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**MANAGING WORK LIFE BALANCE BY WORKING WOMEN - A CASE STUDY IN JODHPUR**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Work life and personal life are two sides of the same coin. Creating and managing a balance between the work and personal life is considered to be a work life balance issue. Increasing work pressures, globalization and technological advancement have made it an issue with both the sexes, all professionals, working across all levels and all industries throughout the world. The corporate world today is exceedingly demanding. Work deadlines are getting tighter and due to this work pressure, it becomes exceedingly difficult to maintain work – family life. Many a times, people, in the quest for reaching the top, work so hard, that they miss out on the pleasures of life. While it is absolutely great to have a flourishing career, it is equally imperative to have a life outside work. Work-personal life conflict occurs when the burden, obligations and responsibilities of work and family roles become incompatible. Women taking up work life balance challenge have an impact on women's advancement. Organization also may create work place culture and climates that reflect concern for employees' lives outside of work. It is important for organizations to periodically review current work processes and practices to determine which ones lead to work in efficiencies and employee stress. In this background the present study is a specific study of working females in service sector undertaken to determine the work-life balance and challenges faced by working women. The sample consists of 100 career women working in Jodhpur district, India. The questionnaire was collected from respondent. After analyzing by using various tools like percentage analysis, chi-square and correlation, results show that there is a work-family conflict and lack of organizational satisfaction among working women.*

**KEYWORDS**

work life balance, career, stress, organizational satisfaction.

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I10, I20, I30.

**INTRODUCTION**

**W**ork-life balance" was first used in the late 1970s to describe the balance between an individual's work and personal life. Work life and personal life are the two sides of the same coin. Traditionally creating and managing a balance between the work-life was considered to be a woman's issue. But with increasing work pressures, globalization and technological advancement have made it an issue with both the sexes, all professionals working across all levels and all industries throughout the world. The technological developments like e-mail, text messaging and cell phones which were thought of as tools to connect them to their work being away from their workplace, have actually integrated their personal and professional lives. Now professionals find themselves working even when they are on vacations.

Work life and personal life are inter-connected and interdependent. Spending more time in office, dealing with clients and the pressures of job can interfere and affect the personal life, sometimes making it impossible to even complete the household chores. On the other hand, personal life can also be demanding if you have a kid or aging parents, financial problems or even problems in the life of a dear relative. It can lead to absenteeism from work, creating stress and lack of concentration at work.

Work-personal life conflict occurs for a woman when the burden, obligations and responsibilities of work and family roles become incompatible. Obligation of one can force an individual to neglect the other.

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 fulfil 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.

The majority of women are working 40-45 hours per week and 53% are struggling to achieve work/life balance. Women reported that their lives were a juggling act that included multiple responsibilities at work, heavy meeting schedules, business trips, on top of managing the daily routine responsibilities of life and home. Successfully achieving work/life balance will ultimately create a more satisfied workforce that contributes to productivity and success in the workplace.

Although it is recognized that government has a role to play, the impact of often unintentional consequences of government intervention, can be damaging. Getting it 'right' is rarely straightforward. It is evident that this real or perceived need for flexibility is increasingly influencing employment conditions. Within organisations, people are both the most vital and the most costly resource. Traditionally, however, people have often been seen, rightly or wrongly, as being prone to inflexibility and inertia. As a consequence, many organisations have sought to achieve greater flexibility in employment conditions in recent decades. Both employers and employees lead the trend, with governments often regulating, sometimes supporting, and developments via legislation. That said, 'flexibility' often means different things to individuals as opposed to business.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Here, a brief appraisal of the studies on the issues surrounding women and employment – dual role perceptions and performance, the facilitators and constraints as well as the coping strategies women employ to achieve work-life balance – is presented with a view to unveil what has already been done on the issues related to the theme of the present study.

**Giri Goswami & Prof. Shalini Nigam (2015)** in their study 'Rewards & Work-Life Balance among Working Women: An Empirical Study in India Specific to Agra Region' revealed that women are entering the workforce to earn livelihood which leads them to arrange better child care and uplift their status in the society.

**Sudha & Dr. P. Karthikeyan (2014)** explored in their study career and goals that 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.

**Satinder Singh (2013)** provided an overview of various aspects of Work-Life Balance through the review of existing literature. The literature identifies its effect on various quality life conditions i.e. Job Satisfaction, Work Stress, Career Growth, Turnover, Absenteeism, Appreciation and competitive environment in context with Work-life Balance and its practices/policies.

**Vartha Raj & Vasantha (2012)** studied the Work Life balance of working women in service sector. They specified that the ultimate performance of its employees which in turn depends on numerous factors. The relationship between personnel and professional life can be achieved through emotional intelligence. Better emotion management is necessary in order to accomplish objective of life.

**Levy (2012)** in his study of working mothers and their perceived work-life balance showed that the age of the children is not that significant but the child-care support remains an important factor in determining perceived work-life balance.

**Rincy and Panchanatham (2011)** revealed that role overload, dependent care issues, quality of health, problems in time management and lack of proper support from the family are the major factors causing imbalance in work and personal life of women entrepreneurs.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the various factors including Personal, Organizational & Societal factors affecting work life balance of working females
2. To study impact of social & demographic variables on work life balance on working females
3. The study aims at developing and recommending strategies to integrate work into overall life issues effectively which may prove to be of some help to service sector Industry and its female employees.

## HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant impact of personal and organizational factors on work life performance.

**H<sub>11</sub>:** There is a significant impact of personal and organizational factors on work life performance.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** Social and demographic wise there is no significant difference in women's perception towards work life balance.

**H<sub>12</sub>:** Social and demographic wise there is a significant difference in women's perception towards work.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The first progressive step for the research is to develop instrumental scale for measuring the factors of work life balance for women employees. The first stage of the study has discussed about the application of factor analysis that affects the performance of women employees and some factors were reduced and prepared the modified factors scale of reduced variables. This modified scale was used for final data collection in the main study. Here, the study has emphasized that the self-constructed questionnaire which is based on five-point scale has used for data collection. Through questionnaire survey collected data is relevant. After measuring the reliability and validity of the scale it is finally prepared for the collection of data. In this study positive approach and a deductive logic have been followed by the researcher. The primary data were collected mainly from working women from different service sectors. Random Sampling Technique has been used in order to collect the primary data. A self-structured questionnaire was canvassed to the selected 100 respondents in the study area from different service sectors like Banks, Hospitals, Telecom, IT and Academics to collect the data. dimensions of work life balance such as: Individual or Personal Factors affecting work life balance, Organizational factors affecting work life balance, work performance, Effect/Outcome of work life imbalance on employees' personal /professional life and Effective measures by which work life balance could be attained at personal and organizational life.

For Secondary data, requisite details on planning and policies of government and other geographical and socio-cultural perspective of the study area was collected from authentic resources such as books and journals, research papers, Project readings, unpublished reports of government departments and other reliable sources of information broadcast.

The reliability and validity of the scale were done using Cronbach's Co-efficient Alpha, Correlation & Regression analysis and One Way ANOVA.

- Correlation analysis (To check the relationship between the factors of work life balance (Personal/Organizational Factors)
- Descriptive Statistics (Demographic profile)
- ANOVA (To check the consistency between two variables)

## FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The relationships between these two variables reveal the positive association and the study concluded that it is important for the organization to understand problems that impact on women in working life that can disturb their work life balance, their work performance and willingness to give their best to the organizations. Organizational support offered by the organization in the form of HR practices does influence work life balance that is experienced by the employees. If employees experience high level of organizational support in the form of benefits, then they exhibit less work life balance and to do more work life performance is experienced.

Work conditions are found to play a larger role than family characteristics for work life balance. Therefore, organizational policies should be emphasized on improving personal and organizational factors which are likely to have major leverage in reducing work life imbalance. As more women enter the work force, the need for counselling to help these women explore how work and family issues influence career choices will increase. Effectiveness of work life balance initiatives are helping women to progress to senior management. Family policy, welfare state provision and labour market structure behave jointly to determine distinct models of work life balance and the financial consequences associated with them.

### PERSONAL FACTOR DISCUSSION

**PERSONAL FACTOR:** This factor is considered as the most important determinant of study with a total variance of 75.074%. Major components of this factor include 'normal working hours (.899)', 'quality of time spend in organizations' (.903) and 'support from family members (.877)', 'denial of relocation/transfer affects the promotion/career growth (.897) and work life balance is an individual's responsibility (.744). During our research, it has found that for working women support of the family, time flexibility and opportunities for career growth are the important determinants which affect the work life balance.

### ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS DISCUSSION

The next factor analysis is applied on the organizational factors affecting work life balance for working women's performance. The Chi-square value is.929, it means the reliability scale for organizational factors is appropriate for factor analysis. The total scale 92.9% is reliable.

**1. CONDUCIVE WORKING ENVIRONMENT:** This factor is considered as the most important determinant of study with a total variance of 37.748%. Major components of this factor include 'timely support from management and employer (.625)', 'timely support from colleagues' (.788) and 'separate policy for WLB' (.824), 'workplace flexibility' (.782), 'safe work environment' (.794), 'career opportunities and professional development, (.827)', 'time off facility for family engagement' (.775) and 'parenting, family and child care programmes run at workplace' (.584) During our research, it has found that these factors are contributing for sustaining work life balance and also to win the competitive advantage in this economic environment.

**2. AMENITIES AND FACILITIES:** This factor is considered as the most important determinant of study with a total variance of 68.663%. Major components of this factor include 'existence of gender biasness (.590)', 'compatibility of career with work life balance' (.830), 'comfortable lunch hours' (.838), 'leave facilities' (.832) and 'discussion on genuine problems with the management for resolving' (.802) and 'WLB is an employer's responsibility.' (.597). During our research, it has found that if organizations provide some privileges for women definitely they do wonder for their organizations.

TABLE 1: FINDINGS OF THE STUDY (figures are in percentage)

KMO AND BARTLETT'S TEST (PERSONAL FACTORS)		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.849
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1514.726

FACTOR ANALYSIS ON ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS (LOADINGS WITH VARIABLES)

TABLE 2

Factors	Variance explained	Variables	Loadings	Eigen Values			
FACTOR 1 CONDUCTIVE WORKING ENVIRONEMNT	37.748%	VR 04 Timely support from management & employer	.625	5.285			
		VR 05 Timely support from colleagues	.788				
		VR06 Separate policy for work life balance	.824				
		VR07 Flexibility in time	.782				
		VR 08 Safe work environment	.794				
		VR09 Career Opportunities/Professional development	.827				
		VR10 Time off facility for family engagement	.775				
		VR11 Parenting, family and child care programmes run at workplace	.584				
		AMENITIES & FACILITIES	68.663%		VR12 Existence of gender biasness	.590	4.328
					VR 13 Compatibility of career with WLB	.830	
VR 14 Comfortable lunch hours	.838						
VR 15 Leave facility-CL/ML/EL/PL	.832						
VR 16 Discussion on genuine problems with the management for restoring	.802						
VR 17 WLB is an employers' responsibility	.597						

TABLE 3: ANOVA ON DEMOGRAPHIC & SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Marital Status	Between Groups	6.413	16	.401	1.072	.380
	Within Groups	140.524	376	.374		
	Total	146.936	392			
AGE	Between Groups	12.243	16	.765	1.069	.384
	Within Groups	269.192	376	.716		
	Total	281.435	392			
EDUCATION	Between Groups	23.263	16	1.454	1.680	.048
	Within Groups	325.470	376	.866		
	Total	348.733	392			
EXP	Between Groups	13.369	16	.836	.852	.626
	Within Groups	368.926	376	.981		
	Total	382.295	392			
DESIGNATION	Between Groups	2.322	16	.145	.327	.994
	Within Groups	167.026	376	.444		
	Total	169.349	392			
TYPE	Between Groups	4.031	16	.252	1.404	.136
	Within Groups	67.485	376	.179		
	Total	71.517	392			
DEPENDENTS	Between Groups	3.562	16	.223	.475	.958
	Within Groups	176.320	376	.469		
	Total	179.883	392			
NATURE OF JOB	Between Groups	5.674	16	.355	.940	.523
	Within Groups	141.888	376	.377		
	Total	147.562	392			
INCOME	Between Groups	8.487	16	.530	.521	.936
	Within Groups	382.892	376	1.018		
	Total	391.379	392			

In this Table, one- way ANOVA was carried out to check the hypothesis that social and demographic wise there is no significant difference in women's perception towards work life balance.

RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

The current research has tried to investigate the influential factors associated with the personal and organizational factors and on the basis of factors following hypotheses have been tested to conclude the findings. Findings revealed results in the expected direction for the first factor based hypothesis has proven there is no significant impact of personal factors on work life performance. The important values, generated by SPSS 20.0 through running regression on the data collected are as follows: Coefficient of Correlation, R-.458, Coefficient of Determination, R2-.209, F-Test Value-105.361 at P-value-.000 and lastly tolerance level is determined through Coefficient of independent variable, Beta-.22.534. The findings concluded that personal factors are important in sustaining the work life balance pressures from the job and family domains are often incompatible, giving rise to imbalance. 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. These changes in work culture have added to women's duties and responsibilities to their family as well as to society.

For the second objective and the hypothesis framed under it said that there is no significant impact of organizational factors on work life performance. To test the above hypothesis correlation and regression were applied and it is concluded that organizational factors have positive relationship with work life performance. The important values, generated by SPSS 20.0 through running regression on the data collected are as follows: Coefficient of Correlation, R-.591, Coefficient of Determination, R2-.399, F-Test Value-211.839 at P-value-.000 and Coefficient of independent variable, Beta-18.826. The calculated value of F is higher than tabulated value at 5% significant level, so null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted. The findings are statistically significant at the 5% level. Hence, the relationships between these two variables reveal the positive association and the study concluded that it is important for the organization to understand problems that impact on women in working life that can disturb their work life balance, their work performance and willingness to give their best to the organizations. Organizational support offered by the organization in the form of HR practices does influence work life balance that is experienced by the employees. If

employees experience high level of organizational support in the form of benefits, then they exhibit less work life balance and to so more work life performance is experienced.

Women have to cope up with high work targets, office commitments, tight meeting schedules and the duties and responsibilities of life and home. Employers should concentrate on framing various policies and schemes to facilitate Work life balance to encourage and attract women employees.

Factors in the workplace can be critical in both encouraging retention and in reducing turnover of women employees. Work conditions are found to play a larger role than family characteristics for work life balance. Therefore, organizational policies should be emphasized on improving personal and organizational factors which are likely to have major leverage in reducing work life imbalance. As more women enter the work force, the need for counselling to help these women explore how work and family issues influence career choices will increase. Effectiveness of work life balance initiatives are helping women to progress to senior management. Family policy, welfare state provision and labour market structure behave jointly to determine distinct models of work life balance and the financial consequences associated with them.

## CONCLUSION

This study is focused on women employees' work life balance in different service sectors. In all the sectors it is very tough job for women employees to bridge the gap between personal life and professional life. Especially in IT sector, women felt pressure of work life balance.

The findings revealed that if women get family support and from the organizations they get flexi time and full cooperation from their superiors, so that they can manage their work life balance. Today more than 70% women are working and they contributing to the Indian economy so the Government should take care and apply rules in private as well as in public sector. Due to changed economy, organizations have to be more conscious about the changes, preferences of the customers, changing needs, desires etc.

Through factor analysis, the loadings of these items have been studied in lieu of the work life balance. If the working environment is healthy then it is easy for women employees to manage their work life balance. Hence these following factors are responsible for making the environment congenial and conducive for them. These are; feeling of personal accomplishment, able to spend time with children, stress free work schedule etc.

Human resource professionals and management consultants can also use this scale to redress WLB issues among women entrepreneurs. By analyzing the major dimensions of the WLB issues of the female employees, one can understand the areas in which the needs remediation and provide advice accordingly. Aspiring entrepreneurs could also use the scale to better understand probable WLB issues, allowing them to take appropriate precautionary actions. Meanwhile, academicians may incorporate the tool into the business curriculum. This is especially important in the Indian context because more and more women are pursuing professional careers because of the changing social and economic situation. Based on the major dimensions involved in the present study, the academics could also encourage public awareness regarding the WLB issues faced by women employees, hopefully rendering societal attitudes toward them more favourable.

## SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following suggestions can be given to the executives to manage the work life balance: The following factors have been studied: work permit from telecommuting, support from local and top management, support from colleagues at workplace, being able to bring children at work place occasionally (subject to requirement), reduced working hours and flexible timings, transportation facilities, formulation of favourable HR policies, conducting personal and wellness development programmes etc. Prioritizing the tasks and planning the activities can help to take out some free time which can be utilized for other purposes.

Taking some time out for hobbies and leisure activities, spending time with loved ones can help to beat the stress.

Learn to say "no" if required.

Sharing the responsibilities will help to maintain work life balance

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