexible work arrangements and work-life balance

Overall, findings support that FWA has a substantial impact in increasing job satisfaction, WLB, as well as quality of life among female employees working in Indian-owned businesses. WLB acts as a critical mediator, enhancing the impact of FWAs on satisfaction and well-being. Moreover, the moderating role of high job demands reveals that flexibility is even more effective in stressful working environments. Not only do findings support existing theories like the JD-R model, but they also generalize their application to the uncharted context of employed Indian women. The findings collectively emphasize the significance of effectively implemented flexibility policies in increasing employee well-being as well as organizational sustainability.

CONCLUSION

The present study examined the impact of flexible work arrangements on women's job satisfaction and quality of life, with particular attention to the mediating role of work-life balance and the moderating effect of job demands. Flexible work arrangements (FWAs) were examined in local companies in Bangalore for their implications on work-life balance, quality of life, and work satisfaction among women. FWAs greatly increased work-life balance, quality of life, and work satisfaction, showing the relevance of FWAs to the well-being of employees. Women had increased empowerment through flexible work arrangements as there was increased time control, decreased work-family conflict, and increased work-personal balance. These findings support previous studies and shed light on how FWAs affect employee performance. Work-life balance proved to be the crucial moderator intervening between FWAs, work quality, and quality of life. Work-life balance has an active role in bridg-

ing the benefits of flexibility, as shown by the findings. Job demands moderate the benefits of FWAs. Flexibility lowers work-life balance in demanding professions, so employers need to account for context while implementing FWAs.

These findings offer implications for employers that want to boost employee well-being and performance. FWA has the power to support work-life balance, reduce stress, and boost work quality and work satisfaction. To achieve maximum FWA benefits, employers must also consider work demands and provide additional support, including work management, as well as establish clear boundaries. FWA, tailored to address employee demands and work contexts, has the power to boost commitment, satisfaction, and performance.

Further longitudinal studies are warranted to discover how FWAs affect employee outcomes over time. Examination of further mediators and modifiers, organizational culture, supervisors' support, and personal traits, may account for FWA effectiveness. Cross-cultural study, particularly in firms that are heterogeneous or have a majority of men, must consider how cultural norms and gendered expectations shape flexible work arrangements. Lastly, future studies may consider how gendered expectations shape the work lives of women in flexible work, toward creating inclusive, equitable work practices.

This study confirms that achieving a work-life balance, managing work demands, and offering flexibility lead to increased well-being among female employees. Focusing on work demands, work-life balance, and flexibility, firms can develop inclusive, efficient workspaces that meet the demands of various categories of employees. The findings contribute to FWA studies and provide recommendations for firms seeking to create a healthier, well-balanced, and efficient work environment.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization: Jamunarani H.S., Rajeena Syed.
Data curation: Jamunarani H.S., Rajeena Syed.
Formal analysis: Jamunarani H.S., Rajeena Syed.
Investigation: Jamunarani H.S., Rajeena Syed.
Methodology: Jamunarani H.S., Rajeena Syed.
Project administration: Jamunarani H.S., Rajeena Syed.
Resources: Rajeena Syed.
Software: Jamunarani H.S.
Supervision: Rajeena Syed.
Validation: Jamunarani H.S., Rajeena Syed.
Visualization: Jamunarani H.S., Rajeena Syed.
Writing – original draft: Jamunarani H.S.
Writing – review & editing: Jamunarani H.S., Rajeena Syed.

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APPENDIX A

Dear Respondent,

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey.

This study aims to explore how flexible work practices influence the job satisfaction and overall quality of life of women professionals in domestic companies. Your responses will help us better understand the challenges and benefits of work-life balance in the context of flexible working environments.

Your participation is completely voluntary, and all responses will be kept strictly confidential. The information will be used solely for academic research purposes and will not be shared in any way that identifies you personally.

We kindly request you to answer the questions sincerely, based on your own experiences.

Thank you once again for your valuable input and support.

Section 1: Demographic Information	
Age Group (in years)	☐ Under 25 ☐ 25–34 ☐ 35–44 ☐ 45–54 ☐ 55 and above
Marital Status	☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Divorced ☐ Widowed
Education Level	☐ High School ☐ Diploma/Certification ☐ Bachelor's Degree ☐ Master's Degree ☐ Doctorate or Higher
Industry Sector	☐ IT ☐ Finance ☐ Data Entry/Call Center ☐ Healthcare ☐ Retail/E-commerce
Job Role	☐ Entry Level ☐ Mid-level ☐ Managerial ☐ Senior Leadership ☐ Freelance/Independent
Years of Experience	☐ Less than 1 year ☐ 1–3 years ☐ 4–6 years ☐ 7–10 years ☐ More than 10 years
Type of Employment	☐ Full-time ☐ Part-time ☐ Contractual ☐ Freelance
Current Work Arrangement	☐ Fully Remote ☐ Hybrid ☐ On-site

Section 2: Survey Constructs and Items								
Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA)								
No.	**Statement**	**(1)**	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**	**(6)**	**(7)**
1	My organization allows a shortened work week.							
2	I have flexibility in choosing my working hours.							
3	I can work remotely (from home or elsewhere) when needed.							
4	My job allows flexibility in work shifts or schedules.							
Job Demands (JD)								
No.	**Statement**	**(1)**	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**	**(6)**	**(7)**
1	My job requires working at high speed.							
2	I am required to put in a lot of physical or mental effort.							
3	My work involves making complex decisions frequently.							
4	I often face tight deadlines.							
5	I feel uncertain about what my job entails.							
Job Satisfaction (JS)								
No.	**Statement**	**(1)**	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**	**(6)**	**(7)**
1	I am satisfied with the content and nature of my job.							
2	I feel personally fulfilled in my current role.							
3	I find meaning in the work that I do.							
4	I feel a sense of personal responsibility in my job.							
Quality of Life (QOL)								
No.	**Statement**	**(1)**	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**	**(6)**	**(7)**
1	I am physically healthy and able to work effectively.							
2	I am emotionally and psychologically well.							
3	I have positive and supportive social relationships.							
4	I am satisfied with the environment I live and work in.							
Work-Life Balance (WLB)								
No.	**Statement**	**(1)**	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**	**(6)**	**(7)**
1	I am able to manage my time between work and personal responsibilities.							
2	I lead a healthy and balanced lifestyle.							
3	I can fulfill both work and personal obligations effectively.							
4	I have control over my work schedule to manage personal life.							
5	I am satisfied with the way I manage work and life priorities.							

Note: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat disagree, 4 = Neutral, 5 = Somewhat agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly Agree.

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