

Work Life Balance of Women Employees, (Public & Private Sector)

Ms. Alka Jain¹ and Prof. (Dr.) Vaishali Dhingra

¹ Research Scholar, Faculty of Commerce and Management, Rama University Kanpur

² Research Guide, Rama University, Kanpur.

Abstract

The Indian scenario has been changing drastically due to globalization, high degree of competition and work culture of organization. Today working women in India are continually challenged by the demands of full-time work and when the day is done at the office, they carry more of the responsibilities and commitment to homes. Working women are juggling between multiple responsibilities at work, heavy meeting schedules, business trips, in managing the daily routine responsibilities of life and home. Career and goals are the most important factors in life. Most of the women are coming forward to work in order to support their family. This change is now natural and dynamic due to change of environment and economic conditions. The biggest challenge for women is how to balance the demands of family and career. The literature identifies the various aspects such as career advancement, Work Stress, Career aspiration, Work Family Conflict and Family Work Conflict, Child care in context with Work Life Balance (WLB) and its practices. This paper reveals the overview of the various challenges and issues faced by Women employees to achieve WLB. The sources referred in this paper include various journals, reports, internet sites etc. and the details has been given in the reference section.

Keywords: Work Life Balance (WLB), Women Employee, Family, Career etc.

Introduction

This project explored the way working women cope with home, work, family demands as well as self-care. It mainly focused on the balance they have been able to achieve in their lives as working women, wife, and mothers. Work life balance is an issue that has become an area of interest because women are pursuing jobs and careers while having families. The purpose of this project is related to how women balance their lives with the responsibilities from both work and family. Balancing job demands and household tasks, including household and childcare demands, has been documented as a huge barrier that prevents women from achieving work-life balance.

By investigating the challenges women face, the strategies they implement, and the support systems they utilize, future working women mothers can better understand how to balance work and family life. Professional women who are mothers face the challenge of meeting the demands of both work and home; however, this is not easy to achieve as most of the time they don't have the time to fulfill appropriately each role.

Women Work Life: - Women of the early centuries were mostly confined to their kitchens and those who were employed worked in factories, farms or shop works. Very few women had the access to higher education and they were forced to be at the mercy of their fathers' or husbands' attitudes towards women and work.

The fast developing knowledge economy has given place for more number of women to be enlightened by higher education. Education has not only empowered them but also has given them robust careers. With brain power being the requisite skill in this knowledge era, rather than endurance or physical strength, the women workers seem to flood into every industry on par with

men. But this has indeed become a tough challenge for women as they have to perform a lot of duties in home and office as well.

As working women get married, they have additional responsibilities and when they become mothers, they have to manage the primary care of children and extended family and are thus, under greater pressure to continue on a career path. Working mothers of today fulfill family responsibilities and also try to remain fully involved in their careers coping up with the competing demands of their multiple roles. The caring responsibilities that working mothers have lays a heavy stress on them when it is combined with their professional duties. The attempt of working women to integrate, organize and balance the various problems and activities in their different roles simultaneously puts them under tremendous pressure. As a result, the family becomes an organizational stakeholder and this powerful social trend marked the beginning of the work/life balance paradigm shift.

Statement of the Problem

The Indian scenario has been changing drastically due to globalization, high degree of competition and work culture of organization. Today working women in India are continually challenged by the demands of full-time work and when the day is done at the office, they carry more of the responsibilities and commitment to homes. Working women are juggling between multiple responsibilities at work, heavy meeting schedules, business trips, in managing the daily routine responsibilities of life and home. The changing phenomenon increasing anxiety among working women where they have to manage the chucks of their family and work and need to strike a balance between their work life and the personal life. Many women are torn between these seemingly incompatible commitments to work and family.

Significance of the Study

Before 1950, few women participated in work outside the home. Most of the women were uneducated, and among the educated, majority did not engage in work outside home, and those who did, were mostly concentrated in nursing, elementary school teaching, and other traditional female occupations. Few women in the profession held position, power and authority in the workplace. By the dawn of the twenty first century, the scenario of India has changed radically (Claramma 2007). The number of working women is on the rise and they are making substantial progress towards equivalence with men. Women established an identity of their own and created a space for them in education and work sphere. Educational institutions started training women to enter new arenas enabling them to move away from traditional roles. Families began expecting women not only to continue with higher education, but also to pursue any interest they may have in the profession. Naturally, after spending so many years in education and obtaining professional degrees, they became interested in using the knowledge acquired productively. As a result, modern Indian women have made inroads into different professions that were unthinkable for women in the past.

The number of women in the jobs is increasing and they are making substantial progress toward parity with men. Indian women in the modern era are well educated, high on proficiency and skills. The reason for this state of affairs can be attributed to the changes in the socio-cultural set up.

Objectives of the study

- To study the prevalence of work-life balance problem among women working in private & public Sector.
- To study the extent to which various factors like hours worked, work involvement and family responsibilities, affect working women’s work-life balance.
- To know that is there health is affecting due to work.
- To know that long working hour affect individual efficiency.
- To identify the key factors influencing the work life balance.
- To know the stress level of working women.

Literature Review

Number of studies has addressed this issue in different perspectives. Some of the papers related to this subject are reviewed. A study of the literature review have been made to know and identify the variables to be studied and to find out what had been done and what new is to be done.

Mothers on this research also expressed having a hard time disengaging from work issues while being at home mainly due to the expectations that were put on them at

work. Also, mothers reported that technological advancements were the main reason for conflict on boundaries between family time and work demands.

They stated not having enough personal time due to the long list of duties on their daily routine, which in the end had negative effects on their relationship with their families, especially their children and spouses.

A study done by Crowley and Kolenikov (2014) used a total of eight- hundred over-the-phone surveys with a sample of mothers who lived across the United States. The questions they were asked included topics of workplace flexibility. To meet the criteria for this research, participants had to mothers, stepmothers, or guardians of at least 18 years old, with at least one child at home. Findings of this research reported that most women who had a partner at home experienced less stress and less of a negative impact to their careers compared to those without a partner at home. Crowley and Kolenikov (2014) also showed in their study that the control mothers had on their time-off was significant and relevant to their perceptions of work and parenting demands. This finding supported another research conducted by Crowley and Weiner (as cited in Crowley and Kolenikov, 2014), in which mother’s control on their time-off flexibility was considered extremely important. When participants were asked to design an ideal job, they reported that time-off options were more important than having flexibility to work arrangements. As reported by Armstead (2015) the balance of work and life among women has focused on the needs and the experiences of working mothers. While without a doubt more women have entered the workforce in largely male-dominated industries in past years, research shows that women are still primarily accountable for most of the domestic labour in families and childcare (Tang & Cousins, 2005). Strazdins and Broom (2004) supported this thought by saying that the emotional work needed in families in women correlates with their increased responsibilities in the workplace. Similarly, in a study of Australian workers in the public sector, Connell (2005) found that most women who work outside home are also responsible for the household duties. Having these two big tasks requires them to be able to maintain balance between home and work in order for them to live fulfilled lives.

Connell went on to explain the main difference in the work/life balance requirements for men and women by stating that “Dropping dead from career-driven stress, or shrivelling emotionally from never seeing one’s children, is a different issue from exhaustion because of the double shift, or not getting promotion because of career interruptions” (p. 378). In support of Connell’s perspective, other research (Aumann, Galinsky, & Matos, 2011) has clearly indicated that the process of balancing work and family life can be physically, psychologically, and personally draining for women. Smithson and Stokoe (2005) shared this concept by admitting that work/life balance prevails as a main concern among working mothers with young children. Levy’s (2012) master research provided a summary of

studies associated with work-life balance. In her study, Marks and Macdermid (as cited in Levy, 2012) claimed that women who have well balance in their roles as mothers experience higher levels of wellbeing. The study showed that those who were more balanced in their lives were not necessarily the ones who worked the fewest hours.

The amount of hour's women worked were not dictators of self-esteem, and depression levels. Pichler (as cited in Levy, 2012) who studied factors in the areas of work and home demands found that women with children ages three to five and children ages six to eleven reported not achieving balance in their lives. Mothers with children under the age of three had achieved more work-life balance than mothers without children under twelve living in the household. The choices, struggles and frustrations that many women face include the burdens that come with having job outside home, for example, dealing with difficult work decisions is one of those burdens. Career/family conflicts are a crucial source of stress for working mothers. A comparative study done on British and French women (Hantrais, 1990), emphasized the importance to these women on being available for their children as much as possible. The price paid was the lack of personal time and the feelings of guilt if any free time was not used to be with their children.

Most women studied stated that they would sacrifice their own free time and reduce the amount of sleep they had so that their children did not feel the adverse effects of having a working mother.

Hoff and Mitchell (2008) found a sad true in my opinion. They found that men tend to be more likely to be able to balance work and home life because the societal expectations place the burden of domestic duties and parenting mostly on women. Even though there is research that states that balance between work and family may be unachievable, there are stories of women leaders who are successfully balancing home and work responsibilities. According to Marshall (2009), professional women reported personal benefits, such as the ability to enrich the lives of and be able to provide for their children. These women also experienced personal gratification for making their children proud. Marshall (2009) also identified the professional advantages of having a career. The women in the study reported loving their careers because it taught them to be more understanding, compassionate, and sensitive, and in the end making them better mothers.

Santosh R. S., Jain R. (2016) in their paper "Study of Effect of Commuting & Working Hours on Work Life Balance of Working Fathers in Mumbai" proved that long working hours and long commuting hours are seriously affecting the Work Life Balance of working fathers in metro cities. There is need to research and investigate further on this subject in order to improve lives and productivity of working men in metro cities of India.

Goyal K.A, Agrawel A (2015) in the paper titled " Issues and challenges of Work life balance in banking industry of India" explained that Work life balance policies and programs are an investment in an organisation for improving productivity, reducing absenteeism, achieving improved customer services, better health, flexible working as well as satisfied and motivated workforce especially in banking industry.

Singh S. (2013) mentioned Role stress theory in his paper Titled "Work- Life Balance: A Literature Review" wherein the negative side of the work- family interaction has been put under the spotlight. Recently, the emphasis has shifted towards the investigation of the positive interaction between work and family roles as well as roles outside work and family lives, and scholars have started to deli.

Purohit M. (2013) in the paper titled "A Comparative Study of Work Life Balance in various Industrial Sectors in Pune region" highlighted Pune's Industry's realities with respect to work-life balance are segmentation of work and life domains of employees, inequality in work-life orientation of organizations. The implementation of work- life programs has both individual and organizational benefits. Effective work-life programs facilitate a symbiotic relationship between the employee and employer for mutual benefits. Employees who are better able to balance the demands on their time are more satisfied and content. In turn they are able to perform better. Berate on the essence of work- life balance.

Ujvala Rajadhyaksha (2012) in the paper titled "Work-Life Balance in South East Asia: The Indian Experience" represented angle of social for work-life initiatives. Such a perspective requires greater reliance on governmental policy in addition to organizational incentive to balance work-family demands. At the moment, however there is an absence of a governing policy at the national level to guide work family efforts for varied segments of workers in the country. There is absence of policy initiatives or organizational interventions for workers in the unorganized sector.

Linkow P. and Civian J. (2011) in the paper titled "Men and Work-life Integration- A Global Study" highlighted the gender stereotype that men derive their identities largely from work, and women largely from family and relationships, was not supported by the study. For the most part, men and women reported comparable work identity and personal/family identity. Work identification appears to be much higher in emerging markets. Both sources of identity were highly correlated with employee engagement in the emerging markets.

Kumari T. (2011) in the paper titled "Impact of Stress on Work-life Balance of Women employees with reference to BPO and Education sectors in Bangalore" analysed the impact of work life balance of women employees in Education and BPO sectors conclusion is drawn that stress level between the women employees is different in different sectors. Though there is difference in their professions based on the work and life balance we can say that stress level in the work

environment might be different but they say that at home their stress level is equal. As per the results, stress level impact is different in both the sectors.

Doble N., Supriya M. V. (2010) in the paper titled "Gender Differences in the Perception of Work-life Balance" brings out with East West comparison. The study indicates that work-life balance issues here are quite similar to those in the West. With the increase in number of dual career couples in India, it is but natural that family friendly work practices must be adopted here too, as they would go a long way towards improving productivity and enhancing quality of work and family life. Flex time, home working, child care facilities and the option to work part time are facilities that need to be introduced.

Jang (2008), studied "The relationship between work-life balance resources and the well-being of working parents" which aimed to study how working parents cope with work-life demands. The study used 27 working parents with either ill or disabled children in New Jersey. It was mixed research with both qualitative and quantitative results. The result talks about the effect of formal and informal workplace support in enhancing the well-being of employees with the children in general and those with a chronically ill or disabled child in particular.

Results and Discussion

In today's competitive era, with changing demands, regulations and so much pressure the work needs have increased a lot.

This leads to increase in stress level of the bankers. Majority of the respondents expressed that there is no separate policy for work life balance in their organization and many people were doing work overtime. Also management has not done much in terms of designing and implementing effective work life balance policies and practices.

If the personal and professional lives of female employees are balanced, they can devote more time to their children and can focus on their upbringing.

It was found that the number of hours worked per week, the amount and frequency of overtime, and inflexible work schedule increase the likelihood of bankers to experience conflict between their work and family roles as it kills their time to perform family related activities. Findings revealed that employees in private bank have medium level of Work Life Balance.

Also there is significant positive relationship and impact of work life balance on employee's personal and professional life. Study also revealed some of employees feel so stressed that they are not able to handle family responsibilities even after coming from workplace as they feel so tired and exhausted because of long working hours.

Conclusion

To achieve Work Life Balance, every woman should set the goal and excel both in career and family.

Some of the strategies and skills at work such as planning, organizing and setting limits can be used at home and work place for accomplishing a satisfying and fulfilling well balanced life both professionally and personally.

Women employee should care the family both physically and financially to satisfy the family needs. Also work for the accomplishment of organizational objectives and individual upliftment to satisfy the career needs. Organizations need to adopt human resource strategies and policies to overcome the issues of the work life balance of women in the current business environment.

Frances and Patricia (200&) concluded that Family Policy, Welfare state provision and labour market structure behave jointly to determine distinct models of work family balance and the financial consequences associated with them.

Future Scope

Helpful to identify how women in the current scenario and fast changing economic development balance their lives with the responsibilities from both work and family.

Reference

- [1] Human Resource Management By: - T.N.CHABRA
- [2] Human Resource Management By: - Dr. C.B.GUPTA
- [3] www.worklifebalance.com
- [4] Caroline Glynn, I. S. (2002). Work/Life Balance: The Role of the Manager Training, vol. 35.
- [5] Chandra, V. (2012). Work-Life Balance: Eastern and Western Perspectives. The International Journal of Human Resource Management, vol. 23, no. 5, pp. 1040-1056.
- [6] Chiu, C. (1998). Do Professional Women Have Lower Job Satisfaction than Professional Men? Lawyers as a Case Study. Sex Roles, pp. 521-537.
- [7] Clark, A. (1997). Job Satisfaction and Gender. Why are Women so Happy at Work? 341-372.
- [8] Coleman, D. I. A. (1993). Leisure and Health: The Role of Social Support and Self-Determination. Journal of Leisure Research, vol. 25, no. 2, 111-128.
- [9] De Coninck J, B. D. (2005). An Analysis of Turnover among Retail Buyers. Journal of Business Research, vol: 58, pp. 874-882.
- [10] Deery, M., Jago, L., & Stewart, M. (2008). Work-life Balance in the Tourism Industry: A Case Study. Doherty, L. (2004). Work-Life Balance Initiatives: Implications for Women. Emerald, vol. 26 no. 4, pp. 433-452.
- [11] Dohrenwend, B. P., & Shrout, P. E. (1985). Life Stress and Illness: Formulation of the Issues. In Stressful Life Events and their Context. pp. 1-27.