

A study on work life balance and occupational problems of women conductors

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Abstract: Traditionally the transport industry is a male dominated sector. women are far away from this sector till 1980's. From the recent years, women started entering this industry as bus conductors and other kind of male dominated and stressful jobs. But women have more responsibility in taking care of family when compared to men. Coming to conductor job, requires more physical and interactive skills than the intellectual knowledge. With the increasing levels of stress in the work life and on the other hand necessity to manage domestic work, which requires a balance of work and life especially for women. This paper is an attempt to identify the factors effecting the work life balance of the women bus conductors of TSRTC. The paper also focuses on occupational problems facing by the women conductors. A sample of 50 women bus conductors of Hyderabad are taken under random sampling for analyzing their work life balance and occupational problems through a questionnaire.

Key words: work life balance, women conductors, occupational problems, health.

1.Introduction:

The Indian culture about career development of women is undergoing rapid changes due to the increased pace of urbanization and modernization. Indian women belonging to all classes have entered paid occupations. Now, Indian women's exposure to educational opportunities is substantially higher than it was some decades ago, this has opened new opportunities, increased awareness and raised aspirations of personal growth. This, along with economic pressure, has been instrumental in influencing women's decision to enter the work force. The economic need is the first criteria for women to go for work in India. The number of women in the jobs is increasing and they are making substantial progress equally with men.

Transport industry has long been considered as male working sector. Women were away from this sector till past two-three decades. The community dishonor deprived women to work in this male sector. The young educated generations have stepped ahead by crossing the traditional barricades and are recruiting in masculine jobs like, police, military, journalist and transport industry. The nature of work of every occupation has its own entity. Similarly, the bus conductor work has required more physical and interactive skills than the intellectual knowledge. The nature of bus conductor is entirely different from other occupations since it is service sector for public. They must work in different shifts every day and interact with commuters of multi personalities and bare misbehavior of commuters. Being a woman, it is a challenging task for them. The women conductors are facing many occupational problems and they are finding it difficult to manage their work and life.

1.1.Work life balance:

Work life balance is a concept that supports the efforts of employees to split their time and energy between work and other important aspects of their lives. Work life balance is a daily effort to make for family, friends, spirituality, personal growth self-care, community participation and other personal activities like hobbies and interests, in addition to the demands of workplace. Work-life balance is a joint responsibility of employer & employee. Work-life brings personal recognition & achievement and personal/ family life brings happiness & harmony in to life. The balance between these two will satisfy the physiological, social, security, esteem needs of an individual. So, the organization must design employee friendly work policy to motivate the employees.

1.2. Objectives:

- To identify the factors effecting the work life balance of women conductors.
- To identify the occupational problems effecting the health of women conductors.
- To analyze the work life balance of women conductors of TSRTC.

1.3. Scope of the study:

The study focusses on finding the factors effecting the work life balance of women conductors. Further the study come up with identifying the occupational problems and its effect on health of women conductors. This study is confined to TSRTC in Hyderabad city, Telangana, India. The participants involved in this study were restricted to women conductors only. The study is limited its scope to defined objectives.

1.4. Limitations of the study:

- The study undertaken is related only to the work life balance and occupational problems of women employees of TSRTC.
- It excludes the male conductors.
- Only women conductors are considered under the study.

2. Review of literature:

Paula Brough and Thomas Kalliath, (2009) in their article titled “Work Family Balance: Theoretical and empirical advancements” evidently confirmed that employees are objectively healthier, less absent and better performing in their lives who has high facilitation between work and family roles. The study provides satisfactory insights into theoretical perception of work family balance research.

Krishna Reddy, (2010) found that the number of hours worked per week, the amount and frequency of overtime, inflexible work schedule, unsupportive supervisor and an inhospitable work culture increases the likelihood of women employees to experience conflict between their work and family roles

Baral and Bhargava, (2011) in her research proposed that in Indian organizations there is a requirement to incorporate work-life balance benefits and programmes and encourage a culture that supports utilizing them to ensure employee commitment and productivity. The research revealed that work-life balance programmes can reduce work-family conflict.

G. Delina, Dr.R. Prabhakara Raya, (2013) The role of working women has changed throughout the world due to economic and social demands. The ever-increasing work pressure is taking a toll on the working women leaving them with less time for themselves. The study is an attempt to explore the tough challenges faced by working women in maintaining a balance between professional and personal life. The various factors affecting work life balance of married working women have been examined in this study. The study concludes juggling between the obligations towards the families and expectations of the organization and constant struggle to maintain a balance between work and family can have serious implications on the life of an individual by effecting their well-being and overall quality of life.

Varshini and Ishwarya, (2014) in their work ‘Work-life Balance among Women Employees in Banking Sector- A Study at State Bank of Mysore, Mysore’ reported that banking employees have average level of Work-life Balance and are generally happy with their working arrangements. Banks should provide flexible starting and ending time to the employees. Women employees should be given the facilities like flexi time, job sharing, crèche facilities, and necessary breaks so that employees feel that the organization is helping to coordinate the family and professional life.

S. Lakshmi Narayanan, A. Savarimuthu, (2015) stated that work-life balance issues were of major concern to the women employees working in IT sector. Furthermore, it was found that high job involvement, job demands, lack of career opportunities was some of the sources of dissatisfaction which led to high levels

of work-family conflict which in turn has contributed to work-life imbalance among women working in IT industries.

3. Research design and methodology:

3.1. Research type: Empirical research

The type of research used for this study is empirical in nature.

3.2. Sampling technique and size:

Sampling technique: Simple random sampling

Sample size: 50.

3.3. Data collection:

Being an empirical research, the present study is based on primary data. A well-structured questionnaire was made to collect primary data. The secondary data was collected from journals, research papers and related websites.

4. Results and discussions:

Based on data so collected, the tabulation and interpretation are made to make the study more meaningful.

Table – 1 Professional factor effecting women conductors in balancing work and life

Factors effecting	Working hours		Over time		Work pressure		Shift work	
	respondent	Percentage (%)	Respondents	Percentage (%)	respondent	Percentage (%)	respondent	Percentage (%)
Always effects	25	50	25	50	10	20	15	30
Many times, effects	10	20	13	26	10	20	22	44
Sometimes effects	8	16	7	14	20	40	5	10
Rarely effects	2	4	3	6	5	10	5	10
Does not effect	5	10	2	4	5	10	3	6
Total	50	100	50	100	50	100	50	100

Some of the professional factors like working hours, over time, work pressure and shift work are affecting the work life balance of women conductors, 50% responded always working hours and over time effecting their work life balance, 40% said sometimes work pressure and 44% said many times shift work effecting in balancing their work and life.

Table – 2 Personal factors effecting women conductors in balancing work and life

Factors effecting	Family responsibilities		Spouse occupation		Child care		Social obligations	
	Respo nd ents	Per centa ge (%)	Respo nd ents	Per cent age (%)	Respo ndent s	Perce nt age (%)	Respo ndent s	Per centa ge (%)
Always effects	15	30	3	6	18	36	15	30
Many times, effects	16	32	15	30	20	40	25	50
Sometimes effects	10	20	20	40	10	20	5	10
Rarely effects	5	10	5	10	2	4	2	4
Does not effect	5	10	7	14	0	0	3	6
Total	50	100	50	100	50	100	50	100

Being a women family responsibility are more when compared to women. Some of the Personal factors like house chore work, spouse occupation, child and elder care and social obligations are affecting the work life balance of women conductors. 32% respondents said many times family responsibilities are affecting work life balance, 40% said sometimes spouse occupation, 40% said many times child care and 50% said many times social obligations are affecting their work life balance.

Table- 3 Occupational problems effecting health of women conductors

Occupational problems	Shifts		Standing jobs		Commuters behavior	
	respo ndent s	Per centag e (%)	Respo ndent s	Per cent age (%)	respo ndent s	Per cent age (%)
Always effects	4	8	28	56	15	30
Many times, effects	10	20	15	30	20	40
Sometimes effects	30	60	5	10	5	10
Rarely effects	4	8	1	2	4	8
Does not effect	2	4	1	2	6	12
Total	50	100	50	100	50	100

Work by standing is one of the occupational problems for women bus conductors since the nature of work is always movable in the bus and within the bus get in and get down by the bus frequently till last destination for issuing tickets and they can't sit for long time .56% of the respondents said standing job is always affecting their health. 30% said sometimes shifts and 40 % said many times commuter's behavior effecting their health.

Table- 4 Able to Balance work and personal life

	Balance	
	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	15	30
No	35	70
Total	50	100

The above table shows that 30 % of the women conductors can balance their work and life where as 70% says that they are not able to balance their work and life.

5. Findings:

This study identified the challenges and occupational problems women conductors are facing.

- 56% of the women said standing job is one of the major occupational problem. Standing for long hours leading health related problems.
- 30% of women also responded commuter's behavior in bus and handling them is challenging problem leading to mental stress.
- Even few women said shift work is also an occupation problem effecting their health.

The study finds the professional and personal factors effecting the work life balance of women conductors.

- 50% of the women said working hours and over time are the two major professional factors affecting their work life balance.
- Child care is the major personal factor effecting the work life balance of women conductors, even study finds other factors like family responsibilities, spouse occupation and social obligations and effacing their work life balance.
- 70% of the women conductors are unable to balance their work and life.

6. Conclusions:

women are entering in to male dominated sectors like transport due to various reasons like economic demand, financial independence etc. In a traditional society like India, women working for masculine jobs are gradually accepting the new changes and values. But women conductors are facing a challenging role to balance both personal life and work life due to some professional and personal factors. some work life balance strategies should be implemented by the organization through trainings and programs to make employees capable of managing time at both home and work place. Occupational problems like standing job, commuters' behavior is also affecting the health of women and feeling stressed in their job. They should include training programs such as yoga, meditation and some other entertainment programs to make employees relieve from their work stress. To overcome occupational problems to some extent organization should provide ten minutes leisure between the trips and introduce new model where conductors to be seated in a place inside the bus and commuters should proceed to the conductors for purchasing travel ticket. It is observed in the study, that majority of the women bus conductors in TSRTC region are not satisfied with the facilities provided by the organization. Proper measures must be taken by the organization to provide supportive work environment.

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