



WORK LIFE BALANCE OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES: A DESIGN THINKING TEST

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Abstract

Women in India have unique challenges while attempting to strike a work-life balance due to cultural conventions, the reality of the Indian economy, and shifting gender roles. Although progress has been made, women continue to confront significant challenges in achieving career success, achieving personal fulfilment, and fulfilling their civic duties. Recognizing the necessity of addressing these challenges is a first step towards building a more welcoming and encouraging environment for women's efforts to achieve work goals while also maintaining a fulfilling personal life. The purpose of this research is to understand what aspects of a pandemic impact people's ability to maintain a healthy work-life balance. Women's personal profiles were found to be related to how well they balanced work and family responsibilities during the pandemic.

Keywords: Work-Life Balance, Professional Goals, Personal Profile.

Work Life Balance: Introduction

The phrase "work-life balance" was coined 25 years ago to highlight how both sexes were increasingly putting their careers and financial success ahead of their personal lives, social lives, and free time. The concept of striking a balance between one's professional and personal lives was central to this movement. This essential topic is now the centre of its own academic subfield. It would appear that people with low incomes, those juggling parental responsibilities with paid work, and those with cultural obligations beyond the family and paid work are more likely to struggle with maintaining a healthy work-life balance than their higher-paid counterparts. There is no separating work from family life. Our personal life, especially our families, can have an effect on our performance at work. Overwork, stress, and long hours at the office can take a toll on a person's health and happiness, leading to diminished well-being and even health concerns at home. If you spend a lot of time caring for other people or attending to family responsibilities, it's probable that your involvement, enjoyment, and motivation will suffer. One's pay, level of professional autonomy, and the level of social support one receives from coworkers and managers are all factors of one's career that can have a positive impact on one's quality of life outside of work. The domestic and familial ties of an individual can provide support and boost their work life. Both men and women struggle to create a work-life balance that allows them to be happy in both their personal and professional spheres. As gender roles become less rigid, more women are entering the workforce, adding to the difficulty. Understanding the intricacies of one's employment and family life can help working women and men achieve a better work-life balance. These results can help human resource professionals, educators, and lawmakers enhance the lives of their workforces as a whole.

Women in India have traditionally held most of the country's low-paying service employment in the informal sector. As a result of shifting cultural norms and a competitive job market, women can be found holding a variety of professional positions today. Educated women in India are successfully entering a range of professional disciplines, from management to the IT industry and beyond. It's likely that this increase is due to families with two breadwinners. According to studies conducted in India, working women there have a harder problem getting to the office on time in the morning than their Western counterparts do. Setting limits may be

difficult if family members put undue pressure on you to do so. Indian women have a hard time 'balancing' their personal and professional life because they lack access to basic necessities like running water, reliable electricity, and convenient kitchen appliances. Many companies are contributing less to the labour shortage since they do not provide their employees with child care and flexible work hours. The influence of societal and marital support on WLB is stronger in nations with lower levels of gender equality, such as India. Indian males provide their wives with sufficient support for their careers but fall short when it comes to helping them with household chores. Many families in India rely heavily on domestic help from outside the home. Despite the high cost of delivering these services, they are much sought after by nuclear families. Female managers and male managers are more prone to have disagreements than are male managers and female managers. Indian men and women react differently to WLB for a variety of reasons entrenched in culture, society, and the economy.

Women and Work-Life Balance

As a result of sociocultural, economic, and technological changes, work and the role it plays in people's lives are undergoing profound transformations. As a result of the shift in work culture, women now have two careers and two separate lifestyles. The changing economic and social atmosphere necessitated that many women leave their homes and seek employment. Women who want to succeed in business will have to give up some personal pursuits to get there. Women in the workforce face unique challenges in maintaining a healthy work-life balance without compromising their personal lives, relationships, or even their lifespan. Trying to advance one's job while also caring for one's family can be stressful and exhausting, if not impossible. Cultural norms, altering gender roles, rising economic demands, and rapid social development in India have all contributed to the rising significance of a healthy work-life balance for women. There are more women working now than ever before, but many of them still struggle to maintain healthy work-life equilibrium.

Statement of the problem

Regardless of their field, professional women must balance their personal and professional lives. In the past, women in India worked in the unofficial sector of the economy for meagre pay. As times and styles have changed, they are now applicable to virtually any industry. Women in professional roles face barriers to advancement because of the demands of family responsibilities. Including travel time for work, social obligations, and household chores, the average working woman puts in between 40 and 45 hours a week. In today's digital world, women need both to be approachable at all times and to have some privacy. Women who work alongside males and have several responsibilities face work-life conflict as a result of the information age's expanded technologies, career opportunities, and flexibility. Stress, depression, anxiety, and premature ageing are all symptoms of a life that is out of balance.

Concerns about maintaining a healthy work-life balance are on the rise, which is discouraging women from entering the workforce. Women in India are leaving the workforce in droves because of the pay inequality. Work-life balance, pay inequality, harassment, mother influence at work, and professional advancement were identified as the top five concerns for women in the G20, with Indian women ranking highest. Stresses from both job and home life contribute to this imbalance. As more women enter the workforce, both workplace and household stress levels rise. Women are more realistic about climbing the corporate ladder because they prioritize happiness above money. Women are more likely to relocate and change careers than males are. Women's work-life balance is significantly impacted by COVID-19. The difficulties of juggling work and caregiving responsibilities were highlighted, as was the necessity for more flexible working regulations. Finding a happy medium between work and personal life is important for everyone involved. There is a need for this study because many women leave their jobs due to the pressure to pick between family and career. Inequity, unhappiness, and worry are driving women out of the labour. As a result, women should explore the concept of work-life balance and this study is intended to provide solution for the following research objective;

1. To study the impact of personal profile on the work - life balance during pandemic.

Research Methodology

Sample respondents provided primary data using standardized questionnaires. These data form the research foundation. Secondary sources, such as academic journals and periodicals, published and unpublished research works, and websites, were searched for additional relevant information for study analysis and other reasons. This study focused on working women from Coimbatore and their communities. This study includes any female worker, public or private. Purposive and judgmental sampling was used for the inquiry. White-collar workers were selected for the sample. The requirements are being set because white-collar workers have a lot of

autonomy and are consequently under pressure. A sample size of 100 respondents was chosen for data gathering.

Literature Review

Hughes (2017) found that work-life balance was the biggest source of discontent for working women. Samuel and Vivienne (1996) found that women balanced work and family by alternating roles. Men could balance job and family. Elizabeth et al. (2017) found that women reported more professional and family stress and less institutional support for work-life balance. According to Parvin and Kabir (2018), business changes like organisational structure, diversity, and female employment boosted the desire for work-life balance. Work-life balance amenities help people fulfil their tasks and help organisations succeed. Sobia Shujaat (2019) found that work-life balance has little effect on job satisfaction in Karachi's private commercial banking sector. Pakistan's unpredictable conditions, high inflation, and unemployment may explain such results. Even in Karachi, employees were unaware of job satisfaction and work-life balance, which were basic rights. With jobs, people were happy, and everything else didn't matter.

Analysis and Discussion

Personal Profile

Table 1: Age Group of the Respondents

| Sl. No. | Age group | Number of respondents |
|---------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Up to 30 years | 18 |
| 2 | 31 years to 40 years | 28 |
| 3 | 41 years to 50 years | 26 |
| 4 | Above 50 years | 28 |
| Total | | 100 |

Source: Primary data

The above table shows the age group of the respondents, and 18 respondents come under the age group of up to 30 years. 28 respondents come under the age group of 31 years to 40 years and 28 respondents fall under the age group of 41 years to 50 years and remaining 28 respondents come under the age group of above 50 years.

Table 2: Family type of the Respondents

| Sl. No. | Family type | Number of respondents |
|---------|--------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Nuclear | 63 |
| 2 | Joint Family | 37 |
| Total | | 100 |

Source: Primary data

The above table shows the family type of the respondents, out of three hundred and forty one respondents, 63 respondents are in nuclear family and remaining 37 respondents are in joint family.

Table 3: Family size of the Respondents

| Sl. No. | Family size | Number of respondents |
|---------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | up to 3 members | 34 |
| 2 | 4 members to 5 members | 30 |
| 3 | Above 5 members | 36 |
| Total | | 100 |

Source: Primary data

The above table shows the family size of the respondents, and 34 respondents' family size is up to 3 members. 30 respondents' family size is 4 members to 5 members and remaining 36 respondents' family size is above 5 members.

Table 4: Monthly Income of the Respondents

| Sl. No. | Monthly Income | Number of respondents |
|---------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Up to Rs. 35,000 | 24 |
| 2 | Rs. 35,001 to Rs. 50,000 | 36 |
| 3 | Above Rs. 50,000 | 40 |
| Total | | 100 |

Source: Primary data

The above table shows the monthly income of the respondents, and 24 respondents' monthly income is up to Rs. 35,000. 36 respondents' monthly income is between Rs. 35,001 and Rs. 50,000 and remaining 40 respondents' monthly income is above Rs. 50,000.

Table 5: Nature of Job of the Respondents

| Sl. No. | Nature of Job | Number of respondents |
|---------|---------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Office work | 66 |
| 2 | Field work | 34 |
| Total | | 100 |

Source: Primary data

The above table shows the nature of job of the respondents, and 66 respondents are in office work and remaining 34 respondents are in field work.

Table 6: Total work experience of the Respondents

| Sl. No. | Total work experience | Number of respondents |
|---------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Less than 5 years | 16 |
| 2 | 5 to 10 years | 27 |
| 3 | 10 to 15 years | 31 |
| 4 | Above 15 years | 26 |
| Total | | 100 |

Source: Primary data

The above table shows the total work experience of the respondents, 16 respondents have less than 5 years of total work experience. 27 respondents have 5 years to 10 years of total work experience. 31 respondents have 10 years to 15 years of total work experience and remaining 26 respondents have above 15 years of total work experience.

Table 7: Job status of the Respondents

| Sl. No. | Job Status | Number of respondents |
|---------|------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Permanent | 72 |
| 2 | Temporary | 28 |
| Total | | 100 |

Source: Primary data

The above table shows the job status of the respondents, and out of three hundred and forty one respondents, 72 respondents are in permanent and remaining 28 respondents are temporary.

H₀: The personal profile has no association with the work life balance of women

Table 8: Chi square test – Overall Work Life balance and Personal profile

| Variables | Chi Square value | P Value | Result |
|-----------------------|------------------|---------|-----------------|
| Age group | 14.541 | 0.001 | Significant |
| Family type | 16.332 | 0.001 | Significant |
| Family size | 17.662 | 0.001 | Significant |
| Monthly income | 2.514 | 0.514 | Not significant |
| Nature of job | 21.332 | 0.001 | Significant |
| Total work experience | 94.659 | 0.001 | Significant |
| Job status | 15.622 | 0.001 | Significant |

Source: Primary data

The above table shows the chi square output of the personal profile and work life balance of the sample respondents. The profile variables namely age group, family type, family size, monthly income, nature of job, total work experience and job status are significantly influence the work life balance of women at 1 % significant level. Hence, the null hypothesis has been rejected and concluded that the personal profile has association with the work life balance of women.

H₀: The personal profile has no impact on the work life balance of women

Table 9 : Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | .756 | .592 | .627 | 2.804 |

l. Predictors: (Constant), personal profile

Source: Primary data

The above table shows the R (.756) value and R² value (.592), and it shows the fitness of the data to apply regression analysis for this present study.

Table 10: ANOVA

| Model | | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-------|------------|----------------|----|-------------|------|------|
| 1 | Regression | 42.52 | 2 | 15.51 | .632 | .001 |
| | Residual | 261.02 | 97 | 1.67 | | |
| | Total | 303.54 | 99 | | | |

Source: Primary data

The above ANOVA table shows the significant variance between the personal profile and work life balance of the respondents. P value (0.001) shows that there is significant variance between the groups and within the groups which the researcher selected.

Table 11: Multiple Regression Analysis – Coefficients

| | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | T | Sig. |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| (Constant) | 3.584 | 6.648 | | 1.554 | .001 |
| Age group | 1.681 | 0.215 | 0.215 | 1.554 | .002 |
| Family type | 1.254 | 1.245 | -1.661 | 0.154 | .715 |
| Family size | 1.248 | 1.641 | -1.215 | 5.541 | .007 |
| Monthly income | 1.510 | 1.125 | 2.215 | 1.307 | .001 |
| Number of earning members | 1.617 | 2.154 | 2.254 | 5.541 | .001 |
| Nature of job | .632 | 1.214 | 1.548 | 2.365 | .001 |
| Total work experience | .815 | 0.521 | 2.214 | 1.154 | .058 |
| Job status | 1.027 | 0.254 | 1.654 | 4.651 | .007 |

Source: Primary data

Age group (0.002), Family size (.002), monthly income (0.001), number of earning members (0.001), nature of job (0.001), Job status (0.007), have positive impact on work life balance of women at 1% significant level, the other variables do not have any impact on work life balance at 5% significant level.

Conclusion

The workplace and Indian households have undergone major transformations in recent years. Striking a balance between work and personal life can be challenging. A literature search, however, reveals that most of these studies have been conducted in industrialised countries, which are the ones that value work-life balance the most. Since 1991, when India's economy was liberalized, more Indian companies have expanded into international markets. Also, the Indian government has been jolted out of its complacency by the arrival of private and foreign enterprises functioning in the country. Several elements, including workers' rights, acknowledgement for achievement, the purpose and meaning of one's work, stress and demands, and job satisfaction, contribute to a person's overall sense of contentment with work and life. These features and qualities highlight the positive feelings that arise from people's interactions with their workplace. Individuals report higher levels of job and life satisfaction when they allocate a reasonable amount of time and effort to both their professional and personal pursuits. The women's community, which is recognized for its flexibility, must therefore learn to navigate the winding path of life while keeping in mind the relevance of the situation at hand, no matter where it may ultimately lead.

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