

WORK LIFE BALANCE OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES – WITH REFERENCE TO TEACHING FACULTIES

K. Santhana Lakshmi¹ and S. Sujatha Gopinath²

Assistant Professor, SRM School of Management, SRM University, Kattankulathu
Tamilnadu, India

Email: ¹anju_laxvis@yahoo.co.in, ²sonasujatha@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Work – life Balance of women employees has become an important subject since the time has changed from men earning the family living in today's world where both men and women equally share the responsibility of earning for the betterment of their family life. Hence it is for the betterment of their family life. Hence it is very necessary to know how the women balance very professional and domestic life. In the initial stages, women had to struggle a lot to establish their identity in this competitive world, both in the society as well as in the professional life. But with the advancement in educational and training institutions, things have improved to a great extent.

Historical data from employment survey in India indicates that the employment rate of women has remarkably increased by 3.6% per year from the year 1991 to 2001. Women in India have broken barriers and built bridges in the professional flat forms. Work-Life Balance focuses on two main aspects called Achievement and enjoyment. This means that a woman should be able to have job satisfaction (Enjoyment) and at the same time be able to grow up in his career (Achievement) when a working woman is able to achieve and enjoy her professional and personal life, it means she has a positive work-Life Balance.

After the Industrial Revolution in the second half of the 18th century, there was a tremendous change in the pattern and concept of professionalism. This has given a new dimension to work-life balance. But there is no one perfect shape to work-life balance. It varies from individual to individual because priorities differ according to individual life styles. It not only changes in priorities but also changes in status, like when one is unmarried, after marriage, after childbirth, when a new career begins and this keeps on changing till one's retirement.

With this increasing industrialization and education, employment opportunities for women have also increased. And with increasing economic conditions, it has become a necessity that both husband and wife need to work to have a normal life. In this fast growing and competitive world, as every possible opportunity for employment is increased, the organizations need to create a congenial atmosphere where employees can balance their professional and personal life. Only when an employer has a positive WLB, she can be productive and give her best to her organization. Hence industries are working out schemes which can attract as well as retain their employees.

Work – Life Balance

Work-Life Balance does not mean an equal balance. It means the capacity to schedule the hours of professional and personal life so as to lead a healthy and peaceful life. It is not a new concept. It emphasizes the values, attitudes and beliefs of women regarding their age to work in organizing and balancing their work and personal life. When a woman achieves a successful work-life balance, she has job satisfaction and becomes highly committed and productive and succeeds in her career. But, in certain cases the women is not able to succeed due to incapability in balancing her work and personal life. She is unable to set her priorities. As a result she withdraws from her work due to simple reasons like taking care of her children, aged in laws/parents, and other family pressures. If the man is able to share some of her responsibilities, she would be successful women. A survey in the UK reveals that the majority of the women has had successful WLB, because their husbands shared an equal partnership both in professional and personal life. With the advancement in technology, and education and revolution in the industrial sector, there has been a little change in Indian men too. Both the partners need to schedule their working hours and personal hours so that they lead a professionally and personally healthy life. The women should also educate her children to share responsibilities to make life better and fruitful.

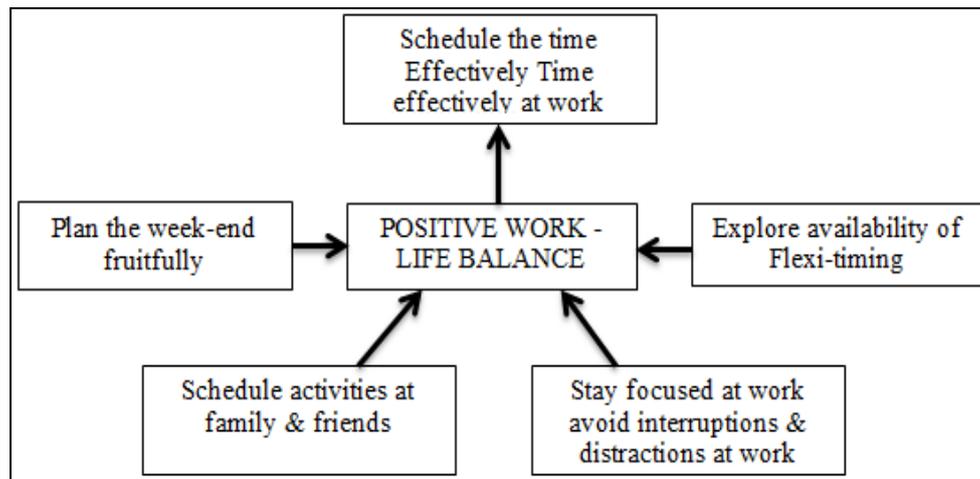
Importance of Work-Life Balance for Women

Studies have shown that the majority of women are working 40-45 hrs/week out of which almost 53% of them struggle to achieve work-life-balance. The reason behind this struggle is that they are being challenged by the demands of their organization versus the commitments of their home. They need to manage the daily requirements of their family as one side and the multiple schedules, meetings, business requirements and other routine responsibilities at work. Women at work need to be taken care by their employers. Employers to work out schemes that would not only attract and retain the employees for a longer period but also make them highly productive. Organizations have many such facilities like, Transport, Canteen, Day care centres, Postal/saving schemes, Flexi-working hours, part-time working, provide the information about work-life balance policies and special leave arrangement such as Annual leave & public holiday leave, Career Break leave, Leave for elective representative, Leave to attend as witness at court in your organization, Health care centres, rewards & recognition, career growth, Insurance plans, Job rotation, Incentives, Performance related pays, Rest rooms and other government schemes like maternity, marriage, sick leave benefit, & medical benefits. And other Work life balance options like Staff counseling, Organizational psychology unit, Workplace Health Promotion, Social clubs, Pre-retirement club, Women's network, Breast feeding support groups etc.

These schemes help the women employees to work peacefully without any family, children tension so that they able to give their best at work. Moreover, organizations have women empowerment schemes like Forums, Committees, Grievance redresses system, suggestion schemes where a women is empowered to share her views, complaints and suggestions with the Top Management and derive solutions for the same.

Positive Work-Life Balance

To achieve a positive work-Life Balance, w women should be pro-active and plan her professional and personal schedules well in advance so that both are equally balanced and the end result is satisfaction. The bellow figure represents few strategies to strike a positive WLB.



When a women follows the above strategies regularly, she would be successful professional as well as an outstanding family maker.

Policy on Work-Life-Balance in Organisations:

If an organization needs to be successful with committed and productive women, it needs to not only lay down schemes and strategies, but also needs to formulate policies and guide lines that can monitor these schemes. The following steps are mandatory to formulate the policy on WLB.

- Identification of the need for introducing WLB Policy.
- Creation of a Task-force that can lead this activity.
- Formulate the policy on WLB based on the company's vision & mission's statement.
- Form a committee that comprises of representatives from management as well as workers category.
- Conduct workshops to enhance knowledge and necessity of this policy.
- Communicate the policy to all the employees.
- Implement the policy of maintain regular feedbacks & suggestions.
- Register and record each activity of the committees/Taskforce.
- Update any changes that have been made to all employees.
- Make the policy reachable and understandable by all.

NEED FOR THE STUDY- LITERATURE REVIEW

- Work life balance studied the effects of family life on women's job performance and work attitudes. The result revealed that women with children were significantly lower in occupational commitment relative to women without children; contrary to expectation, women with younger children outperformed women with older children.

- The importance of work-life balance highlights the current concern within society and organizations about the impact of multiple roles on the health and well-being of professional women and its implications regarding work and family performance, and women's role in society. The following variables influencing the experience of work-life balance were identified while reviewing the international literature.
 - The multiple roles performed by women Role strain experienced because of multiple roles, i.e., role conflict and role overload
 - Organization culture and work dynamics: Organizational values supporting work-life balance have positive work and personal well-being consequences
 - Personal resources and social support: Several studies confirmed the positive relationship between personalities, emotional support and well-being
 - Career orientation and career stage in which women careers need to be viewed in the context of their life course and time lines
 - Coping and coping strategies: Women use both emotional and problem-focused coping strategies to deal with role conflict.
- Work-life balance is the maintenance of a balance between responsibilities at work and at home. Work and family have increasingly become antagonist spheres, equally greedy of energy and time and responsible for work-family conflict (WFC). These conflicts are intensified by the "cultural contradictions of motherhood", as women are increasingly encouraged to seek self-fulfillment in demanding careers, they also face intensified pressures to sacrifice themselves for their children by providing "intensive parenting", highly involved childrearing and development. Additional problems faced by employed women are those associated with finding adequate, affordable access to child and elderly care.
- The concept of work life imbalance and eventually role conflict of employed women, has gathered attention in the recent times.
- WFC has been defined as a type of inter-role conflict wherein some responsibilities from the work and family domains are not compatible and have a negative influence on an employee's work situation. Its theoretical background is a scarcity hypothesis which describes those individuals in certain, limited amount of energy. These roles tend to drain them and cause stress or inter-role conflict. Results of previous research indicate that WFC is related to a number of negative job attitudes and consequences including lower overall job satisfaction and greater propensity to leave a position.
- Workplace characteristics can also contribute to higher levels of WFC. Researchers have found that the number of hours worked per week, the amount and frequency of overtime required, an inflexible work schedule, unsupportive supervisor, and an inhospitable organizational culture increase the likelihood that women employees will experience conflict between their work and family role.
- Baruch and Barnett found that women who had multiple life roles (e.g., mother, wife, employee) were less depressed and had higher self-esteem than women who were more satisfied in their marriages and jobs compared to women and men who were not married, unemployed, or childless.

- Work/life balance as a satisfactory level of involvement or 'fit' between the multiple roles in a person's life. Although definitions and explanations vary, work/life balance is generally associated with equilibrium, or maintaining an overall sense of harmony in life.
- The study of work/life balance involves the examination of people's ability to manage simultaneously the multi-faceted demands of life. Although work/life balance has traditionally been assumed to involve the devotion of equal amounts of time to paid work and non-work roles, more recently the concept has been recognized as more complex and has been developed to incorporate additional components. A recent study explored and measured three aspects of work/life balance:
 - Time balance, which concerns the amount of time given to work and non-work roles.
 - Involvement balance, meaning the level of psychological involvement in, or commitment to, work and non-work roles.
 - Satisfaction balance, or the level of satisfaction with work and non-work roles.
- Work/life balance is out of kilter when the pressures from one role make it difficult to comply with the demands of the other. This is known as work/life conflict. This means that if individuals do not feel they have a 'good' mix and integration of work and non-work roles, they may experience negative or conflicting outcomes. This implies a bi-directional relationship where work can interfere with non-work responsibilities (work/life conflict) and vice versa (life/work conflict). Individuals experiencing interference between work and personal lives are also significantly more likely to suffer from reduced psychological well-being and physical health.

Period of the Study

- The period of the study was from June to August'2011.
- The primary data was collected by distributing a questionnaire among the teaching faculties, those who are from different department of SRM Universities, Kattankulathur, Tamilnadu, India.

Research Questions

- How do understand the effects of family life on women's job performance and work attitudes?
- How do work and family related factors influence the work-family balance of Indian women, especially Teaching Faculties?
- What challenges did they face to achieve their work-life balance?
- How they possessed multi-role responsibilities and attempts to negotiate them ?
- How women employees ensure their self and professional identity ?
- In what way the organizational policies and schemes are more helpful for women employees to enrich their working environment?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To examine the effect of work life balance on women's performance and work attitude.
- To determine the factors affecting work-life balance.

Sample

- Primary data was collected from the faculty members of SRM University, Kattankulathur.
- Sample size is 50.
- Questionnaire was distributed to the teaching faculties belonging to various disciplines.

RESEARCH METHODOLOY

- Research design proposed for the study is 'Descriptive' type of research service. This type of research deals with quality of responses from the respondents, attitudes, interests, technical skills, experience, behavioral, beliefs and values, emotions, personality, self-concept etc.,
- Primary data was collected by questionnaire survey method based on a pilot study.
- Secondary data was collected from journals and Research articles to support the research.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**FINDINGS**

As one of the objectives set for this paper is to identify the factors that influence work life balance among women, Factor analysis was conducted to ascertain the relative strength of various factors in this regard. The KMO measure indicated sample adequacy of 0.579 which is fairly good. The Bartlett's test confirmed normality of the samples as supported by statistically significant Chi-square value.

Table 1. KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.579
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	312.934
	Df	45
	Sig.	.000

It could be noted from Table 2, that among various factors included for the factor analysis, the first three components alone explained more than 73% of variance in Work life balance. This means the factors chosen for analysis are relevant.

Table 2. Total Variance Explained

Component		Initial Eigen values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
dimension	1	3.822	38.218	38.218	3.822	38.218	38.218	3.816	38.163	38.163
	2	2.042	20.420	58.638	2.042	20.420	58.638	1.984	19.844	58.007
	3	1.470	14.696	73.333	1.470	14.696	73.333	1.533	15.326	73.333
	4	.986	9.856	83.189						
	5	.661	6.614	89.803						
	6	.331	3.308	93.110						
	7	.308	3.084	96.194						
	8	.209	2.088	98.282						
	9	.125	1.250	99.533						
	10	.047	.467	100.000						

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

By analyzing the Rotated component matrix it is clear that first component has four factors with heavy loading, viz. marital status, working hours, requirement of flexibility, additional working hours and over time. It is very clear that it is the volume and length of working hours which distort the work life balance. This is more unique in the case of married women, as any additional working hours at the organizational level deny them the time required to attend to the children and the other dependents. Among the factors classified in to components, the above factors alone influence more than 38% of work life balance. Accepting overtime by the married women adds to their work life balance problem, but that is atleast compensated through additional earnings. To cross verify this expectation, Chi-square test was applied to ascertain whether marital status and overtime are related. This test yielded a result confirming the above expectations. Out of a total of 50 women employees, 30 women employees [60%] accepted overtime work. The test result indicated statistically significant relationship between marital status and overtime work. It was also found that among these 30 married women 14 preferred to work in the week ends while the remaining were prepared to work in the morning or evening of every working day. One more finding is that these 37% of the married women mainly work for financial reasons. Based on this discussion it is established that married women are more affected and their work life balance is severely distorted.

The second component lists three factors, viz., and number of dependents, childcare and reason for overtime with heavy factor loading. As has been already discussed, work life balance of married women gets affected with the number of dependents at home. This is worsened by the number of small children who need to be cared for and tended. If the dependents at home at able-bodied people but unemployed, at least by extending support in child care, the work life balance of the married women could remain tolerable. But this is challenged by the economic condition of the family, which force the married women to accept overtime work.

The third component contains 3 factors with heavy loading, viz. number of dependents, support of the functional head and ability to discuss freely the work life balance issues with the functional head. While the number of dependents is inversely related to work life

balance problem, [i.e., larger the dependents lesser is the balance and vice versa], the supportive functional head can always help to minimize the work life balance related consequences. When this problem can be discussed with the functional head, the married women would be able to lessen their imbalance in work life balance.

Table 3. Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component		
	1	2	3
Mar	.835	-.107	.308
Dependent	.155	.720	-.522
Childcare	-.077	.896	-.048
WWHour	-.832	.160	-.234
ResnReqFlex	.862	-.035	-.136
Addnlhours	.947	.055	-.099
Overtime	.846	.164	-.175
Whyovrtme	-.027	.708	.375
HeadSupprt	-.126	.261	.691
DisswithHead	.154	-.163	.656

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

Work Life Balance Index [WLBI]

WLBI was constructed for the respondents taking in to account all those factors which cause work life balance related problems. It was found that the average work life balance was around 73%, within a range of 92 % and 58% This clearly points out that there is a wide range [34%] between the sample respondents. That is, there women who are able to achieve a high work life balance along with other women who have a poor work life balance index. Apart from addressing the Work life balance related problems, specific counseling for women with low WLBI so that they can learn to manage themselves better. It has been already stated that poor WLBI will affect the women psychologically and physiologically, resulting in poor performance at the work place. Institution with more than 30% of women staff need to consider methods of easing this problem for women.

CONCLUSIONS

From the above discussion, it is reasonable to conclude that modern organizations, especially educational institutions, should address the Work Life Balance related issues among their staff, specifically women and take a holistic approach to design and implement policies to support the teaching staff to manage their work life balance which would add to the performance of these staff members.

REFERENCES

1. Duxbury and Higgins 1984, Frone and Russell 1978.

2. Campbell DJ, Campbell KM, Kennard D. The effects of family responsibilities on the work commitment and job performance of non professional women. *J Occupa Organ Psych* 1994;67:283-96.
3. Adelman PK. Multiple roles and health among older adults. *Res Aging* 1994;16:142-66.
4. Carlson DS, Kacmar KM, Williams LJ. The development and validation of a multi-dimensional measure of work-family conflict. Paper Presented at 1998 Academic Management Meeting. 1998, California.
5. Greenhaus JH, Beutell NJ. Sources conflict between work and family roles. *Acad Manage Rev* 1985;10:76-88.
6. Fu CK, Shaffer MA. The tug of work and family. *Personnel Rev* 2001;30:502-22.
7. Stover DL. The horizontal distribution of female managers within organization. *Work Occup* 1994;1:385-402.
8. Burke RJ. Organizationa values, work experices and satisfactions among managerial and professional women. *J Mangament Dev* 2001;20:346-54
9. Amatea ES, Fong ML. The impact of roles stressors and peronal resoucnes on the stress experience of professional women. *Psychol Women Q* 1991;15:419-30.
10. Sharma S. Multiple role and women's health: A multi-linear model. *Equal Oppor Int* 1999;18:16-23.
11. Gill S, Davidson MJ. Problems and pressures facing lone mothers in managment and professional occupations - A pilot study. *Women Manag Rev* 2000;17:383-99.
12. Rapoport R, Rapoport RN. *Work, family and the carrer*. New York: Praeger Publishing; 1980.
13. White B. The career development of sucessful women. *Women Manage Rev* 1995;10:4-15.
14. Coser LA. *Greedy institutions: Patterns of undivided commitment*. New York: The Free Press; 1974.
15. Hays S. *The cultural contradictions of motherhood*. New York: Yale University Press; 1996.
16. Reskin B, Ross CE. Jobs, authority, and earnings among managers: The continuing significance of sex. *Work Occup* 1992;19:342-65.
17. Reskin B, Padavic I. *Women and Men at Work*. Thousand Oaks: Pine Gorge Press; 1994.
18. Marks S. Multiple roles and role strain: Some notes and human energy, time, and commitment. *Am Sociol Rev* 1977;42:921-36.
19. Aryee S. Antecedents and outcomes of work family conflict among married professional women: Evidence from Singapore. *Hum Relat* 1992;45:813-37.
20. Grandey AA, Cropanzano R. The conservation of resources model applied to work family conflict and strain. *J Voc Behar* 1999;54:350-70.

21. Boles JS, Babin BJ. On the front lines: Stress, conflict, and the customer service provider. *J Bus Res* 1996;37:41-50.
22. Good LK, Grovalynn FS, James WG. Antecedents of turnover intentions among retail management personnel. *J Retailing* 1988;64:295-314.
23. Allen, T. D. (2001), Family-Supportive Work Environments: The Role of Organizational Perceptions, *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 58(3), 414-35.
24. Allen, T. D., and Russell, J. E. (1999), Parental leave of absence: Some not so family friendly implications, *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 29(1), 166-91.
25. Australian Bureau of Statistics (1997), Labour force status and other characteristics of families, Australia. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service (No. 6224.0).
26. Bailyn, L. (1993), *Breaking the mold: Women, men and time in the newcorporate world*, Free Press, New York.
27. Bailyn, L. (1997), The impact of corporate culture on work–family integration, in Parasuraman, S., and Greenhaus, J. H. (eds), *Integrating work and family: Challenges and choices for a changing world*, Quorum Books, Westport, CT, pp. 209-19.
28. Bailyn, L., Fletcher, J. K., and Kolb, D. (1997), Unexpected connections: Considering employees' personal lives can revitalise your business, *Sloan Management Review*, 38, 11-19.
29. Baltes, B. B, Briggs, T. E., Huff, J. W., & Wright, J. A. (1999), Flexible and compressed workweek schedules: A meta-analysis of their effects on workrelated criteria, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 84, 496-513.
30. Bercussen, B., and Dickens, L. (1996), Equal opportunities and collective bargaining in Europe: 1. Defining the issues, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, Dublin.
31. Bittman, M., Hoffmann, S., and Thompson, D. (2004), Men's uptake of family friendly employment provisions, Policy Research Paper Number 22, Department of Family and Community Services, Canberra, Australia.