

# Managing Work-Life Balance: A Study of Married Female Employees in Management & Engineering Colleges in a Selected Area

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## Abstract

*Today's working women are continually being challenged by the demands of full-time work and when the day is done at the office, they carry more of the commitments and responsibilities at home. With growing number of employment among females, it is becoming difficult to separate work from their lives or we can say that work has actually become their life. Since, academic jobs are growing larger and becoming oversized, so it requires more dedication and effort from faculties. In reality, academia now means that colleges/institutions want faculties to teach more courses than ever before while maintaining active research programs, obtaining significant grants and other activities that include finding, mentoring and advising students. So, these jobs today, have three dimensional demands i.e. research, teaching and services. Regardless of whether the women is in a job, they tend to bear a greater proportion of domestic responsibilities as compared to men which she tries to balance with various conflicting roles like professional, mother, wife, daughter-in-law etc. When domestic work gets coupled with a busy professional life, the workload becomes burdensome. This significantly increases pressure in office as well as in the family. For the purpose of study data was collected from female faculties of various management and engineering colleges in Lucknow city with the help of structured questionnaire. Data was analyzed with the help of percentage & frequency table analysis and hypotheses were proved with the help of chi-square and one-way ANOVA test. Present study aims to analyze the*

*relationship between socio-economic variables and work-life balance. The results revealed that there is no significant difference between the designation of female employees and their attitude towards conflicting demands at home and work. The study also shows that without proper support from spouse and family, it is difficult to balance work and life effectively.*

**Key Words:** Work-life balance, attitude, WLB programs, stress, personal commitment

## **I. Introduction**

A proper balance between work and daily living is a challenge that the workforce faces today. More or less all families are affected, even if it is done adequately. Some couples start their family, but are not very sure whether they can afford to leave their job or not. On contrary, some parents prefer more children and are also willing to work for elongated work hours. This is also a challenge to government, because if parents will not achieve work-life balance, it will lower the welfare development of the nation.

Work-life balance is a concept that advocates division of time and energy between work and the other important aspects of life. Work-life balance talks about making regular effort to spare time for family, friends, community participation, spirituality, personal growth, self care, and other personal activities, in addition to meeting demands of the workplace.

Work-life balance is not a new thought; it has originated from changing pattern of work and workplace after industrial revolution i.e., in the second half of 18<sup>th</sup> century. With the changing scenario, worldwide people are more indulged in their work-life for attaining sustainability of wealth. Emerging concept of nuclear families, dual earning partners, elongated working hours are some of the reasons that create life imbalance. According to a survey, more than 65-70% professional are not able to balance their professional and personal lives. Maintaining balance is not an easy task as it wants more synchronized

approach. The state of imbalance, results into stress, hypertension, physical deterioration, domestic and workplace conflicts and many other physical and mental problems. Thus, it becomes necessary to maintain the balance between professional and personal lives.

## **II. Review of Literature**

According to Naylor and White 2010, teachers work 10 to 20 hours per week outside of regular school hours. These long hours create stress and exhaustion, which, in turn, leads to high rates of absenteeism and burnout.

Christensen and Staines (1990), found that flexi time options decrease late comings, absenteeism, and turnover. Thomas and Ganster (1995) have found a positive association between flexi time policies and job satisfaction. They concluded that flexible time policies enhance employee productivity by decreasing absenteeism and turnover, and positively served families by decreasing depression among employees, they get more time to spend with their family leading to reduced work/ family conflicts. Greenhouse and Powell (2003) suggested that certain working conditions, such as time flexibility can mitigate the negative effects of work demand on family life.

Wesley and Muthuswamy (2005) in a study of 230 teachers in an engineering college in Coimbatore, India, found that work-to-family conflict was more prevalent than family to work conflict, thus indicating that permeability of work into family was more than permeability of family into work. Institutions or colleges emphasize on high-stake testing and that accountability increases the amount of time that teachers spend on paperwork, administration, and formal student assessment and reporting.

Work time and work location flexibility have the potential to balance work and family demands by increasing an employee's ability to control, predict and absorb change in

work and family roles (Couture, 2013). According to Lease, S.H. (1999), time is such a scarce resource that flexible arrangements are a top indicator of work life equality and employee satisfaction.

Felstead, Jewson, Phizacklea and Walters (2002) defined the work life balance (WLB) strategies as those strategies which enhance the independence of employees in coordinating with the work and non-work aspects of their lives.

### **III. Objectives of Study**

1. To find out the general opinion of female employees towards their personal & professional life.
2. To determine the relation between the attitudes of different designation of female employees towards the conflicting demands at work and home.
3. To test the relationship between the designation of the female employees and their attitude towards nature of work.
4. To analyze the relationship between the socio- economic variables and work-life balance of female employees.
5. To find out the sources of support and factors that hinder the work-life balance of the employees.

### **IV. Hypotheses of Study**

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is a significant relationship that exists between the socio-economic variables and work-life balance.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** There is a statistical significant difference between the different designations of female employees and their attitude towards conflicting demands at home and work.

**H<sub>3</sub>:** There is a relationship between the different designation of female employees and their attitude towards nature of work.

## **V. Methodology**

The present study is descriptive in nature. Majority of data was collected through structured questionnaire which consists of questions related to socio-economic background, personal and professional demands and strategies adopted by the colleges or institutions for facilitating work-life balance of their employees especially for female employees. Convenient sampling technique was adopted for selection of respondent which consist of female faculties (teaching & non-teaching) and administrative staffs of various management and engineering colleges in Lucknow city. The sample size for study was 200, out of which 150 questionnaires were received duly filled, giving 75% return rate. The collected data was analyzed with the help of percentage tables and graphs and hypotheses were tested with the help of chi-square and one-way ANOVA test.

## **VI. Result & Discussion**

Socio-economic conditions of respondents are shown in Table 1 and Table 2. From the total number of respondents 62% (n = 92) female are in the age of 25-35, 36% (n = 24) female respondents are between age of 35-45, which shows that majority of married female employees lies between the age of 25-35. 62% of female employees have more than 5 years of experience and 67% have highest qualification as post graduation. 43% (n = 65) female respondents received compensation between 15000-25000 and only 14% females received compensation more than 25000, which also sometimes created a problem of work-life balance. Besides this, there were few colleges / institutions which were running 5 days a week while others had 6 day working. In the study 122 respondents out of 150 reported working for six days while only 19% worked for 5 days.

58% female employees agree to work for 6-7 hours per day, while 28% were working for 7-8 hours per day.

**Table 1: Socio-Economic Profile I**

Characteristics		Frequency	%	Characteristics		Frequency	%
<b>Age-Group</b>	Less than 25	6	4	<b>Experience</b>	Less than a year	7	4
	25-35	92	62		1-5 years	51	34
	35-45	36	24		5years & above	92	62
	45 and above	16	10				
<b>Total</b>				<b>Total</b>			
<b>Highest Degree</b>	Graduate	8	5	<b>Compensation (in Rupees)</b>	Less than 5000	21	14
	PG	101	67		5000-15000	43	29
	M.Phil/M.Tech	28	19		15000-25000	65	43
	Ph.D	3	2		25000-	18	12
	Other	10	7		More than 35000	3	2
<b>Total</b>				<b>Total</b>			
<b>Working Day/week</b>	5 days	28	19	<b>Working Hours/day</b>	6-7	87	58
	6 days	122	81		7-8	42	28
<b>Total</b>					9-10	21	14
<b>Total</b>				<b>Total</b>			

Table 2 shows that 96% (n = 143) of the spouses of female employees are employed and 85% had children. The data depicted that 49% (n = 63) had one child. 36 respondents (67%) had children under 4 years old which were taken care by their parents or in-laws.

**Table 2: Socio-economic Profile II**

Characteristics		Frequency	%
<b>Employment Status of Spouse</b>	Employed	143	96
	Unemployed	7	4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Having Child</b>	Yes	127	85
	No	23	15
	<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

<b>No. of Children</b>	1	63	49
	2	56	45
	3	8	6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Caretaker for children less than 4 years old</b>	Spouse	5	9
	In-laws	14	26
	Parents	22	41
	Servants	7	13
	Day-care Centre	6	11
	<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3 depicts that 55% (n = 83) of married employees accept that they are able to balance their personal and professional life whereas 45% of respondents stated that they are unable to match their personal and professional life. It also shows that this becomes an initial problem for improper work-life balance.

**Table 3: General opinion towards Personal & Professional Life**

<b>Capable to Balance</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Able</b>	83	55
<b>Unable</b>	67	45
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

As shown in table 4, 38% of the female respondents accept that late hour meetings and extra classes hinder in balancing work and family while 35% of the employees agrees that long working hours too, contribute for their work-life imbalance.

**Table 4: Hindrance in Balancing Work and Family Commitment**

<b>Hindering Factors</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Long working hours</b>	52	35
<b>Frequent travelling</b>	13	9
<b>Compulsory overtime</b>	13	9

<b>Negative attitude of colleagues</b>	8	5
<b>Negative attitude of family members</b>	17	11
<b>Meetings/classes after normal working hours</b>	57	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

55% females often worry about work, even when not at work while 29% (n=43) of the respondents sometimes worry about work whereas no one accepts that they never worry about work when they are not at work (Table no.5). It means every selected female employee under this study was worried about their work at different extents.

**Table 5: Worry about work when not at work**

<b>Worry about work</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Never</b>	0	0
<b>Rarely</b>	16	11
<b>Sometimes</b>	43	29
<b>Often</b>	83	55
<b>Always</b>	8	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 6 shows responses towards how they spend their time at work, almost 67% of the respondents revealed that they felt either happy or very happy with the time they spent at work. 12% of them felt unhappy whereas no one felt very unhappy at their work place.

**Table 6: Time Spend at work**

<b>Time Spend at Work</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Very Unhappy</b>	0	0
<b>Unhappy</b>	18	12
<b>Indifferent</b>	33	22
<b>Happy</b>	61	41



<b>Very Happy</b>	38	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

For testing the hypothesis no. 1 chi-square analyses (Table.7) was used which shows that designation of female employees, experience, possession of children and working hour are associated with the work-life balance. But age group of female employees lead to no association with work-life balance, it also depicts that age factor is not contributing to such imbalances. This also breaks the philosophy that “as age increases, individuals tend to easily adjust in their personal and professional life”.

**Table 7: Chi-square analysis of Socio-Economic Variables & Work-Life Balance**

<b>Association Between</b>	<b>Calculated Chi-square</b>	<b>d.f.</b>	<b>Tabulated Chi-square</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
Designation & general opinion towards balancing work & personal life	10.26	2	5.991	Association Exists
Age group & general opinion towards balancing work & personal life	8.5	4	9.488	No Association (Rejected)
Experience & general opinion towards balancing work & personal life	6.72	2	5.991	Association Exists
Possession of children & general opinion towards balancing work & personal life	13.91	1	3.841	Association Exists
Working hours & general opinion towards balancing work & personal life	27.16	2	5.991	Association Exists

From the table 8 it could be inferred that there is no significant difference between the designation of female employees and their attitude towards conflicting demands at home and work. It means that regardless of designation that an employee holds they have same attitude or thought process towards responsibilities related to home and work and their conflicting status.

**Table 8: One-way ANOVA to Test the Difference B/W Different Designation of Female Employees and their Attitude Towards Conflicting demands at Home and Work**

Factors	Source of Variation	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F-ratio
Influence of Professional Activities at home	Between Groups	101089	2	50545	2.58(3.89)
	Within Groups	235476	12	19623	
Influence of Home Affairs on workplace	Between Groups	128649	2	64325	3.09(3.89)
	Within Groups	249998	12	20833	

For testing hypothesis no.3 one-way ANOVA test was used which shows that opinion regarding nature of work is by chance only; there is no association between designation of female employees and their opinion towards nature of work. It means whatever the designation of employee (teaching, non-teaching & administrative) is, they all had a same opinion towards nature of work (Table 9).

**Table 9: One-way ANOVA to test the Relation between Designation of Female Employees and their Attitude Towards Nature of Work**

Factors	Source of Variation	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F-ratio
Nature of work	Between Groups	724654	2	362327	3.12(3.89)
	Within Groups	1392343	12	116029	

## VII. Conclusion & Recommendations

Females are an important part of workplace; they play a major role in modern organizations, especially, when we are concerned about educational institutes or colleges where females dominantly acquire their positions in their particular concern. The role of women in teaching profession is not less important than the male teachers; instead it is observed that a woman can be a best teacher due to the God gifted qualities of motherly nature. From the above discussion, it is reasonable to conclude that in educational institutions, for work-life balance it is advisable to take holistic approach to design and implement policies to support the teaching staff to manage their work-life balance which

would add to the performance of these staff members. Achieving a good balance between work and family commitments is a growing concern for contemporary employees and organizations.

From the findings of the above study following are the recommendation to maintain work-life balance:

- Females should take personal efforts to balance their career and home life.
- It is advisable that the working female should plan, prioritize and schedule as efficiently as possible.
- Considering the personal needs of female employees, educational institutions should adopt the flexi-time system, leave plans, facilities for child care to facilitate female employee when they are at work.
- Provide counseling facilities for problems related to managing work and the home.
- Conduct work-life balance related seminar and conferences where they can get training how to balance their work and home effectively.
- Institutions should develop effective communication channel with the family members of female employees and that would be done by sponsoring employee oriented events like employee's children day celebrations, pizza parties, picnics, cultural programs in a year for relieving stress and creating feelings of belongingness with the institution.

Apart from the above recommendations, it was concluded that there is no perfect and one solution to all female employees regarding their work-life balance. The best work-life balance may be different for each one because all female employees have different priorities and different lives.

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