

Impact of Life Domain Balance on Global Life Satisfaction

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Abstract

The world is changing at a fast pace, and the future will be faster. This quick change is leading to Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous (VUCA) work environments. Uncontrollable uncertainty is one source of stress. Traditional work-life balance interventions are insufficient to address stress as they do not consider the latest developments in the employment relationships and working arrangements. Last few decades, there is growing interest in Global Life Satisfaction (GLS), a component of positive psychology and Subjective well-being, to build the resilience required to tackle stress-related challenges. GLS is, in turn, related to satisfaction with Life Domains (LDS) like career, money & finances, health, friends & family, fun & recreation, physical environment, and personal growth. The study's objective is to know the impact of LDS balance approaches on GLS and give suitable suggestions to improve GLS. Study results indicated that the LDS balance significantly impacts GLS. Working on a domain with the least LDS improves GLS, whereas working on a domain with the highest LDS decreases GLS..

Keywords:

1. Introduction

The world is changing at a fast pace, and the future will be faster. This fast change is leading to Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous (VUCA) work environments. Uncontrollable uncertainty is one source of stress for leaders and individuals both in the personal and organizational contexts.

If not handled properly, stress can severely affect the employees, families, organizations, and communities. Michie (2002) defined stress as the "physical and psychological condition that results when personal resources are not enough to cope with the pressures and demands". Further, he said stress has an impact on behaviour, feelings, physical symptoms, or thinking. Grant and Ferris (2012) explained possible reasons as job, unpredictability, financial, work-life balance, interpersonal, and self-induced.

For several years, work-life balance mediations were in use to address stress. Naithani (2010) discussed historical perspectives of the work-life balance initiatives: Initially, the focus was primarily on the welfare of women with children; Afterwards, the shift was towards a broader focus on men & women, married & unmarried, and with or without children; Kelliher, Richardson, and Boiarintseva (2019) argued that the past studies of work-life balance do not fully consider recent developments in employment relationships and working arrangements.

Recent years have seen an increase in research on Subjective Well-Being(SWB). De Neve, Diener, Tay, and Xuereb (2013) stated that “the experience of wellbeing encourages individuals to pursue capacity-building goals to meet future challenges”.

Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith (1999) listed components of SWB as affective and cognitive. This study focuses on the cognitive-judgmental aspect of SWB, Global Life Satisfaction(GLS). Shin and Johnson (1978) defined GLS as “a global assessment of a person’s quality of life according to his chosen criteria.”.

M. Sirgy and Lee (2018) defined “Life Domain Balance(LDB) as a state of equally moderate-to-high levels of satisfaction in important life domains contributing to overall life satisfaction”.

Literature considered several approaches to maximizing GLS: M. Sirgy and Lee (2018) suggested that life balance can be achieved by increasing domain satisfaction; Stewart and Eric (2019) suggested experimenting with small changes that enhance performance in all domains satisfaction.

In this study, three approaches were considered for evaluation related to Life Domain Balance(LDB) & GLS.

1. Increase all domain satisfactions equally
2. Increase only lowest satisfied domain
3. Increase only highest satisfied domain

To summarise, this study focuses on Life Balance inter-domain approaches that can improve LDS & GLS to build resilience to cope with VUCA challenges.

2. Review of Literature

Life Satisfaction

Headey, Veenhoven, and Weari (2005) discussed two theories: Top-down theory, where GLS influences LDS. Bottom-up theory, where satisfaction in many life domains (LDS) influences Global life satisfaction(GLS). For this study, the Bottom-up theory, the LDS influences the GLS, was considered.

Life Domains

This subsection details chronologically the outcome of the literature survey regarding Life Domains.

Salvatore and Sastre (2001) considered life domains as job, physical body, money, spouse, family, friend, and leisure.

Van Praag and Ferrer-i Carbonell (2004) supposed life domains like health, marriage, job, income, social contacts, housing, and environment..

Byrne (2005) suggested life domains as career, money & finances, life partner, health, friends & family, fun & recreation, physical environment, and personal growth.

Headey et al. (2005) opined life domains as leisure, marriage, sex life, work, living standards, friendships, and health.

Cummins (2005) deemed life domains like health, material well-being, safety, productivity, intimacy, community, and emotional well-being.

Argyle (2013) considered life domains as education, money, work and employment, health, social relationships, leisure, and housing..

Nowok, Find-lay, and McCollum (2018) supposed life domains as spouse/partner, house, health, job, social life, leisure, and income.

Vinas-Bardolet, Guillen-Royo, and Torrent-Sellens (2020) analysed education , job, health, accommodation, the standard of living, family life, and social life.

For this study, the life domains chosen career, money & finances, health, friends & family, fun & recreation, physical environment, and personal growth.

Life Domain Balance

This subsection chronologically details the outcome of the literature survey regarding the impact of Life Domain Balance(LDB) on GLS.

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Kitayama and Markus (2000) indicated that a person could achieve life domain balance through compensation (i.e. decreasing the importance of negative domains and increasing the importance of positive domains).

Frisch (2005) indicated that people's life satisfaction is based on how well their requirements, goals, and dreams are met in critical domains.

Byrne (2005) concludes that a person can address stress problems by applying 'Wheel of Life' tool to know the imbalances and address them.

M. J. Sirgy and Wu (2009) explained two concepts: 1. One can obtain only limited satisfaction from a single life domain; 2. People have to be involved in many domains to meet both basic and growth needs.

Lothaller (2010) indicated that balance can be due to conflicting life domains and not as the believed view of balance as the absence of conflicts between domains

Matuska (2012) suggested that life balance has approximately equal levels of satisfaction across the relationship, identity, health, and challenging needs.

M. Sirgy and Lee (2018) suggested that Life balance can be achieved by increasing domain satisfaction. An individual who is highly satisfied in multiple domains is likely to experience a higher life satisfaction than an individual who is highly satisfied in a single domain.

Stewart and Eric (2019) suggested experimenting with small changes in all domains satisfaction.

Research gap

There are no empirical studies done in India to validate the impact of various life balance approaches on GLS.

To summarize, the studies covered the importance of Life Balance, approaches like experimenting with small changes in all domains, minimizing conflicts between domains, and equal levels of satisfaction among domains to maximize Life satisfaction.

Problem Statement

The best possible scenario is to have the highest GLS by achieving the highest satisfaction in all domains. The reality is that it will vary for individuals across situations and time availability because people have different role requirements in different situations.

Objectives of the study

Following objectives are considered for the study.

1. To know the effect of Life Domain Balance on GLS
2. To analyse the effect of Life Domain Balance approaches on GLS.
3. To give suitable suggestions to improve GLS

Hypothesis

Following hypothesis are framed based from the objectives

1. LDB is inversely correlated with GLS.

For testing this hypothesis, Correlation analysis was used.

2. LDB affects GLS

For testing this hypothesis, Regression Analysis was used.

3. Research Methodology

Data

The source of the data considered was primary data. Data collected through an online survey from executives of Information Technology(IT) & Pharmaceutical(Pharma) companies in India. Companies chosen are start-ups, product companies, and multinationals.

Sampling Method & Sample Size

The sampling method used was judgement sampling to ensure the coverage. Sample size 632 meets the requirement for statistical analysis (sample size required, as Krejcie and Morgan (1970) indicated, is 384).

Tools & Techniques used are

- Statistical measures range, coefficient of variation used for measuring LDS dispersion.
- Cronbach’s alpha used for reliability testing. Cronbach’s alpha is high at 0.9 (as per Henson (2001), .80 is considered high for research purposes).
- Pearson Correlation Coefficient used to establish the strength of the relationship between LDS & GLS and the relation between LDB & GLS. Test static & *p* values used to test the significance of the relationship.
- Regression technique used to determine the regression equation between LDB & GLS. F-test used to test model significance. T-test used for testing LDB coefficient significance.
- SPSS, Python, and Excel used for statistical analysis.

4. Results and Discussion

Variables used for the analysis are

1. LDS_{*i*}: Life Domain Satisfaction of domain *i*; where *i*=1,8.

Validation of the selection of the Life domains to consider is done through an extensive literature survey. Figure 2 lists LDS_{*i*} considered in the study.

2. LDB: Life Domain Balance (Independent)

This is a computed variable, coefficient of variation of LDS. Results are shared in Table 5 of the Results and Discussion section.

3. GLS: Global Life Satisfaction (Dependent)

Relationship Model

The relationship among all the three study variables is presented in this subsection.

Figure 2: Relationship Model

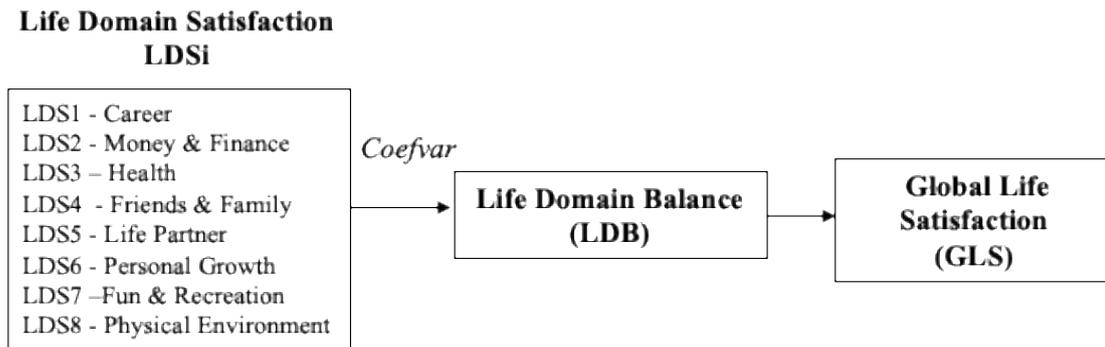


Figure 2 depicts the relationship model between variables. LDS is primary data collected through a survey. LDB is the calculated coefficient of variation of LDS. GLS is also primary data collected through a survey.

Equation

$$GLS_k = c_0 + c_1LDB_k + e_k$$

Where GLS: Global Life Satisfaction; LDB: Life Domain Balance; *k* =1,*n*(*n*=sample size).*c*₀ is constant; *c*₁ is coefficient, *e_k* is error

Participants’ demographic profile

Participants’ profiles analysed to check the coverage of the sample on demographics.

Table 1: Participants Demographic profile

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	Nos	%		Nos	%
D1. Industry			D5. Marital Status		
IT	314	49.7	Single	196	31.0
Pharma	318	50.3	Married without Children	82	13.0
D2. Level			Married with Children	354	56.0
Junior	147	23.3	D6. Spouse Earning Status		
Middle	332	52.5	Not Applicable-Single	196	31.0
Senior	153	24.2	Spouse Not Working	253	40.0
D3. Gender			Spouse Working in Less Demand Job	82	13.0
Male	499	79.0	Spouse Working in high Demand Job	101	16.0
Female	133	21.0	D7. Support Status		
D4. Age			Living in Joint Family	211	33.4
20-25	73	11.6	No Support on Daily activities	285	45.1
25-30	179	28.3	External Support on Daily Activities	136	21.5
31-40	213	33.7			
41-50	136	21.5			
51-60	31	4.9			

Table 1 summarizes the participants' demographic profiles. IT participants(49.7%) are .6% less than Pharma. Middle-level participants are at 52.5%. Male participants are at 79%. The maximum number of participants(33.7%) are in the age bracket of 31-40. Married participants are at 69%. Out of 436 married participants, 183 participants' spouses are working. 33.4% of participants live in a joint family.

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics is based on a scale of 1-10 for all the LDS & GLS.

Table 2: Overall Statistics

	LDS								GLS
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Mean	7.63	6.52	7.16	7.93	8.39	7.78	7.51	7.71	7.52
Std. Deviation	1.56	2.00	1.69	1.54	1.43	1.41	1.72	1.52	1.56

Table 2, results indicate the mean of money & finance (LDS2-6.52) and health (LDS3-7.16) are low compared to other domains indicating a lower level of satisfaction. The highest satisfaction is with the life partner domain. Standard deviation is also high with money & finance(2.00), indicating a large variance in the satisfaction level.

Relationship among LDS & GLS

Correlation of all LDS and GLS analysed to understand the relation between LDS & GLS.

Table 3: Relationship among LDS and GLS - Correlation Analysis

	LDS								GLS
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
LDS1	1	.414**	.431**	.338**	.257**	.519**	.391**	.396**	.507**
LDS2	.414**	1	.474**	.333**	.189**	.389**	.346**	.414**	.563**
LDS3	.431**	.474**	1	.557**	.345**	.502**	.536**	.520**	.602**
LDS4	.338**	.333**	.557**	1	.536**	.499**	.569**	.602**	.577**
LDS5	.257**	.189**	.345**	.536**	1	.441**	.359**	.506**	.472**
LDS6	.519**	.389**	.502**	.499**	.441**	1	.612**	.621**	.646**
LDS7	.391**	.346**	.536**	.569**	.359**	.612**	1	.620**	.587**
LDS8	.396**	.414**	.520**	.602**	.506**	.621**	.620**	1	.682**
GLS	.507**	.563**	.602**	.577**	.472**	.646**	.587**	.682**	1

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

Table 3 summarizes the correlation between LDS & GLS. The relationship between GLS with all dimensions of life is positive and significant. The GLS had the higher positive correlations with the physical environment(LDS8-.682), personal growth(LDS6-.646), and health(LDS3-.602) domains.

Relationship between LDB & GLS

Correlation analysis was used to study the relationship between different dispersion measures & GLS.

Table 4: Correlation between different dispersion measures on GLS

Dispersion Measure	Correlation	Significance
Range	-.345**	0.000
Standard Deviation	-.363**	0.000
Coeff of Variation	-.568**	0.000

** . significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 summarizes the correlation of the dispersion variables (range, standard deviation, coefficient of variation) with GLS. The relationship between GLS with all dispersion variables is negative and significant. The GLS had the highest negative correlations with the coefficient of variation(-.568). Hence, for this study, the coefficient of variation is considered as LDB. As correlation analysis results indicated LDB(coefficient of variation of LDS) is significant at .01 level; Hypothesis 1 is failed to reject.

Association between LDB & GLS

Regression analysis was used to analyse the association between LDB & GLS.

Table 5: Regression - Association between LDB & GLS

	R	R Square	Adj R Square	Std. Error	F	Sig.	N
	.568a	0.323	0.322	1.282	300.271	0.000	632
Unstandardized Coefficients		Stand. Coeff			Collinearity Statistics		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	sig	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	8.804	0.090		97.913	0.000		
LDB(Coeff of Variation)	-7.745	0.447	-0.568	-17.328	0.000	1.000	1.000

Dependent Variable: GLS

Table 5 summarizes the regression model results between GLS and dispersion variable, coefficient of variation, LDB. As regression analysis results indicated, F-test & t-test for coefficient LDB is significant at .01 level; Hypothesis 2 is failed to reject.

Evaluation of approaches

One LDS point is added to the baseline for a particular approach to particular criteria for evaluating different approaches.

Table 6: Illustration of calculations used in the evaluation of approaches

Approach	LDS1	LDS2	LDS3	LDS4	LDS5	LDS6	LDS7	LDS8	Mean	Range	StdDev	coefVar
Baseline	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	4.5	7	2.45	0.54
1 Increase all domain satisfactions	1.125	2.125	3.125	4.125	5.125	6.125	7.125	8.125	4.625	7	2.45	0.53
2 Increase only lowest satisfied domain	2	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	4.625	6	2.26	0.49
3 Increase only highest satisfied domain	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	9	4.625	8	2.67	0.58

Table 6 illustrates an example explaining the impact of approaches on the assumed baseline. As per the additive association between LDS & GLS, GLS is expected to increase by .125 (1 point/8 domain). However,

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the coefficient of variation, LDB varies depending on which domain satisfaction is increased. Numbers in italics indicate the impacted domain.

The regression equation obtained from the previous subsection is shared below.

$$GLS = 8.804 - 7.745 * LDB$$

This equation is used to predict GLS with different approaches defined in the model. LDB used in the equation is the average coefficient of variation of participants arrived by using the calculations explained in Table 6.

Table 7: Evaluation of different approaches

Approach		LDB	GLS	Difference in GLS
No	Detail			
	Baseline	0.166	7.518	
1	Increase all domain satisfactions	0.16	7.565	0.046
2	Increase only lowest satisfied domain	0.135	7.758	0.240
3	Increase only highest satisfied domain	0.183	7.387	-0.132

Table 7 summarizes the predicted GLS with different approaches compared with baseline. Approach 2, an effort to improve LDS of the lowest satisfied domain(7.755), results in higher GLS(0.240) than other approaches. Approach 1, an effort to improve LDS of all domains, results in a minimal positive impact(7.566) on GLS(0.046). Conversely, approach 3, an effort to improve LDS of the highest satisfied domain(7.388), results in lower GLS(-0.132).

5. Conclusions

This study is to know the impact of Life Domain Balance on GLS and giving suitable suggestions to improve LDS & GLS.

The study used sample data of 632 executives collected from Information Technology(IT) and Pharmaceutical(Pharma) companies in India. Companies chosen are start-ups, product companies, and multinationals. Identification of the right Life Domains is made through extensive literature study and discussion with experts. Reliability & Validity tests are done to ensure consistency and accuracy of the measurement.

Descriptive Statistics indicated that money & finance, and health have the least average LDS than other domains. The relationship between GLS with all domains of life is positive and significant. The GLS had higher positive correlations with the physical environment, personal growth, and health domains.

The correlation of the dispersion variables (range, standard deviation, coefficient of variation) with GLS is negative and significant. Among the dispersion variables, the GLS had a higher negative correlation with the coefficient of variation. As the coefficient of variation is a function of standard deviation and mean, any increase in the standard deviation for the same mean, coefficient of variation increases and impacts GLS.

Among the inter-domain approaches to improve life balance by increasing focus and allocation of time on a specific domain or domains:

1. Improving LDS of the lowest satisfied domain results in a higher increase in GLS
2. Improving LDS of highest satisfied domain results in a decrease in GLS
3. Improving LDS of all domains equally results in a small increase in GLS.

The knowledge gained on the impact of Life Domain Balance can help,

Individuals to design the right interventions. For example, if health is the least satisfied domain, increasing the focus & allocating more time to this domain can improve GLS more than expand the focus & give more time to the highest satisfaction domain.

Organizations to use the information regarding the least average satisfaction level domains (for example, in this study, money & finance, health have lowest domain satisfaction) and plan the right interventions to improve satisfaction in these domains at organization level GLS.

Implication of the Study

This study is useful for organizations looking for more impact-full interventions than traditional work-life balance initiatives. Benefits of higher Subjective well-being or Global Life Satisfaction are many: reducing stress, improve happiness, improve quality of life, improve productivity, and improve resilience.

Understanding the dimensions of life balance relationship of life balance with life satisfaction should help practitioners and policymakers design programs to enhance subjective well-being. With this knowledge, therapists, life coaches, and human resource managers can develop better programs to help their clients achieve a greater balance.

Further scope of the study

Future researchers can explore evidence-based studies with other approaches like minimizing conflicts between domains and equal satisfaction levels. A similar study can be carried out in other sectors like education, health, and travel. Researchers can also Longitudinal studies on the impact of interventions of Life balance on GLS.

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