



A STUDY ON WORK-LIFE BALANCE AMONG THE WOMEN FACULTIES IN ARTS & SCIENCE COLLEGES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MADURAI CITY

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Abstract

The scope for teaching profession has been increasing day by day especially for women. 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 in teaching as their male counterparts while sustaining active engagement in personal life. The ever-increasing work pressure is taking a toll on the working faculties leaving them with less time for themselves. 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 women faculties 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 present study explores aspects like to measure the level of satisfaction as perceived by the women-respondent employees on the varied determinants of work life balance, to identify the major factors that influence the work life balance among various categories of women faculties in arts & science colleges and to measure the overall work life balance of women faculties. The conclusion has been given.

Keywords: *Work-Life Balance, Quality of Work Life, Personal Life, Professional Life.*

I. Introduction

Work – life Balance of women employees has become an important subject since the time has changed from men earning the family living in today's world where both men and women equally share the responsibility of earning for the betterment of their family life. Hence it is for the betterment of their family life. Hence it is very necessary to know how the women balance very professional and domestic life. In the initial stages, women had to struggle a lot to establish their identity in this competitive world, both in the society as well as in the professional life. But with the advancement in educational and training institutions, things have improved to a great extent. 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.

II. Review of Literature

Number of studies has addressed this issue in different perspectives. Some of the papers related to this subject are reviewed. Vijaya Mani (2013) has revealed the major factors influencing the Work Life Balance of Women professionals in India such as role conflict, lack of recognition, organizational politics, gender discrimination, elderly and children care issues, quality of health, problems in time management and lack of proper social support. Work-family balance reflects an individual's orientation across different life roles, an inter-role phenomenon (Marks and MacDermid, 1996). Work-life balance is a key issue in all types of employment as dual-career families have become common and high work demands with long working hours have become the norm. The importance of helping employees achieve a balance between the demands of their work and their home lives has been emphasized. Demographic changes as seen in the increasing number of women in the workplace and dual career families have generated an increasingly diverse workforce and a greater need of employees to balance their work and non-work lives (Bharat, 2003; Komaraju, 1997; Rajadhyaksha & Bhatnagar, 2000; Ramu, 1989; Sekharan, 1992). K.Santhana Lakshmi et al, (March 2013) have examined that the Educational institutions should address the Work Life Balance related issues among their staff, specifically women and take a holistic approach to design and implement the policies to support the teaching staff to manage their WLB. Kumari K.Thriveni et al, (2012) have studied and analysed



the significant relationship between the demographic variables and WLB. Kirchmeyer (2000) views living a balanced life as “achieving satisfying experiences in all life domains, and to do so requires personal resources such as energy, time, and commitment to be well distributed across domains”. The purpose of striving very hard both at home and work at the cost of her individual health and well-being for every married working woman is to have a good quality of life. But this quality of life that she craves for is often influenced by work-life balance. Any imbalance in the work and family of an individual can hamper the quality of life thoroughly for the individual. Kofodimos (1993) suggests that imbalance—in particular work imbalance—arouses high levels of stress, detracts from quality of life, and ultimately reduces individuals’ effectiveness at work. Heather S.McMillan et al, (2011) suggested that the individual harmony and its effects has developed a new Harmony based on conflict and enrichment. N.Krishna Reddy et al, (2010) concluded that the married women employees indeed experience Work Family Conflict (WFC) while attempting to balance their work and family lives. Thus, Organization needs to formulate guidelines for the management of WFCs since they are related to job satisfaction and performance of the employees. Pleck’s (1977) research suggests that family-to-work spill-over is stronger for women and the work-to-family spill-over is stronger for men. Research suggests that female respondents in all parts of the world are pressured for time, rarely have time to relax and feel stressed and overworked most of the time, but women in emerging countries feel the strain even more so than women in developed countries. Masako SETO et al, (2004) have examined the effects of work related factors and Work Family Conflict on depressive symptoms among working women living with young children in a Japanese Metropolis. Karen M. Collins & Jason D. Shaw (2003) suggested that an equally high investment of time and involvement in work and family would reduce work–family conflict and stress thereby enhancing an individual’s quality of life. And so it goes without saying that married working women of this era can have a healthy quality of life only when work-life balance is maintained making the topic of work life balance for working women, the need of the hour. Niharika and Supriya (2010) have studied the work based factors and family related factors that are considered to contribute to work life balance. Work based factors are flexi time, option to work part time and freedom to work from home and the family related factors are child care facility and flexibility to take care of emergencies at home.

III. Need for the Study

The importance of work-life balance highlights the current concern within society and organizations about the impact of multiple roles on the health and well-being of professional women and its implications regarding work and family performance, and women's role in society. This study is basically for assessing the prevalence of work life among married working women. The purpose is also to present and discuss specifically the problems married women face in the process of balancing their work and family life. Previously, the female workforce in India was mainly employed in non-managerial, subordinate or low-profile positions. Now, they occupy almost all categories of positions in the workplace. Work-life balance is the maintenance of a balance between responsibilities at work and at home. Work and family have increasingly become antagonist spheres, equally greedy of energy and time and responsible for work-family conflict (WFC). These conflicts are intensified by the "cultural contradictions of motherhood", as women are increasingly encouraged to seek self-fulfillment in demanding careers, they also face intensified pressures to sacrifice themselves for their children by providing "intensive parenting", highly involved childrearing and development. Additional problems faced by employed women are those associated with finding adequate, affordable access to child and elderly care. Research conducted by Rout, Lewis and Kagan (1999) finds that women in India experience considerable pressure, in the morning before going out to work and after work, to do all that is necessary for the family. According to Peeters, Montgomery, Bakker and Schaufeli (2005), pressures from the job and family domains are often incompatible, giving rise to imbalance. Therefore, the concept of WLB, along with its implications, is a core issue that must be investigated as the number of working women is on the rise and the problems they face because of it is without doubt quite serious. The purpose is also to present and discuss specifically the fact that work-life is out of balance and in need of attention for most working women irrespective of the sector they are into be it academics. This study has been essential for assessing the growing need for work life balance policies for the women faculties of india. The study of work/life balance involves the examination of people’s ability to manage simultaneously the multi-faceted demands of life. Although work/life balance has traditionally been assumed to involve the devotion of equal amounts of time to paid work and non-work roles, more recently the concept has been recognized as more complex and has been developed to incorporate additional components.

IV. Objectives

- To Study the frequency of work-life balance problem among the women faculties.
- To study how various factors affecting work-lie balance influence the women faculties.
- To study the work-life balance problems of women faculties across their demographic characteristics.
- To study the effect of work-life balance on the quality of life of Women faculties.
- To examine the effect of work life balance on women’s performance and work attitude.



V. Research Methodology

A. Description of Sample

The study was conducted among the women faculties working in arts & science colleges in Madurai city. A sample of 120 women faculties was selected using Convenient Sampling. They were from various arts & science colleges in Madurai city were chosen for the study. Since the study focused only on women faculties, all the 120 respondents were women.

B. Description of the Tool Used

The questionnaire had 21 items. The major tool was the checklist. It consists of twelve statements about work–life balance where the options for answers were either ‘agree’, ‘sometimes’ or ‘disagree’.

C. Data Collection

The questionnaire was distributed to the women faculties of various arts & science colleges in person & through mail. A total of 180 check list instruments were distributed and 120 completely filled questionnaires were collected.

D. Scope

The scope of the study was limited to the women faculties working in arts & science colleges in Madurai city regarding the challenges that they face in balancing professional life and personal life.

VI. Analysis and Interpretation

In order to subject the data to statistical testing, the collected data were coded and analyzed using SPSS (originally Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 16 for Windows. The data were also tabulated with frequency tables and percentages using MS-Excel.

Results and Discussions

Profile of the Respondents: Among the 120 women faculties, maximum number of respondents belonged to the age group of 30-40 (50%). Many respondents (72.0%) had children. I focused less on unmarried faculties as there work-life is comparatively easy as compared to married faculties.

| Demographic Characteristics of Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|-----------|------------|
| Age Group of Respondents: | | |
| Under 30 years | 20 | 16.6 |
| 30 to 40 years | 60 | 50.0 |
| Over 40 years | 40 | 33.3 |
| TOTAL | 120 | 100 |
| No. of Children: | | |
| None | 23 | 19 |
| One | 45 | 37 |
| Two | 39 | 32 |
| Three or more | 13 | 11 |
| TOTAL | 120 | 100 |

Percentage Analysis

a) The response of the respondents to the statement “I am able to balance my personal and professional life well” with the options yes and no, was tabulated and the percentage analysis was found.

Table 2

| Responses | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|-----------|--------------------|------------|
| YES | 80 | 64 |
| NO | 40 | 33 |

From the above table, we find that out of the total 120 women faculties of arts & science colleges, 40(33%) of them felt that they were not able to balance their work-life while 80(64%) of them felt that they were able to do so.

b) The response of the respondents to the statement “There is a strong relationship between work-life balance and quality of life” with the options yes and no was tabulated and percentage analysis was found.



Table 3

| Responses | No. of Respondent | Percentage |
|-----------|-------------------|------------|
| YES | 100 | 83.3 |
| NO | 20 | 16.6 |

From the above table, we find that out of the total 120 women faculties of arts & science colleges, 100(83.3%) of them felt that there is a strong relationship between work-life balance and quality of life while 20 (16.6%) of them felt that there is no strong relationship between work-life balance and quality of life.

c) The response of the respondents to the statement “In general, my level of satisfaction towards my Quality of life is good.” with the options yes and no, was tabulated and the frequency distribution and percentage analysis was found.

Table 4

| Responses | No.of Respondent | Percentage |
|-----------|------------------|------------|
| YES | 90 | 75 |
| NO | 30 | 25 |

From the above table, we find that out of the total 120 women faculties of arts & science colleges, 90 (75%) of them felt that their level of satisfaction towards their Quality of life is good while 30 (25%) of them felt that their level of satisfaction towards their Quality of life is not good.

It is found through the tabulated results that majority of the respondents are successful in balancing between their personal and professional life. A small number of respondents working with arts & science colleges are found to have the feeling that the biggest challenge of being a working woman is work-life balance. This implies that women faculties of arts & science are really not facing a tough time in their attempts to balance personal and professional life. Many respondents have agreed that there is a strong relationship between work-life balance and quality of life and many of them feel that a good work-life balance can guarantee them a better quality of life. Majority of the respondents are satisfied with their quality of life.

Summary of Findings

This study was able to measure the work–life balance of women faculties working in arts & science colleges and found that women faculties find it not very tough to balance their work and personal life irrespective of the industry they are into, the age group they belong to, the number of children they have and their spouse’s profession. Working hours related WLB problems is not too much in this profession while time to socialise or being relaxed is not too tough for women in arts & science colleges. Even the married working women of this sector predominantly find it very easy to steal out time for their own hobbies or leisure activities and maintain friendships or extended relationships. The women faculty in the age group of under 30 years were found to have more work -life balance problems than those in the age group of 30 to 40 years while women faculties over 40 years were found to be balancing work-life slightly better than the above mentioned age groups. Our findings revealed the importance of work-life balance and the need to have work-life balance to have happiness and life satisfaction.

Conclusion

From the above discussion, it is reasonable to conclude that modern organizations, especially educational institutions, should address the Work Life Balance related issues among their staff, specifically women and take a holistic approach to design and implement policies to support the teaching staff to manage their work life balance which would add to the performance of these staff members. With dual career couples widely prevalent in this modern era, there is a need for systematic research into the nature of work-life conflict and further insight is required into ways by which the work-home interface can be more effectively managed. Considerably more research is needed to gain additional insight into the meaning and consequences of work–family balance. This study was able to measure employees’ work–life balance and found weekly hours of work and the stress associated with work were very important determinants of employees’ work–life balance, alongside their occupations, age and caring responsibilities. Conflicts in work-life balance of working women affects their health who report more stress, headaches, muscle tension, weight gain and depress than their male counterparts. Juggling between the obligations towards the families and expectations of the organisation and constant struggle to maintain a balance between work and family can have serious implications on the life of an individual by affecting their well-being and overall quality of life. There is a



widespread demand from employees for the right to balance work and home life in today's busy world where finding time for oneself seems impossible. Health and wellness programs can, for sure help working women in balancing their personal and professional life. But they alone cannot be the answer to addressing the problems of imbalance. The problems and difficulties of women are multi-dimensional as evident from the literature reviewed; therefore, they require further probing to help working women in balancing their work and family life.

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