

Factors influencing Work Life Balance of employees Working from Home in the IT Industry in Sri Lanka

Tharini Weerasekara, Dr. Ayoma Sumanasiri I

thariniweerasekara@gmail.com, ayoma@sjp.ac.lk

University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Gangodawila, Nugegoda, Sri Lanka.

Abstract

Purpose: Because of the pandemic of COVID-19, most organizations are move to the work from home policy. With this new concept most of the employees are struggling with the work life balance. In Sri Lanka IT industry is the leading industry which is adopted to the work from home concept with the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the primary goal of this research is to identify characteristics that influence the work-life balance of individuals in Sri Lanka's IT industry working from home.

Design/Method: This is a quantitative analysis that has considered IT personnel that work from home. The primary data for the analysis was acquired from 270 respondents via a structured questionnaire and to represent whole IT industry only have select three IT companies namely, CodeGen International (PVT) Ltd, Pearson and Virtusa. And four hypotheses have been tested in this study.

Findings: Weighted least square regression analysis results indicated that 33.2% variation of the work life balance can be explained by occupational stress, socio- economic status, management support and family support. Among them only management support and family support indicated the significant relationship with work life balance and among four hypotheses only two hypotheses are accepted.

Research Consequences: The findings of this study are significant to developing countries, and they will give researchers a better knowledge of the work life balance of employees working from home in the IT industry, particularly in Sri Lanka. Furthermore, the findings will aid future local and international researchers in identifying other factors that may influence an employee's work life balance.

Research limitations/ Future Research Suggestions: Future research can extend model by including mediating factors like gender and age. Qualitative or mixed methodology can be used to conduct further studies to arrive more diverse findings regarding factors that influence work life balance of the employees who work from home.

Keywords: Work life balance, Work from home, Occupational Stress, Socio- Economic Status, Management Support, Family Support

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

Due to modernization and advancement of technology, work from home concept has become a growing trend in the entire world (Nordin et al., 2016). Nowadays, many organizations are adopting fully distributed and remote workforce as a recent trend. As MBA Skool Team, 2020 work from home is a theory where the employees can do his or her job from home. This concept provides adjustable working times to the employee as well as the employer to make sure the job is done with ease. As they found, WFH is a modern-day work approach facilitated via the internet and social mobility wherein nevertheless of the physical place of work can be done. Also, they found, working from home can be defined as working remotely or telecommuting which indicates that the employees are working from a remote location - generally home.

As a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic in the world, most organizations have adopted the working from home concept. There are lots of definitions of WFH theory. However, Felstead and Jewson (2000) defined it as "any paid work that is carried out primarily from home". Dagnino (2016) describes two generations of work from home. First generation is, "Home Office" and second generation is, "Mobile Office". This concept was applied to nonagricultural employees since the industrialized transformation and in the first part of 1990s the rates of men and women utilizing WFH were make equal (Deming, 2017). Former research has shown that incorporating WFH regulations into workplace could be answered to keeping graduates and efficient employees from leaving the profession, owing to household and family obligations. With ever-increasing progress in Information & Communication Technology and devices, any section that broadly utilizes computers and the internet could benefit from the WFH policy such as IT, Management, Designing, Media etc. (Srivastava et al., 2015). Also, it supports to maintain efficiency of the employee the identical or even better and at the equal period helps the worker for being with household or conducting some personal effort. Due to the current pandemic situation, employees are confronting some health matters of self or family. Therefore, WFH can be a fantastic tool for assisting employees keep on at home and work out at the same time. Likewise, it has empowered many companies to keep on productive and keep themselves pertinent ("Business concept team", 2020). Some business leaders are considering work from home as a constant feature due to COVID-19 and have opened assessing its advantages and disputes.

Because of the WFH concept, most employees struggling to maintain work life balance. Work-life balance (WLB) refers to the interaction among work and other activities such as household, culture, relaxation, and personal growth. (Chaitra et al., 2019). His study stated that, it is regarding the proper or stable arrangement of a person's engagement in work and other elements of their life, and if this blend does not remain the same over time, it can be changed. He further stated that WLB is defined as a situation in which the frictions between work and personal life are lessened by having appropriate rules, practices, supportive management, workplace provisions, and good personal relationships. According to Haar (2007), maintaining balance supports appropriate working hours, which improves efficacy and balances work, and household issues are becoming increasingly important to employees and employers, and are a common occurrence. As per Gautam et al., (2019) WLB is essential for equally business preparation and scholarly research & his study shows that WLB is a main problem that influencing happiness, as family and work are the most essential aspects of the whole world. Thus, retaining an ample stability between professional and personal life is very much essential.

In a study, Tiwari (2017) found that in daily lives, female employees have two roles: one at work and one at home. His research was conducted in a non-profit organization with 150 female employees. It was discovered that 93.32% of employees felt that changing nature and related questions are challenging both job and home life. Similarly, according to the Tiwari (2017) study 56.67% workers said their business culture and advisers were not encouraging to support employees in balancing their personal and professional lives, with 83.32% of employees receiving complete family support in pursuing a job and relinquishing personal obligations.

In line with Crosbie et al., 2004, most organizations requested WFH concept for their organizations and most employees encountered WLB challenge due to COVID-19 pandemic. Some workers are easily faced with that challenge, and some are miscarried. As Sadhukhan (2020) said, the IT sector employees are struggling with the WFH concept to overcome the challenges.

According to Jeyarathnam, 2017, the Information Technology (IT) industry began as a vital economic growth engine. His study stated that, IT transformation not merely expand employment chances and the nation's GDP, but it also leads to cultural reform & societal upheaval. As the Crosbie et al., (2004) said, Worldwide labour market gives expanded career opportunities for IT experts who have great inclinations to leave their organizations. Therefore, IT professionals are viewed as essential knowledge workers who have specific expertise and talents that are tough to switch (Manju et al., 2007). And according to Jeyarathnam (2017) the IT industry is unique in its adherence to standards like working a minimum of 14 hours per day, working alongside targets on weekends, the short-term nature of plan formation, the global distribution model, and taking conference calls after working hours, all of which place a strain on IT professionals and create inequity in their work lives. And Sadhukhan, (2020) stated, they have faced serious tension because they are exceedingly goal oriented and exceedingly anxious on outcomes. Hence, they go through a huge tension, unhappiness, and loneliness due to workload and often show feelings of incompetence, dropped self-confidence, frustration, and sense of absenteeism. As a result, studies on the WLB of employees working from home in the IT sector are critical for Sri Lanka.

1.2 Research Problem

Likewise, due to COVID-19 pandemic Government authorities across the world have applied WFH concept for all employees especially in the IT industry. Some workers have easily adapted to remote work, and some have failed. Accordingly with that new concept employees of the IT industry are struggling with WLB. As the national academic press says (2020), IT becomes integrated into all aspects of society. Therefore, IT professionals are important in the present context of society.

And employee WLB is becoming increasingly vital because, in today's environment, males and females both contribute equally to the growth of their daily lives. Then it's critical to understand how to strike a balance between their professional and personal lives. Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) identify three primary elements that generate work-family conflict in their article with the same title. Conflict has three components: conduct, time, and occupational stress. Further, Tiwari (2017) highlights that socioeconomic status, family background, leaders' support also blocking both professional and personal life. Sri Lankan literature highlights that, there are lack of investigations done on the work life stability of IT professionals who working from home. As such, the investigation about work life balance of IT professionals including both male and female who work from home is necessary for Sri Lanka.

Therefore.

This study aimed at addressing that gap by identifying factors that affect work life balance of employees working from home in the IT industry of Sri Lanka.

1.3 Research Objectives

The study's objectives were divided into two categories: general objectives and specific objectives.

1.3.1 General Objective

1. To identify "factors influencing work life balance of employees who work from home in IT industry due to COVID – 19 pandemic".

1.3.2 Specific Objective

- To identify how occupational stress (OS) influence work life balance (WLB) of employee working from home.
- To identify how socio-economic factors (SE) influence work life balance (WLB) of employees working from home.
- To identify how management's support (MS) influence work life balance (WLB) of employees working from home.
- To identify how family support (FS) influence work life balance (WLB) of employees working from home.

1.4 Research Questions

This study focuses on the following research questions.:

- 1) What is the influence of Occupational Stress (OS) on Work life Balance (WLB)?
- 2) What is the influence of Socio-Economic Status (SE) on Work life Balance (WLB)?
- 3) What is the influence of Management Support (MS) on Work life Balance (WLB)?
- 4) What is the influence of Family Support (FS) on Work life Balance (WLB)?
- 5) What are the challengers faced by the employees when work from home (WFH)?
- 6) What are the employee's suggestions to enhance Work Life Balance (WLB) in the among IT companies?

1.5 Significance of the study

Today due to COVID- 19 disease, most of the organizations and people give considerable attention to WFH concept as it really affects the work life stability of employees. In past, organizations have not given much attention to this concept. Most researchers have done lots of research about different topics and problems relate to WLB. But in Sri Lanka, only few studies have reported regarding "work from home concept for work life balance". Normally most organizations don't give top priority to employee WLB as they only concern about the other things related to the job such as productivity and efficacy. Hence employees are dissatisfied about their position and discourage. Wherefore, predominantly organizations must give more attention to WLB out of workers who work at home because research findings about factors influencing to work life stability who work at home will be more fruitful if they are applicable for different professionals. Accordingly, this study will become a guideline for all employees who can apply WFH concepts such as IT professionals, design professionals and media professionals etc. When employees facing the challenge of balancing work life and personal life can identify suggestions or solutions for the related problems.

And this study will give priority to IT professionals as they are highly target oriented as well as highly stressed. As a result of that they go through a lot of apprehension, depression, loneliness, lower self-confidence, and dissatisfaction. Because of these reasons IT professionals are mostly faced with WLB challenge than the other professionals during the ongoing virus pandemic COVID-19. Therefore, the findings will further assist with IT professionals who struggle with WLB when working from their home. It is important to employees as well as organizations when achieving the organization's goal. Also, this study will help IT professionals as well as other professionals to identify factors which they ought to concern to balance work life and personal life while working from home. As well as research can be used as secondary data by any researcher conducting additional research on the subject. Finally, through this study can identify challenges faced by employees when working from home and can identify personal and professional factors that enhance work life stability.

1.6 Limitations of the study

As a result of COVID-19 pandemic, as earlier stated government authorities across the world have applied work from home concept. But this research is limited to Sri Lanka among countries like China, Australia, India, and America which have applied WFH concept. Therefore, generalizability of outcomes can be determined by further studies. Similarly, because of WFH concept most professionals like IT, media, design, management are highly fought with WLB. Among them IT professionals become more significant. Therefore, this research is up to IT professionals working in different IT companies. However, to conduct this study only three companies have selected such as CodeGen International (PVT) LTD, Virtusa and Pearson. Hence further research can be commenced to observe how other IT professionals in any IT company overcome the work life balance challenge.

2. Literature review

2.1 Work from Home

According to the Purwanto et al., (2020), Work from Home (WFH) is a nightmare of numerous persons, especially for the existing idealistic generation as they do not necessarily to awaken in the morning and get ready to go to the workplace by deafening the roadblocks that occupy more time and it's sufficient to use makeshift clothes then open the laptop at home and work. Due to COVID-19 pandemic people should quarantine at home, to have social separation to stop the spreading of virus. All firms then quick turn to an accepted virtual organization, totally digitalized, by remote working from home (Iamamporn et al., 2019). This theory is new to the bulk of workers, as the COVID-19 has forced practically all divisional staffs to work from home for first time. (Shahid et al., 2020). According to Iamamporn et al., (2019), there are some the benefits of faraway working such as cut the cost of movements, decrease time and it cares for resources of the business, involving electrical and water utilization. The beneficial to espoused remote working is not only by workers but also manager as well. The director should recognize the reasons which impact to complete the tasks, have a good blueprint, give availability of work, and targeted at the outcome.

2.2 Dependent Variable

2.2.1 Work Life Balance

As a result of WFH, most employees are struggling with work life stability especially in the IT industry because IT profession is mostly associated with stress, high workload etc. Also, due to COVID-19 made inescapable failures and fears in most organizations of the IT industry and mostly IT professionals are clashing with WLB (Kishnamurthy, 2020). According to the literature, Guest (2002) illuminates the significance of WLB by demonstrating that inequity in work-life has a negative impact on all people. Also, O'Driscoll (1996) WLB has a number of advantages and disadvantages for both businesses and employees. If an employee's work life is unjust, it can result in trauma, as well as physical and mental health problems. Disparities in work-life balance, from the perspective of an employer, lead to an increase in absenteeism, poor member performance, and excessive costs, such as hiring more workers. Therefore, today, Industries have recognized the significance of the work life stability in initiations for their employees and they are aiming to be imposing policies for balancing a work life. Businesses are trying for inventive ways to keep their employees delighted and gratified, so it creates company ecosystem better for working and positively impact efficiency of employees (Srivastava et al., 2015).

According to Song & Gao (2019), contrast with working in the workplace, telework increases stress in both weekdays and weekends and it also decreases net affect and increases conflict in the weekends. Not only that, based on Subramaniam et al., (2015) evidenced that socio-economic factors have considerable effect on employees when accomplishing work life balance. Greenhaus et al., (1985) was also discovered that having a manager who was supportive of an employee's family requirements was favorably related to the employee's work-life balance. And Padma et al., (2013) have underlined the importance of family support in balancing personal and professional lives, demonstrating that aid from family partners will be crucial in achieving this balance.

Likewise, it is evidence by literature, there are four factors that influence to work life balance for instance, occupational stress (Sadhukhan 2020), social economic status (Brough et al., 2020), management's support (Kishnamurthy, 2020), family support (Gautam et al., 2019).

2.3 Independent Variables

2.3.1 Occupational Stress

As stated, Sadhukhan (2020), stress is a familiar manifestation in everyone's regular life and is noticeable in all the segments of the community. All of these factors combine to cause worry, tension, and anxieties, which can lead to 'stress' if left unchecked for an extended period of time. Extreme stress can have a negative impact on one's well-being, anger, efficacy, connection, and overall quality of life. It has also been discovered that families are affected by their spouses' stress issues, either directly or indirectly. According to literature, Sehgal (1997) discovered that the title role of a worker's stress is dependent on the stage of his contribution to his job. Resource shortages, role destruction, and inter-role gaps are only a few of the causes that have contributed to role stress. Then, stress has been increasing because of growing demands, challenging competition, work tension and goals. When occupational stress is felt, it will not only disturb the performance of work but also affect health of employees in the type of heart attack, migraine that can lead to death. (Yahaya, et.al 2010).

2.3.2 Socio-Economic Status

As emphasized by Nelson DO (2019), socioeconomic status is a collective element of wellbeing and is classified as the measure of how revenue, education, and profession affect an individual's social reputation. As stated by Brough et al., (2020) education is the most vigorous forecaster of the value of employee can work. Lesser educational fulfillment is related with smaller commercial status. Single parents (predominantly single women) with only a basic education, according to Montez et al., (2014), have the least amount of flexibility in their work. Due to significant conflicting requests on their time, these professionals experience high levels of work–family conflict and lack of confidence, and their health suffers as a result. Even while working full-time, single working parents experience crushing poverty, emotional discomfort, and terror, according to Stack and Meredith (2018), because of their low hourly wage. Likewise, the employees who don't have much education face the unbalance between work life and personal life. And, due to lack of education these employees can't perform their work within the home because they are unable to do that. Hence, can prove socio-economic factors also affect the work life balance.

2.3.3 Management Support

According to Krishnamurthy (2020), leaders must have some important skills such as, the capacity to deal with ambiguity, being active in decision making, being considerate while creating trust with their teams and acting effortlessly across frontiers would be obviously essential. And as Bradley et al., (2011) says, Management's performance and stance have a significant impact on work-life balance. In line with this, Burke (2002) also noted that an association with management helps to balance work life as preferred by both females and males. The advantage for males shown to be more than females. As a result of Dessler (2005), Unlike many men, women should make the 'career vs family' decision, even though the responsibilities of raising children and running a household still fall disproportionately on women. As a result, balancing job and family life becomes difficult for women. Since females are more involve to the decision making in the house than the men. Also, Thompson et al., (1999) discovered that managerial support was the sharpest prognosticator of WLB.

2.3.4 Family Support

Family background is a key element of most employees who WFH, and it has a significant influence over the WLB. Employees with fully grown children are better able to balance their lives than those with tiny children. According to

the Padma et al., (2013) studies, employees who are responsible for the well-being of their elderly parents have a lower WLB than their colleagues, and a smaller WLB can contribute to increased absenteeism, lower job satisfaction, and, in some cases, more employee abrasion. It also explains the impact of married status on WLB to enable the companies to comprehend and execute proper motivational policies. Panisoara and Serban (2013) discovered that there was no significant level of work balance in the four categories of employees: unmarried, married without children, married with children under the age of 18, and married with children over the age of 18.

2.4 Relationship between dependent variable and independent variable

2.4.1 Occupational stress and work life balance

Also, Kumar et al., (2011) conducted a study to assess occupational stress among IT professionals in a number of Chennai-based companies with total of 104 IT experts in Chennai were polled for information. According to the findings of the study, middle-level professionals are more stressed than higher- and lower-level professionals. The impact of the outcome was investigated, as well as the possibility of interfering with the expansion of organizational resources among IT professionals. Because of COVID-19 not only middle level IT professionals all levels IT professionals are performing their work, from home. Hence, they are struggling with the WLB as IT professionals are doing more stressful jobs like proved by literature.

Also, Krishnamurthy & Prabakaran (2015) conducted a survey with employees in the IT industry in Chennai to highlight work stress. It was decided that the amount of stress is the same for all IT organizations, but that only one or two factors can affect the outcome. In Madurai, Anbuoli (2016) conducted a study on the level of stress among software employees. According to the findings, software specialists are under a lot of pressure from their employers. As well, Yahaya et al., (2008), conducted research regarding occupational stress of professional lectures. In here stated that, lectures experience stressed when they are unable to strike a balance between their personal and professional lives, which runs to reduction in quality of teaching and shortage of efficiency which affect the link between the learner and lecturers. Therefore, prior studies opined that occupational stress would affect the WLB of the employees. On the other hand, according to Desai et al. (2011), home-based employed women experience less stress since they are more adaptable and enjoy their jobs. Therefore, it has been identified that there is a significant positive as well as harmful relationship among occupational stress and work life balance.

Based on above literature, this study hypothesizes:

H1: There is a significant influence between Occupational Stress (OS) and Work Life Balance (WLB) of employees working from home.

2.4.2 Socio-economic status and work life balance

Regarding, Subramaniam et al., (2015) evidenced that socio-economic factors have major impact on employees when achieving WLB. Moreover, in compared to less educated women, skillful women with high professional rank, a bachelor's degree, and a higher wage are more capable of balancing work and home life. And, Tariq (2012) studies disclosed, the extensive knowledge linked to the model and practices of WLB, and WLB is both important for the company and its employees, according to a large meta-analysis of literature, especially in today's active organizational circumstances. Alternatively, Delaporte et al., (2020) argued that the individual who are the utmost educated, who live in towns, who have an official job and who work in a large firm, as well as the persons who are in the upper of entire labour income distribution are the most able to work from home and they can balance their work life with domestic

life without many troubles. Therefore, literature identified positive as well as negative relationships between socio-economic factors and work life balance.

Based on the above literature, this study hypothesizes:

H2: There is a significant influence between Socio-Economic status (SE) and Work Life Balance (WLB) of employees working from home.

2.4.3 Management support and work life balance

As a result of Fatima et al., (2012) studies, spouse support, co-worker assistance and career resources are clearly related with the WLB whereas unethical critique at employment is adversely associated with WLB. That study shows that regarding partner support male workers are encouraged with WLB as related to females. Female employees also experienced more work-life stress because of childcare responsibilities, and elder dependency is causing women to gain more weight than males. Based on Brough et al., (2020) the connections amongst family related experiences and WLB is usually lower than matched to the relationships among work related experiences & WLB. It means management gives good support to workers to steady their work and family life. Not only that, according to the Ferguson et al., (2012) combined with partner support an employee can manage rival needs of professional and personal life. Therefore, Lakshmi (2017) noted that this is especially true for married women, as longer work hours at the workplace deny them the time they need to care for their children and other dependents. WLB of spousal women is influenced by the presence of dependents at home and that study shows the accommodating manager can always support to reduce the WLB linked troubles. Therefore, because of literature it proved that management's support is very much influenced by the work life balance in positively as well as negatively.

Based on above literature, this study hypothesizes:

H3: There is a significant influence between Management's Support (MS) and Work Life Balance (WLB) of employees working from home.

2.4.4 Family support and work life balance

According to Zimmerman (2003), the tactics used by teams to achieve a balance between family and work can be identified. He looked at 47 working-class parents with children and discovered six consistent cooperative themes: shared housekeeping, joint and active childcare, combined decision-making, similar access and control over finances, value placed on both couples' work-life goals, and shared emotive effort. Higgins (2000), on the other hand, claims that mothers who work part-time pay more attention to maintaining work-family balance than mothers who work full-time. It was also shown that mothers who work part-time have fewer responsibilities, which results in less stress and allows them to spend more time with their families and be happier in life. Working from home, according to Kossek et al., (2015), allows you to meet family expectations while conducting regular job. Employees who use this type of work can not only observe their children's development but also track their progress. Similarly, an employee's work-life balance can have a favorable or bad impact on their family.

Based on above literature, this study hypothesizes:

H4: There is a significant influence between Family Support (FS) and Work Life Balance (WLB) of employees working from home.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Approach

In line with Bryman and Bell (2015), research approach basically divided to two segments, which are: Deductive approach and Inductive approach. This study targets to recognize the influence of factors on WLB, & this study uses a deductive technique, in which hypotheses are created and then tested over a large number of sample entities. Explanatory research design uses the logical approach to examine hypotheses. It means that, first and foremost, a hypothesis has been established, and that at the conclusion of the research, the hypothesis has been tested to see if it has been realized or not.

3.2 Study Design

Furthermore, the survey method is an excellent research strategy for this study since it allows the researcher to collect quantitative and qualitative data on a wide range of research topics. Indeed, surveys are commonly used to collect data on individuals, events, or circumstances in explanatory and descriptive research.

3.3 Conceptual Framework

The study of the factors affecting to WLB of the employees who WFH is a quantitative study, and the conceptual framework built based on the literature review is depicted in figure 3.2. Consequently, independent variables recognized as Occupational Stress, Socio-Economic Status, Management Support and Family Support and the dependent variable identified as Work Life Balance.

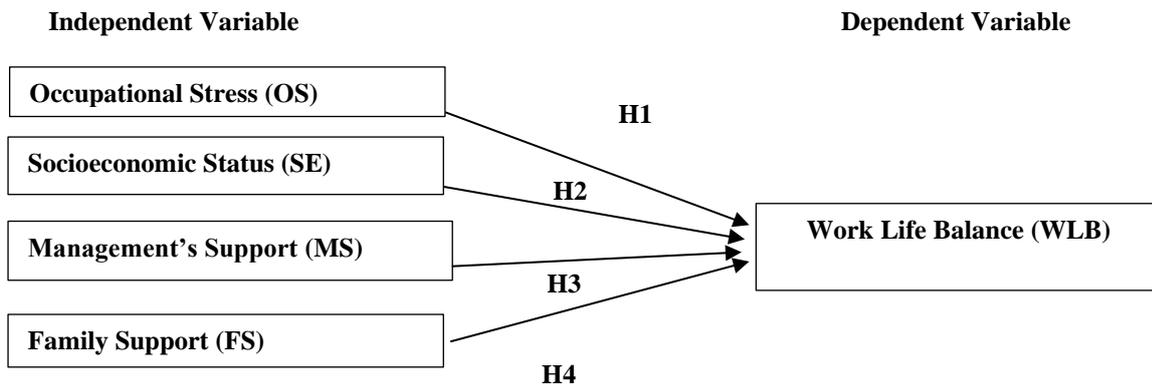


Fig 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Constructed by the author

H1: There is a significant influence between Occupational Stress (OS) and Work Life Balance (WLB) of employees working from home.

H2: There is a significant influence between Socio- Economic Status (SE) and Work Life Balance (WLB) of employees working from home.

H3: There is a significant influence between Management Support (MS) and Work Life Balance (WLB) of employees working from home.

H4: There is a significant influence between Family Support (FS) and Work Life Balance (WLB) of employees working from home.

3.4 Population and Sample

3.4.1 Unit of Analysis

This research has been done to evaluate how occupational stress, socio-economic status, management support, family background could influence to WLB of employees who WFH in the IT industry. Hence, this research's unit of analysis is IT employees who work from home in Sri Lanka.

3.4.2 Scope of the study

The research's scope includes employees of three selected IT companies in Sri Lanka namely, CodeGen International (PVT) LTD, Virtusa and Pearson. One reason for selecting only these three companies, is head count. Under the head counts of the companies Virtusa become number one and second is the Pearson. Then third one is CodeGen International (PVT) Ltd. And, as the second reason can state, more than the other IT companies these three companies are mostly following work from home concept during COVID-19 pandemic.

3.4.3 Population

Target population refers to a large group of people which are subject matter of the research, and they should have similar characteristics (Explorable, 2009). Therefore, the target population of this study is the IT employees in Sri Lanka who worked in the above stated IT companies. Because to conduct this study only consider the three IT companies.

3.4.4 Sample

In this study sample is selected based on the past studies that identified through the literature survey. So accordingly, the sample size of this study is approximately 270. The proportional Stratified Simple Random Sampling approach is used to get the necessary sample size because this method ensures accuracy and each element in the sample gets a fair chance of selecting.

3.5 Data Collection Method

The primary goal of every study's research approach is to collect data. The information can be gathered from two sources: primary sources and secondary sources. The essential data for this study were gathered utilizing primary data and survey techniques, which included closed format structured questionnaires with two components. First part of the questionnaire consists of the demographic information of the respondents and second part focused on the collect information regarding independent and dependent variable. An itemized rating scale (five-point Likert-scale) with a strongly agree end point is used to produce a structured questionnaire with a total of 14 items (Refer Annexure I). And the relevant data were collected through the emails, google form methods.

3.6 Data Analysis Method

In data analysis, there are three steps: evaluating the sample profile, testing the data's goodness, and testing the hypotheses. The sample profile is measured using frequency analysis. The measuring items' reliability and validity are used to assess the data's quality. Factor analysis, construct reliability, average variance extraction, Cronbach's alpha values, and discriminant validity are all investigated in this section. Multiple regression analysis is used to evaluate the hypotheses. In this study, multiple regression analysis is used to determine whether the following four criteria have a significant impact on the WLB of IT workers. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software version 21.0 will be used for these calculations.

3.7 Pilot Survey Result

A pilot survey is conducted to analyse the reliability and the validity of the measurement items used in the study prior to conducting the final survey. Accordingly, in this study, responses from 40 employees who WFH due the COVID-19 pandemic were consider for the pilot survey. Cronbach's alpha has been used to determine reliability of the measurement items of the study.

Table 2 shows a summary of the results of the pilot survey. (Refer Annexure II)

Table 2 Pilot Survey Results

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha Value
Work Life Balance (WLB)	3	.867
Occupational Stress (OS)	3	.713
Socio- Economic Status (SE)	3	.706
Management Support (MS)	4	.846
Family Support (FS)	4	.708

Source: Survey Data

So accordingly, the dependent variable, WLB and the independent variables, OS, SE, MS, and FS have exhibited Cronbach's alpha values more than 0.6 and the inter item correlations of the measurement items of WLB, OS, SE, MS and FS have fallen between the range of 0.3 to 0.9 (refer annexure II). Therefore, it can be concluded that the reliability of these measurement items was sufficient.

4. Data Analysis

4.1 Sample Profile

Information needed for this study has been collected through 270 respondents, who are employees of above stated IT companies such as Virtusa, Pearson and CodeGen International PVT Ltd.

Part A of the questionnaire (Annexure I) comprised of the details relating to the background information of the respondents. Those tested parameters were Gender, Age, Marital Status, Have any children, Total work experience, Education Level, and Income Level. Part B of the questionnaire (Annexure I) contained information about the study's independent and dependent variables, and its analysis is detailed in the chapter's following sections with reference to validity, reliability, mean, standard deviation, correlation analysis, and regression analysis.

As a result, the examination of the demographic data pertaining to sample is discussed further down.

As per the gender distribution of the sample, majority were male which is 55.9% of the total respondents and female represents 44.1%.

Table 3 Gender

Gender of respondents			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Female	119	44.1
	Male	151	55.9
	Total	270	100.0

Source: Survey Data

When focusing on the age of the respondents of the sample, majority were between 26-35 age group which is 62.2% of the total respondents and less than 25 age group represents 18.5% and it was followed by 36-45 age group representing 15.6% and 46-55 of age representing 3.7% and above 50 age group is not representing by any respondent from the total respondents.

Table 4 Age

Age of respondents			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Less than 25	50	18.5
	26-35	168	62.2
	36-45	42	15.6
	46-55	10	3.7
	Total	270	100.0

Source: Survey Data

Also, according to the marital status of the respondents of the sample, 50.0% respondents are single, and 48.9% respondents are married.

Table 5 Marital Status

		Marital Status	
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Single	135	50.0
	Married	132	48.9
	Other	3	1.1
	Total	270	100.0

Source: Survey Data

According to the analysis it was derived that 71.9% respondents are married but without children and 28.1% respondents, it means 76 employees are married and they have children. Among these 76 respondents 59.2% employees have one child. And 36.8% have two children and 4% have three children. There is not any employee who have children more than three. And when consider about the age of those children 52.6% means 40 children are between the 1-5 age group. And 28 children (36.8%) are categorized to between 5-12 age group also 14.5% children are relevant to less than 1 age group. Then 8 children mean 10.5% are between 13-18 age group and there are only 3



children more than 18 age group.

Figure 2. (a) How many children have,
(b) How old are they

Table 6 Do you Have any children.

		Having Children in the family	
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	76	28.1
	No	194	71.9
	Total	270	100.0

And according to the experience that employees have 38.5% employees have 1-5 year working experience and 26.7% have 6–10-year experience. Also, it was derived that 14.1% employees have 11-15 year working experiences and

other 10.7% & 10.0% allocated to the less than 1 year and more than 15 years' work experiences.

Table 7 Years of Experience

		Experience	
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Less than 1 year	29	10.7
	1-5 years	104	38.5
	6-10 years	72	26.7
	11-15 years	38	14.1
	More than 15 years	27	10.0
	Total	270	100.0

Source: Survey Data

Based on the analysis it was derived that 49.6% of the sample has educated up to bachelor's degree level. And it was followed by 20.4% of employees educated up to level of masters. Also, 16.7% and 8.9% employees respectively categorized up to professional qualifications and up to advanced level. And balance 2.6% and 1.9% is relevant to the certification level and post graduate level.

Table 8 Highest Education

		Highest Education Level	
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Up to Advanced level	24	8.9
	Professional Qualification	45	16.7
	Certifications	7	2.6
	Completed bachelor's degree	134	49.6
	Completed masters	55	20.4
	Post-Graduate	5	1.9
	Total	270	100.0

When focusing about the income level of the employees 28.9% of total respondents is fall under to 50,000-99,999 income categories. Further, 24.1% have been relevant to the less than 50,000 and 16.3% entered to the 100,000-149,999. Then 14.4%, 9.6% and 6.7% encompassed relatively to categories of more than 250,000, between 200,000-249,999 and 150,000-199,999 categories.

Table 9 Income Level

		Income Level	
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Less than Rs: 50,000	65	24.1
	Rs: 50,000 - 99,999	78	28.9
	Rs: 100,000 - 149,999	44	16.3
	Rs: 150,000 - 199,999	18	6.7
	Rs: 200,000 - 249,999	26	9.6
	More than Rs: 250,000	39	14.4
	Total	270	100.0

4.3 Validity

The degree to which a measuring tool can exactly measure what needs to be assessed is often referred to as the validity test (Zhoe, 2019). According to the Opatha (2003), validity testing can refer as, method of examining whether the factors the study measures, exactly what is expected to measure and whether the measures give an accurate expression of the incident the researcher is expected to examine. Therefore, Factor analysis has been the most common approach of determining a study's validity.

4.3.1 Factor Analysis

Validity is largely assessed in Factor Analysis using the Kaiser- Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. The KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity are primarily used to determine the sample's correctness and acceptability level. It should have a value of 0.5 or higher in order to be considered a good factor analysis.

The Total Variance Explained number is the next focus of the Factor Analysis. Total Variance Explained is used to determine how much the study's specified variables will vary with the measurement items. For the variation of measurement items to be appropriate with the variables, the Total Variance Explained value should be 50% or above. Finally, evaluate the Factor Loading or component matrix of the measurement items in the factor analysis. The component matrix shows how much weight each item has in changing one variable. For the factor analysis to be appropriate, the value of the measurement items in the Component matrix should be between 0.3 and 0.9.

Table 10 Factor Analysis

Variable	KMO Value	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Chi-Square	Total Variance Explained	Factor Loading
Work Life	.716	301.564	74.379%	Component Matrix*
Balance				
				Component
				1

				WLB 1	.874
				WLB 2	.876
				WLB 3	.837
Occupational	.625	199.240	65.477%	Component Matrix*	
Stress				Component	
					1
				OS 1	.712
				OS 2	.878
				OS 3	.829
Socio-Economic	.545	247.883	65.281%	Component Matrix*	
Status				Component	
					1
				SE 1	.916
				SE 2	.634
				SE 3	.847
Management	.736	323.305	60.406%	Component Matrix*	
Support				Component	
					1
				MS1	.664
				MS 2	.727
				MS 3	.842
				MS 4	.859
Family Support	.745	332.623	60.537%	Component Matrix*	
				Component	
					1

	FS 1	.839
	FS 2	.842
	FS 3	.558
	FS 4	.835

Source: Survey Data

According to Table 4.5, the dependent variable's Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value, as well as all of the independent variables, is more than 0.5 (>0.5).

As a result, it can be concluded that the sample used in this study satisfies the requirement of being suitable for factor analysis. Furthermore, after looking at the Total Variance Explained of the Variables, it was observed that all of the variables had a variance of more than 50%. Furthermore, the Component matrix shows that all of the measurement items for the variables are between 0.3 and 0.9, showing that factor analysis is applicable in this study.

4.4 Reliability Analysis

The research used reliability analysis to determine the internal trustworthiness and appropriateness of the variables. Cronbach's alpha value is used to examine dependability since it reveals how strongly the measurement items of a certain variable are positively associated to each other. The Cronbach's alpha value should be more than 0.7 to be considered acceptable for measurement item consistency.

Table 11 Reliability Analysis

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha on standard items	Cronbach's Alpha Value
Work Life Balance (WLB)	3	.828	.827
Occupational Stress (OS)	3	.732	.736
Socio-Economic Status (SE)	3	.723	.724
Management Support (MS)	4	.777	.768
Family Support (FS)	4	.773	.769

Source: Survey Data

The Cronbach's Alpha value for both the dependent and independent variables is larger than 0.7 (>0.7), as shown in Table 11. As a result, the items might be revealed to have the needed measurement adequacy and consistency.

4.5 Mean and Standard Deviation

Table 12 shows that of all the variables, Socio-economic Status has the greatest mean value. Other independent variables, as well as the dependent variable, do not show much variances in their mean values, indicating that the study's respondents gave similar responses.

Table 12 Descriptive Statistics Table

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Occupational Stress	3.7086	.82448
Socio-Economic Status	3.7654	.69288
Management Support	3.6407	.86736
Family Support	3.4074	.88237
Work Life Balance	3.7111	1.19454

Source: Survey Data

4.6 Normality of the dependent variable

Table 13 Test of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
MeanW	.190	270	.000	.920	270	.000

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The Sig. value was determined to be less than 0.05 based on table 4.8. As a result, the dependent variable does not follow a normal distribution. The Sig. value should be greater than 0.05 to ensure the normal distribution of dependent variable. Accordingly, a non-parametric test has been conducted to check the correlation of the variables.

4.7 Correlation Analysis-Spearman (non-parametric correlation analysis)

Correlation Analysis is used to determine how difficult a link between two variables. The coefficient value varies between -0.1 and 0.1, demonstrating a perfect negative and positive association between the two variables. The closer the correlation coefficient is to -0.1 or 0.1, the greater the association between variables is, and the closer it is to 0, the weaker the relationship.

Table 14 Correlation Analysis

Variable	MeanWLB	MeanOS	MeanSE	MeanMS	MeanFS
MeanWLB	1.000	-.002	.189**	.570**	.326**
MeanOS	-.002	1.000	.147*	.040	.159**
MeanSE	.189**	.147*	1.000	.244**	.087
MeanMS	.570**	.040	.244**	1.000	.254**

MeanFS	.326**	.159**	.087**	.254**	1.000
---------------	--------	--------	--------	--------	-------

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

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

Source: Survey Data

Table 14 shows that there is a statistically significant link between the variables of Socio-Economic Status, Management Support, Family Support and Work Life Balance. But in Occupational Stress only have statistically significant relationship within the family support (.159) & Socio- Economic Status (.147). There is not any significant relationship among Occupational Stress and other variables. However, Socio- Economic Status becoming statistically significant with work life balance & other variables it doesn't show significant relationship between Family Support (.087).

4.8 Regression Analysis

The goal of regression analysis is to find the relationship between two or more variables. That is, regression analysis allows you to see how independent factors affect the dependent variable. Since the dependent variable of the study is non-normally distributed, weighted least square regression analysis has been performed (James and Knaub, 2009).

Tables 15, 16, and 17 show the results of the regression analysis.

Table 15 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.576 ^a	.332	.322	1.32724	2.033

a. Predictors: (Constant), MeanFS, MeanSE, MeanOS, MeanMS

b. Dependent Variable: MeanWLB

c. Weighted Least Squares Regression - Weighted by WEIGHT

Source: Survey Data

Table 16 Anova

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	231.752	4	57.938	32.890	.000 ^c
	Residual	466.815	265	1.762		
	Total	698.567	269			

a. Dependent Variable: MeanWLB

- b. Weighted Least Squares Regression - Weighted by WEIGHT
 - c. Predictors: (Constant), MeanFS, MeanSE, MeanOS, MeanMS
- Source: Survey Data

According to Table 15, the R2 value is 0.332, which is greater than 0.3, indicating that the dependent variable has changed as a result of the independent variable changing. F=32.890 and p 0.001 are seen in table 16. As a result, 33.2% difference in Work Life Balance may be found in terms of Occupational Stress, Socio-Economic Status, Management Support, and Family Support. In addition, the VIF value in Table 17 is less than 5, indicating that the model has no multicollinearity concerns.

Table 17 Coefficient

Model	Coefficients ^{a,b}						Collinearity Statistics	
	Unstandardized		Standardized		t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
	B	Std. Error	Beta					
1 (Constant)	1.814	.288			6.295	.000		
MeanOS	-.078	.057	-.071		-1.377	.170	.961	1.040
MeanSE	.045	.047	.050		.955	.340	.928	1.077
MeanMS	.446	.050	.479		8.991	.000	.890	1.124
MeanFS	.137	.034	.210		4.017	.000	.923	1.084

- a. Dependent Variable: MeanWLB
 - b. Weighted Least Squares Regression - Weighted by WEIGHT
- Source: Survey Data

The p-values of Management Support (MS) and Family Support (FS) were less than 0.05, according to table 17. Hence, it can be concluded that these independent variables have significant impact on the Work Life Balance (WLB) of workers in among IT companies. When reviewing the results, Management Support (MS) recorded highest beta value (0.479) and 0.210 is the beta value of the Family Support (FS). And between Occupational Stress (OS) and work life balance have a negative relationship. It means when Occupational Stress increase employees Work Life Balance will decrease. Even though, the p-values of Occupational Stress are more than 0.05, this relationship will not be significant. (0.05 = 0.170, p>0.05). However, having positive relationship between Socio- Economic Status (SE) and Work Life Balance, it also become insignificant due to the p value become more than 0.05. (0.340).

As well as in the questionnaire that used to gather information in this research finally have two open ended questions. The purpose of these questions is to identify the primary obstacles that employees have when working from home, as well as the extra supports that they require to make working from home more convenient. Following sorted table shows the overall challenges that employees have faced.

Table 18 Challenges that employees faced

Challenges	
1	Extended working hours
2	Difficulty in managing household chores while managing work
3	No time to focus on physical wellbeing
4	Mental Stress
5	Less infrastructure to support work environment (Computers, Network speed, Workstation, Power supply etc.)
6	Increased internet and electricity bills
7	No real face to face interaction with team
8	It's disturbed to the other members in living with us in same house. They lost their freedom.
9	No real time to spend for kids.
10	Power outages on national grid
11	Slow Internet
12	Can't connect office data base from home

Source: Survey Data

Furthermore, under the final question focus on the factors that give more support to make work from home much easier. Likewise, following sorted table shows the answers that gave from 270 respondents. Some have directly said that if they can move again to work from office it is better.

Table 19 Factors that help to make work from home more efficient

Factors that help	
1	Pre-defined standard working hours
2	Peaceful environment
3	Exercise
4	Wi-Fi
5	More Internet reimbursement & an allowance to set up a proper home office
6	More Infrastructure facilities with the Internet and the fixed working hours
7	To teach in effective manner (training/webinar) on how to effectively manage work remotely.
8	It would be good if we could have a hybrid model where we could go to work at least two days a week but work from home on other days
9	A good communication among team members
10	Celebrate victories
11	Correct posture of neck and back
12	Off days
13	More flexibility & flexible deadlines.
14	Manager's support

-
- 15 Sharing on point management decision
 - 16 Prioritizing & segregating tasks among subordinates
 - 17 Homework environments need to improve
 - 18 Being able switch off from work mode
 - 19 Emotional support
 - 20 Environment support
 - 21 No meetings after office hours
 - 22 To make it more efficient the teams should meetup at least 1 day per day to clear out the dependent tasks
 - 23 Run a roster basis to work from home and office few days a week
 - 24 Only solution is to go back to office for work.
 - 25 Having a separate office room at home
 - 26 Sleep
 - 27 Time management & efficiency
 - 28 Frequent outings
 - 29 Music, leisure activities for relaxing at home
 - 30 Company should grant reasonable payment for internet
 - 31 Documentation needs to be in soft copy mode other than hard copies
 - 32 Family support
 - 33 Create application or social platform to reduce isolation & loneliness
 - 34 Day care facilities for children
 - 35 Giving some time for myself to engage with something which love to do
 - 36 Proper guidance for all the employees
-

Source: Survey Data

4.9 Hypothesis Testing

The examination of the hypothesis under research is given below, taking into account the overall results of the Regression Analysis.

Table 20 Hypothesis Result

Hypothesis	Result
H1: There is a significant influence between occupational stress and work life balance of employees working from home.	Rejected
H2: There is a significant influence between socioeconomic status and work life balance of employees working from home.	Rejected
H3: There is a significant influence between management's support and work life balance of employees working from home.	Accepted

H4: There is a significant influence between family background and work life balance of employees working from home. Accepted

Source: Survey Data

5 Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Overview of the Findings of the study

The research was based on practical work on work-life balance of employees in the IT industry working from home. The findings, based on the data collected from the employees who work from home in the selected three IT companies. According to the study's findings, it was identified there is a significant influence to work life balance (WLB) from management support (MS) and family support (FS). Among them management support has the highest significant influence on work life balance of IT industry employees when working from home. Under the management support variable, the measurement item "MS4" has been identified as the most important item. MS4 states that with the good support from the management, employees have flexibility to manage work life balance accurately. This is mainly because the respondents can talk with managers freely regarding any matter they have, and managers are not too harsh to the employees. And the least important item under the management support is "MS1", which states that the companies provide necessary infrastructure to employees to work from home such as desktop, laptop, cell phones etc. Family support exhibits the second significant relationship with the work life balance. The "FS2" measurement item has been recognized as the most important item within this variable based on the findings. It states that the children of employees are at the age where they can help with household chores. And the least important item under this variable is "FS3" which states that the employee's parents are dependent on them.

And as previously stated, Occupational Stress (OS) and Socio-Economic Status (SE) not given significant influence on the work life balance of the employees working from home. But in occupational stress, "OS1" measurement item becomes an important item among others. It states that, employees take sufficient breaks during work time to reduce stress levels. Most of the employees agreed with that statement it means, they take breaks while they work from home. And according to the results, the variable under socio-economic status "SE1" measurement item takes the most important place among others. It declares, the salary that employees get is adequate to set up infrastructure that needs to work from home.

Furthermore, based on the research questions of this study must identify challenges that are faced by the employees when working from home. According to the findings of the study, can state some challenges that faced by the employees of IT companies when working from home. Based on these results, "no real face to face interaction with team" is the major challenge that faced by most employees in the IT sector. Then "extending working hours" is the second major challenge that employees faced. Out of 270 respondents 142 respondents are agree with that challenge (52.6%). As the third major challenge can identified "mental stress" of the employees have during work from home because 132 respondents approved this challenge. And less infrastructure to support work environment such as computer, network speed, workstation, power supply etc, no time to focus on physical wellbeing, increased internet and electricity bills and difficulty to managing household chores while managing work get the respectively fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh place of the major challenges that employees faced during work from home. Additionally, based on the findings can state, no real time to spend for kids, disturbances that made for other living beings in the same house, power outages of national grid, not able to access office databases from home are some other challengers handled by the IT industry employees.

In line with discoveries of study, can identify some suggestions that employees recommend improving the work life balance of the employees among IT companies. Therefore, the major finding that most of the employees are suggest

is,

- Providing a proper infrastructure facility including network accessibility, good network connections, stable power connections, better communication facilities with collaborators, better equipment (laptops, desktops, computer tables, comfortable chairs, cell phones etc).

And some more employees suggest providing fixed, proper, or standard working hours. Because of their suggestions they have many more meetings with the top management without considering the time (sometimes they must work for about 16 hours per day). So, they really struggle with the time management, and they suggest working within office hours only.

Other than that, employees recommend reducing mental stress levels. Due to the long working hours, they must face some more stress than working in the office. So, they suggest some good sleep, schedule some breaks during the work, online conversations with friends, doing exercise, doing YOGA, listen to music, motivate employees by giving trainings and rewards & setup hybrid model where we could go to work at least two days a week but work from home on other days etc.

5.2 Discussion

This section discusses how the findings of this study are consistent with the findings of earlier investigations. The research variables were constructed, and the research questions and hypotheses were formulated, based on past studies. To arrive at a conclusion on the accuracy of the above developed hypotheses, the collected data has been analyzed through various ways. Multiple regression analysis has been completed to define the association remaining between the dependent and independent variables of the study. As a result, occupational stress and socioeconomic status were shown to have no significant link with the work-life balance of workers who working from home in the IT sector among the independent factors in this study. In addition, there is a considerable association between work-life balance and management support and family support. According to the results of the data analysis, two hypotheses are rejected, while the other two are supported.

The six research questions posed in this study, as well as some of their answers, served as the foundation for the study's hypotheses. As a result, the study's research topics are:

- 1) What is the influence of Occupational Stress (OS) on Work life Balance (WLB)?
- 2) What is the influence of Socio-Economic Status (SE) on Work life Balance (WLB)?
- 3) What is the influence of Management Support (MS) on Work life Balance (WLB)?
- 4) What is the influence of Family Support (FS) on Work life Balance (WLB)?
- 5) What are the challengers faced by the employees when work from home (WFH)?
- 6) What are the employee's suggestions to improve Work Life Balance (WLB) in the among IT companies?

As a result, the findings of previous experimental investigation and how they are congruent with the findings of this study are listed below.

5.2.1 What is the influence of Occupational Stress (OS) on Work life Balance (WLB)?

The study, Sadhukan (2020) has found that people who stuck with high workload due to the work from home faced to high stress levels and they have encountered trouble to keep a healthy personal life & They lack the ability to balance their work and personal lives. As he stated, being bored at home, finding it difficult to maintain a private life, and finding it difficult to focus on work all point to the "home-work interface" as a major source of stress. Based on the Hsu et al., (2019) result, higher occupational stress seems to have very negative consequences for work life wellbeing such as work life imbalance and job dissatisfaction. Because occupational stress has a detrimental impact on work-life balance, the major findings of these two research are very similar to the main outcome of this study. Confirming same result of the Hsu et al., (2019), Zaheer at el., (2020) also noted that the correlational analysis of his study, strong beneficial association between occupational stress and work-life balance has been discovered. In other words, there is a strong negative correlation between occupational stress and work-life balance. By analyzing 4.12 coefficient table, can see the negative beta value by indicating when occupational stress become increase work life balance of the employee become decrease.

5.2.2. What is the influence of Socio-Economic Status (SE) on Work Life Balance (WLB)?

Despite personal fulfilment, as the result of this study socio-economic status has a constructive influence with WLB. According to the Kossek (2017) study, also have the same result between socio economic status and WLB. Based on the sample that he used to conduct his study, the main benefits of homeworking to those who are higher in the income, education and occupation involved higher work-life balance satisfaction. In addition to that, Subramaniam (2015) conducted the study related to the WLB of the women in Malaysia. His study utilizes the proof from primary survey done among 14 organizations in service industry. Used 500 female employees as sample and finally get the result indicating that the women who having a degree, earning a salary higher than RM7000 (1USD = RM3.10), and in the better occupational position were the ones who were more concerned in WLB.

According to this study also, the person who have high level of income is agreed with the question, "I have adequate income to get the infrastructure need to work from home". And the person who have high education and who are in high occupation level can easily manage WLB. These things helped them to carry out domestic activities and professional activities accurately. Not only that, Kim (2020) also conducted the study applying data from the nation-wide representative South Korean Working Conditions Survey in 2014, to examine the socio-economic connection with WLB. As he found, socio economic status of employee and WLB have same influence as this study. He stated that, well knowledgeable individuals are expected to have specialized jobs that involved some more pressure with higher income and more individuals who take part in satisfied work family interests can cause better WLB.

5.2.3 What is the influence of Management Support (MS) on Work Life Balance (WLB)?

As relate to findings, this study revealed that management support positively influenced to the WLB of the IT employees working from home. The study findings of Jeyarathnam (2017) in Tami Nadu of India IT professionals shows the positive correlation between management support and WLB. Managerial support for WLB is a critical aspect, according to Smith and Gardner (2007), because management has the capacity to develop WLB initiatives and may create a culture that is supportive of WLB by applying his research findings. The findings of the Gunawardhana (2019) well supported by the findings of the current study. It has been shown that immediate management support & attitudes which employees considered the most significant factor in balancing their work life responsibilities. The

findings of this study are also consistent with those of Kailasapathy et al., (2014), who found that high-value administrator support aids individuals in balancing work and family obligations.

5.2.4. What is the influence of Family Support (FS) on Work Life Balance (WLB)?

Family support also discovered to be a major contributing factor of WLB because of having expanding interconnection of work and family domains, family support is identified as essential factor to understanding of the well-being of employees (Gunawardhana 2019). The result of this study also creates the positive type of influence with the WLB. Outcome of this, was confirmed by the Zhoe (2020) which was done by using IT sector employees in China. This is highlighting the family support can assist employees to have a confident attitude regarding the WLB. Also, he argued that family support between individuals can be differ because various individuals have different degree of satisfaction. The result of current study is also aligned with the result of Padma (2013) which was conduct by using female police constables in Andhra Pradesh in India. Her study found that, the female employees who have teenagers can simply handle WLB than women who are with kids. Also, women who must look out of elder parents have less significant work life balance than others.

5.2.5 What are the challengers faced by the employees when work from home (WFH)?

Employees confront several challenges when working from home, which can be discovered by examining empirical studies. According to study done by the International Labour Organization (2020) staff may have to face some technical problems such as connectivity problems like found through this study. The challenges of current study also in line with the study of Brough at el., (2020). He found that enhanced workloads, lengthy working hours, time pressures are some more challenges that employees faced. The result of Vijayakumar et al., (2020) study also found workers must take care about their children and needs to look after their home fronts. Due to those employees have much mental stress than work in the office like found from this study. Likewise, via this study can observed more challenges faced by employees when they work from home.

5.2.6 What are the employee's suggestions to improve Work Life Balance (WLB) in the among IT companies?

As relate to the finding of Gautam et al., (2018) study revealed that, employee focused resolutions for offsetting work life, will support company to create and execute WLB plans. As well as the result of Vijayakumar et al., (2020) lined up with the result of this study. He noticed that employers should confirm some strict working hours, setting the right relationship with the senior management to share their problems etc. Also, according to the International Labour Organization (2020), discover that sharing the decisions or information with staff regarding any matter of organization will help to manage WLB. So, employees can get the sense relate to the company operations, change in company policies, strategies etc. other than these suggestions, can found some more recommendations through this study findings.

5.3 Implications of the Study

The following suggestions can be made to improve the balance between work and personal life, based on the findings of this study. These implications can be divided into two categories: managerial and theoretical. As a result, those recommendations will aid in the development of identified elements and will help to improve the WLB of employees in the IT business who work from home.

5.3.1 Managerial Implications

Management Support is the highest influencing factor on WLB of the IT employees in Sri Lanka. But when proceed

company policies managers should take in account towards all the employees who are implemented to WFH whether they have enough worked background and other infrastructure facilities because some workers are adopted remote work, while others have struggled. Managers should more concern about these things (specially infrastructure facilities) while conducting WFH concept.

Also, as the managers need to care about their employees. While they are working from home employees work more than working in office. So, managers can organize some special meetings with employees to encourages them, to listen their grievances or as a manger they have a responsibility to keep employees happily by listening to them. Further, if organization can, should provide financial benefits and incentives because employees have much more expenses than they work in the office. (Like data chargers, electricity charges etc.)

Another important determinant of WLB of IT sector employees is family support. The result of this study indicated that partner support is most significant item under the family support. And employees who have young children can easily manage their WLB. But the employee who have kids are more difficult to balance personal work with office work. At that time partner support is really needed. Thus, if both (husband and wife) are working from home managers should implement effective strategies to retain all the employees while they work, from home.

And the last determinant is the occupational stress. Occupational stress was found to have a negative impact on employees' WLB, as per the findings of this study. They are subjected to higher stress than who works in office due to their lengthy working hours. Hence managers should implement policies to give enough mental freedom while working such as encouraging for getting enough sleep, exercising, practicing YOGA, listening to music etc. And they can make some plans by including maximum working hours per day, leaving schedules for each employee, maximum workload for each employee or maximum number of meetings to participate etc.

Also, managers can utilize this study to identify factors that are influencing to the WLB of Sri Lankan IT industry employees. Because most empirical studies are conducted related to the other countries. But in Sri Lanka only have limited number of prior studies relate to WLB of IT industry employees.

5.3.2 Theoretical implications

Further, as the theoretical implications can recommend some factors which affect to the WLB of the employees who work from home. According to the findings, “accurate infrastructure facilities” is the highly affecting factor to WLB of employees. And workload and lengthy working hours also affect to the WLB. Like wise, WLB is most critical point of employees when working from home with COVID-19 epidemic. Thus, it needs to adopt some effective administrative strategies, policies, plans for the organization. These needs to reduce unbalance between office work and personal work, which ultimately achieve work life balance.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

Even though, there are many benefits found from this study, there are several downsides as well. The limitations of this study are, when conducting research, only have selected here IT companies namely CodeGen International (PVT) Ltd, Pearson & Virtusa among 300 IT companies in Sri Lanka. Because these three are highly consider about the WFH concept.

And due to COVID -19 outbreak, it has been unable to gather more expressive & appropriate information. Only consider about smaller amount of sample size. This is limiting the detailed information that can gather from large

number of samples. In addition to that, due to COVID -19, unable to distribute printed questionnaires or unable to meet employees to talk with each other. Therefore, the study was gathered relevant information from Google Forms.

5.5 Further Research Suggestions

Since this study is only limited to a sample obtained from the three IT companies such as CodeGen International (PVT) Ltd, Pearson and Virtusa in Sri Lanka, further researchers could address this geographical gap by attaining a broader target.

The purpose of this study was to determine the factors that influence the WLB of employees working from home in Sri Lanka's IT industry. As determined by study, large number of employees are struggling for the adequate infrastructure facilities to conduct their office work in home. Therefore, forthcoming researchers can give much attention on the infrastructure facilities as the factor which affect to the WLB of the employees. Further, there can be some more other factors which influence to the WLB.

As well as future studies can focus on WLB of employees working from home more context specific, and formed theories be applied to realize more incidents of WLB of employees and the organizations that they employed.

Also, the current study does not assess about how demographic information (gender, age, geographical area, income level etc.) affect to the work life balance of employees. Thus, the model can be extended by including mediating variables such as gender and age.

Because this study relied solely on a quantitative approach, future studies can employ a qualitative strategy to acquire more accurate data from respondents. Apart than depending just on one approach to perform the study, future researchers can use mixed methodology to produce more different results in this setting.

5.6 Conclusion

This study has been conducted to discover factors influencing to the WLB of employees working from home in IT industry. As a result of ongoing COVID-19 pandemic most industries (specially IT industry) moved to the WFH concept and due to that most of the employees are struggling with the WLB. Therefore, as a developing country can have the greater impact in the personal lives of the employees. Hence, it is evident that the necessary measures must be taken to reduce the impact for personal lives. This will not only be helpful to increase status of their families but also to upliftment of the whole country. So, it is essential to identify components impact to the WLB of the employees. To give the answer the question of why it is necessary to ascertain the factors that influencing WLB of the employees, primary data were gathered through with google forms. Then the study's discoveries which were supported by empirical works, it was identified that management support and family support has the most significant influence on the work life balance of the employees. It is hope that forthcoming researchers may reassess positively on this work, in the face of its noticeable limitations. Further research suggestions stated here will support to make better understanding in WLB of employees in the IT industry in Sri Lanka as well as all around the world.

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Annexure I

Questionnaire

The objective of this study is to acquire knowledge regarding work life balance and factors such as occupational stress, socioeconomic status, management’s support and family background in the IT professionals in Sri Lanka. You have been chosen as one of the study's participants. Please rest assured that the data collected for this project will only be used for research reasons, and that your personal information will not be shared with anybody.

Please take a few moments to answer the following questions. There are two parts to this questionnaire (Part A and B).

Thank you.

Tharini Weerasekara

Student, Department of Commerce

University of Sri Jayewardenepura.

thariniweerasekara@gmail.com

Part A: Demographic Information

Please select appropriate response.

1. Gender:

Male	
Female	
Prefer not to say	

2. Age

Less than 25	
25-35	
36-45	
46-55	
Over 56	

3. Marital Status

Single	
Married	
Other	

4. Do you have any children?

Yes	
No	

4.1 How many children do you have

1	
2	
3	
4	
More than 4	

4.2 How old are they?

Less than 1	
1-5	
5-12	
13-18	
More than 18	

5. Total work experience

Less than 1 year	
1-5+ years	
6-10+ years	
11-15+ years	
More than 15+ years	

6. Income Level

Less than Rs: 50,000	
Rs: 50,000 – 99,999	
Rs: 100,000 – 149,999	
Rs: 150,000 – 199,999	
Rs: 200,000 – 249,999	
More than Rs: 250,000	

7. Education/ Professional Qualifications

Up to Advanced level	
Professional Qualification (CIMA/ CIM etc.)	
Certifications (Microsoft/ JAVA/ Cisco/Redhat/AWS etc.)	
Completed bachelor's degree	
Completed masters (MSc/ MBA/MA)	
Postgraduate (PHD/ Post-Grad Diploma etc.)	

Part B: Work Life Balance & factors affect to Work Life Balance

Please rate following statements regarding work life balance on the given scale by putting a number. [1-Strongly Disagree 2-Disagree 3-Nutreal 4-Agree 5-Strognly Agree]

No	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
8.	The connection among professional and home life is known as work-life balance.					
8.1	Overall, I can manage both my work and personal life.					
8.2	I am able to attend my needs of my family members.					
8.3	I am able to complete the tasks assigned to me in timely manner.					
9.	Occupational Stress is in progress or continuing stress an employee feels due to the obligations, restrictions, environment, or other pressures of the workplace.					
9.1	I take sufficient breaks during work time to reduce stress level.					
9.2	I work more hours at home during the week, compared to when I'm working in the office.					
9.3	I feel frustrated when I am nor able to meet my office deadlines.					
10.	Socio-economic status is described as the extent of how salary, education, and profession impact an individual's social status as well as work life balance.					
10.1	The salary I get is adequate to set up the infrastructure needed to work from home.					
10.2	My education level helps me to manage work life balance.					

10.3	My occupation status helps me to manage work life balance.				
11.	Management Support is the support given to employees when working from home.				
11.1	My company provides necessary infrastructure to work from home (computers, internet, cell phones etc.)				
11.2	My management does not expect me to work extra hours when I'm working from home.				
11.3	I feel comfortable asking my manager for time off when I have personal emergencies.				
11.4	I have flexibility to manage my work life balance.				
12.	Family Background is defined as the assistance that you have from your family members to balance your work life with your professional life.				
12.1	I have support from my spouse to manage my office work.				
12.2	My children are at an age where they can help with household chores.				
12.3	My parents are dependent on me.				
12.4	I have extra support (parents or maids) to take care of my children.				

13. What are the three main challengers you face when working from home.

	Extended working hours
	No real face to face interaction with team
	Difficulty in managing household chores while managing work
	Less infrastructure to support work environment (Computers, Network speed, Workstation, Power supply etc.
	Increased internet and electricity bills
	No time to focus on physical wellbeing
	Other

14. What factors could help support you better, to make work from home less stressful and/or more efficient?

.....

Thank you for your corporation.

Annexure II

Reliability - Pilot Survey Result

Work Life Balance (WLB)

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.867	.868	3

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
WLB1	3.60	.928	40
WLB2	3.63	1.102	40
WLB3	3.70	.823	40

Inter-Item Correlation Matrix

	WLB1	WLB2	WLB3
WLB1	1.000	.752	.678
WLB2	.752	1.000	.551
WLB3	.678	.551	1.000

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
WLB 1	7.33	2.892	.816	.665	.692
WLB 2	7.30	2.574	.718	.569	.805
WLB 3	7.23	3.615	.651	.464	.851

Occupational Stress (OS)

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.713	.715	3

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Inter-Item Correlation Matrix			
			40
			40
			40
OS1	1.000	.532	.409
OS2	.532	1.000	.678
OS3	.409	.678	1.000

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
OS1	7.43	3.020	.712	.506	.812
OS2	7.23	2.281	.875	.765	.792
OS3	7.05	2.767	.614	.376	.694

Socio- Economic Status (SE)

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.706	.707	3

Inter-Item Correlation Matrix

	SE1	SE2	SE3
SE1	1.000	.492	.328
SE2	.492	1.000	.388
SE3	.328	.388	1.000

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
SE1	3.18	1.059	40
SE2	3.88	.757	40
SE3	3.85	1.331	40

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
SE1	6.73	3.128	.786	.617	.700
SE2	6.03	3.820	.814	.662	.785
SE3	7.05	2.844	.672	.451	.660

Management Support (MS)

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.846	.869	4

Inter-Item Correlation Matrix

	MS1	MS2	MS3	MS4
MS1	1.000	.368	.575	.511
MS2	.368	1.000	.697	.717
MS3	.575	.697	1.000	.789
MS4	.511	.717	.789	1.000

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
MS1	3.28	1.320	40
MS2	2.93	1.309	40
MS3	3.45	1.218	40
MS4	3.48	1.132	40

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
MS1	9.85	11.003	.531	.346	.889
MS2	10.20	10.062	.677	.565	.828
MS3	9.67	9.661	.825	.698	.765
MS4	9.65	10.285	.803	.684	.780

Family Support (FS)

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.708	.709	4

Inter-Item Correlation Matrix

	FS1	FS2	FS3	FS4
FS1	1.000	.461	.571	.454
FS2	.461	1.000	.331	.507
FS3	.571	.331	1.000	.594
FS4	.454	.507	.594	1.000

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
FS1	3.93	1.071	40
FS2	3.58	1.752	40
FS3	3.75	1.428	40
FS4	3.90	1.482	40

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
FS1	10.23	11.410	.580	.336	.640
FS2	10.58	7.225	.532	.283	.683
FS3	11.40	11.579	.674	.454	.669
FS4	10.25	8.859	.783	.613	.740

Source: Survey Data