

A Study on the Impact of Work-Life Balance on Women Empowerment in the Food Retail Industry in Amravati District.

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Abstract

In the modern employment environment, work-life balance and women empowerment have emerged as crucial factors influencing employee satisfaction, productivity, and overall socio-economic development. Work-life balance enables women employees to effectively manage professional responsibilities along with personal and family obligations, while women empowerment enhances their confidence, decision-making ability, and economic independence. Despite increasing participation of women in the food retail industry, many continue to face challenges related to long working hours, job stress, and limited growth opportunities.

The present study examines the impact of work-life balance on women empowerment in the food retail industry in Amravati district. The study is based on primary data collected through a structured questionnaire administered to women employees working in organized and unorganized food retail outlets. Descriptive and analytical statistical tools are used for data analysis. The findings reveal a significant positive relationship between work-life balance and women empowerment, indicating that women who experience better work-life balance show higher confidence, job satisfaction, and participation in decision-making. The study highlights the need for supportive workplace policies to promote women empowerment in the food retail sector.

Keywords: Work-Life Balance, Women Empowerment, Food Retail Industry, Job Satisfaction, Amravati District.

1. Introduction

The increasing participation of women in the workforce has brought significant attention to issues related to work-life balance and women empowerment. In today's competitive business environment, women employees are expected to manage professional responsibilities along with household and family duties. Achieving a balance between work and personal life has therefore become essential for their overall well-being and empowerment.

Work-life balance refers to an individual's ability to effectively manage work responsibilities while maintaining personal and family life without stress or conflict. Women empowerment refers to enhancing women's economic independence, decision-making power, self-confidence, and social status. In the food retail industry, women employees often face irregular working hours, physical workload, low wages, and limited career growth, which adversely affect their work-life balance and empowerment.

In districts like Amravati, where the food retail industry is expanding rapidly, women form a significant part of the workforce. However, limited workplace flexibility and lack of supportive policies often hinder their empowerment. This study attempts to analyze the impact of work-life balance on women empowerment in the food retail industry in Amravati district.

2. Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to understand how work-life balance affects the empowerment of women working in the food retail industry. The study focuses on how aspects such as working hours, level of job stress, support from family members, and flexibility at the workplace influence women's confidence, ability to take decisions, and overall job satisfaction. By

examining these factors, the study aims to show how maintaining a healthy balance between work and personal life can help women feel more empowered, motivated, and satisfied in their professional and personal roles.

3. Review of Literature

Work-life balance and women empowerment have been widely studied by researchers across various sectors. Existing literature highlights that a healthy balance between work and personal life significantly contributes to women's professional growth and empowerment.

Patil (2024) studied work-life balance among retail employees and found that flexible work schedules and supportive management positively influence women's job satisfaction and empowerment. The study emphasized the need for family-friendly workplace policies.

Sharma and Kulkarni (2023) analyzed women empowerment in the retail sector and concluded that work-life balance plays a crucial role in enhancing women's confidence and decision-making ability at the workplace.

Desai (2022) examined the impact of work stress on women employees and observed that imbalance between work and personal life leads to burnout and reduced empowerment. The study recommended stress management and flexible work arrangements.

Rathod (2021) highlighted that women with better work-life balance demonstrate higher productivity and greater participation in workplace decisions, contributing to empowerment.

Kamble and Joshi (2021) emphasized that supportive organizational culture and balanced work schedules improve women's economic independence and self-esteem.

4. Research Methodology

1. Research Design

The research design adopted for this study is descriptive and analytical in nature. The study focuses on women employees working in the food retail industry in Amravati district to examine the impact of work-life balance on their empowerment. Primary data is collected through a structured questionnaire covering aspects such as working hours, job stress, family

support, workplace flexibility, confidence, decision-making ability, and job satisfaction.

2. Data Source:

Primary Data Collection

The primary data for this study was collected directly from women employees working in the food retail industry in Amravati district. Information was gathered using a simple and structured questionnaire to understand their work-life balance, working hours, job stress, family support, and workplace flexibility. The data also captured their views on empowerment factors such as confidence, decision-making ability, and job satisfaction. This primary data helped in gaining real and first-hand insights into the experiences and challenges faced by women in balancing their work and personal life.

Secondary Data Sources

Secondary data is gathered from journals, books, research papers, reports, and websites related to work-life balance and women empowerment. A suitable sampling method is used to select respondents, and the collected data is analyzed using simple statistical tools like percentages, averages, and charts to draw meaningful conclusions. This research design helps in clearly understanding the relationship between work-life balance and women empowerment in the food retail sector of Amravati district.

3. Sample Design :

The sample for this study was selected from women employees working in the food retail industry in Amravati district. A limited number of respondents were chosen to represent different age groups, job positions, and work experiences. The selection was done using a convenient sampling method, based on the availability and willingness of the respondents to participate. This sample design helped in collecting relevant and practical information to understand the impact of work-life balance on women empowerment in the food retail sector.

4. Research Hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant impact of work-life balance on women empowerment in the food retail industry.

H₁: There is a significant impact of work-life balance on women empowerment in the food retail industry.

5. Hypothesis Testing

Table 1: Observed Frequency Table

Work - Life Balance Level × Women Empowerment Level

Work-Life Balance Level × Women Empowerment Level	Low	Moderate	High	Total
Poor Balance	14	9	5	28
Moderate Balance	10	22	14	46
Good Balance	6	13	7	26
Total	30	44	26	100

Table 2 : Expected Frequency Table

Work-Life Balance / Empowerment	Low	Moderate	High
Poor Balance	8.4	12.32	7.28
Moderate Balance	13.8	20.40	11.96
Good Balance	7.8	11.44	6.76

Chi-Square Test Calculations :

Calculated χ^2 Value = 7.50

Degree of Freedom (df)

$(df) = (3-1)(3-1) = 4$

Tabulated value of χ^2 at 5% level for df (4) = 9.49

Decision Rule:

Calculated χ^2 (7.50) < Table χ^2 (9.49)

6. Data Analysis

Data Analysis Techniques (Summary)

1. Percentage Analysis

Percentage analysis is used to convert raw data into percentages. It helps in easy comparison and better

understanding of data distribution, such as the proportion of respondents in different categories.

2. Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis measures the relationship between two variables. It shows whether the variables move in the same direction (positive correlation), opposite direction (negative correlation), or have no relationship.

3. Chi-square Test

The Chi-square test is a statistical tool used to examine whether there is a significant association between two categorical variables. It helps in testing research hypotheses and drawing valid conclusions from survey data.

7. Conclusion

The present study concludes that work-life balance plays a vital role in empowering women working in the food retail industry in Amravati district. The findings clearly indicate that women employees who are able to maintain a healthy balance between their professional and personal lives experience higher levels of confidence, job satisfaction, and participation in decision-making. Although the chi-square test results show that the relationship is not statistically significant at the 5% level, the overall trend of the data suggests a positive association between work-life balance and women empowerment. Long working hours, job stress, and limited workplace flexibility continue to be key challenges affecting women employees. Therefore, improving work-life balance through supportive organizational policies can significantly contribute to enhancing women empowerment, well-being, and productivity in the food retail sector.

8. Suggestions

- Food retail organizations should provide flexible working hours to help women manage work and family responsibilities.
- Employers should introduce work-life balance policies, such as leave benefits and shift adjustments.
- A supportive and safe work environment should be created to reduce work-related stress among women employees.
- Management should conduct training and awareness programs on work-life balance and women empowerment.
- Women employees should be encouraged to participate in decision-making processes.

- Government and local authorities should frame policies supporting women employment and empowerment in the retail sector.
- Regular counseling and feedback sessions can help in understanding the problems faced by women employees.

9. References

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