

Work-Life Balance of Women Academicians – An Empirical Study

Ms. Annie Sam¹ and Ms. Anitha.K²

¹ Associate Professor, School Of Management Studies, Vel's University.

² M.Phil Research Scholar, School Of Management Studies, Vel's University.

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Abstract

Women as of today have placed their foot in diverse sectors such as Academics, Management, Media, Politics, Law, Medicine, Space and lot more. A survey reveals that about 82% of women are into the field of Academics. Many reviews have identified WLB as a poking issue for every woman. This study examines about the factorial evils that women face today in her work life and how she manages to balance it with respect to academicians. It also provides a knowledge on the WLB practices that needs to be reinvented so as to meet the corporate challenges for both the organization and women. This study reveals that major factors like stress, time, self, change, family management play a major role in influencing the WLB issues in women. and managing the above factors through their skill and confidence lies their ability to balance their work & life. The study has shown keen interest on how their relationship with family and work can enhance their career. The study also provides few suggestions to women on how well they can structure and balance their work life.

Keywords: Work-Life Balance, Women, Manage, work, Family, career

Introduction

Work life balance (WLB) seems to be a poking issue and it needs liberal attention from the society. According to Lawlor (1994) and Schwartz (1989), the role of women in society has started to transform especially with the bloom of women's empowerment. The professional women are no exception who sets very high standards for themselves. They have changed the ways they used to look at themselves and that has changed the way the world looks at them. However it is necessary to know how women balance the professional development & family care. It's not all women are able to balance their work-life as the challenges vary with every women. Women choose a range of sectors to exhibit their talent and struggle hard to achieve their aspiration. Most women choose the field of Academics. There are various reasons like time; lower level of stress, security & many more. Still they do face lot of problems in balancing their work and life. WLB for the academic professional has become one of the greatest challenges in today's world.

Literature Review

Guest, D.E (2002) defines work-life balance as, "satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home with a minimum role conflict. "Several researchers have found work life balance as three dimensional with respect

to time and space measure involving personal time, family care, and work (**Ungerson & Yeandle , 2005**). Reviews also indicate that the perception of work- life balance is observed to be different across genders (**Connell 2005; Smithson and Stokoe 2005; Duxbury and Higgins 1991**). Women set a trend today in entering the workplace at various levels similar to men, with similar credentials and expectations, but their career paths quickly begin to diverge (**Burke and Mattis, 2005; Burke and Nelson, 2002**). **Schwartz (1992)** offered several reasons of how the aspirations of talented women make sound business sense. Women face problems like job strain, role conflict, sexual harassment, inadequate household help, financial assistance and other occupational hazards. **Cinnamon & Rich (2005)** reported that academicians attributed high importance to both roles.

According to **Burke (2002)**, both men and women prefer to work in organizations that support WLB. Women mostly stress that work and family are both equally important and both are the sources of their satisfaction. When work does not allow women to take care of their family, they feel unhappy, disappointed and stressed. They usually try to draw tight boundaries between work and family and they do not like one crossing the other. Women, make sure that the primary care is given to domestic tasks, irrespective of their employment status. So, many women employees

continue to face difficulties to balance the two forces (Hyman and summers 2004).

Ryhal and Singh (1996) studied the correlation of job stress among university faculties. A sample of 100 faculty members comprising 30 professors, 31 associate and 39 assistant professors were taken for the study. Results revealed that assistant professors experienced higher job stress than associate professors and professors. Blix et.al (1994) conducted a study on occupational stress among university teachers and found that faculty having less than 10 years of experience had higher stress than faculty with more than 20 years of experience.

Research objectives

1. To identify the factors affecting women at work towards balancing life.
2. To find the relationship between family support & career growth.
3. To suggest few measures to improve WLB.

Methodology

This study is an empirical research with the sample of 100 women faculty from city colleges. Purposive Quota Sampling technique was followed for the study. The respondents were administered with Work-life balance questionnaire and the data was obtained. Likert’s 5 point scale was used to get the opinion of the respondents. The data obtained were subjected to simple percentage analysis and statistical analysis like regression & factor analysis.

Table 1 Sample Composition

Age	Percentage	Education	Percentage
25 - 30	48 %	Under Graduate	0 %
31- 40	32 %	Post Graduate	82 %
Above 40	20 %	Doctorate	18 %
Occupational Designation	Percentage	Experience	Percentage
Lecturer	8 %	1 - 5	44 %
Asst. Prof.	70 %	5- 10	32 %
Assoc. Prof.	20 %	10 - 15	14 %
Professor	2 %	15 - 20	8 %
		Above 20	2 %

Table 1 cites that most of the academicians, about 48% are within a age group of 25 -30 and about 82% of the respondents are post graduate. 70% of the respondents have an occupational designation as Assistant Professor with an experience of 5 to 10 years.

Findings

Factors Affecting Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance has emerged as a hot topic in recent

years– fuelled in part by changing trends in women’s social roles. 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. But how women perceive this burden and how she manages to balance her activities lays the question. There are few factors which really affect WLB of a women and its in her hands to overcome it.

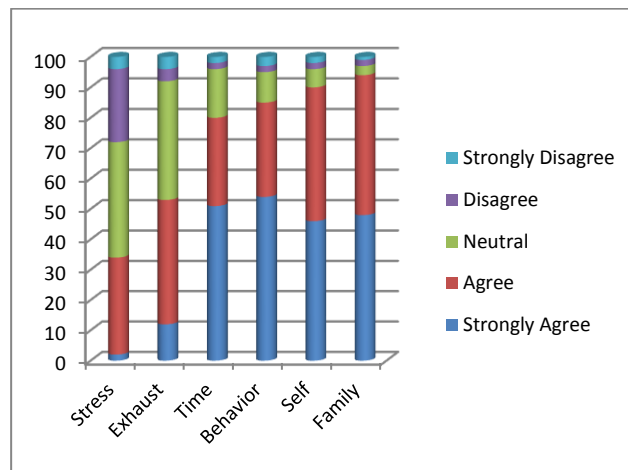


Chart 1 cites that about 51% of the respondents strongly agree that stress is a major factor which affects WLB for every woman. Also about 54% agree that behavior is a factor affecting WLB followed by family support where 48% of the respondents strongly agree to it.

Relationship between family support & career growth

The following hypotheses were tested using Regression Analysis.

H₀₁: There is no significant association between Family Motivation and the type of family.

Table 2 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.064 ^a	0.004	-0.006	0.893

a. Predictors: (Constant), Family Motivation

TABLE 3 ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	0.327	1	0.327	0.409	.524 ^b
	Residual	78.233	98	0.798		
	Total	78.56	99			

a. Dependent Variable: Family

b. Predictors: (Constant), Family Motivation

Table 4 Coefficients^a

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.247	0.581		3.866	0
	Family Motivation	-0.082	0.128	-0.064	-0.64	0.524

a. Dependent Variable: Family

The ANOVA table 3 indicates the regression is not statistically significant ($F(1, 98) = 0.409, p > 0.01$). The F-test tests the $H_{01}: \beta_1 \neq 0$ vs. $H_{a1}: \beta_1 = 0$. Clearly there is a strong evidence to accept H_{01} . Therefore there is no significant association between Family Motivation and the type of family.

The following hypotheses were tested using Chi Square.

H₀₂: There is no association between decisions relating to the benefits of family at the expense of career and their children’s age.

H₀₃: There is no association between compromising on career growth to accommodate the needs of the family and the number of children.

Table -5

Hypothesis	H ₀₂	H ₀₃
Pearson Chi Square	80.099	105.431
Df	20	12
Sig. value	0.000	0.00

From the above table the following inferences were made.

H₀₂: $p < 0.05$ There is no strong evidence to accept the null hypothesis. Therefore, there is a significant association between children’s age and the decisions relating to the benefits of family at the expense of career.

H₀₃: $p < 0.05$ There is no strong evidence to accept the null hypothesis. Therefore, there is a significant association between the number of children and one compromising on career growth to accommodate the needs of the family.

Measures to improve WLB

Women academicians need to check out clearly on how well they can balance their work-life. Few suggestions according to a survey which would help them to improve WLB are as follows.

Table-6

Suggestions for Women	Suggestions for Organizations
Manage Time	Integration
A little relaxation goes a long way	Flexibility
Rethink on your errands	Women-friendly workplace
Set your priorities	Training Programs
Leave work at work	Availability of accommodations
Nurture yourself	Commitment during hiring
Seek help of Counselors	Nominating WLB Champions
Effectively Use technology	Administrative roles to be done separately
Organize Things	Offer WLB programs according to employee needs

One can look into the above suggestions and plan out a way to lead a balanced life.

Conclusion

The above study reveals the factors that affect women in balancing their work and life. Women have the power of self-confidence and the ability to handle the above said factors. When she has complete support from her family she can excel herself in her career. Family motivation is the utmost urge what all women is looking for as of today. Few researchers have concluded that in order to balance work and life women should try to follow the 3 things **Accept, Adapt and Achieve**. Few suggestions according to a survey would be:

1. Scheduling work
2. Planning on chores
3. Relaxation

With the help of above mantra it would certainly help women to maintain a healthy balance her work and life.

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