

A study of individual and work related constraints influencing Work Life Balance (WLB) of middle aged married women working in selected IT industrial units from Pune.

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to explore significant individual Job related Work Life Balance(WLB) among women working in IT sector, operating in the city of Pune, which is a key area of concern for experts who sense that toughness between function and existence is of vital significance when one relates performance in the work force in an organization. The main challenges in professional life were found to be prolonged/odd occupied hours, travel time between home and workplace and participation in additional jobs and duties. In personal life, the main worries were guilty of not being able to take care of self and family. Social media interaction was found to be stress busters for most women working in IT sectors. Most women would prefer elastic timing, and supportive partners, family as well as friends and favorable environment for work in the office. Hence it is inevitably required to find out the means how women basically working in the IT sector balance their personal and professional life. The study is accomplished with an outlook, where the personal and professional encounters for the work life balance are equated and evaluated through the realistic platform of the sample group of

the women personnel working in various IT companies.

Keywords- Work life Balance, Women, Pune, IT, Personal, Professional.

INTRODUCTION:

WLB can be defined as “Work life balance is a method which helps employees of an organization to balance their personal and professional lives. Work life balance encourages employees to divide their time on the basis on priorities and maintain a balance by devoting time to family, health, vacations etc. along with making a career, business travel etc. It is an important concept in the world of business as it helps to motivate the employees and increases their loyalty towards the company.”

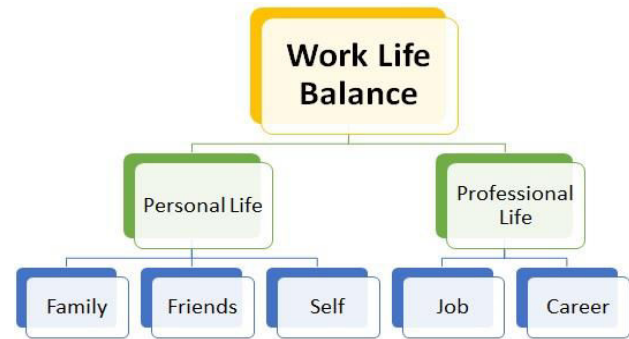
In the current scenario, the women of Pune of all the classes are occupied into livelihoods, especially in the urban location the women involved into the work is comparatively higher now as compared to few decades ago. Work life balance has arisen as a burning matter in current years— Driven in part by fluctuating trends in women’s social roles.

In country like India, it is generally perceived as financial activities are exclusively the right of males while

domestic work, child bearing and rearing is the one and only professions of women. In the past, women in India have not enjoyed any good status and any reputed position but due to the varying economic conditions and societal demands have changed the countryside of work throughout the world.

Work life Balance of women employees has been an important anxiety since the time where both male and female equally shares the answerability of earning for the profit of their personal life. Hence, it is very important to know how women working specially into the IT sector balance their work life as well as their personal life. There is lots of work burden around the IT professionals that is causing Work-Life inconsistency. Actually meaning and significance of Work-life balance means different to different people at distinctive stages of life but changes in political, social and economic factors have influenced the existence of women in our country, especially Pune and brought a drastic change in the women's roles in the society. But this has indeed become a hard-hitting challenge for women as they have to perform a lot of responsibilities in home and office as well. As working women get wedded, they have additional accountabilities and when they become mothers, they have to accomplish the primary care of children and stretched family and are thus, under greater pressure

to continue on a professional career pathway. Employed mommies at the moment fulfill household responsibilities and also try to remain fully involved in their professions coping up with the conflicting demands of their numerous roles.



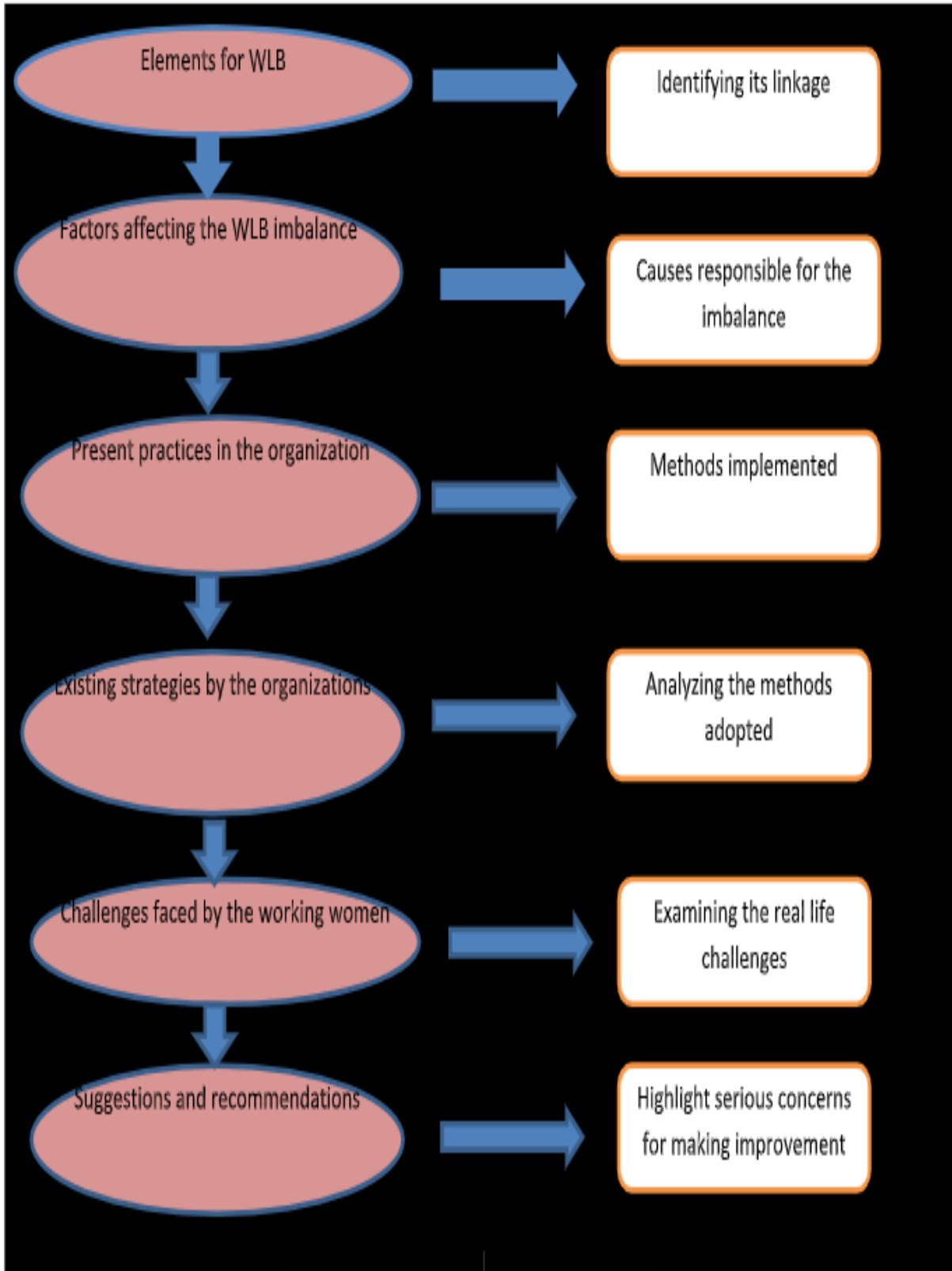
This paper emphasizes on the tough life of married working women of Pune in their battle to strike a balance between their work life and family life.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The major aim and objective of this study is to witness how women employees, especially those belonging to the information technology (IT) sector, balance their professional and personal facets of life. The objectives are outlined as follows.

1. To identify the WLB among the working women from the IT sector
2. To identify the factors affecting working women's WLB and remedial measures there on.

AN OUTLINE OF PROCEDURE FOLLOWED TO ACHIEVE THE STUDY



LITERATURE REVIEW:

The literature review on Work-life Balance has been framed up in view of its gained popularity with the major aim to have prosperity of society and the realization of fulfilling lives for its employees by supporting the growth of every employee and the further development of the companies. The literature identifies its effect on various quality life conditions i.e. Job Satisfaction, Work Stress, Career Growth, Turnover, Absenteeism, Appreciation and competitive environment in context with Work-life Balance and its practices/policies. In this paper, an endeavor has been made to provide an overview of various aspects of Work Life Balance through the review of existing literature. The sources referred include various journals, books, doctoral thesis, working papers, reports, magazines, internet sites, newspapers etc and has been reflected as references at the end. Higgins et al.(1992), Hochschild (1989), Kelley and Voydanoff (1985), Hochschild (1989) Thompson & Walker (1989) revealed that working women face well-documented conflicts due to their continuing role as primary caretakers for their homes, children, and/or elderly parents being women's greater responsibility for children and other family members and they experience more interruptions than men resulting common household problems. However, at family front researcher Milkie and Peltola (1999) stated that one will feel less successful in achieving their own work-family balance if spouse has to do the smaller portion of housework whereas Kiecolt (2003) found

that who find work a haven spends no more hours at work than those with high work home satisfaction. However, Higgins and Duxbury (1992) expressed that work conflict is a greater source of work family conflict whereas personal or family lives, interfere with work are associated for fewer hours but work that interferes with life matters as revealed by the researcher Reynolds(2005). The literature on Work-life balance with different prospective are studied and available, in recent years, there has been an increased interest in work family interface in the human resource management literature, especially regarding the sources and outcomes of conflict between these two spheres. A number of studies have addressed this issue from different perspectives. Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) and Greenhaus et al. (1989) examined the antecedents of conflict between family and work, Goodstein (1994) and Ingram and Simons (1995) presented an institutional perspective on organizations,, responses to work-family issues. In addition, Campbell,Campbell and Kennard (1994) have studied the effects of family responsibilities on the work commitment and job performance of women. The work-family issue is even further expanded to address the relationship of business marriage partners (Foley & Powell, 1997). Ideally, the WLB concept requires organizations to effectively integrate employees“ work and non-work roles such that levels of multiple-role conflict, and the associated stress and job-dissatisfaction, are minimized or avoided (De Bruin & Dupuis, 2004; Greenblatt, 2002). In attempts to achieve a

WLB, however, western organizations have tended to adopt a limited set of policies such as on-site child-care facilities, on-site gymnasiums, telecommuting opportunities, and even on-site sleeping quarters for the employee and their family (Hacker & Doolen, 2003; Hyman & Summers, 2004). Each has attempted to increase the flexibility by which employees can enact their work-roles whilst simultaneously enabling them to enact their family based roles to the minimum extent necessary.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research methodology inclusive of descriptive and exploratory studies was focused on selected working women from the Pune-based six IT industrial units (Tech Mahindra, Wipro, Infosys, Mphasis, KPMG and Capgemini) having > 250 employees. The Convenient-cum -Judgmentsampling technique was used to collect the data from the married women in the middle age category i.e. 25 to 35 years @ of 20 per unit. Hence, the total number of women to be interviewed was 120; however from these, 115 women responded properly and hence the data analysis is based on the same number. (115)

SAMPLE SIZE

It is noticed that there are a reverberations of the responses to the questions, when > 20 women are contacted and hence the sample size of women for each IT unit is fixed as 20 and for six units it came to 120 (6*20)

DATA ANALYSIS:

The Average Perceived Intensity (API) mapping technique based on Likert extended 100 point scale where 0% unveils “nil” gravity while 100% unveil “full” gravities and any % in between these two connotes the gravity level. On the basis of data collected, the APIs for each variable are estimated as summation of Perceive Intensity in % (PI%) of each and every respondent in sample population is divided by 115 (population size) *Mathematically* $APIs = \sum of PI\%$

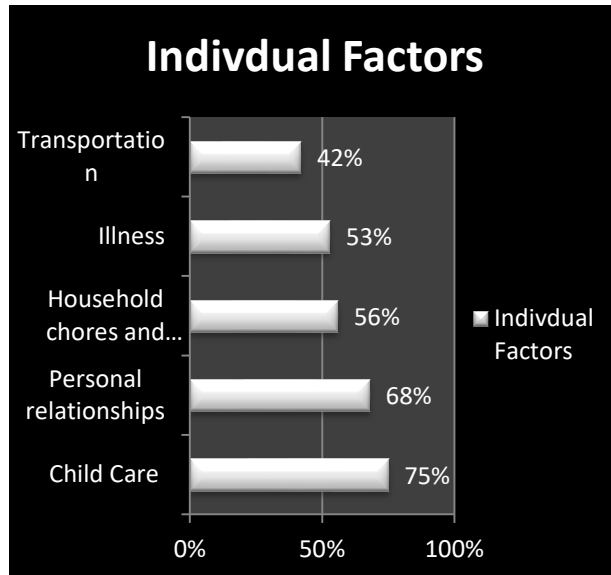
Individual Job related Factors

Question: - Do the following factors affect your Work Life Balance? Answer in 100 point scale where 100% is negative benchmark

Table No-1: APIs in %s as perceived by sampled women employees towards the various Individual factors affecting WLB (Negative benchmark -100%)

Sr. No.	Individual Factors influencing work life balance	IT Women employees (n=115)
1	Child Care	75%
2	Personal relations (with husband, children, father/mother in laws etc)	68%
3	Household chores and responsibilities	56%
4	Illness	53%
5	Transportation	42%
	Mean	59%
	SD	13%
	CV	22.02%

Graph 1: Individual Factors affecting work life balance with reference to Table No.1.



Amongst the various job related factors influencing WLB, the five factors given in the table no-1 are repeatedly told under the experience survey and also found in the literature review and hence these are chosen for enquiry to know their APIs over WLB of respondent

It is seen from the table that an average perceived Intensities (APIs) is 59% which is 41% away from bench mark with variance of SD 13% and CV 22.02%; thus there is wide variations of intensities as between one to other reasons instrumental to leading to disturb the Work life balance.

The table No-1 unveils child care has the highest APIs (75%) near to bench mark followed by Personal relations (68%), Household chores and responsibilities (56%), Illness (53%) and Transportation (42%).

The table no. 1 illustrates that child care has the highest API 85% followed by personal relationship API 68% as a major work life disturbing factors backed by household chores and responsibilities API 56% and Illness API 53% which also effect work life balance among women employees at IT sector in Pune. Many working professional women have agreed that child care and handling other house hold responsibilities and relationship is an opposing task in their daily life and eventually many of them fails in balancing it the right way. This leads to the state of stress and burn out for which the women professionals come to the conclusion of quieting the job due to lack of support from their spouses and other family members. At the same time, many women also seek the help of social media and other sources available in the society as a stress buster which may sometime leads them to be the part of fake and fraudulent commotion.

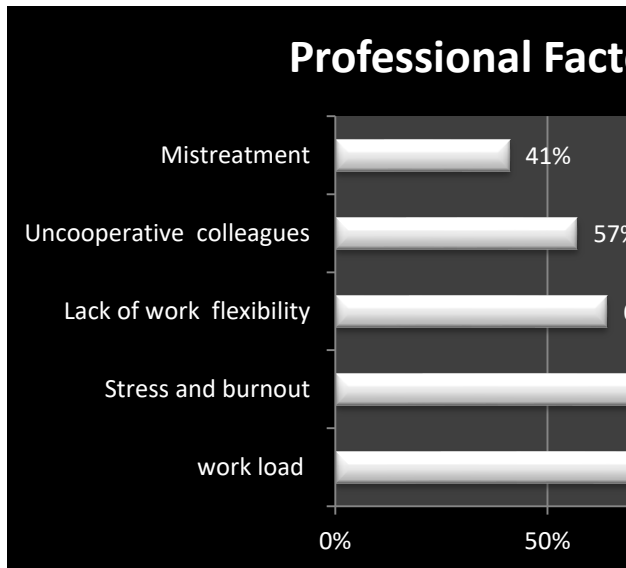
Question: - Do the following Job related factors affect your Work Life Balance? Answer in 100 point scale where 100% is negative bench mark

Table No-2: APIs in %s as perceived by sampled women employees towards the various Individual factors affecting WLB (Negative Bench Mark 100%)

Job related Factors disturbing work life balance	IT Women employees (n=115)
Work Load	85%
Stress and burnout	76%
Lack of work flexibility	64%
Uncooperative colleagues	57%

Mistreatment	41%
Mean	60%
SD	12.65 %
CV	21.27%

Graph 2: Professional Factors affecting work life balance with reference to Table No.2



The above noted 5 reasons are structured in question for inquiry of their Intensities perceived by the sampled employees (n=115) It is seen from the table that an average perceived Intensities (APIs) are 60% with SD 12.65% and CV 21.27%; thus there are wide variations of intensities only 35% near to bench mark as between one to other job related reasons which are instrumental to influence on Work life imbalance.

Job related Factors disturbing work life balance are:

Based on the research table we can discover that the highest effecting factor in professional front which leads to work life imbalance is the over Work load with (API 85%) which cannot be persuaded on time this

which again leads to the situation of stress and burn out (API 76%) and no work flexibility (API 64%) makes the situation even more worse. Uncooperative colleagues (API 57%)& Mistreatment (API 41%) are also the main reasons for disturbing work life balance.

DISCUSSION:

In today’s challenging world, with change in technology lifestyle needs and desire of human being has built up a lot of pressure towards the work needs which lead to higher stress level and imbalances in Job requirements and personal life of working women. As majority of the respondents have expressed that left-over work overload and unbending working hours are causing a lot of hindrances into their personal life and hence, Organization should adopt few policies or schemes to make the life of working women a bit easier. There should be free and convenient means of transport for those women who are residing far away from the work place and need to waste much time in travelling to work place which kills their time for family roles. Some of them also feel that the long working hours with the uncooperative and unfriendly colleagues make them feel so exhausted and drain them up psychologically that they cannot. Such wasted travelling time can be used by women to discharge their house hold responsibilities if they are residing near work place even they are back to their home which ultimately has an adverse effect on their personal relationships especially with their spouses and children. This hampers women and makes them mentally weak and develops a low self-esteem and sense of

insecurity and irresponsibility. Organisation should conduct stress buster programs, yoga sessions and training tools to deal with this situation for their female employees. Short breaks, rest hours and proper leave policies must be adopted by the Organisation so that they can fulfill their family commitments and can relief themselves from long hectic schedule. It has been rightly said by BosaSebele ***“There is no force more powerful than a woman determined to rise”*** so Organisation must take a small step to assist her in rising and shining with the efficacious colors.

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