



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE AND MANAGEMENT

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QUALITY OF LIFE OF FEMALE PROFESSIONALS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MALE VS. FEMALE

PRATIBHA BARIK
RESEARCH SCHOLAR
PT. RAVI SHANKARSHUKLA UNIVERSITY
RAIPUR (CG)

ABSTRACT

At present the Indian women's are changing constantly. Women of today are no more confined to kitchen and four walls of the house. The unfolding changes in the composition of the workforce together with the growing proportion of workers in non-traditional family forms have focused discriminating attention on the conflicts faced by employed men and women in balancing the competing demands and responsibilities of work and family roles. The females are coming out and earning equivalent to men. The aim of the study is to find the quality of life among female professionals in comparison to the male employees. The study is conducted with 50 male and 50 female professionals working in government and private sector organizations. The research reveals that there is no difference in the quality of work life of male and female employees, but still the women professionals are less satisfied in their general life than the men.

KEYWORDS

Indian Women, Quality of Life, Female Professional.

INTRODUCTION

Quality of Life refers to the quality of life of individuals in their working organizations- commercial, educational, cultural, religious, and philanthropic or whatever they are. According to the WHOQOL Group, QoL is defined as "the individual's perception of his position in life in the context of his culture and the value systems of the society in which he lives compared to his objectives, expectations, standards and concerns." (WHO Quality of Life Group 1995, p.1405). Quality of life among women involves a variety of everyday activities, such as work, taking care of home, children and other activities like spending time on leisure activities.

Baba and Jamal (1991) listed what they described as typical indicators of quality of working life, including:

- Job satisfaction
- Job Involvement
- Work role ambiguity
- Work role conflict
- Work role overload
- Job stress
- Organizational commitment
- Turn-over intentions

NEED FOR QUALITY OF WORK LIFE FOR WORKING WOMEN'S

As from an era "Men are bread winners, women are home-makers"

It was the time when husband earns and wife's were staying at home, busy with family chores. But now the time has changed women's are becoming professional and they are also earning. Though the women have come out to work but still they have to cook and look after the children's. So how does she balance her work with life at home?

Women's in India are still struggling to establish their own identity. They have to face difficult situations because of competing demands between job and family life. But still Indian women's are all the way to break the glass ceiling.

Most women, because of familial or societal pressures, may find it difficult to continue in the same strain. The question is not whether this workplace environment is right or wrong but what can we do to make it favorable for both men and women? Where and how do we begin the process?

The growing presence of professional women at workplace in India, as in other countries, is leading to a noticeable increase in dual role. Where the women try to manage work and non-work domains concurrently. The challenge in the work domain for professional women is pursuit and enhancement of dual careers, each with its demand on the commitment, time, and energy of individual members. The non-work domain includes multiple-role commitments from family members making demand on emotional, cognitive and financial resources for personally meaningful pursuits.

These increased responsibilities at home when combined with unhealthy work relationships can cause stress and mental problems such as loss of sleep, headaches, BP problems etc. At present many organizations have adequate preventive strategies and response mechanisms to address issues of sexual harassment, violence and discrimination at the workplace. Organizations are providing various facilities such as extended maternity leave, crèche/daycare facilities, half day working, loss-of-pay leave, telecommuting, facilitating re-entry of women through crash training programmes, providing dependable child care facilities, flexible work schedules, job etc. This is supporting them a lot in maintaining better quality of work life.

THE INDIAN CONTEXT

The growing number of professional females in India is forcing the organizations to play a major role in providing better quality of worklife. As Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985; Sekaran, 1986 researched that employed women who are married and/ or those who have children tend to experience high level of career family conflict because of the conflicting pressures arising from family and work.

As the researcher researched that family environment and work environment are the two factors that contribute to the enhancement of complications or problems for employed women, and between the two, the non job factors or family-related factors weigh more importantly for women (Joshi 1990). It has been found by empirical research that career women in India shows that work and family dilemmas are often different from those reported by women in the west (Sekaran,1992).

Komaraju, 1997, found that the growing number of educated women in India- who are participating in the Urban, organized, industrial sector in technical, professional and managerial positions- has been accompanied by a steady growth in dual career families. Paul, Lewis and Kagan (1999), 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

As compared to their counterparts in other parts of the world, Indian employees face a lot of difficulties in managing their work and life.

The studied showed that although conflict between career and family roles can be a potential source of stress for both women and men managers, it affects women in India more than men because of many reasons. While social, legal and economic reforms have helped women to join the workforce in India, the continuing influence of normative attitudes and values have prevented them from altering the perception of the society as well as their own regarding sex-roles. Equal distribution of domestic responsibilities is thus a distant possibility now (Bharat, 2003).

Aryee, Srinivas and Tan, (2005), surveyed that the expectation that women should give priority to the family suggest that women managers would experience higher level of parental role- oriented than men

THE OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To find out the comparative analysis of quality of life of working women and men.
- To understand the perception of women professional towards their general life satisfaction.
- To study the quality of life of female professionals in government and private sector.
- To study the impact of age on quality of life of both male and female professionals.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To test the above, the following null hypotheses were formed. The hypotheses were as follows:

- H1 – There is no significant difference between the quality of work life of male and female employees.
- H2- Male employee’s general satisfaction in life is significantly better than female employees.
- H3- Quality of work life of female employees in public sector is significantly better than the employees of private sector.
- H4- General life satisfaction of female employees in public sector is significantly better than the private sector employees.
- H5- There is a significant difference in the quality of work life of female employees with respect to their age groups.
- H6- There is a significant difference in the general life satisfaction of female employees with respect to their age groups.

This study was conducted with a total sample of 50 women professional and 50 male professionals through random sample method. The respondents were from private and public sector organizations. The male respondents were from Bhilai Steel Plant and female respondents from State Bank of India, ICICI Bank and Chhattisgarh State Electricity Board. The primary data is collected for the study. The primary data is collected through survey method. A structured questionnaire was developed for this research work. It consists of two parts- the quality of work life in an organization and how you feel about the general satisfaction in your life. Respondents were asked to judge the factors/statements through four-point scale ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”. For data calculation, “strongly agree” was given 4 points, “agree” was given 3 points, “disagree” was given 2 points and “strongly disagree” was given 1 point. Apart from this, data was collected through interviews to have a greater understanding of the issues. Here various hypotheses were tested. Percentage, average, standard deviation, t-test and one way ANOVA were used for data analysis.

RESPONDENT’S PROFILE

Out of 50 male respondents 2% are below 25 years of age, 4% are 25- 35 yrs of age, 38 % are 35-45 yrs of age, 46% are 45- 55 yrs of age and 10% are above 55 yrs. From female professionals 22 % are below 25 yrs, 40% are 25-35 yrs, 20% are 35-45 yrs and 18% are 45-55 yrs. Majority of the male respondents (100%) are married and among women professionals 62% are married and 28% are unmarried. In terms of the male respondents only 22% of the spouse is in working and rest 66% of the spouse are house wife. Among male and female respondents 85% of the employees are in government sector and 15% are in private sector. In terms of education of male respondents 2% are Under Graduate, 84% are Graduate, 14% are Post-Graduate and of female respondents 44% are Under Graduates and 56% are Post-Graduate.

DISCUSSION ON THE FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

COMPARISON BETWEEN THE QUALITY OF WORK LIFE OF MALE AND FEMALE EMPLOYEES

TABLE 1: QWL OF MALE AND FEMALE EMPLOYEES

Groups	Mean	S.D.	‘t’
Male (N=50)	123.3	10.85	0.12
Female (N=50)	123.06	8.39	

It’s clear from the analysis that in case of both male and female employees the degree of satisfaction about the quality of work life in the organization is almost the same. The null hypothesis is that there is no significant difference between Quality of Work Life between male and female employees. The obtained t=0.12 which is less than the table value of 2.576 at 1% level, which is statistically insignificant and hence the null hypothesis is accepted. Hence it indicates that male (M=123.30) and female (M =123.06) are equally satisfied with quality of worklife in an organization. The results of the study revealed that about 61% of female professionals are equally satisfied with their organization policies. Even organizations are paying due importance on the quality of work life of working women’s of their organizations.

GENERAL LIFE SATISFACTION OF MALE AND FEMALE EMPLOYEES

TABLE 2

Groups	Mean	S.D.	‘t’
Male subjects (N=50)	45.90	5.45	4.15
Female subjects (N=50)	40.84	6.66	(p<.01)

The study reveals that male (M=45.09) are more satisfied in their life as compared to female (M=40.84). The null hypothesis is that Male employee’s general satisfaction in life is significantly better than female employees. As t=4.15 which is statistically significant at 0.01 level, as the calculated value of t is more than the table value 2.576. Thus Ho is accepted. This is very true as the women professional have to take care of the family responsibilities vis-à-vis to their spouse. As the survey showed that almost 81.73% of the male and about 76.27% of the female respondents are satisfied with their life. Still now a days male are coming up to do the home chores, as most of the male respondents (84%) favored that in the morning at work fly offs.

QUALITY OF WORK LIFE OF FEMALE EMPLOYEES IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS

TABLE 3: QWL OF GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR OF FEMALE EMPLOYEES

Groups	Mean	S.D.	‘t’
Govt. sector employees (N=35)	123.63	8.43	2.08
Private sector employees (N=15)	119.40	7.29	(p<.05)

The findings suggests that in government sector employees are more satisfied in their quality of work life in the organization (M=123.84) as compared to private sector employees (M=119.40) at .05 level of statistical significance (t=2.08, p<.05). As Ho is QWL of government of female employees is better than private sector employees. The calculated value of t is more than the table value 1.960 at 5% level, so the hypothesis is accepted. An overwhelming majority of government employees (75%) and only 66% of private employees have supported this statement that “the salary and compensation which they are receiving is adequate for them and their family”. In government sector 71% of the employees agreed that they don’t feel overburden with the duration and the work load of their organization in comparison to private sector employees (26%). In private sector only 53% employees agrees that they never feel insecure about their job whereas in government sector mostly (90%) are secure about their jobs.

GENERAL LIFE SATISFACTION OF FEMALE EMPLOYEES IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS

TABLE 4: LIFE SATISFACTION OF GOVERNMENT VS PRIVATE SECTOR EMPLOYEES

Groups	Mean	S.D.	't'
Govt. sector employees (N=35)	42.3	6.68	2.50
Private sector employees (N=15)	37.40	5.39	(p<.05)

The hypothesis is the general life satisfaction of female employees in public sector is significantly better than the private sector employees. The above result it indicates that government sector female employees seems to have more magnitude of general satisfaction in life (M=42.3) as compared to private sector female employees (M=37.40) at .01 level of statistical significance $t=2.50$, $p<.05$, so the H_0 is accepted. About 75% of the government female employees are satisfied with the schooling facility available for their children's than private sector employees only 40% are satisfied. As the government employees are not overburden with the work load that's why they get enough time to take care of their children's so almost 70% of government employees are satisfied with children's study whereas in private sector only 40% are satisfied with it. If we talk of housing facility maximum of government employees agreed on the statement "satisfied with housing accommodation". So from the above analysis it's clear that in government sector work-life issues are followed more than in the private sector.

QUALITY OF WORK LIFE OF FEMALE EMPLOYEES WITH RESPECT TO THEIR AGE GROUP

TABLE 5: QWL OF FEMALE EMPLOYEES ON THE BASIS OF AGE

Age group	Number (N)	Mean	S.D.	F
<25 years	11	122.18	5.79	0.52
25-35 yrs	20	121.75	8.76	
35-45 yrs	10	125.40	7.89	
45-55 yrs.	09	124.04	11.06	

The finding suggests that no statistical significant difference was found on quality of work life in organization on the basis of different age among female groups. As the hypothesis is, there is a significant difference in the quality of work life of female employees with respect to their age groups. The calculated value of $F=0.90$ which is less than the table value 2.76 at 5% level with d.f $v_1=3$ and $v_2=47$, so the H_0 is rejected, which is statistically insignificant, so it gives weightage to above analysis. Thus it shows that age doesn't make much difference in quality of work life. About 96% of the employees agree that they are equally treated in respect of caste, religion and community and 64% they say that all the employees are equally treated for strict observation of rules and regulations of the organization. So there is no inferior complexity among the employees with different age groups.

GENERAL LIFE SATISFACTION OF FEMALE EMPLOYEES WITH RESPECT TO THEIR AGE GROUPS

TABLE 6: LIFE SATISFACTION OF FEMALE EMPLOYEES

Age group	Number (N)	Mean	S.D.	F
<25 years	11	34.09	2.80	20.41
25-35 yrs	20	39.25	5.29	
35-45 yrs	10	44.20	4.63	
45-55 yrs.	09	48.88	3.98	

In the study the female employees at the age of 45-55 yrs are highly satisfied than whose age is less than 25 years, between 25-35 years and between 35-45 years respectively. There is a significant difference in the general life satisfaction of female employees with respect to their age groups. The calculated value of $F=20.41$ which is more than the table value 4.31 with d.f $v_1=3$ and $v_2=47$, hence the hypothesis is accepted. After the age of 45yrs a female is satisfied with her position in an organization, little bit free from children's responsibilities and a mental peace is their as her spouse is in good position, having their own house etc are the factors which make them more satisfied in their life. This shows that among female employees the general satisfaction of life differs with a different age group. So the females who are married having children's are more satisfied in their life than unmarried females. The observation showed that only 36% of female employees below 25 years, 75% of 25-35 yrs of age, 80% of 35-45 years of age and female employees with an age of 45-55 years favored this statement "How much are they satisfied in terms of leading a stoic state of mind in the present form of living". This indicates that female unmarried employees are more career conscious than married employees.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The research undertaken indicates that female professionals are continuously making an afford to manage a proper balance between their family and work. The organizations are also putting their best to retain the female employees as the study showed that there was no difference in the quality of work life of male and female professionals.

It is important to note that the female professionals are less satisfied in there general life than the male employees. As many women professionals agreed that they are over burden with the family responsibilities. Due to this they are not able to utilize their full potential at work. A significant percentage of the female respondents showed their strong preference for other things being important in their life than work and they avoid taking extra duties and responsibilities.

From the research it was very clear that the women professionals in public sector organizations are more satisfied than at private sector organizations. As the facility and policies provided at public sector organizations help them to develop a system where they can establish a balance and best utilize their potentials. More than 75% of the women professional at private sector organizations agreed that "they are insecure about their job and are over burden with the duration and the workload in their organization".

Among the female professions between the age group of 45-55yrs are more satisfied in their life. This indicates that women professionals reaching the middle of their career, the work-family conflict increases a lot and they are not able to manage it properly. Thus it shows that the organization policies are not much supportive for the women professionals in managing the balance between work-life. So, the organization needs to recognize the dual responsibilities of female professionals and need to develop a system where they can build a balance between work and life.

The results of this study throw up a number of issues that are to taken into consideration by the organization on priority basis to boost the female professionals. The female professionals face family challenges due to which it hampers the organizational progress. It is to be understood that the burden of managing work and family among the women professionals can result in negative mental and physiological health outcomes like, high blood pressure, headache, depression etc. Along with it acts as a barrier in their career. In this competitive environment, when the numbers of women professionals are increasing rapidly, the organization must think for providing better quality of life. They should think on the sensitive issues of making a family-friendly environment.

The organization should go for flexible working hours, childcare, telecommuting, job-sharing, emergency care facilities for children and elders and also support them for non-work commitments. It would help the organization to pool the talented women professionals at every level. The Indian organization has to understand that societal expectations and family responsibilities do come in the way of female professionals and their career. The organization should encourage family-friendly practices. They should ensure for various work-life requirements which would help the women professionals to balance their work and family responsibilities.

It's very necessary to understand that the married woman with children requires more organizational support than the unmarried and married females with no children. So it's the prime responsibility of the employers to take care while designing the human resource policies so that they can best utilize the women's potential.

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