

Enhancing Work Life Balance of Women

Jyothsna M

Pragathi Mahavidyalaya PG college

Abstract - *The role of working women has changed throughout the world due to economic conditions and social demands. This has resulted in a scenario in which working women have tremendous pressure to develop a career as robust as their male counterparts while sustaining active engagement in personal life. The ever-increasing work pressure is taking a toll on the working women leaving them with less time for themselves. The increasing responsibilities on the personal front with the technological blessings like advanced mobile phones, notepads, etc. that keeps work life integrated with personal life also creates stress on personal and professional fronts in this knowledge age. This affects the person's physical, emotional and social well-being. Thus, achieving work life balance is a necessity for working women to have a good quality of life. This paper is an attempt to explore the tough challenges faced by working women in maintaining a balance between their personal and professional life. The various factors affecting the work-life balance of married working women have been examined in this study. The tool used for the study is the manual on work-life balance of The Industrial Society (now the Work Foundation) by Daniels and McCarraher. Data were subjected to descriptive statistics and it was found that the problems faced by the working women of Pondicherry in terms of work-life balance are quite high. The results also indicate that the work-life balance of individuals affect their quality of life.*

Keywords: *Work-life balance, quality of life, working women, personal life, professional life.*

I. INTRODUCTION

This Study was conducted to examine the conflicts raised between the work and Non-work lives of women and their perception towards it, also what type of measures can be taken to reduce these conflicts that they feel between their work and Non-work lives. If we go way back to 60's or 70's where only few women got the privilege to go for higher education and out of which only a few are seen taking up jobs, but even then if there is any problem raised they left the jobs in order to support their family. As the growth in economy has increased, Women are enlightened by higher education and also achieving their dream careers. Women are competing for every industry to become successful professionals. In order to prove their worth they are running high on the deadlines, but once after the marriage they have additional responsibilities like taking care of the extended families and this will be doubled after they become mother, as their primary duty is to take care of their children, this puts them under greater pressure. This is when they really want to compete in their career but their professional and personal responsibilities put them under tremendous pressure. And now we have an

alarming high percentage of Women employees who face a lot of pressure due to work-life imbalance. Pressure is the main reason for many health issues which leads to less productivity at work. Major focus of this study is on the women employees who are hitting it hard to balance their work life.

II. NEED OF THE STUDY

In the Global scenario every organization is competing with the others and wants to be recognized for their Products, Quality of Service and Customer Satisfaction. To achieve the reputation and to with stand in the market organizations expecting and demanding for best out of best. In order to reach the targets and to become Star performers employees are competing with each other and this raises the curtain for work life pressure. Multiple roles performed by Women increase the issues in work and Personal life. Work life balance is playing significant role in public and private sectors. Women employees feel both work and personal life responsibilities are important and both demands seem to be fair their life. Though several initiatives were taken by Organizations, but this issue has predominantly increasing, and this is where the need for Work Life Balance for Women comes in. Our study focuses more on to find the better solution to improve work life balance of Women also to know the success factor of some organizations where they are taking steps to maintain work life balance for their women employees.

III. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

From Organizations perspective it is difficult to handle every individual's issue. More women are working and more Mothers are in workforce. As many of the women are responsible for economic security of their families. Here comes the need to improve work life balance of women. In US, they have made an ACT which gives the Women employees to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave and not putting their jobs at risk, those who have more demands from personal life can balance their time properly and can deal their family issues more efficiently. This gives broader picture of employment for Women and both their Work and personal life demands can be tackled sufficiently.

A. Background of the study

The Expression "Work Life Balance" was first used in 1970s in UK to describe the concept of prioritizing work and personal life to maintain a balance and later it was used in 1986 in US. Over the past few decades, drastic

change has occurred in workforce, where the women are not just restricted to household work also playing the role of breadwinner. Tackling many things would definitely put anyone under high pressure. It is crucial to maintain a balance between work and personal life. Work Life balance has a major role to play in women employees life, the lesser the pressure the more productivity. As a result of advances in technology, work life balance is missing in Private and public sector undertakings. This can massively effect the health and also productivity of employee. Work Life balance should be addressed by employers, as this will be a benefit to them. To achieve work life balance, employers can offer a range of different programs and initiatives.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

An organization will be recognized in market only when it is economically sustainable, if it delivers quality of service and consistency in it. Simply paying the employee will not achieve the results, If the work life is imbalanced then the work environment is effected. The researchers has thrown some light on these issues and made an attempt to find out what gives the employee job satisfaction. The results revealed employees expect not only competitive pay for their productive work but also balance in their work and personal life. After considering the various views from employee and employer, a research design has been formed, which includes the Objective of the study and also the limitations of the study.

A. *Objective of the Study*

- To find out what are the measures implemented for work life balance of employees in Hyderabad.
- To know the perceptions of employees on work life balance.
- To analyze the effectiveness of work life balance.
- To evaluate the impact of work life balance and also suggest the recommendations for the betterment.

B. *Limitations of the Study*

This study has acknowledged some limitations, in this research male employees, un employed and self-employed females are excluded. This study is with reference to female employees of Hyderabad who are working in service sectors. This research has been carried on some employees who are willing to share their personal and professional matters, hence the study has concluded with the available data. Inconsistency in responses is another limitation as some the employees are not willing to disclose their personal or professional matters.

C. *Review of the Literature*

A literature review is a search and evaluation of the chosen topic. It is an important step in undertaking research which helps in clarifying and defining the problem. The sources referred include various journals, books, magazines, internet sites, newspapers etc. Work life balance is defined as the employee perception of a conflict between their work and personal life. Significant changes as seen in the increasing number of women in the workforce have generated a greater need of employees to balance their work and non-work lives. Many women today are playing multiple roles and their attempts to balance both career and family life. Concern about family can affect to a great extent in work and can exhibit work issues in front of family. 72% of Indian Women prefer better work life balance. Striving to work life balance is becoming impossible. If the individual does not feel satisfied about the roles that she is playing may put them under serious pressure. Work life balance problem needs to be addressed in due time. Several surveys have conducted by ASSOCHAM on work life balance and also many researchers like Jeffrey H. Greenhaus, Karen, M. Collins & Jason D. Shaw (2003) have done research to understand and solve this issue.

Checklist Manual on Work-Life Balance: The checklist manual developed by Daniels and McCarragher for the Industrial Society (2000) and the guidelines to check oneself with the manual on the balance between work and family are as follows:

V. DATA COLLECTION

The questionnaire was distributed to the married working women of the various sectors in person. A total of 200 check list instruments were distributed and 180 completely filled questionnaires were collected giving an overall response rate of 90 per cent.

A. *Data Scope*

The scope of the study was limited to the married working women of Pondicherry from the academic, health and IT sectors regarding the challenges that they face in balancing professional life and personal life.

VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Reliability Analysis: The data were subjected to Alpha tests of reliability and they had acceptable (0.731) Cronbach's Alpha value which indicates a good level of internal consistency for the scale with the specific sample used for the study.

Profile of the Respondents: Among the 180 married working women, maximum number of respondents belonged to the age group of 30-40 (38.9%). Many respondents (65.0%) had two children. In terms of Spouse's Profession, 18.9% were engaged in business, 17.2% in the Academic sector and so on respectively.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Age Group of Respondents:		
Under 30 years	50	27.2
30 to 40 years	67	39.9
Over 40 years	63	33.9
TOTAL	180	100
Spouse's Profession:		
Business	34	18.9
IT Industry	30	16.7
Healthcare	25	13.9
Academic	31	17.2
Insurance	18	10

Marketing	23	12.8
Others	19	10.6
TOTAL	180	100
No. of Children:		
None	25	13.9
One	27	15
Two	117	65
TOTAL	180	100

Comparison of Mean Scores: Table represents the comparison of means scores of the ten Work-Life Balance related statements from the checklist manual and the industry/sector in which the 180 respondents were employed

Industry/ Sector		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
		(Working Long Hours)	(Less time to socialize/ relax)	(Taking Work home in The evenings)	(Working late/ at weekends)	(Forgetting About Work issues is difficult)	(Worry about the effect of work stress on health)	(Relationship with partner suffering)	(Family missing out on input)	(Finding time for hobbies, leisure activities etc. is difficult)	(Want to Reduce work hours but have no Control over it)
Academic	Mean	2.43	2.53	2.15	2.05	2.20	2.55	2.37	2.63	2.77	2.58
	N	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
	S.D	.789	.769	.685	.910	.840	.723	.843	.780	.647	.787
Healthcare	Mean	2.60	2.50	1.67	2.07	2.22	2.53	2.42	2.62	2.73	2.67
	N	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
	S.D	.764	.813	.752	.918	.846	.724	.809	.783	.686	.705
IT	Mean	2.70	2.55	2.27	2.32	2.20	2.62	2.40	2.70	2.77	2.65
	N	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
	S.D	.671	.769	.733	.854	.840	.666	.785	.671	.647	.709
Total	Mean	2.58	2.53	2.03	2.14	2.21	2.57	2.39	2.65	2.76	2.63
	N	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180
	S.D	.747	.780	.765	.898	.837	.702	.808	.744	.657	.732

From the table, it is evident that IT sector professionals have the highest mean score of 2.70 for the statement “At the moment because the job demands it, I usually work long hours” (Q1). The mean score of 2.55 is the highest for the IT sector professionals for the statement “There isn’t much time to socialize or relax with my partner/see family in the week” (Q2). The statement “I have to take work home most evenings” (Q3) is found to have the highest mean score of 2.27 for the professionals of the IT sector. “I often work late or at weekends to deal with paperwork without interruptions” (Q4) has the highest mean score of 2.32 for the IT sector professionals. The statement “Relaxing and forgetting about work issues is hard to do” (Q5) has the highest mean score of 2.22 for the professionals of health care sector working. “I worry about the effect of work stress on my health” (Q6) statement has

the highest mean score of 2.62 for the IT sector working women. “My relationship with my partner is suffering because of the pressure or long hours of my work” (Q7) statement is found to have the highest mean score of 2.42 for the working women of health sector. “My family are missing out on my input either because i don’t see enough of them/am too tired” (Q8) statement had the highest mean score of 2.70 for the IT sector professionals. “Finding time for hobbies, leisure activities, or to maintain friendships and extended family relationships is difficult” (Q9) statement had high mean scores of 2.77 for both the IT and academic sector professionals. The statement “I would like to reduce my working hours and stress levels, but feel I have no control over Through comparison of mean scores, it was useful to know how the perception of married women changed with regard to the Work-Life Balance

statements based on the industry/sector that the respondents are employed in the current situation” (Q10) had the highest mean score of 2.67 for the health sector working professionals.

Summary of Findings

This study was able to measure the work–life balance of working women finding that married working women find it very hard to balance their work and personal life irrespective of the sector they are into, the age group they belong to, the number of children they have and their spouse’s profession. The IT sector working professionals were found to have more difficulties in balancing work and family followed by academic sector working women and then health sector working women. Working hours related WLB problems were more for the IT sector professionals while time to socialise or being relaxed is tough for working women of health sector. The married working women of all the sectors predominantly find it very hard to steal out time for their own hobbies or leisure activities and maintain friendships or extended relationships. The married working women in the age group of under 30 years were found to have more work -life imbalance problems than those in the age group of 30 to 40 years while married working women over 40 years were found to be balancing work-life slightly better than the above mentioned age groups. The respondents with spouse’s profession as Business were found to be the ones suffering the most with work-life balance closely followed by the spouse’s profession marketing. Our findings revealed the importance of work-life balance and the need to have work-life balance to have happiness and life satisfaction.

VII. CONCLUSION

This study was able to measure employees work life balance. Conflicts between work life balance can put them under tremendous pressure which leads to health issues and less productivity. Striving to match the expectations both at work and personal life can leave serious effect on them. Hence this issue is wide open for research in India. Educating employees on this issue will make them understand and demand for work life balance. The solution to this cannot be achieved alone by women employees, they should be given support from families and employers, to maintain the balance and to be satisfied with their work and personal life.

REFERENCES

- [1] “Title of the research”, Citation Details, year Bailyn, Lotte; Drago, Robert; and Kochan, Thomas A.; “Integrating Work and Family Life – A Holistic Approach”. A Report of the Sloan Work-Family Policy Network. 9/14/2001: pp 1- 10.
- [2] R. Baral & S. Bhargava; “HR interventions for work-life balance: evidences from organisations in India”. International Journal of Business, Management and Social Sciences, Vol. 2, No. 1, 2011, pp. 33-42
- [3] Bharat, S. 2003. “Women, work, and family in urban India, Towards new families?” in J. W. Berry, R. C. Mishra, and R. C. Tripathi ed., Psychology in human and social development, Lessons from diverse cultures pp.155-169 New Delhi, India, Sage.
- [4] Clark SC (2000). Work/Family Border Theory: A New Theory of Work/Family Balance. Human Relations 53(6): 747–770.
- [5] Daniels, L. and McCarragher, L. (2000) The Work–Life Manual. London: Industrial Society.
- [6] Denise Horner Mitnick, “The Impact of Working Women on Work/Life Balance Perspectives”, University of Pennsylvania Scholarly Commons, 2006
- [7] Francene Sussner Rodgers, “When the Business Case Is Common Sense: Coming to Terms with America’s Family Challenge,” ACA Journal, (Autumn 1992)
- [8] Friedman, S D and Greenhaus, J H (2000). “Work and family—Allies or enemies? What happens when business professionals confront life choices”, New York: Oxford University Press.
- [9] Grossman, Allyson Sherman. “Working Mothers and Their Children”. Monthly Labor Review: Special Labor Force Reports – Summaries. May, 1981: pp 49 -54.
- [10] Jeffrey H. Greenhaus, Karen M. Collins & Jason D. Shaw, “The relation between work–family balance and quality of life”, Journal of Vocational Behavior 63 (2003) 510–531
- [11] Kirchmeyer, C. (2000). Work-life initiatives: Greed or benevolence regarding workers’ time. In C. L. Cooper & D. M. Rousseau (Eds.), Trends in organizational behavior (Vol. 7, pp. 79–93). West Sussex, UK: Wiley.
- [12] Kofodimos, J. R. (1993). Balancing act. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Komaraju M. 1997. “The work–family interface in India”, in S. Parasuraman and J. H. Greenhaus Eds., Integrating work and family, Challenges for a changing world pp. 104–114. Westport, CT, Quorum Books.