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Job Stress and Work Life Balance of Women in Academics

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Abstract

Job stress and work life balance are the two important factors that need attention especially for working women. Work-life balance (WLB) is about finding the right balance between work and life, and about feeling comfortable with both work and family commitments. In a present context, the concept of Work Life Balance (WLB) has gained immense significance. In this contemporary world, the teaching professionals play assortment of roles; such as pedagogical, managerial, technical and subject-designing role (Bennet & Lockyer, 2004). These multiple roles of teaching professionals constantly keep them under pressure and lead to imbalance in their work and personal life.

The purpose of the study was to examine the level of stress experienced by the women, to study the work life balance among women in academics and to suggest suitable measures to balance their work life. Descriptive research design was used to describe the Job Stress and Work Life Balance of women in academics. The study was conducted among women faculties in higher education. Samples of 100 respondents were selected through simple random sampling method. Primary data elicited by administering the questionnaire. The result of the findings reveals that more than three fourth (76.0%) of the respondents are more likely to experience stress, job stress has significant positive effect on work life balance.

Key Words: Job Stress – Work Life Balance – Women in Academics

Introduction

Work life balance has always been a concern of those interested in the quality of working life and its relation to broader quality of life (Guest, 2002). Work-life balance (WLB) is about finding the right balance between work and life, and about feeling comfortable with both work and family commitments. In a present context, the concept of Work Life Balance (WLB) has gained immense significance. Clarke (2000) define Work-Life Balance as satisfaction and smooth functioning at work and home without any role conflict. Work-life balance can be defined as a measure of proper control as to how, when and where people work. Proper work life balance can be achieved when an individual is able to fulfill all his/her needs in respect of family, work and society. Within the social sciences there is much contemporary concern regarding work-life balance (Warren, 2004). With increasing demands and pressures of work-life, conflicts between work and personal roles seem to be increasing. Changed demographics of the workforce have been the primary force for the increased focus on family-work issues. Work-life balance is a term that is always used in context of employees in general, but nowadays teachers are found to be overburdened due to their academic work load and career issues (Hakanen et al., 2006). All this adds to the stress among teachers leading to imbalanced work- life equations. Thus, there is a need to study work-life balance issues vis-à-vis teachers.

Significance of the Study

There are certain reasons for the inevitability of stress and work-life balance among women teaching professionals. First amongst them is the tremendous advancement in technology particularly the development of ICT which has transformed the nature of delivery systems in higher education. ICT has transformed the teaching learning process from conventional, which is teacher centric, to constructivist learning, which is learner centric. In the new learning environment the teacher has to cope with many more uncertainties which lead to stress and leading imbalance in their family life. Hence, work-life balance is indispensable for teaching professionals.

Another important reason has been the role played by the teaching professionals. In this contemporary world, the teaching professionals play assortment of roles; such as pedagogical, managerial, technical and subject-designing role (Bennet & Lockyer, 2004). These multiple roles of teaching professionals constantly keep them under pressure and lead to imbalance in their work and personal life.

Hence, this study is focused on women in teaching professionals with the objectives of finding the relationship between the level of stress in balancing work and life.

Review of Literature

Mishra (1995) found a highly significant and positive relationship of overall job related stress and its four dimensions. i.e. role based stress, task based stress, boundary mediating stress and conflict mediating stress with depressed mood at work. Pandey and Tripathi (2001), too reported a moderate level of occupational stress of engineering college teachers. Anurani (2006) reported that both male and female college teachers perceived lack of infrastructural facilities, callous administration and apathetic students as major stressors.

Ismail et al. (2010), in a study of 80 academic employees, found that capability of employees to manage their own and other employees' emotions, increased their ability to control psychological stress in implementing job. **Jude (2011)** studied a sample of 392 secondary school teachers and found significant differences between the occupational stress of teachers with low and those with high

emotional intelligence. Teachers with high emotional intelligence were found to have low occupational stress than the teachers with low emotional intelligence. These studies reveal that stress occurs as a negative psychological factor in organizational settings. In view of this, present study is an attempt to find out determinants and consequences of stress among women teachers colleges.

There were ample researches had been conducted on teachers work life balance as it has been found that teaching is a stressful profession (Rosser, 2004). Another most important reason for studying teachers on the aspect of work life balance is that this is the profession that has overwhelmingly female than in any other profession (Acker 1996). Clark (1989) concluded that it is the teaching profession that has different dimensions such as pattern of work, authority, identification and career etc, and most important thing is that all these dimensions differ with different institutes and subjects that is why this field is most preferred for Work family conflict.

Studies on work-life balance in the Indian context are still few and far between. Sandeep (2012) carried out a study on work life balance initiatives and how these initiatives impact employee's personal and professional performance. It also investigates the relationship between work-life balance initiatives and employees attitude towards work life conflicts. Mathew and Panchanathan (2010) examined the relationship of various facets of work-family balance with organization commitment (OC) and its different dimensions among employees in the service sector in India.

It would thus appear that the literature relating to stress research in India is quite scanty with regard to teaching in higher educational institutions in particular whereas the growing demand for innovation as also autonomy as well as accountability in the wake of globalization, privatization and accrediatation etc. has altogether changed the very character of higher education in India (Deo, 2008). Hence the present study measures the job stress of women in academics and their work life balance.

Aim

- To examine the level of stress experienced by the women

- To study the work life balance among women in academics and
- To suggest suitable measures to balance their work life.

Research Methodology

Descriptive research design was used to describe the Job Stress and Work Life Balance of women in academics. The study was conducted among women faculties in higher education. Samples of 100 respondents were selected through simple random sampling method. Primary data elicited by administering the questionnaire. Analyses were done in SPSS 19.0 version. The results were presented in the form of table and proper interpretation is given.

Data Analysis

Age, Marital Status and Educational Qualification of the Respondents

Variable	Label	Frequency	Percent
	Twenty one - Thirty	53	53.0
	Thirty one - Forty	38	38.0
Age	Forty one - Fifty	8	8.0
	Fifty one - Sixty	1	1.0
	Total	**100**	**100.0**
	Married	66	66.0
Marital Status	Unmarried	34	34.0
	Total	**100**	**100.0**
	Post Graduate	21	21.0
Education	M.Phil	54	54.0
	Ph.D	25	25.0
	Total	**100**	**100.0**

Age of the Respondents

The above result reveals that more than half of the respondents (53.0%) are in the age group between Twenty One – Thirty, 38 percent of them are in the age group between Thirty One – Forty, followed by Forty One – Fifty (8.0%) and Fifty One – Sixty (1.0%). It can be inferred that young women teachers are more in teaching profession in colleges.

Marital Status

It is found that two third (66.0%) of the respondents are married and the remaining one third (34.0%) are unmarried. This shows that married women are more in numbers in colleges.

Educational Qualification

The above result shows that more than half of the respondents (54.0%) are educated upto M.Phil, one fourth (25.0%) are educated up to Ph.D ad only 21 percent of them are in Post Graduate level.

Designation, Experience, and Monthly Income of the Respondents

Variable	Label	Frequency	Percent
Designation	Lecturer	18	18.0
	Asst. Professor	81	81.0
	Associate Professor	1.0	1.0
	Total	**100**	**100.0**
Experience	1 – 5 Years	56	56.0
	6 – 10 Years	37	37.0

	11 – 15 Years	4	4.0
	16 – 20 Years	3	3.0
	Total	**100**	**100.0**
Monthly Income	Up to 10,000	49	49.0
	Rs.10001-20000	30	30.0
	Rs.20001-30000	12	12.0
	Rs.30001-40000	1	1.0
	Above Rs.40001	8	8.0
	Total	**100**	**100.0**

Level of Stress	Frequency	Percent
Least likely to suffer from Stress	12	12.0
More likely to experience Stress	76	76.0
More prone to Stress	12	12.0
Total	**100**	**100.0**

Designation

Majority of the respondents (81.0) are working as Assistant Professor, 18 percent of them are working as lecturer and only one percent of them are working as Associate Professor. This shows that women working in colleges are in the Assistant Professor grade.

Experience

More than half of the respondents (56.0%) are having 1-5 years of experience, followed by 6-10 years (37.0%), 11-15 years (4.0%) and 16-20 years (3.0%).

Monthly Income

The above result shows that nearly half of the respondents earn up to Rs.10,000 per month followed by Rs. 10001-20000 (30.0%), Rs.20001-30000 (12.0%), Above Rs.40001 (8.0%) and Rs. 30001-40000 (1.0%). This shows that majority of the respondents are earning low income, since most of the respondents are working in self-finance college.

Level of Stress

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.636[a]	.404	.398	3.44291
a. Predictors: (Constant), js				

Level of stress among women in academics is classified into three categories namely, Least likely to suffer from Stress, More likely to

experience Stress and More prone to Stress. The result shows that more than three fourth (76.0%) of the respondents are more likely to experience stress and only 12 percent of them are least likely to suffer from stress and more prone to stress. This shows that majority of the respondents are more likely to experience stress.

One-way Analysis of Variance between Level of Stress and Work-Life Balance of Women

Variable	SS	DF	MS	Level	Mean	SD	Statistical Inferences
WLB Between Groups Within Groups	83.509 1865.2 41	2 97	41.75 4 19.22 9	Least likely to suffer More likely to experience More prone to Stress	26.0833 25.8553 23.0833	4.60155 4.50985 3.11764	F = 2.171 P = 0.120 Not Significant

One way Analysis of Variance between level of stress and work life balance of women in academics was conducted. The result reveals that there was no significant difference between level of stress and

work life balance of women in academics (F = 2.171, P = 0.120). It   can be inferred that stress level is not influencing work life balance of women in academics.

Relationship between Job Stress and Work Life Balance

It was attempted to assess the relationship between job stress and work life balance of women in academics.

<p style="text-align:center">Job Stress influences Work Life Balance</p>

The above model summary table shows that R-Square was 40.4 percent implies that the regression model used for this study can explain 40.4 percent variations on Work Life Balance. This indicates that there are other factors that explain the remaining 59.6 percent variations of Work Life Balance. The adjusted R-Square for the model is 0.398 which supports the above assertion.

The above data was subjected to ANOVA analysis to indicate the overall regression model in the following and F value is calculated to examine the significant relationship between job stress and work life balance.

		Coefficients^a				
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	10.097	1.927		5.239	.000
	js	.283	.035	.636	8.149	.000
a. Dependent Variable: wlb						

ANOVAᵇ						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	787.091	1	787.091	66.401	.000ᵃ
	Residual	1161.659	98	11.854		
	Total	1948.750	99			
a. Predictors: (Constant), js						
b. Dependent Variable: wlb						

The F ratio for the regression model indicates the overall regression model. The larger the F ratio there will be more variance in the dependent variable that is associated with the independent variable. The F = 66.401 and P = 0.000. It can be inferred that there is a significant relationship between job stress and work life balance. Further, the result also suggests that the model explains work life balance of women in academics is reasonable well.

The above data was also examined by t-test using the regression co-efficient and the results are shows in the following table.

Based on the rest result it is found that the job stress is statistically significant at 1% significant level (t = 8.149, P = 0.000) with a positive beta. It means that job stress have significant positive effect on work life balance.

Findings

- More than half of the respondents (53.0%) are in the age group between Twenty One – Thirty.
- Two third (66.0%) of the respondents are married and the remaining one third (34.0%) are unmarried.
- More than half of the respondents (54.0%) are educated up to M.Phil.
- Majority of the respondents (81.0) are working as Assistant Professor.
- More than half of the respondents (56.0%) are having 1-5 years of experience.
- Nearly half of the respondents earn up to Rs.10,000 per month.
- More than three fourth (76.0%) of the respondents are more likely to experience stress.

- There was no significant difference between level of stress and work life balance of women in academics.

- Job stress has significant positive effect on work life balance.

Suggestions

- Since majority of the respondents are more likely to experience stress, the women in academics should adopt coping mechanism such as yoga, meditation to overcome the stress. It will prevent from depression and other stress related disorders.
- Monthly income of the respondents also influencing stress level of the respondents since nearly half of the respondents earn up to Rs. 10000 per month. Therefore the salary of the women in academics needs to increase.

Conclusion

In this contemporary world, the role of teaching professionals are ever changing and evolving and the new teaching learning environment puts heavy pressure on teaching professionals. This work pressure will have an impact on their personal life and lead to imbalance in their work and life. Hence, teaching professionals' work life balance is the most significant aspect in the success and development of educational institutions. It is vital for any institution to provide facilities to their staff members to get relieved from stress for balancing their work and personal life. The further research may determine the suitable work-life balancing programs for teaching faculty members in higher learning institutions in India. It is a rewarding exercise to the researchers and helps to gain knowledge on socially relevant problems.

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