A Study on Work Life Balance and Stress of Female Employees in IT Sector: A Study with Special Reference to Employees in Chennai

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Abstract
The main aim of this study is to find the work life balance and it causing stress among the female employees working in IT sector. The primary data is collected by using primary method such as questionnaires. For this study questionnaires are used to collect primary data from the respondents. Factor analysis is used to find the result by the researcher. The results shown that Work-life-balance is an important issue in IT profession. In today’s competitive era, with changing demands, regulations and so much pressure the work needs have increased a lot. This leads to increase in stress level of the female IT employees. Majority of the respondents expressed that there is no separate policy for work life balance in their organisation and many people were doing work overtime.

Keywords: Work life balance, Stress, Job Performance.

Introduction
Every individual is an integral part of the family in particular and the society in general. In today’s business world, employee performance is key determinant in the achievement of organizational goals. As a result, organizations look for different ways of motivating their employees, in order for them to give their best to the organization. Employee performance is a focal point in any establishment. Every policy should be geared towards increasing the employee performance. For organizations to remain on top they should be able to improve their employee performance and monitor it. In a situation where this does not occur, they are liable to face several challenges which stands as a set back to the organization in the sector where they belong.

Work life balance is a very important phenomenon that is of great concern to various employees in both private and public sector. It goes beyond prioritizing the work role and one’s personal life. It also affects the social, psychological, economical and mental well being of the individual. All these is been reflected in the output of the individual, which affects his or her performance in the work place on the long run. Work life balance has implication on employee attitudes, behaviours, wellbeing as well as organizational effectiveness (Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeanx and Brindley, 2005). The competition for market leadership in the banking sector, may lead to bank managers giving their employees excessive work load in order to meet up with their target. Employees try their best to be retained in the organization by putting in more time at work which may be at detriment of their personal life. All these may affect the upbringing of children, lead to broken and unhappy homes and poor social life.

The conventional wisdom indicates that a happy worker is a better worker. But it seems that the employers find it difficult to understand this fact. We all experience pressure on a daily basis. We need it to motivate us and enable us to perform at our best. However, when the pressure becomes excessive, it leads to stress. Many of the stressful life events are related to the workplace, e.g. lack of job security, changes in working hours, changes in working conditions, layoffs, downsizing, organizational readjustments, etc. IT industry in India has long been exempted from labour regulations in order to facilitate its rapid growth and competency in the global market. Although this is a sound argument in the wake of our
developing economy struggling to sustain and expand economic growth, yet it needs to be checked whether the burden is not being borne by the industry’s labour force.

The recent past is a witness to changes in work schedules. A larger part of the IT sector is hence moving from a standard eight-hour a day regime to operating twenty four hours a day for seven days of the week. Many employees need to work on Saturdays and Sundays too. Moreover, there is a changing pattern in the working hours which is quite different from the standard one, which normally operates from 9 am to 5 pm. While some employees work in the standard time some others need to be available for work that normally starts early in the evening and continues well through the night. Sometimes they need to even work beyond the normal eight hours. Increasing workloads have pressurised employees to demonstrate their commitment to work in more obvious ways. Consequently, a larger part of them have tended to be present at their work place for longer periods of time, thereby reducing the time for which they are available at home.

Employees who start to feel the pressure to perform are likely to get caught in a downward spiral of increasing effort in order to meet rising expectations but no increase in job satisfaction. The internet and mobile phones have made it possible for the organizations to keep in constant touch with the employees both during the day and at night. To a large extent in the IT sector, the employee is expected to be engaged on the job almost at all times. Consequently, there are growing reports of stress and work imbalance. The constant requirement to work at optimum performance takes its toll in job dissatisfaction, employee turnover, reduced efficiency, illness and even death in some cases. Absenteeism, alcoholism, bad or snap decisions, indifference and apathy, lack of motivation or creativity are all by-products of an over stressed workplace. So the distinctions between work-life and family-life have vanished.

**Review of Literature:** Chassin et al. (1985) found three types of conflicts in their research on a sample of 83 working parents who have pre-school kids. These differences were related to (a) the demands of multiple roles, (2) between role expectations of self and spouse, and (3) lack of congruence between expectation and reality of roles. Frone et al. (1992a) in their randomly drawn sample of 631 comprising 278 male and 353 female respondents also found that work to family conflict is more prevalent than family to work conflict. Their study suggested that family boundaries be more permeable to work demands than are work boundaries to family needs.

Bachmann (2000) found that work arrangements such as flexi-time, telework ethic are depicted as an important component of an individual’s work preference towards work time. There is a suggestion that such work arrangements will help the employee achieve a better blend between their work and non-work activities. This will assist the organizations recruit, retain and motivate their workforce.

Hochschild (1997) has observed that to enhance commitment to an organization, the promotion of work life balance policies is of a compulsory interest to the governing body.

Burke (2002) noted that an organization that supports work life balance is preferred by both women and men. The benefit for Men appeared to be more than women. Satisfaction was more for Men when their achievement in job was more even at the cost of ignoring the family. On the other hand, women emphasized the need to strike a balance between work and family sources for their gratification. Women feel unhappy, disappointed and frustrated when work prevents them from taking care of their family. Women do not like the crisscrossing of the boundaries between work and home.

De Bruin and Dupuis, (2004) and Greenblatt (2002), emphasized the integration of the work and non-work roles of employees. Then the levels of multiple-role conflict, and the associated stress and job-dissatisfaction, can be minimized or avoided.

Doherty (2004) in the study on working life balance initiatives for women in the hospitality industry explored the main barriers to advancement into managerial roles. It was found that managerial roles called for long working hours.

Grady and McCarthy (2008) in their study defined that work-life integration is an outcome of the complex relationship between the dynamics of employment and personal factors. They found the balance between work and life is achievable through the funding and coordination of multiple activities which included the organization’s interest. Children were given first priority by the respondents exhibiting a deep sense of motherhood. Factors like work stimulation, challenges, achievement
and enrichment were given high importance and sought more self-care time to balance work and family⁹.

Baral (2010) studied 485 employees working in varied organizations in India found that working men and women in India experience more work family enrichment than the work family conflict. It was also found that there were no gender differences in the employee perception of work family enrichment².

Desai et al (2011) found that home-based working women had less stress, able to adjust better and were more satisfied with their careers⁶.

Objectives of the Study:
• To find out problems faced by women employees in IT sector
• To determine the factors affecting work-life balance and causing stress
• To examine the effect of work life balance on Job performance

Hypothesis of the Study:
1. There is no significant difference among the factors influencing work-life balance.
2. There is no significant impact of Work life balance on the Job performance of the female employees.

Research Methodology: Research methodology is a method to solve the research problem research systematically. It involves gathering data, use of statistical techniques, interpretations and drawing conclusions about research data. Keeping in view the objectives of the study, data is collected from the following sources:
• Primary data
• Secondary data

Primary data - The primary data is collected by using primary method such as questionnaires. For this study questionnaires are used to collect primary data from the respondents.

Secondary data - Secondary data collected from various journals, websites and other research reports.

Sample size
Under this research 50 respondents in Chennai opinion are being to obtained on the basis of convenient sampling method.

Analysis and Interpretation:

Factors affecting work-life balance: The factor analysis results in five important work-life-balance factors of the respondents and the names were considered based on the list of items under each component and the respective loadings of the item. The Eigen value and the percent of variance explained by factors are presented in the below table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Number of Variables</th>
<th>Eigen Value</th>
<th>Percent of Variation Explained</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent of Valuation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Work Load</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.081</td>
<td>11.336</td>
<td>24.177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Work environment</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.838</td>
<td>13.303</td>
<td>37.480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Organizational support</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.428</td>
<td>10.864</td>
<td>48.343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Family Domain</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.316</td>
<td>7.838</td>
<td>56.182</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Computed data

It is clear from Table 4 that five dominant work-life-balance factors, which consist of thirty five work life-balance components, accounted for 56.182 percent of total variance.

Inference: ‘Job Nature’ is the dominant factor that influences the work-life-balance since its Eigen value and percent of variation explained are 13.001 and 12.841 respectively. Work load is the next significant factor with Eigen value of 2.081 and percent of variation explained is 11.336. ‘Work environment’ is the third important factor followed by ‘Organisation Support’ and ‘Family Domain’ in terms of their Eigen value of 1.838, 1.428 and 1.316 and percent of variation explained with value of 13.303, 10.864 and 7.838 respectively. It is concluded

**Relationship and Impact of Work Life Balance on Employee’s professional life:** Correlation analysis was carried out to study the relationship between work life balance and professional life of working female employees. The results were shown in the below table.

**Table 2: Professional Life**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work Life Balance</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Sig. (1 – tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.594</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Computed data

### Table 3: Showing Coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>6.053</td>
<td>.594</td>
<td>5.231</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worklife balance</td>
<td>.612</td>
<td>.085</td>
<td>6.943</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dependent Variable: Professional Life

Source: Computed data

Value of t for human resource system comes out to be 6.943, p value is .000 and beta value is .594 which is significant at 5 percent level of significance. Thus null Hypothesis 2 was not accepted in this regard.

**Inference:** The result depicted significant positive relationship between work life balance and employees’ professional life. Coefficient of correlation 0.594 is significant at 5 percent level of significance. The result depicted that there exists a significant positive relationship between work life balance and female employees’ professional life.

Thus there is significant impact of work life balance on employees’ professional lives. Hence there must be focus on improving the work life balance which will further improve their professional life leading to more productive and efficient staff.

**Findings and Conclusion**

Work-life-balance is an important issue in IT profession. In today’s competitive era, with changing demands, regulations and so much pressure the work needs have increased a lot. This leads to increase in stress level of the female IT employees. Majority of the respondents expressed that there is no separate policy for work life balance in their organisation and many people were doing work overtime. Also management has not done much in terms of designing and implementing effective work life balance policies and practices. If the personal and professional lives of female employees are balanced, they can devote more time to their children and can focus on their upbringing. It was found that the number of hours worked per week, the amount and frequency of overtime, and inflexible work schedule increase the likelihood of employees to experience conflict between their work and family roles as it kills their time to perform family related activities.

Also there is significant positive relationship and impact of work life balance on employee’s professional life. Study also revealed some of employees feel so stressed that they are not able to handle family responsibilities even after coming from workplace as they feel so tired and exhausted because of long working hours. Breaks are also very short so they were not able to take proper rest. However, their company provides no policy as such to help their employees meet their family commitment. Thus focus must be there in making policies that can help the female employees to have balance between the two.

The study was also able to measure women IT employees’ work-life-balance and found that ‘frequently extended work schedule’, ‘frequent changing requirement of clients’, ‘role overload’, ‘lack of flexible options’ and ‘unrealistic deadlines’ are some important determinants which influenced women employees’ work-life-balance. The analysis also reveals that five factors namely, Job Nature, Work Load, Job Environment, Organizational Support, and Family Domain constitute work-life-balance of women.
professionals. The result of correlation analysis also confirms the positive correlation among the above five factors. The companies in IT industry may consider the above five factors and modify their HR policies suitably and create conducive work environment to maintain work–life-balance among women professionals so as to improve their performance.

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**Ethical Clearance:** Taken from UGC Committee

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**References**


