A Review on Relationship Between Work-Life Balance Techniques and Work-Life Conflict Factors Among Working Women

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Abstract

This study delves into the factors contributing to work-life conflict and the strategies employed by working women to achieve a balance between their professional and personal responsibilities. With an increasing number of women joining the workforce, managing these dual roles has emerged as a significant challenge. The research highlights key contributors to work-life conflict, including challenges in time management, workplace pressures, and societal expectations. It also examines practical solutions adopted by women, such as embracing flexible work schedules, delegating tasks effectively, and prioritizing self-care. By analyzing data gathered from different research papers, the study underscores the critical role of organizational policies and individual coping strategies in promoting work-life balance among working women from different sectors. Additionally, it emphasizes the importance of societal support in fostering an environment conducive to work-life integration. The paper concludes with actionable recommendations for policy-makers and organizations to cultivate more supportive ecosystems for working women.

Keywords: work-life conflicts, work-life balance techniques, working women

Introduction

The growing involvement of women in the workforce has disrupted traditional gender norms, creating new challenges in managing professional goals alongside household responsibilities. Working women, in particular, often experience significant work-life imbalance, which can negatively affect their mental and physical health, job satisfaction, and overall quality of life. This imbalance occurs when the demands of work clash with personal life, resulting in stress, burnout, and reduced productivity.

This research investigates the factors contributing to work-life imbalance among working women and looks at the strategies they use to juggle their professional and personal roles. Additionally, it evaluates how organizational policies—such as flexible working hours and remote work opportunities—can help women manage these overlapping responsibilities. By analyzing the experiences of women across different sectors, this study aims to provide valuable insights into effective solutions for addressing work-life imbalance and enhancing overall well-being.

Literature Review

"Work-life conflict" refers to a situation where the demands of one's professional life (such as work) interfere with personal commitments (like family, hobbies, and other personal activities), making it difficult to fulfill responsibilities in both areas without negatively impacting one another (Bingar Hernowo et al., 2023).

Disagreements among lecturers arise from tensions within the academic setting, including conflicts with leaders, peers, and students, as well as struggles between individuals and their work environment. These disputes are typically fueled by differences in perspective and interpersonal friction (Zulkarnain et al., 2015). The demands of globalization and digitalization are escalating occupational stress, which in turn affects the health and well-being of workers. This is particularly noticeable in the field of higher education, where institutions constantly face pressure to compete for funding, personnel, and student enrollment (Lucia Jerg-Bretzke et al., 2020).

Faculty members in universities predominantly used accommodating and collaborative methods to address conflicts. While no significant differences were observed between

instructors at public and private institutions, variations were evident based on factors such as gender, job title, age, and educational qualifications (Dr. Zahida Parveen et al., 2020). Jim Bird, the CEO of worklifebalance.com, defines work-life balance as the seamless integration of professional, familial, career, health, social, and spiritual responsibilities (Shobha Sundaresan), rather than a strict 50-50 division. Work-life conflict can undermine this balance, especially for women in the workforce, with gender being a key factor in amplifying the negative impacts (Deepak Chawla & Neena Sondhi, 2011).

Work-work conflict, a type of inter-role conflict linked to work-life conflict, should be addressed in work-life balance strategies to improve employee satisfaction (Wynn et al., 2018). Modern women face notable challenges as well-educated individuals who are key contributors to their families' well-being, providing both financial and physical support (Sachdeva & Priya, 2022).

Despite advancements in the sharing of family duties, working women still carry disproportionate loads and face dissatisfaction, resulting in work-life conflicts (Kaur, 2022). Advancements in technology have enhanced women's participation in the workforce, changing their lives and often leading to these conflicts (Khatreja, 2023). In academic settings, job satisfaction is closely tied to performance; employees who experience greater job satisfaction generally perform at higher levels, which in turn supports the organization's development (Sengar, 2024).

Promoting work-life balance for working women requires providing equal decision-making opportunities, ensuring job security, and establishing proper oversight within the workplace (Munazza Mahmood 2018). Studies indicate that boundary work tactics, including behavioral, temporal, physical, and communicative strategies, significantly influence work-family conflict for working women. As a result, organizations can adopt these tactics more effectively to support women in achieving a healthier work-family balance (Nur Fatihah et al.,2016).

Factors contributing to work-life conflict can typically be divided into four categories: individual factors (such as personal capabilities and expertise), interpersonal factors (like support from a spouse or lack of family help), organizational factors (including company policies and working hours), and cultural factors (such as societal patriarchy and the existence of a family-friendly environment) (Zahra Hosseini et al.,2023).

Work-life and life-work conflicts create different spillover effects. Both types of conflict were significant contributors to burnout, but only life-work conflict was strongly associated with a decrease in perceived performance. Burnout was negatively correlated with perceived performance, though it did not significantly influence the desire to continue teleworking after the lockdowns (Filipa Sobral et al.,2025). Work-life conflicts can have detrimental effects on both personal lives and societal health. Recently, the research emphasis has moved from work-family balance to a broader work-life balance perspective. This approach emphasizes that, in addition to family duties, various other life activities should be balanced with one's career responsibilities (Seyyede Fateme Rahimi et al., 2024).

Work-life conflicts have a considerable impact on the quality of life for female employees, frequently resulting in a decrease. Studies indicate that social support, family functioning, and marital happiness play a crucial role in determining the quality of life for working women (Megawati Simanjuntak et al., 2024). Although women's roles have evolved, granting them more autonomy, traditional expectations still persist (Pokharel, 2024). Maintaining balance is crucial for the overall well-being of workers. An imbalance can have detrimental effects on both mental and physical health, which makes monitoring necessary (Khanna et al., 2024).

Shujaat et al. (2019) discovered that faculty at private universities primarily faced time-based work-life conflict, without significant strain- or behavior-based conflicts. Female faculty members showed a strong organizational commitment, particularly in terms of affective commitment. In a separate study, Islam et al. (2015) found that work interfering with family

(WIF) had a negative effect on job satisfaction and increased intentions to change jobs.

Conflict management involves a series of actions and responses between participants and external parties in a conflict. It is a critical aspect of managing private universities, especially in addressing how conflicts are handled in the educational sector (Eko Pujiati, 2018). The effects of globalization on women are diverse, influenced by varying levels of capacity and knowledge. While economically privileged women have gained from globalization (Parida, 2011), women worldwide, irrespective of family structure or cultural context, continue to shoulder the primary responsibility for domestic and childcare tasks, making work-family balance a significant challenge (Saha et al., 2016).

Global efforts to advance gender equality in business and management have primarily focused on enhancing women's participation in the workforce and increasing their representation in leadership roles. Additionally, the relationship between actual pay, pay satisfaction, pay equity, and the respect of colleagues. The psychological and material values of pay are widely recognized, yet understanding their interaction can be particularly challenging in the context of university faculty (Barry Bozeman, 2011).

Teaching, along with other professions, is linked to both positive and negative experiences concerning work-life balance. The relationships between job satisfaction, work-life balance (WLB), turnover intentions, and burnout among educators (Nayeem & Manas, 2012). Various approaches can be used to support work-life balance, which can be analyzed from two fundamental perspectives. The first involves assessing how work-life balance is influenced by economic conditions and the structure of the prevailing welfare or family system. The second focuses on determining how much of work-life balance is shaped by private-life factors compared to external, structural, and institutional influences (Vera Kucharova, 2009). India has been attempting to reform its higher education system for over fifty years, but the changes in terms of systemic transformation have been limited. While universities have expanded significantly to cater to the demands of an increasingly affluent middle class, the available resources have been insufficient to maintain high standards (Philip G. Altbach, 1993).

Teaching responsibilities in today's higher education sector are increasingly demanding. Beyond focusing on teaching quality, today's educators are also evaluated based on their involvement in professional development and societal contributions. Women in academia take on equal responsibilities as their male counterparts, yet in India, women often assume multiple roles outside of work, unlike men. The primary goal of this cross-sectional study was to examine gender differences in Work-Life Balance (WLB) among higher education teachers (Mayya et al., 2021).

Educational institutions in India employ a large number of teaching staff, especially in private colleges and universities. The Quality of Work Life for teachers has become critical for the effective management of universities and colleges. The quality of work life directly impacts employees' performance and efficiency, which in turn influences the quality of teaching and, ultimately, societal well-being (Ramegowda K.V, Anitha Kumari P, 2024). Collaborative learning is proving to be a key strategy for addressing emerging challenges in inclusive education research. It enhances positive attitudes towards learning, boosts academic performance, and improves self-esteem by fostering interaction and mutual support among students (Rocsana Bucea et al., 2020).

The definition of work as paid employment has influenced women's health research, including the relationships between women's work and health, as well as health and social policies. They advocate for a broader definition of women's work that includes not only paid employment but also the diverse and multiple roles that women occupy across different contexts (Deanne K. HilfInger Messias et al., 1997). The study suggests that simple quality control measures and assurance systems are insufficient to maintain student engagement in Indian Higher Education Institutes. The study emphasizes the need for quality enhancement programs within a culture

that prioritizes quality (Anil Shukla and Tripta Trivedi, 2008).

This article addresses work-family conflict reported by both male and female academic scientists in nine U.S. research universities. The study explores: (1) the bidirectional conflict between work and family, (2) the factors, including family status, academic rank, and departmental environment, that predict higher levels of conflict, and (3) gender-based patterns in work-family conflict. The findings highlight key differences and similarities in the factors that contribute to work-family conflict for male and female scientists (Mary Frank Fox, 2011). Research indicates that women's employment pathways are influenced by a combination of resources, social changes, and individual agency. Key factors such as social stratification, gender ideologies, and work-family challenges contribute to how women are directed toward particular career paths from an early age (Sarah Damaske and Adrianne Frech, 2016).

Managers and senior staff members, who possess more autonomy, are better equipped to balance their work and family responsibilities. This paper highlights the prevalence of work-family conflict, with employees reporting significant personal sacrifices to meet the demands of both work and family. These findings align with the "greedy institutions" framework, which helps understand how organizations influence employees' ability to manage dual work-family demands (Rosaria Burchielli et al., 2008).

Many women consider their professional growth and advancement to be essential components of their professional identities (Valk & Srinivasan, 2011). Over the previous ten years, women's employment participation has increased. There hasn't been much of a shift in the distribution of domestic duties despite the fact that more women are working (Singh 2004; Double & Supriya).

The current workforce is characterized by frequent voluntary turnover, which poses challenges for employers who invest significant time and resources in recruitment and training. The study explores the effects of workplace policies on the voluntary turnover of women administrators in higher education (Victoria H. Jo, 2008).

Work-life conflict factors

Work-life conflicts experienced by working women stem from several critical factors:

Time Management: The difficulty of balancing extended working hours with family duties creates stress due to the limited time available for both professional and personal life.

Role Overload: Managing multiple roles, including those of a professional, mother, and caregiver, often results in conflicting demands on a woman's time and energy.

Workplace Demands: High job expectations, lack of flexible work arrangements, and the pressure to advance in one's career can hinder personal and family obligations.

Societal Expectations: Cultural norms and traditional gender roles often place the primary responsibility for family duties on women, intensifying the conflict between work and home life.

Lack of Support Systems: Limited access to childcare, insufficient family support, or minimal partner involvement can increase the strain on working women.

Organizational Factors: The lack of family-oriented policies, gender bias, and inadequate mental health resources at the workplace contribute to heightened work-life conflict.

Health and Well-being: Managing work and family demands continuously can result in physical exhaustion, burnout, and mental health challenges.

Economic Pressures: The financial necessity to maintain employment can further complicate the balancing act between professional and personal responsibilities.

Work-Life Balance Techniques

Work-life balance techniques are strategies designed to help individuals effectively manage both their professional and personal responsibilities. Some common approaches include:

Time Management: Prioritizing tasks, creating structured schedules, and using tools like calendars or to-do lists to allocate time effectively between work-related and personal

activities.

Setting Boundaries: Drawing clear lines between professional and personal life, such as refraining from checking work emails after office hours or allocating specific times for personal activities.

Delegation: Sharing tasks and responsibilities with colleagues, family members, or partners to alleviate personal and work-related pressure.

Flexible Work Arrangements: Utilizing flexible hours, telecommuting, or job-sharing opportunities to adjust work hours around personal life commitments.

Self-care: Incorporating self-care practices like physical activity, hobbies, or relaxation to manage stress and maintain overall well-being.

Support Systems: Reaching out to family, friends, or professional networks for assistance with childcare, household responsibilities, or emotional support.

Efficient Work Practices: Improving work efficiency by reducing distractions, focusing on priority tasks, and streamlining workflows to maximize productivity, thus freeing up time for personal life.

Conclusion and Suggestions

In conclusion, work-life conflict remains a major challenge for working women, influenced by factors such as job demands, family responsibilities, and societal expectations. Despite these obstacles, women employ various strategies to manage the negative effects of work-life conflict, including efficient time management, establishing clear boundaries, seeking support from others, and utilizing workplace policies like flexible work options.

The findings emphasize that achieving work-life balance is a collective responsibility that goes beyond the individual. While organizational efforts, such as flexible working hours and supportive environments, play a crucial role, it is equally important for women to cultivate personal strategies that build resilience and enhance their well-being. This research underscores the need for a holistic approach to work-life balance that combines individual actions with institutional support, helping to reduce conflict and increase overall life satisfaction.

In conclusion, work-life conflict continues to present a significant challenge for many working women, shaped by factors such as workplace demands, family obligations, and societal expectations. Nevertheless, women adopt a variety of strategies to mitigate the negative impact of this conflict, including effective time management, establishing boundaries, seeking support from social networks, and utilizing workplace policies like flexible working arrangements.

The study emphasizes that achieving work-life balance is not solely an individual responsibility but requires collaborative efforts from both organizations and society. While policies such as flexible work hours and a supportive work environment are crucial, women must also develop personal strategies to build resilience and prioritize their well-being. Ultimately, the research advocates for a comprehensive approach to work-life balance, one that integrates individual efforts with support from institutions and society to minimize conflict and improve overall life satisfaction.

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