

# An Empirical Analysis of Factors Affecting on Work Life Balance for Women Faculty in Higher Education

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## Abstract

Work life balance is a broad concept including proper prioritizing between career and ambition on one hand, compared with pleasure, leisure, family and spiritual development on the other. Work life balance is an attempt made to make time to the demands of the workplace along with time for family, friends, community participation, spirituality, personal growth, self care and other personal activities. Balanced employees tend to feel more motivated and less stressed out at work. This helps to increase the organizational productivity and builds a sustainable workforce. Working women face conflicts due to their continuing role as primary caretakers for their homes, children, and elderly parents. In higher education, women faculty has to spend extra time for their own development in their home to face the challenging atmosphere. This requires support from family members and spouse to work inside and outside the home effectively.

**Keywords:** working women, work life balance, higher education, women faculty

## Introduction

In 21<sup>st</sup> century due to increase in competition, major changes took place in different sectors including education. Work is central to an individual's lives and it has to be organized properly by considering our schedule and priorities in life. Balancing work and home life is a growing concern for both employers and employees. Since life is assumed about family activities, mystical developments, pleasure and leisureliness, while work is supposed for a person's aspiration and professional responsibilities. When people need to split their time in these two important and vital elements of our living, they have to build a balance between them. Employees split their time and energy between work and the other important aspects of their lives.

The best work life balance for an individual will vary with different stages of life and career, as priorities of that individual change over time. Work life balance is a daily effort to make time for family, friends, community participation, spirituality, personal growth, self care, and other personal activities, in addition to the demands of the workplace. Work-life balance is assisted by employers who institute work life environment, culture, policies, procedures, actions, and expectations that enable employees to easily pursue more balanced lives.

Greenhouse and Allen defined work-family balance as the degree to which an individual's effectiveness and satisfaction in the roles of work and family domain are well-matched with the individual's life priorities. The paper addresses concept of work life balance, need of work life balance for women faculty in teaching profession in higher education, objectives of the study, findings, suggestions and conclusion. The information has been gathered from authentic books, journals, articles and websites for the study purpose.

## Need of Work Life Balance for Women Faculty in Teaching Profession in Higher Education

In 21<sup>st</sup> century as a result of the expanding financial conditions and social request, the time has turned into a need that both a couple needs to work to have an ordinary life. Women and men generally have a different perception of what the "life" part of the balance involves. For women, it tends to be devoting more time to family, while for men it is spending more time pursuing personal interests. It causes to the psychological strain to the women employees, which in turn affects the health. The psychological strain, increases due to the strong pressure of time, the complexity of work, growing responsibilities, concern for long-term existential protection and more. The mentioned stresses and strains could lead in the long term to irreversible, physical signs of wear as well as to negative effects on the human cardiovascular and immune systems.

Women is considered traditionally to accept role of a caretaker or a mother figure and naturally gifted with talents of empathy and patience and hence she is considered to be suitable for teaching. Because of the convenient timings, and respectable position, working in higher education seems to be the perfect career option for women. But in 21<sup>st</sup> century, in the age of digitalization, due to severe competition and new advances in technology, women faculty in higher education has to keep update themselves in their field. They have to attend conference, faculty development programmers', seminars and workshops in their respective area also. Women faculty in higher education need to spend extra hours every day to be effective and productive in their profession so that they could reach higher levels and face the challenging atmosphere.

Moreover, they not only look forward towards teaching, but need to also focus on soft skills and life skills, so

that they can produce good professionals and develop good citizen. By considering this, in present times, young teaching professionals are increasingly confronted with a problem of conflict between work role and an equally demanding role at home. Hence work life balance for women faculty in higher education has become one of the greatest challenges in today’s world.

**Objectives of the Study**

By considering nature of the study, the researcher has laid down following objectives of the study.

1. To study the concepts and importance of work life balance among women faculty in higher education in the sample area.
2. To study various factors affecting on work life balance.
3. To study the work life balance among different levels of women faculty in higher education.

**Methods of Research**

The researcher has adopted Field Survey Method and Observation Method to understand the concept of work life balance and the various aspects that are involved in the successful development of work life balance. The above study “A Study of Work Life Balance among Indian Women in Higher Education” is mainly conducted in different universities and colleges approved by UFGC/AICTE like Engineering, Medical, Management, Pharmacy, Arts, Commerce and Science, Environmental Science and fine arts. For the field research, a questionnaire is prepared including both open ended and close ended questions. The researcher personally met women faculty from different colleges personally and interviewed them. Literature review was done from different journals and internet and considered for research purpose. Based on the literature review, the conceptual model was prepared. Two possible variables for the identification of the work life balance are number of colleges and number of women faculty. Therefore first colleges under university were identified and then women faculties were selected for the study purpose.

**Sources of Data Collection**

- A. Primary data:** Primary data constitutes of information gathered through formal and informal discussions, structured and unstructured interviews and administration of questionnaire. Following tools were used to collect primary data:
1. **Questionnaire** - Primary data is collected through a well-structured questionnaire by taking direct interviews of women teachers. A Pilot study is conducted from some of sample respondents and then a final questionnaire is administered through respondents.
  2. **Formal and Informal Interviews** – Using open-ended and close ended questionnaires, the data

was collected. Certain information required to fulfill few objectives can be elicited with the help of formal and informal interviews of women teachers.

3. **First-hand Information** - It is collected through observation method and used as data collection.

**B. Secondary data:** Following tools were used to collect secondary data.

1. **Visit to libraries-** For the study purpose, the required secondary data is collected by using various published sources, research journals, conference proceedings and different websites. Also manuscripts from various libraries are collected.
2. **Websites:** Secondary data is also collected by referring to websites. The original research works carried out by different researchers in work life balance have been reviewed thoroughly for concluding the significance of work life balance.

**Analysis of Factors**

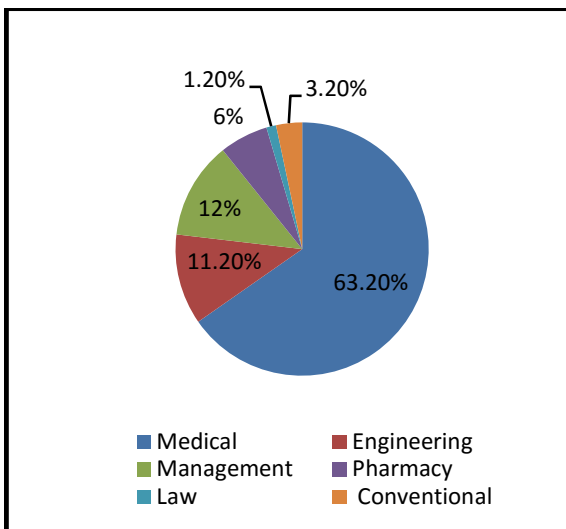
The present study is based on descriptive type of study, so certain factors have been found out which would provide a base for conduction of various analysis & interpreting results. The following are the factors extracted from the survey done through questionnaires:

- A. Type of Faculty:** The basic objective of the study is to identify the work-life balance of women faculties belonging to different discipline like engineering, medical, management, pharmacy, law, conventional and others out of total sample size of 250 faculties.

**Table No.1: Details of Women Faculty selected from different discipline**

Type of Faculty	Number	Percentage
Medical	158	63.2%
Engineering	28	11.2%
Management	30	12%
Pharmacy	15	6%
Law	03	1.2%
Conventional	08	3.2%
Others	08	3.2%
Total	<b>250</b>	100%

Table No.1 shows the details of women faculty selected from different discipline like medical, engineering, management, pharmacy, law, conventional and others



**Graph no. 1: Details of women faculty**

**B. Present Designation of Women Faculty:** To study the work life balance, present designation of women faculty like assistant professor, associate professor, professor and principal/director in different discipline is collected and the details are shown in Table No. 2.

**Table No. 2: Present Designation of Women Faculty**

Designation	Number	Percentage
Asst. Professor	216	86.4%
Asso. Professor	20	8%
Professor	10	4%
Principal/Director	04	1.6%
Total	250	100%

**C. Career Stage of Women Faculty:** Regarding career stage of women faculty, table no.3 shows that, out of 250 respondents, 60 respondents are at the beginning stage, 180 respondents are at the middle stage and 10 respondents are at the closing stage.

**Table No. 3: Career Stage of Women Faculty**

Career Stage	Number	Percentage
Beginning	60	24%
Middle	180	72%
Closing	10	4%
Total	250	100%

**D. Number of Hours Spend for Travelling to Work Place:** Regarding number of hours spend in the travelling to work place table no. 4 indicates that, out of 250 women faculty, 53 are agreed that they spend 30 minutes in the travelling, 134 are agreed that they spend 30 minutes to 1 hour in the travelling, 56 are agreed that they spend 1 hour to 1

½ hour in the travelling and 7 agreed that they spend more than 1 ½ hour in the travelling.

**Table No. 4: No. of hours spent in travelling to work place**

No. of Hours	Number	Percentage
30 minutes	53	21.2%
30 minutes- 1 hour	134	53.6%
1 hour - 1 ½ hour	56	22.4%
More than >1 ½ hrs.	07	2.8%
Total	250	100%

**E. Details of Children Caring:** About children caring of women faculty members, 43 agree that their parents take care of their children, 81 agree that their parents-in-law take care of their children, while 74 faculty says that they are dependent on maid for the caring of their children and 11 faculty agrees that they are using day care centre for their children as shown in Table no. 5.

**Table No. 5: Details of Children Caring**

Career Stage	Number	Percentage
Spouse	0	0%
Parents	43	17.2%
Parents-in-law	81	32.4%
Maid	74	29.6%
Day care centre	11	4.4%
Not Applicable	41	16.4%
Total	250	100%

**F. Stress Related Diseases:** Regarding details of the stress related disease as shown in table no. 6, it is observed that 174 women faculty are suffering from eye sight problem, 33 are suffering from obesity, 41 are suffering from diabetes, 46 are suffering from frequent headaches and 56 are suffering from body pain. Also it is observed that some women faculty are suffering from more than one stress related disease.

**Table No. 6: Women Faculty Suffering from Stress related Disease**

Stress Related Disease	Number	Percentage
Eye sight problem	174	69.6%
Obesity	33	13.2%
Diabetes	41	16.4%
frequent headaches	46	18.4%
body pain	56	22.4%
any other	0	0%

**G. Level of Difficulty to maintain Work Life Balance:** Regarding level of difficulty to maintain work life balance, table no. 7 shows that 38 women faculty agrees that it is easy, 161 faculties agrees that it is moderate and 51 faculty agrees that it is high.

**Table No. 7: Level of difficulty to maintain Work Life Balance**

Level of Difficulty	Number	Percentage
Easy	38	15.2%
Moderate	161	64.4%
High	51	20.4%
Total	250	100%

**Hypothesis of the Study**

By considering the title and objectives, researcher has set the following hypothesis.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** The marital status of women faculty in higher education influences significantly to the work-life balance.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** The various factors impact significantly to the work-life balance among women faculty in higher education.

**A) Chi-Square Test for Married Women Faculty about Distraction of Personal or Family Worries**  
**Table No. 8: Symmetric Measures for Married Women Faculty about Distraction of Personal or Family Worries**

Symmetric Measures		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Contingency Coefficient	.270	.075
N of Valid Cases		250	

**Interpretation:** Applying chi-square test to Table No. 8, the calculated value of  $p=.075$ , which is greater than  $p_0=0.05$ , hence null hypothesis is true and it is accepted at 5% level of significance. Hence work life balance of married women faculty in higher education is not influenced because of distraction of personal or family worries and problems at college.

**B) Chi-Square test for Married Women Faculty to spend time for preparation of self development at home**

**Table No. 9: Women Faculty to spend time for preparation of self development at home**

Marital Status		Spend time for preparation of lecture and self development at home					
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Marital Status	Unmarried	0	4	3	15	6	28
	Married	3	30	43	73	50	199
	Divorced	0	6	1	6	5	18
	Widowed	0	0	1	2	2	5
<b>Total</b>		3	40	48	96	63	250

**Table No. 10: Chi-Square Tests for spend time for preparation of lecture at home**

Chi-Square Tests	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.100 <sup>a</sup>	12	.520
Likelihood Ratio	12.319	12	.420
Linear-by-Linear Association	.014	1	.907
N of Valid Cases	250		

**Interpretation:** Using SPSS package to Table No. 9 and applying chi-square test to it (Table No. 10), the calculated value of  $p=.520$ , which is greater than  $p_0=0.05$ , hence null hypothesis is true and it is accepted at 5% level of significance. Hence work life balance of married women faculty in higher education is not influenced because of spending time for preparation of lecture at home with not significant positive correlation  $r=+0.206$  from Table No. 11.

**Table No. 11: Symmetric Measures and correlation for preparation of lecture at home**

Symmetric Measures and correlation		Value	Approx. Sig.
nominal by Nominal	Contingency Coefficient	.206	.520
N of Valid Cases		250	

**C. Symmetric Measures and Correlation about taking care of elderly family members in home with hierarchical level:**

**Table No. 12: Symmetric Measures and correlation about taking care of elderly family members in home with hierarchical level**

Symmetric Measures and correlation		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Contingency Coefficient	.331	.002
N of Valid Cases		250	

**Interpretation :** Using SPSS package to Table No. 12 and applying chi-square test to it , the calculated value of  $p=0.002$ , which is less than  $p_0=0.05$ , hence null hypothesis is false and it is rejected at 5% level of significance. Therefore there is reason to accept the alternative hypothesis with 95% confidence that the work life balance is significantly influenced due to taking care of elderly family members in home and hierarchical levels of women faculty in higher education with significant association coefficient  $r = 0.331$ .

### Suggestion

1. To maintain proper work life balance, educational institutions should introduce certain family friendly measures such as extended maternity leave, child care facilities, elder-care assistance, flexible duty hours and job sharing, special leave, pick and drop facilities, and residential facility for women faculty members.
2. Now a days since health care is very expensive, there is a need that organization should provide free health checkups, health insurance, nutrition counseling & exercise facilities to the women faculties. This not only act as work life initiative but also acts as good retention tool to the women faculties.
3. Management should take care to maintain healthy work environment, increase employee morale and managing proper employer employee relationship, co-worker support; employee friendly policies help to manage work life balance for women faculty in higher education.
4. For women faculty working in higher education and working at different hierarchical level, emotional intelligence is required to maintain a balance between private and professional life. Regular exercises, mediation and other soft skill practices can improve the emotional balance of the employees.

### Conclusion

To maintain proper work life balance for women faculty working in higher education, proper work environment, employer-employee relationship and contribution towards family welfare is important. Women faculty members are facing several types of problem not only at the work place but also at their home. Impact of home on work and work on home need to be balanced properly. Hence there is a big challenge for the women faculty to make equilibrium between the professional life and the personal life. In Indian culture, family members like spouse, children , in laws have expectations from the working women. But it is difficult for working women to fulfill all the expectations. Hence specific counseling programs to family members should be conducted to change the mindset of family members. Since women faculties are undergoing in stress, it is necessary to design modules and deliver lectures for stress

management. Management should take initiative to design activities to enhance spiritual health, yoga and meditation instructions especially for women faculty in higher education.

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