

Work Balance of Employee Women

Siraveni Rajitha

**Department of Commerce,
Osmania University,
Hyderabad, Telangana 500007, India.**

INTRODUCTION

Work life balance is about people having a measure of control over when, where and how they work. It is achieved when an individual's right to a fulfilled life inside and outside paid work is accepted and respected as the norm, to the mutual benefit of the individual, business and society.

In his book "managing Work-Life Balance", David Clutter buck defines work-life as:

- Being aware of different demands on time and energy
- Having the ability to make choices in the allocation of time and energy
- Knowing what values to apply to choices
- Making choices

The term 'Work-Life Balance' was first coined in 1986 in reaction to the unhealthy choices that many Americans were making in favor of the work place, as they opted to neglect family, friends and leisure activities in pursuit of corporate goals.

Work-Life balance is a person's control over the conditions in their workplace [1]. It is accomplished when an individual feels dually satisfied about their personal life and their paid occupation. It mutually benefits the individual, business and society when a person's personal life is balanced with his or her own job.

The Work-life balance strategy offers a variety of means to reduce stress levels and increase job satisfaction in the employee while enhancing business benefits for the employer. In our increasingly hectic world, the work-life strategy seeks to find a balance between work and play.

A sentence that brings the idea of work life balance to the point is: "Work to live, don't live to work".

The best individual work-life balance varies over time, often on a daily basis. The right balance for a person today will probably be different for him/her tomorrow – the right balance for a person when he/ she is single will be different when he/she gets married or he/she becomes a parent; when he/ she starts a new career verses when he/she is nearing retirement. The best work-life balance is different for each one of us because we all have different priorities and different lives.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Today's diverse workplace is increasingly populated with women, single parents and dual-career couples. The potential for conflict and stress increases as most workers struggle with the demands of balancing paid employment and home responsibilities this has led to problems both on the professional(example-attrition, job-related stress, low productivity, etc.) as well as the personal (example-stress, broken relationships, etc)front.

SCOPE FOR THE STUDY

The achievement of a balance between work and life/family responsibilities is essential for the overall wellbeing of all employees and the effective operation of workplaces.

The demand for Work-Life Balance solutions by employees and employers is expanding at an unprecedented rate. Over the coming years it will be one of the most important issues that executives and human resource professionals will be expected to manage.

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OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To find the significance of Work-Life Balance from employee's perspective.
- To measure the balance between work-life and personal-life.
- To find out the effect of stress on work and personal-life.
- To measure the imbalance between the work and family-life.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

Hypothesis is a tentative proposition formulated for empirical testing. It is a declarative statement combining concepts. It is a tentative answer to a research question. It is tentative, because it can be evaluated only after its veracity has been tested empirically.

Hypothesis of the study

- There is significant relationship between the effect of stress on work of the respondents and the work-life balance
- There is significant relationship between the imbalance between the work and family life of the respondents and work-life balance

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF CONCEPT

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Work-Life balance: David Clutterbuck defines work-life balance as:

- Being aware of different demands on time and energy.
- Having the ability to make choices in the allocation of time and energy.
- Knowing what values to apply to choices.
- Making choices.

In this research, the research has mainly focused on the employee's perspective of Work-Life Balance and its benefits.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research is a process through which we attempt to achieve systematically and with the support of data the

answer to a question, the resolution of a problem, or a greater understanding of a phenomenon.

The core concept underlying all research is its methodology. It is not enough to follow the research procedures without an intimate understanding that research methodology directs the whole endeavor – where critical decisions are made and where organizing, planning and directing the whole project take place. The methodology controls the study, dictates the acquisition of the data, and arranges them in logical relationships. Sets up a means of refining the raw data, contrives an approach so that the meanings they lie below the surface of those data become manifest, and finally issues a conclusion or series of conclusions that lead to an expansion of knowledge. The entire process is an unfiled effort as well as an appreciation of its component parts. Thus, research methodology has two primary functions:

1. To control and dictate the acquisition of data.
2. To corral the data after acquisition and extract meaningfulness from them.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Being a study of 50 employees, the findings of this study cannot be generalized to all working population.

The responses given by the respondents may be biased.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A literature review is a body of text that aims to review the critical points of current knowledge on a particular topic. A literature review usually precedes a research proposal, methodology and results section. Its ultimate goal is to bring the reader up to date with current literature on a topic and forms the basis for another goal, such as the justification for future research in the area.

Work and family research in IO/OB (1980–2002)

This monograph reviews 190 work–family [2] studies published in IO/OB journals from 1980 to 2002. The results of a content analysis are presented which catalog these articles with respect to the study focus, nature and direction of the proposed effects, and predictor, criterion,

and mediator variables examined. Then a narrative review of the articles is presented, organized in terms of the following topical areas: work–family conflict, work role stress, work–family assistance, work schedules, job-related relocation, career and job-related outcomes, gender and the relationship between work and family domains, dual-earner couples, and relationships among life domains. The review concludes with a discussion of recurring themes in the literature and the identification of blind spots in the IO/OB perspective on work and family.

Convergence between measures of work-to-family and family-to-work conflict: A meta-analytic examination

The overlap between measures of work-to-family (WFC) and family-to-work conflict (FWC) was meta-analytically investigated. Researchers have assumed WFC and FWC to be distinct; however, this assumption requires empirical verification. Across 25 independent samples (total N = 9079).

The sample size weighted mean observed correlation was .38 and the reliability corrected correlation was .48. The pattern of external correlates for the two types of conflict was also examined. Both forms of conflict had similar (.41) reliability corrected correlations with measures of organizational withdrawal. WFC conflict correlated .41 ($k = 15$, $N = 4714$) with job stressors and .17 ($k = 13$, $N = 3312$) with non-work stressors whereas FWC conflict correlated .27 with job stressors and .23 with non-work stressors. Correlations between the two forms of work/family conflict and other variables such as organizational commitment, job and life satisfaction, and health were examined. Implications for the discriminate validity of the two types of conflict measures are discussed.

Work-life balance: an exploratory study of supports and barriers in a construction project

An exploratory study of supports and barriers in a construction project. The purpose of this paper is to explore employees' perceptions of work-life balance

(WLB) in an Australian infrastructure construction project, using semi-structured focus groups. In total, 43 employees participated in the focus groups, representing 50 per cent of the project workforce at the time. Focus groups explored employees' experiences of WLB during the planning and design stage of the project, as well as their expectations for the management of WLB during the construction phase. Project culture, project resourcing and the schedule demands of the construction stage of the project were identified as barriers for WLB, while participants believed that the “project alliance” delivery model, flexibility of working hours and the project management team's support for WLB would facilitate WLB in the project. Data were collected from one case study project which utilized an alliance delivery model. Therefore, the results cannot be generalized to the construction industry as a whole or to construction projects utilizing an alliance delivery model. Data were collected from professional and white collar workers therefore the results cannot be generalized to blue collar workers. The research findings suggest new directions for future research in WLB related to project settings.

IBM Global Work/Life Survey (2003)

At IBM, first Work Life [3] Issues Survey was conducted in 1986. The survey provided information about the effectiveness of existing programs and suggestions for future programs. Surveys were repeated in 1991 and 1996 in the United States, 1998 in Europe and Latin America, and 1999 in our Asia-Pacific region. In 2001, the first IBM Global Work/Life Survey was conducted. This was the largest, most complex single-focused work/life survey by any corporate, academic, or government entity, which was conducted in 20 languages and 48 countries. More than 25,000 employees took the survey, which yielded a 44% participation rate, and provided us with 59,000 written comments from employees.

TELECOMMUTER WORK/LIFE BALANCE SURVEY

Telecommuting suggests that one positive outcome of a telecommuting work arrangement is the benefit of being

able to better balance work and personal life (Jensen, 1994; Duxbury, Higgins, & Neufield, 1998; Smith & Reid, 1996). However, other research has contradicted this argument stating that telecommuting blurs the boundaries between work and home life (Jones, 1997; Riley & McClosky, 1997). This study did not find any significant differences between telecommuters and non-telecommuters in terms of work/life balance.

INDUSTRY PROFILE

Retail industry largest industry, accounting for are 10% of the country’s GDP and around 8% of the employment retail industry in India is at the cross roads. It has emerged as one of the most dynamic and fast paced industry with several players entering the market, but because of the heavy initial investment required break even is difficult to achieve and many of these players have not tasted success so far.

However the future is promising; the market is growing, government policies are becoming more favorable and emerging technologies are facilitating operations. Retailing in India is gradually inching its way towards becoming the next boom industry. The whole concept of shopping has altered in terms of format and consumer buying behavior ushering in a revolution in shopping in India.

Modern retail has entered India as seen in sprawling shopping centers, multi strayed malls and huge complexes after shopping, entertainment and food all under one roof. The Indian retailing sector is at an inflexion point where the growth of organized retailing and growth in the consumption by the Indian population is going to take higher growth trajectory. The Indian population is witnessing a significant change in its demographics.

A large young working population with average age of 24 years, nuclear families in urban areas, along with increasing working women population and emerging opportunities in the services sector are going to be the key growth drivers of the organized retail sector in India

SOME KEY FACTS:

- Retail is India’s largest industry accounting for over 10% of the country’s GDP and around 8% of the employment.
- The market size of the Indian retail industry is about US \$312 billion.
- Retailing in India is gradually inching its way towards becoming the next boom industry.
- A large young working population with average age of 24 years.

DATA ANALYSIS

Analysis and interpretation of the data collected from the organization is given below:

TABLE 5.1-Distribution by age

Sl.No	Age(years)	Frequency	Percentage
1	Up to25	15	30%
2	26-30	27	54%
3	31-35	7	14%
4	36 and above	1	2%
	Total	50	100%

GRAPHNO.5.1

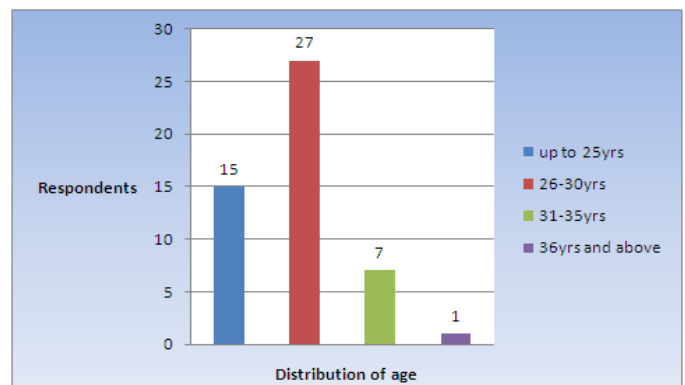


Table 5.1 and chart 5.1 show more than one-fourth of the respondents are below the age of 25 years. Almost half of the respondents (54 percent) are between the age group of 26 and 30 years. Nearly one-seventh of the respondents (14 percent) come under the age group of 31 to 35 years. The least number of respondents (2 percent) come under the age group of 36 years and above

TABLE 5.2-Distribution by work experience

Sl.No	Experience(years)	Frequency	Percentage
1	Less than 1	9	18%
2	1-2	12	24%
3	2-3	15	30%
4	Above 4	14	28%

GRAPHNO.5.2

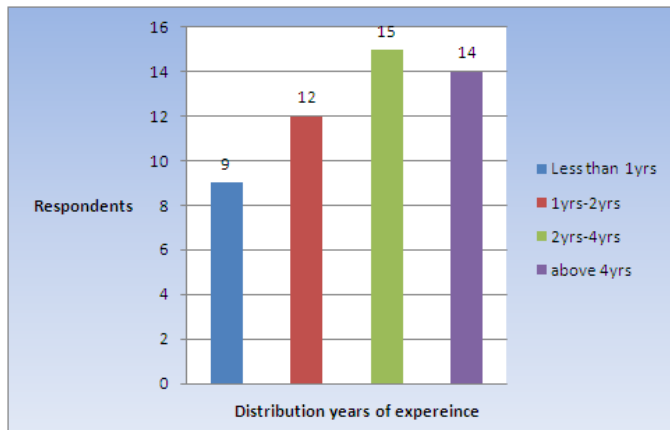


Table 5.2 and chart 5.2 show 18 percent of the respondents have less than 1 year of experience. About 24 percent of the respondents have 1 to 2 years of work experience. Nearly 30 percent of the respondents have 2 to 3 years of work experience. Almost 28 percent of the respondents have above 4 years of experience.

TABLE 5.3-Distribution by number of children

Sl.No	No. of children	Frequency	Percentage
1	None	24	48%
2	One-two	16	32%
3	Not married	8	16%
4	More than two	1	2%
5	Blank	1	2%
	Total	50	100%

GRAPHNO.5.3

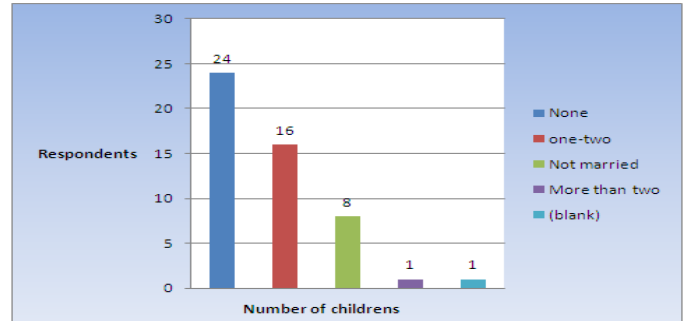


Table 5.3 and chart 5.3 show that out of total married respondents 48 percent of the respondents have no children's and 32 percent of them have one to two children's. Whereas 16 percent of respondents are not married and two percent of them have more than two children's.

TABLE 5.4-Distribution of annual income

Sl.No	Annual income (in Rs.)	Frequency	Percentage
1	Below 20,000	13	26%
2	20-25,000	13	26%
3	25-30,000	4	8%
4	Above 30,000	20	40%
	Total	50	100%

GRAPHNO.5.4

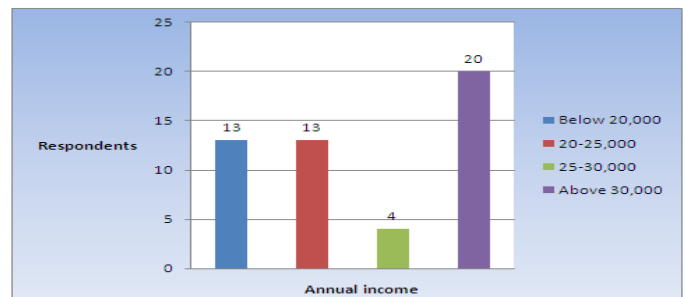


Table 5.4 and chart 5.4 show that the annual income of half the respondent (40 percent) is above 30,000 Rupees. The annual income for a little more than a quarter of the respondents (26 percent) is below 20,000 and other quarter of the respondents (8 percent) are between 20 to 25,000 Rupees.

TABLE. 5.5-Distribution of time spent in traveling.

Sl.No	Time (min)	Frequency	Percentage
1	Less than 30	33	66%
2	30-60	16	32%
3	More than 60	1	2%
	Total	50	100%

GRAPHNO.5.5

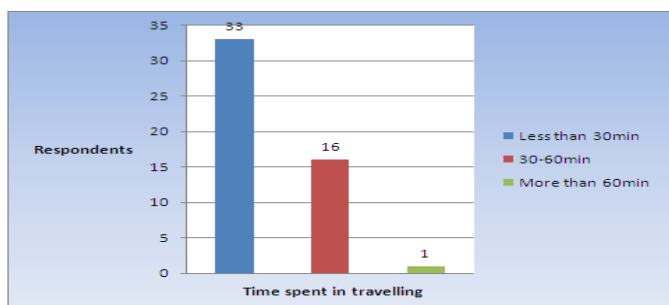


Table 5.5 and chart 5.5 shows that little less than two-third of the respondents (66 percent) takes less than 30 minutes. Nearly two-fifth of the respondents (32 percent) and one percent of the respondents take more than 60 minutes.

FINDINGS

Socio-economic profile of the respondents

A number of demographic and other variables capturing the characteristics of the employees were gathered in order to examine their relation with Work-Life Balance including age, marital status, household type such as presence of number of dependent children) etc.

- Majority of the respondents are from the age group of 26 to 30 years whereas the least number of respondents above the age 36 years.
- The annual income of majority the respondents is above 30, 000 whereas between Rs.25-30,000 for least respondents.
- Majority of the respondent are married. Out of married respondents, majority has one to two child and only 8 percent do not have any children.
- Majority of the respondents spend less than 30 minutes in commuting to/from their work place

whereas least number of respondents spends more than 60 minutes.

CONCLUSION

Work-Life Balance is of great importance to the daily life of the working population. Its impact is significant for economic competitiveness and demographic development. For example, through positively flexible working times, companies can offer women better possibilities of combing work and family, which would promote women's employability, in particular.

The achievement of a balance between work and life/family responsibilities is essential for the overall wellbeing of all employees and the effective operation of workplaces. The results of this survey reinforce the imperative for employers and employees in managing family and lifestyle commitments. These policies should also allow all people management [4] to participate to their desired extent in workforce, while ensuring that business for the organization can continue to operate productively and efficiently.

SUGGESTIONS

Suggestions for employees

The most important parameter to achieve a good work life balance industry today is self awareness of the employees towards the significance of work life balance as well as organizations policies promoting the same.

Ignorance among employees regarding the concepts of work-life balance is an area of concern. This ignorance in turn leads to non-awareness of the policies and family- friendly entitlements that their employment arrangement provides.

Suggestions for HR personnel

It is the HR department which lays down most of the policies that define the work culture in an organization. Therefore it is the bonus of the HR personnel to appreciate the significance of a good work-life balance for the employees of the organization and design policies accordingly.

The key to success of any organization has always been linked to co-operation between management and its employees. Instead of approaching Work-Life Balance as a benefit handed out to those with deserving special circumstances, the focus should be on designing employee friendly policies that promote a healthy Work-Life Balance culture within the organization.

References

Books

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Website

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Author Details



Siraveni Rajitha

Department of Commerce,
Osmania University,
Hyderabad, Telangana 500007, India.