



A Study of Work Life Balance among Working Women

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Abstract

Indian families are undergoing rapid changes due to the increased pace of urbanization and modernization. Indian women belonging to all classes have entered into paid occupations. At the present time, Indian women's exposure to educational opportunities is substantially higher than it was some decades ago, especially in the urban setting. This has opened new vistas, increased awareness and raised aspirations of personal growth. This, along with economic pressure, has been instrumental in influencing women's decision to enter the work force. Most studies of employed married women in India have reported economic need as being the primary reason given for working. Primary data was collected with the help of Scale and finally 126 filled questionnaires were used for testing hypotheses. t – test and Anova has been applied to test the hypotheses.

Introduction

Women's employment outside the home generally has a positive rather than negative effect on marriage. In India, it is taken for granted that economic activities are exclusively the prerogative of males while domestic work, child bearing and child rearing are the sole occupations of women. Historically, women in India have not enjoyed a good status in workplace settings whether in managerial or operative roles. Since times immemorial, women have been burdened with work of all sorts all through their lives. From reproduction to all household chores and outside, their role as worker is significant, unique and burdensome. But they are discriminated and exploited all over.

The working sphere of Women in India is changing at incredible pace due to, progressive reduction in trade barriers, modern innovation in technologies, globally interconnected market place, cut throat competition and business rivalry and changing family and population patterns. By family pattern it means that the changing family structure from joint family to nuclear family, altered family value systems, and diminished quality time for self and children, increase in time spent on internet and altered social exchanges and communications. These factors bring out tense anxiety into the life of the women and then it is magnified many times if both the husband-wife work and they have children of growing age and old age parents. This constant worry can cause disorder on the psychological comfort of the women due to a feeling of diminished control over one's life and a hopeless perception that there is never enough time to have a sensible stability and balance in life.

This mental stress for women lead to physical stress and cause ill health, headache, gastritis, body ache etc. or lead to long term cardiac problems, high blood pressure, diabetes or other psychiatric problems. All these problems generate Work life conflict especially for women employees, which results in Increased Absenteeism, Increased Employee Turnover, Reduced



long way towards improving productivity and enhancing quality of work and family life. Flex time, home working, child care facilities and the option to work part time are facilities that need to be introduced. Building a supportive work environment is yet another important initiative to be addressed”.

Duxbury and Higgins(2007), women are more likely than men to report high levels of role overload and caregiver strain. This is because women devote more hours per week than men to non-work activities such as childcare, elder care and are more likely to have primary responsibility for unpaid labour such as domestic work.

Hyman and Summers (2004) classified seven major problems which are associated with current practices over work-life balance these are unevenness of adoption across different sectors and organizations, lack of formalization of policies at organizational level, restricted employee voice over the introduction and implementation of policies , policies are primarily to meet business needs rather than those of employees, there is no evidence of reduction in working hours, tangible and intangible work intrusions into domestic life , domestic responsibilities are still conducted primarily by women irrespective of their employment status.

Hyman et al. (2003) observed that “organizational pressures, combined with lack of work centrality, result in work intruding into non-work areas of employees’ lives. Such intrusions often manifest themselves differently depending on the type of work, extent of autonomy and organizational support”.

Burke (2002) founded that” Men feel more satisfied when they achieve more on the job even at the cost of ignoring the family. On the other hand, women stress that work and family are both equally important and both are the sources of their satisfaction. For them the former is more important. When work does not permit women to take care of their family, they feel unhappy, disappointed and frustrated. They draw tight boundaries between work and family and they do not like one crossing the other”.

Higgins and Duxbury (1992) expressed that” work conflict is a greater source of work-family conflict” whereas personal or “family lives, interfere with work are associated for fewer hours but work that interferes with life matters” as revealed by the researcher Reynolds (2005).

Higgins et al.(1992), Hochschild (1989), Kelley and Voydanoff (1985), Hochschild (1989) Thompson & Walker (1989) revealed that “working women face well-documented conflicts due to their continuing role as primary caretakers for their homes, children, and/or elderly parents being women's greater responsibility for children and other family members and they experience more interruptions than men resulting common household problems”.

Super (1980) identified six common life roles. He indicated that the need to balance these different roles simultaneously is a reality for most individuals at various stages throughout their lives. Rather than following a transitional sequence from one role to another, women are required to perform an accumulation of disparate roles simultaneously, each one with its unique pressures. Multiple role-playing has been found to have both positive and negative effects on the mental health and well-being of professional women. In certain instances, women with multiple roles reported better physical and psychological health than women with less role involvement. In other words, they cherished motivational stimulation, self-esteem, a sense of control, physical stamina, and bursts of energy. However, multiple roles have also been found to cause a variety of adverse effects on women's mental and physical health, including loss of appetite, insomnia, overindulgence, and back pains.

Objectives

1. To study the work life balance with respect to income.
2. To study the work life balance with respect to age group.
3. To study the work life balance with respect to marital status.

Research Methodology



Universe of the study-Working Women of MP state have been considered for study.

Sampling Technique- Convenient Sampling

Sample Size- 150 questionnaires were distributed out of which 126 properly filled questionnaires were collected.

Primary Data-It was collected using the scale.

Tools for data analysis-Normality, Reliability, t- Test, One way Anova

Hypotheses-

H₀₁:- There is no significant effect of income on Work Life Balance.

H₁₁:- There is a significant effect of income on Work Life Balance.

H₀₂:- There is no significant effect of age on Work Life Balance.

H₁₂:- There is a significant effect of age on Work Life Balance.

H₀₃:- There is no significant effect of marital status on Work Life Balance

H₁₃:- There is a significant effect of marital status on Work Life Balance

Result and Discussion

Normality-Most statistical tests assume that the data are normally distributed hence there is a necessity to check the distribution. The Kolmogorov- Smirnov Statistic tests the hypothesis that the data normally distributed. A low significance value less than 0.05 indicates that the distribution of the data differs significantly from a normal distribution. After conducting this test, it was found that the assumption holds good for the data. The normality value is: **.499** (Please see Annexure 1)

Reliability

Reliability test has been made for testing the reliability of Quality of work life, with the help of Coefficient (Cronbach Alpha). Reliability of data is **.75** (Please see Annexure 2) which is excellent, according to different theory of reliability value above 0.6 is appropriate, low value below the 0.6 implies that reliability may not be appropriate.

Hypothesis testing for Income (H₀₁)

Since p value is .287(Annexure 3) which indicates that income does not influence work life balance. As it can be understood that income can influence physical efforts of a woman but it cannot influence the mental pressures or concerns of a working women. So it can be stated that income does not influence the work life balance.

Therefore **H₁** is rejected, and **H₀** is accepted. Hence, there is no significant effect of income on Work Life Balance.

Hypothesis testing for Age(H₀₂)

Since p value is .568 (Annexure 4) which indicates that age does not influence work life balance. Since this is because, as per the age increases, roles and expectation changes as well such as household responsibilities, career tension, family pressures, and tension of children. This leads to a bit pressure and tension for a women and cause work life imbalance

Similarly, when testing for organizational variables **Sturges & Guest (2004)** found that age, gender, marital status and dependent children had no effect on the work-life balance. Therefore **H₁** is rejected, and **H₀** is accepted. So, there is no significant effect of age on Work Life Balance.

Hypothesis testing for Marital status (H₀₃)

Since p value is .244 (Annexure 5) It is found that marital status does not influence work life balance. This is because the unmarried woman also has to face certain difficulties in her life like career pressure, family responsibilities, work load which also leads to imbalance in work life.

Hamilton and Gordon and Whelan Berry (2006) focussed on understanding the work life conflict of never married women without children. Their findings showed that never married women



without children do experience conflict specifically work to life conflict and often at similar levels to that experienced by other groups of working women.

Therefore H_1 is rejected and H_0 is accepted. So, there is no significant effect of marital status on Work Life Balance.

Conclusion

It can be concluded from this study that work life balance is not influenced by age, qualification, income, marital status and experience.

As today we see women working in almost all types of professions demonstrating that there is no gender difference in work. In fact many organizations say that women are playing a vital role in uplifting the organization. This is a positive development that women are making their presence in different walks of life. On the other hand, for every woman there is one more background to manage, which is home and personal life. Today with increasing demands at work place, the interface between work life and personal life assumed significance which demands more attention. The pressures of the work or personal life can lead to stress. According to studies, it has been found that such situation affects person's health both physiologically and psychologically.

Therefore, it is important for employees to maintain a healthy balance between work and their private lives. For the employers, Work-life balance of employees will be an important input in designing appropriate policies for employees to address work –life balance issues.

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Annexure 1

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		VAR00001
N		126
Normal Parameters ^a	Mean	80.2619
	Std. Deviation	12.02942
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.074
	Positive	.047
	Negative	-.074
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.828
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.499

a. Test distribution is Normal.

Annexure 2 - For Reliability

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	126	52.3
	Excluded ^a	115	47.7
	Total	241	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.751	32

Annexure – 3 Hypothesis testing for Income

Descriptives

VAR00016

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
>100000	44	82.6818	9.41244	1.41898	79.8202	85.5435	66.00	104.00
100000- 300000	55	79.1455	13.22094	1.78271	75.5713	82.7196	48.00	109.00
400000-700000	23	79.5652	12.75228	2.65903	74.0507	85.0797	58.00	102.00
800000-1000000	4	73.0000	15.42725	7.71362	48.4518	97.5482	52.00	86.00
Total	126	80.2619	12.02942	1.07167	78.1409	82.3829	48.00	109.00

ANOVA

VAR00016

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	548.323	3	182.774	1.271	.287
Within Groups	17540.034	122	143.771		
Total	18088.357	125			



Table 4 Hypothesis testing for Age

Descriptives

VAR00001

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
<20 yrs.	9	83.6667	9.44722	3.14907	76.4049	90.9284	71.00	102.00
20-29 yrs	51	81.7059	11.36186	1.59098	78.5103	84.9015	56.00	102.00
30-39 yrs	37	79.3514	12.97266	2.13269	75.0261	83.6767	52.00	109.00
40-49 yrs	17	79.5882	12.07300	2.92813	73.3809	85.7956	48.00	92.00
50-59 yrs	10	76.0000	14.69694	4.64758	65.4864	86.5136	49.00	94.00
more than 60 yrs	2	72.0000	4.24264	3.00000	33.8814	110.1186	69.00	75.00
Total	126	80.2619	12.02942	1.07167	78.1409	82.3829	48.00	109.00

ANOVA

VAR00001

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	567.219	5	113.444	.777	.568
Within Groups	17521.138	120	146.009		
Total	18088.357	125			

Annexure 5 Hypothesis testing for Marital Status

Descriptives

VAR00001

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Married	83	79.2651	12.46956	1.36871	76.5423	81.9879	48.00	109.00
Unmarried	39	82.8205	9.67055	1.54853	79.6857	85.9553	63.00	102.00
Others	4	76.0000	21.40093	10.70047	41.9463	110.0537	57.00	102.00
Total	126	80.2619	12.02942	1.07167	78.1409	82.3829	48.00	109.00

ANOVA

VAR00001

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	410.445	2	205.222	1.428	.244
Within Groups	17677.912	123	143.723		
Total	18088.357	125			

Multiple Comparisons

VAR00001
Tukey HSD

(I) VAR00002	(J) VAR00002	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Married	Unmarried	-3.55545	2.32740	.282	-9.0770	1.9661
	Others	3.26506	6.13696	.856	-11.2944	17.8245
Unmarried	Married	3.55545	2.32740	.282	-1.9661	9.0770
	Others	6.82051	6.29412	.526	-8.1118	21.7528
Others	Married	-3.26506	6.13696	.856	-17.8245	11.2944
	Unmarried	-6.82051	6.29412	.526	-21.7528	8.1118