
FACTORS AFFECTING WORK LIFE BALANCE OF WORKING WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

Everyone in today's cutthroat society wants to develop quickly and make an effort to fit in. Everyone wants to be wealthy so they may live a life of luxury, but in order to do so, they must work hard and spend a lot of time at work, where they can do their jobs well and create value. He can impress his superiors in this way. In addition to this, one must deal with a work-life balance that might lead to serious problems in his life. In the end, he may be recognized with a designation and incentives. However, he spends less time with his family during this process, which may eventually result in a rift between his spouse and children. As a result, tension builds, which has an impact on both his personal and Working mothers in particular have a variety of responsibilities to balance between their personal and professional lives. Every job has a unique set of demands, and when these demands and roles interact, an imbalance is created that can lead to stress, illness, and other problems. Therefore, it is necessary to examine how female employees combine their professional and personal lives. The current study examines the factors affecting work-life balance of working women.

INTRODUCTION

The organization is expecting more from its employees in the fiercely competitive climate. Work-life balance is becoming unbalanced as individuals are forced to work harder and strain themselves to fulfill employer demands. In reality, one of the hardest problems female employees confront in the twenty-first century is finding a balance between work and home life. Many female professionals in a variety of industries are allegedly experiencing a disturbed work-life balance, which is driving an increase in divorces, strained relationships among family members, conflicts in the workplace, and suicides. The problem of work-life balance has gained a lot of attention in the modern environment. The emergence of work-life balance as a relevant concept in industrialized cultures was influenced by changes in technology, values, and demographic trends. Other variables, such as the growing complexity of the work, the evolution of the family, and the increased number of women entering the workforce, support it. The difference between the demands of the workplace and those of personal life is referred to as the "work-life balance." When one side is out of balance for an extended period of time, unpleasant symptoms are likely to result (fatigue, stress, depression, etc.). Domestic and professional lives being out of sync with one another results in severe personal and financial hardship for both the individual and the business.

Organizations in the competitive era are under pressure to attain high productivity and need personnel with a healthy work-life balance since they would be better able to contribute to the success and growth of the company (Naithani, 2010) [1]. Therefore, it is imperative that businesses devise plans to assist female employees in enjoying their work and living life to the fullest.

REASON FOR IMBALANCE

The entry of women professionals into various sectors is one of the significant shifts in India's labor markets that is anticipated. The role of the primary breadwinner has always been given preference to men in Indian families (Awasthy & Gupta, 2001) [2]. Many people spend more time at work and like it because of the socialization, great work environments, flex time, and facilities. Grzywacz Butter (2005) [3] explored some ideas on how to make work and family life easier and discovered that jobs with lots of resources make this possible. Life satisfaction has a relatively wide reach when compared to the relationship between domain satisfaction (such as employment, family, and marriage) (Beutell, 2006) [4]. Role expectations for women at work and at home are in conflict. Women are expected to be nice, soft, sensitive, adaptable, gentle, submissive, and domesticated on the professional front (Misra, 1998) [5]. An individual is driven and engaged when their job and personal lives are in balance. Keeping a balance between work and personal time is so essential and should be a strategic issue for both businesses and employees (Baral & Bhargava, 2009) [6].

Work-life balance has grown to be a major concern for both employees and companies over the past ten years. Work and personal life are intertwined and vital components of any person's existence. Policymakers are beginning to see the value of assisting women in balancing work and family obligations. However, women who work in historically male-dominated fields must put up a fight, overcome many obstacles, and establish their value (Roe & Siegelman, 1964) [7]. However, it must be acknowledged that in Indian society, women's time and energy are under a lot of pressure due to their new and increased role as employees with a distinct occupational identity (Adya, 2008) [8]. In addition to being a source of worry, participants' work-life imbalance was also their main cause of dissatisfaction. Additionally, it has been noted that there is a direct link between issues with work-life balance and withdrawal behaviors, such as turnover and non genuine sick absence (Hughes & Bozionelos, 2007) [9]. One in four Canadians said that their work obligations interfered with their ability to fulfill their responsibilities at home in a national research on work-life conflicts conducted in Canada in 2001 (Duxbury & Higgins, 2003) [10]. The two main causes of work-life conflicts are the obligation to take care of family members and work intensification (Cooke & Jing, 2009) [11].

Those who are young and single have fewer problems with work-life conflict than those who have to take care of children or the elderly (Chen, 2006) [12]. According to a study by Allen (2000) [13], conflict causes unhappiness, sadness, and poor physical health. According to Campbell-Clark (2000) [14], "satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home with a minimum of role conflict" and Marks & MacDermid (1996) [15], "a satisfying, healthy, and productive life that includes work, play, and love, that integrates a range of life activities with attention to self and to

personal and spiritual development, and that" (Shaffer, Francesco, Joplin & Lau, 2003) [16]. Unbalance between work and life is a huge worry for everyone. Due to role conflicts, employment pressures, various duties, domestic commitments, child care, the type and attitudes of superiors and family members, competition, etc., employees experience an imbalance between their work and personal lives.

- Increased responsibilities at work
- Longer working hour
- Increased responsibilities at home
- Personal mind-set
- Social media

SOME APPROACHES TO IMPROVE THE WORK LIFE BALANCE

These work-life balance recommendations will assist in redressing a healthy work-life balance by tipping the scales in the right direction.

- **Recognize peaks in productivity**

It shouldn't matter what time of day the work is completed as long as it is completed.

While some people work best and are most creative in the morning, others like a slower start and work best in the afternoon. To decrease procrastination and the stress brought on by a lack of productivity, employees should work to their strengths and organize their tasks around those times when they are most productive.

- **Take scheduled breaks throughout the day**

If you work from home or in an office setting, it's helpful to plan your day so that you have frequent scheduled breaks. By taking breaks, you're less likely to get sidetracked from work during allotted work hours by family, friends, or household chores.

Most people can only focus at their highest level for 90 minutes at a time, so taking regular pauses to recharge is essential for maintaining productivity throughout the day.

- **Adhere to the strict working hours.**

Make a choice, whether it's 7am-3pm or 9am-5pm, and abide by it. It's challenging to get back into a pattern after employees develop the habit of letting their workday interfere with their personal or family time in the evenings.

Your boss and colleagues will continue to count on you to respond to emails at 10 p.m. if you develop a habit of doing so. Make sure your coworkers know that you leave the office at the same time every day and won't be back till the next morning.

- **Have a long-term plan**

Create a long-term strategy that includes the due dates for all upcoming projects and tasks to reduce "deadline stress."

A long-term plan will enable you to realistically distribute your workload and quickly determine which project you should be focusing on at any given time.

- **Follow your passion**

Employees that have a healthy work-life balance understand how important it is to make time for their hobbies, whether it be reading, exercising, painting, yoga, or spending time with their families.

- **Set your priorities straight in life.**

Making compromises while juggling a work and a personal life is inevitable. Every family function, academic occasion, or social engagement cannot coexist with the job calendar. But just as there are occasionally crucially important meetings at work to attend, some personal engagements should likewise be viewed as irreplaceable. Make a decision about which ones they are, and don't let job obligations get in the way.

- **Don't spend breaks doing tasks**

When working from home, it can be tempting to perform errands for personal use during breaks. A 30-minute break can easily develop into a whirlwind session of housecleaning, laundry folding, dishwashing, or bill paying.

Instead, take advantage of the chance to put yourself first by scheduling some "me time" in between work sessions.

- **Schedule social activities**

It's tempting to delay social activities when work is very demanding. No matter what is going on at work, it is still important to schedule at least one social event each week.

- **Just say no.**

Do not feel obligated to accept every new request made by a coworker or manager. Your work-life balance will be irreparably damaged if you always say "yes."

Instead, set aside some time to discuss the choices with the individual who made the request. For instance, if one item on your current to-do list can be transferred to another person, you might be able to take on a new, urgent assignment.

- **Seek assistance**

Never keep your suffering a secret or let job pressures get out of control. When things get too much, coworkers, supervisors, friends, and family are there to lend a hand and share the load. But if they are unaware of what is happening, they cannot assist.

Employers who give mental health support to their workers, such as counseling, should be utilized by those who require professional assistance.

- **Benefit from flexible scheduling**

To take into account the interests of their employees, progressive businesses provide a variety of flexible working arrangements. A shorter workweek, flexible scheduling, the option to work from home, or job sharing are a few examples of this. Learn about your alternatives and how to make the most of them.

- **Keep work and play separate.**

For workers who work from home, it's especially important to keep work and leisure distinct. Ideally, attempt to position your workstation such that it won't interfere with your free time.

If at all possible, think about using a dedicated work computer and phone that can be turned off at the end of the day.

- **Give mental health and wellbeing top priority**

It's critical to put employee wellbeing first now more than ever. There is a lot of noise on social media urging people to make the most of their alone time by picking up new hobbies or increasing their physical activity. But maintaining mental health must come first at a time when many individuals are dealing with increased anxiety and worries about the future.

Employers should think about the following if they want to assist their staff in striking a healthy work-life balance-

- Each employee should be treated as an individual with unique life objectives and viewpoints on what makes for a healthy work-life balance. Try, within reason, to provide flexible working options in order to satisfy various expectations and demands.
- Set a good example. Never plan a meeting for 7 p.m. on a Friday or send emails in the middle of the night.
- Employees should be made aware of the options and services that may be able to help them achieve a better work-life balance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Review of literature is the study of the prevalent materials related to the topic of research. This helps the researcher to get a clear idea about the particular field. It is further intended to serve as a means of exchanging information with the hope that it could prevent further duplications of the respondents to determine what is already known from similar research. The knowledge of other research literature is very important for researchers, to check their findings in line with the findings of the previous studies.

MULTIPLE ROLES AND PROFESSIONAL WOMEN

Six basic life roles were identified by Super [17]. He said that most people experience this necessity to manage these numerous responsibilities simultaneously at different points in their life. Women are forced to fulfill a variety of different tasks at once, each with its own set of demands, rather than moving smoothly from one to the next (Kopp et.al, 1993) [18].

The impact of multiple role-playing on the mental health and wellbeing of working women have been proven to be both beneficial and bad. In other cases, women who played more roles than others reported being in better overall physical and mental health. In other words, they valued physical stamina, bursts of energy, self-esteem, motivational stimulation, and a sense of control (Doress Wortes, 1994) [19]. Multiple roles, however, have also been discovered to have a number of negative consequences on women's mental and physical health, such as appetite loss, sleeplessness, overeating, and backaches (Hughes, 1994) [20].

CONCEPT OF WORK LIFE BALANCE

Each working woman recognizes the need of finding a work-life balance. They are compelled to lose their composure and critical thinking skills, which are essential for humans, due to external environmental factors. This raises concerns within organizations and society about how women's many tasks may affect their health, wellness, and ability to succeed in their positions at work, at home, and in society. Women employees appear to be flooding into every field on par with men

because brain power, rather than endurance or physical strength, is the necessary skill in this knowledge era.

Positively balancing one's personal and professional lives is what is meant by "work-life balance." It is quite tough to maintain balance between the two in this demanding and demanding time because demands have increased, adding to work strain. To attain this equilibrium, people must make difficult decisions. People are at the office more. The constantly shifting demands of clients and the job have a direct impact on employees' personal lives, making it challenging for them to complete household responsibilities. On the other side, whether you have a child or elderly parents, your personal life may also be demanding (Hudson, 2005) [21].

Today's female workforce represents a sizable and persistent pressure group pushing for workplace flexibility. Although both men and women work to meet their own needs, the burden of caring for a family, running a home, and taking care of parents and children falls more heavily on women's shoulders.

Women therefore struggle harder in our culture to balance their personal and work lives. Unbalanced work and personal lives can cause absenteeism, which can stress employees out and impair their ability to concentrate at work. As more and more families are becoming nuclear and made up of two earners, the question of work-life balance is becoming more and more crucial.

Due to the growing and altering expectations of organizations as well as the growing obligations of families, stress and other conflicts are on the rise. The changing nature of the banking industry's workplace and RBI requirements have made finding a work-life balance for bank workers one of their biggest concerns. Therefore, it is imperative that management functions devise and carry out such policies that allow employees to balance their personal and professional life. This will help employees perform well, resulting in higher productivity and a decrease in stress and absenteeism levels (Hudson, 2005).

The most important aspects of life are a person's ambitions and career. Most women are looking for jobs to help support their families. This shift is now common and dynamic due to changes in the environment and economic conditions. Finding a healthy balance between family and work duties is the biggest challenge for women. A few causes include career advancement, work stress, career aspirations, work-family conflict and family work conflict, child care, and Work-Life Balance (WLB) and its methods.

The work-life balance of women employees has emerged as a key issue because women share equally in the responsibility of providing for their families through income. Women are finding jobs and keeping their jobs after getting married. A married woman is more responsible than a man for taking care of families and young children. Working women effectively manage challenging circumstances due to their dedication and determination. Women who engage in income-generating activities are better able to meet their home needs.

Work-life balance is a state of mind, not just something that relates to work and life. A wide notion known as "work-life balance" entails establishing proper priorities between "life" (health, pleasure, leisure, family, and spiritual development) and "work" (career and ambition). In its broadest definition, "work-life balance" is referred to as a person's numerous roles in their life "fit" together

satisfactorily (Hudson, 2005). The interaction between paid job and other activities, such as voluntary work in the community and with families, leisure time, and personal growth, is what is meant by "work-life balance."

The capacity to balance one's professional and personal obligations in order to lead a happy and healthy life is referred to as work-existence balance. It focuses on how women view and value balancing their personal and professional life as they get older.

The following variables affect WLB's experience.

- Family Relationships and Work-Family Conflict Workplace Disputes
- Different roles played by women
- Workplace Stress
- Taking good care of children.

Balance between work and life is not something that just happens. It requires the efforts of a variety of stakeholders, including the employee, the organization for which he or she works, the employee's family, and the society in which the employee resides (Rajesh, 2021) [22].

- Family and Work Conflict

Work-family conflict is characterized as a clash between the personal and professional spheres. Conflict arises between the two environments when involvement in one function is made more challenging by involvement in the other.

- WLB and Women's Role

Women often have full-time jobs, put in at least 8 hours a day, five days a week, and deal with increasing workloads every day. Because of this, the majority of them have both work and family responsibilities. However, how can you manage the two?

The quick-paced world of today demands talent, tact, knowledge, and caution. Women must balance their responsibilities in life with their demanding work schedules, office obligations, and tight meeting schedules.

- Workplace stress and a lack of work-life balance.

Women in high-ranking positions are under pressure to be timely, cook, clean, and take care of their families, which raises their stress levels and compromises their health (Rajesh, 2021).

- Children's Services.

Working women who have young children must leave them in a daycare facility or in the care of a housekeeper. They become more stressed out as a result and find it difficult to concentrate on their work. Additionally, there are situations when they cannot give them the proper care.

Men and women are segregated into various occupations, which is the primary cause of the salary gaps between the sexes. People's career prospects are limited by occupational segregation, especially during the crucial early years of adulthood. For Europeans, it was the situation.

The ILO and the Commission both believe in workplace safety and health. The issue of segregation can and ought to be resolved.

Every woman must set goals and succeed in her career and family in order to achieve WLB. To achieve a satisfying and well-balanced living both professionally and emotionally, strategies and abilities used at home and at work include planning, organizing, and creating boundaries. Women

who work should take care of their families financially and physically in order to meet their demands. To fulfill job criteria, focus on both personal and corporate development.

To address the issues with women's work-life balance in the current corporate environment, organizations must employ human resource strategies and policies (Rajesh, 2021).

The accelerated rate of urbanization and modernization is causing tremendous changes in Indian families. Indian women from all social groups now work in paid positions. Today, especially in urban areas, Indian women have significantly more access to educational opportunities than they did a few decades ago. This has opened up new perspectives, expanded awareness, and elevated desires for personal development. This has played a significant role in influencing women's decisions to enter the workforce, combined with economic pressure. Economic need has always been cited as the main justification for working in the majority of studies of married women in India who are employed (Ramanna et.al, 1994) [23].

Marriage often benefits more from a woman's work outside the home than it does from a disadvantage. The impact of family life on women's work performance and attitudes was examined by Campbell et al.(1994) [24] Contrary to expectations, women with younger children outperformed women with older children.

The results showed that women with children were much less committed to their jobs than women without children. Makowska (1995) [25] investigated the psychosocial factors that affect working women's stress levels and wellbeing. Although the association between family functioning, stress, and well-being was also substantial, it was clear that the significance of the stressors related to the performance of one's work was stronger than that of the stressors related to one's ability to care for one's family.

The significance of work-life balance has been emphasized in an increasing number of studies. This emphasizes the present concern in society and organizations about the effects of multiple roles on professional women's health and well-being and the consequences for work and family performance as well as women's role in society. While reviewing the international literature, the following factors that affect the experience of work-life balance were found. The various roles that women perform (Carlson et.al, 1998) [26]

- Multiple responsibilities can cause role strain, including role conflict and role overload (Shaffer MA, 2001) [27].
- Organizational values that enable work-life balance have favorable effects on both the workplace culture and the dynamics of the workplace (Burke et.al, 2001) [28]
- Personal traits and social support: Several studies supported the link between emotional support, personality, and wellbeing (Gill et..al, 2000) [29].
- Women's careers should be evaluated in the context of their life courses and time lines, depending on their career inclination and stage (White B, 1995) [30]
- Women utilize both emotionally-focused and problem-focused coping techniques to resolve role conflict (Folkman, 1984) [31].

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Irrespective of education, income and employment, professional women in India are still doing three jobs - office, housework and child care. Professional women hardly find space for themselves to accomplish basic necessity of life like adequate sleep, exercise and a healthy diet.

They do not get enough time to get updated with the latest trends in their field to have career advancement. Domestic pressure, stress at work, child mental or physical distress due to lack of attention adds on to the psychological effect among working mothers.

The root cause of the problem is the patriarchal structure of the society, where women are expected to give the highest priority to the needs of the family irrespective of whether they work outside the house or not. Their primary role is considered to be looking after the home and children, and their employment outside the home is still regarded as secondary. Women's pregnancy and maternity leave might result in a delay in their promotions as compared to their male counterparts. They also face sexual harassment and exploitation in their workplace. When working women try to manage both home and job along with the demands of childcare, they are bound to experience role conflict.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is theoretical in nature. The data for the present study has been collected from secondary sources. The data analysis has been done through secondary review and content analysis has been performed to arrive at conclusions and discussion. The secondary sources of the data includes books, journals, newspapers, published and unpublished research work, various search engines, etc.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Women's work-life balance has become a crucial problem because they are equally responsible for earning money to support their families. After getting married, more and more women are finding and keeping jobs.

When it comes to taking care of families and young children, married women are more responsible than men. Working women successfully handle difficult situations because of their commitment and persistence. Women who engage in income-generating activities are better able to meet their home needs. Men also face the problem of work life balance but this study is confined to the working women only.

CONCLUSION

Women have traditionally been given all tasks relating to caring for and managing a family since they are viewed as nurturers and caregivers. Men believe they are the family's main provider, and society looks to men to perform jobs that will bring in money for the household. But as the structure of the workforce has changed, so has the proportion of men who work outside the home and of women who are housewives. The proportion of dual-earner households is progressively rising in urban India, and for the majority of women and men today, the family and their workplace are the two most significant institutions in life. Work-life balance is now more important than ever due to changes in values brought about by changes in the workforce. Women's work-life balance is

especially important because they typically have two full-time jobs: one at home and one at work. Working mothers frequently have to overcome stereotypes and views that change as they transition from being working women to working mothers. When a woman aspires to a leadership position inside an organization, she must take into account the impact on her interests, intimate relationships, and family. The majority of executive positions demand a significant amount of time and effort, which a working mother might not be able to contribute due to duties to her family. Also, it might be quite difficult for a working mother who has a senior management position to be her child's primary caregiver. Due to the conflicting demands of work and family life, women frequently have a harder time maintaining balance. In order to maximize their potential in all four spheres of life, working women must skillfully manage their personal balance and balance their duties.

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