

# Perception about Work Life Balance among Working Women in Kashmir (Rural and Urban Population)

## Abstract

Work-life balance is a comprehensive term in this diverse workforce. Work life balance requires attaining equilibrium between professional work and personal work. The objective of the quality of work life depends upon circumstances and procedures that include promotion policies, participatory supervision by involving employees in decision making and safe working conditions. In mental definition, the quality of work life is the perception of employees' physical health and psychological health at their work place.

**Keywords:** Work Life Balance, Impact of Job, Budget Maintenance, Participation in Social Activities, Personal Life and Professional Life.

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## Introduction

Women of the earlier times were mostly confined to perform only household work. Very few of them had the access to higher education. Now by this time fast developing knowledge economy has given place for more number of women to be enlightened by higher education. Education has not only empowered them but also has given them robust careers. With brain power being the requisite skill in this knowledge era, rather than endurance or physical strength, the women workers seem to flood into every industry on par with men. Work life Balance does not mean an equal balance. It means the capacity to schedule the hours of professional and personal life so as to lead a healthy and peaceful life. It is not a new concept. It emphasizes the values, attitudes and beliefs of women regarding their age to work in organizing and balancing their work and personal life. When a woman achieves a successful work life balance she has job satisfaction and becomes highly committed and productive and succeeds in her career. But, in certain cases the women is not able to succeed due to incapability in balancing her work and personal life. She is unable to set her priorities. But this has indeed become a tough challenge for women as they have to perform a lot of duties in home and office as well. Many women today are wearing multiple hats in their attempts to balance both career and home/family responsibilities. In a broader sense Work Life can be described as the fit between multiple roles in a person's life. The fundamental theory behind the concept of WorkLife is that individuals have varying and sometimes mutually exclusive demands on them due to the roles that they play in the different facets of their lives for example, mother versus worker. Some would say it is the need of all individuals to achieve and maintain the balance between their paid work and their life outside of work. It is not one single ultimate experience but a series of individual experiences unfolding over time. For working women balancing a challenging career with life outside work is a complex task. Working women have to maintain a balance between family, career, health and society. In the current scenario it is very important that what place a woman is holding in the society. There is no single model that is right for everyone and no single approach is right for anyone for their whole life. WorkLife is a subject, in which increasing interest in academic literature, legislation and public disclosure. WorkLife Balance is a broad concept including proper prioritizing between Work and life such as career and ambition, on the other hand such as health, pleasure, leisure, family and spiritual development. WorkLife Balance means, meaningful daily achievement and enjoyment in life quadrants work, family, friend and self. It is a comprehensive term in this diverse workforce. It is a multidimensional issue as it is connected to the immigration, discrimination and the laws

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relating to the employment. More and more women are coming in the profession. Most of the working professionals feel the need to balance their work and their personal life. Work life is one of organizational interventions that have a great impact on the changes planned. They argue that the subsets of organizational development are organizational arrangements, quality circles, share of income, schedule of works, organizational structure, social factors, theories of personality, technical systems. It also reflects an individual's orientation across different life roles, an inter-role phenomenon. Hence, women should be active and plan her professional and personal schedules well in advance so that both are equally balanced and the end result is satisfaction.

### Objective of the Study

The purpose of this study is to present and discuss specifically the problems of women facing in the process of balancing their work and family life.

### Findings

The study reveals that (42%) rural and (44%) urban women employees opined that the budget is maintained by their family head (father/husband). About (54%) rural and (84%) urban women employees did not participate in social activities and (62%) rural and (78%) urban women employees agree that they have impact of job on social life. Likewise, (70%) rural and (76%) urban women employees did not maintain standard and superior quality of cleanliness at their home. Around (62%) rural and (64%) urban women employees accede that they did not get time for meditation, (62%) of rural and (86%) of urban women employees depict that they did not buy materials for their children.

### Review of Literature

Work-life balance is a multidimensional issue as it is connected to the immigration, discrimination and the laws relating to the employment. Most of the working professionals feel the need to balance their work and their personal life. The opinion of working women in dual career families on work life balance variables and support required from employers. It concluded that working women perceive that organizational policies that promote flexible work arrangements have positive direct association with work life balance. Thus, time flexibility is the most important factor considered by women employees to balance their work and family life. Particularly the following factors affected this perception i.e.; ability to interrupt office work to attend family matters and return to work, ability to arrange a convenient work schedule, provision to work partially from home, provision of leave when required, provision of child care as well as elderly care facilities, etc. Also, it point out that organizational support is very crucial in selecting job opportunities and in achieving a desired level of work life balance (Seshadri et al (2012). Work Life Balance of faculty members in Management Colleges in Pune and found out that a majority of women faculty members find it difficult to balance work and life. The stress from job spills over in their personal life and it is hard to takeout time for self-development and activities of self-interest. Also, it has

severe impact on their physical and mental health. Working beyond the official working hours and spending too much time on household chores also disturbs the thin line of balance between work and life, as females are generally more responsible for child care, elderly care and household responsibilities (Leena et al 2012). Work life balance entails attaining equilibrium between professional work and other activities, so that it reduces friction between official and domestic life. Work life balance enhances efficiency and thus, the productivity of an employee increases. It enhances satisfaction, in both the professional and personal lives. The findings of the study revealed that the majority of the women Employees feel comfortable in their work place irrespective of their trivial personal and work place irritants (V. Varatharaj et al (2012). It was found out that meaningful and fulfilling careers helped women in managing multiple roles and creating a positive balance between work and life. 96 strategies emerged out of the study and they were grouped into 18 themes. The most important strategy was to find meaningful work, followed by the second theme which was to 'Obtain a Mentor' as these mentors help, support and motivate in striking the right balance. Other important themes were to 'Work Hard' i.e. being competitive and productive; 'Prioritize' i.e. to schedule important family events in advance making sure they do not clash with work commitments; 'Increase Confidence' i.e. to believe in oneself; 'Faith' i.e. being religious helped them cope with stress; 'Support system' i.e. being supported by spouse, extended family, partner, outsourcing for childcare and elderly care, etc. (Kerri Health (2012). The study was conducted to evaluate the relationship between work life balance and employees satisfaction. Data is collected from 210 respondents in IT organizations through questionnaire. Multiply regression analysis was applied to drive the results. Results indicated job satisfaction have positive relationship with work life balance and negative relationship with work recognition, relationship with subordinate & supervisor and task at work (Rani et al 2011). The quality of work life leads to create motivation, loyalty and flexibility in the workforce. All these factors are crucial for competitiveness of organizations. Quality of work life also leads to reduce absenteeism and turnover rates of employees and increase their job satisfaction Adhikar et al (2010). Work-Life Balance is affected by time by analyzing the data in 2 themes: customized work schedule and divided time for personal needs. The results and findings suggested that Work-Life-Balance is more about the mind-set which is not dominated by work. It is a mental state that is determined to create 'me- time' rather than choosing part time jobs and work schedule (Roberts Emma 2008). Work-life balance is about effectively managing the act between paid work and all other activities that are important to people such as family, community activities, voluntary work, personal development and leisure and recreation. Thus, employees who experience high work-life balance are those who exhibit similar investment of time and commitment, to

work and non-work domains (Virick et al 2007). Work-life balance is defined as an employee's perception that multiple domains of personal time, family care, and work are maintained and integrated with a minimum of role conflict (Ungerson et al 2005). The gift of this knowledge era for women is occupational opportunity and mobility. But this gift has become a great challenge for the working women of today as they are not only exposed to the same working environment as men but in turn are also exposed to the pressures created by the multiple role demands and conflicting expectations. "By fulfilling their economic needs, employment has no doubt made women independent with an identifiable social status but it has also made them to juggle into two main domains of life- work and family. They have stepped into work place but the role responsibilities of women still remain the same, i.e., women may be a top executive, still the "nurturing" or "care giving" roles are considered much a part of feminine roles" (Sunita et al 2005). Work-life balance is a key issue in all types of employment as dual-career families have become common and high work demands with long working hours have become the norm. The importance of helping employees achieve a balance between the demands of their work and their home lives has been emphasized. Demographic changes as seen in the increasing number of women in the workplace and dual career families have generated an increasingly diverse workforce and a greater need of employees to balance their work and non-work lives (Bharat 2003). The work-life balance includes a number of aspects. How long people work; when people work; and where people work (Glynn et al 2002). It is possible to investigate the trend of work-life balance and its developments which influence the wellbeing and job outcomes of employees at work (Guest 2002). The work life strategies and work conditions are different among genders, for example, some families prefer husbands working for a long hour and women to work part time or fewer hours. Women report more stress and overload and lower levels of coping when compared to men. Job insecurity is similar in both men and women. However couples where both husband and wife are working full time (with or without children) tend to score higher when compared to couples where the wives work for a shorter time (with or without children) (Phyllis and Yun (2002). Living a balanced life as "achieving satisfying experiences in all life domains, and to do so requires personal

resources such as energy, time, and commitment to be well distributed across domains". The purpose of striving very hard both at home and work at the cost of her individual health and well-being for every married working woman is to have a good quality of life. But this quality of life that she craves for is often influenced by work life balance. Any imbalance in the work and family of an individual can hamper the quality of life thoroughly for the individual Kirchmeyer (2000). More employees are telecommuting or bringing work home, thus blurring the boundaries between work and non-work life. The quality of work life is correlated with commitment and performance of employee correlated. Hence the feelings and perceptions of employees from quality of work life have a considerable effect on organizational commitment (Hill et al 1998).

### Methodology

#### Hypothesis

Rewards, Impact of job, Budget maintenance, Participation in social activities, personal life and professional life affects work life among working women in Kashmir positively.

#### Respondents

The data has been collected through questionnaire from a sample of 100 women employees in which 50 respondents were taken from rural and 50 from urban population.

#### Instrument

A cross sectional study was conducted in Kashmir (Rural and Urban) and a sample of 100 respondents were taken. The data was collected via self-administered questionnaire. The data was analyzed by using various tools mean, percentage, chi-square and p-value.

#### Data Analysis

In the present study, both the primary as well as secondary sources of data were used. The primary data was collected by using simple random sampling in rural and urban areas using a structured questionnaire and an interview schedule. Collection of data through secondary source included information obtained from books, unpublished dissertations, journals University E-resource which is an excellent source of information and also from internet. The filled in questionnaire was edited and was subsequently coded and analyzed by using SPSS program. The data was then presented in tabular form.

### Result and Discussion

Table No.1

Social Life of the Respondents

Parameters	Responses	Dwelling						x <sup>2</sup>	p-value
		Rural		Urban		Total			
		Frequency	Percent (%)	Frequency	Percent (%)	Frequency	Percent (%)		
Budget maintenance of the respondents	Family Head	21	42.0%	22	44.0%	43	43.0%	5.42	0.05
	Mother	13	26.0%	21	42.0%	34	34.0%		
	Self	16	32.0%	7	14.0%	23	23.0%		
	Total	50	100.0%	50	100.0%	100	100.0%		
Participation in social	Yes	23	46.0%	8	16.0%	31	31.0%	10.51	0.97
	No	27	54.0%	42	84.0%	69	69.0%		

activities	Total	50	100.0%	50	100.0%	100	100.0%		
Impact of job on social life	Yes limit a lot	6	12.0%	5	10.0%	11	11.0%	3.54	0.16
	Yes limit a little	31	62.0%	39	78.0%	70	70.0%		
	No not limit at all	13	26.0%	6	12.0%	19	19.0%		
	Total	50	100.0%	50	100.0%	100	100.0%		

Table No.1 describes the budget maintenance data regarding the respondents. Of which 21 (42%) of the rural women employees reveals that the budget is maintained by their family head (father/husband), 13 (26%) mother, 16 (32%) self. While as 22 (44%) urban women employees opined that their budget is maintained by family head, 21 (42%) mother and 7 (14%) self. Hence the descriptive statistics  $\chi^2(5.42)$  and p-value (0.05) renders that the budget is maintained by their family head in both rural and urban women employees and it manifests positive correlation with variables.

It further infers whether the respondents actively participate in social activities or not. Of which 27 (54%) rural women employees did not participate in social activities, 23 (46%) participate in social activities. Whereas 42 (84%) urban women employees did not participate in social activities and 8

(16%) participate in social activities. Hence the multivariate values  $\chi^2(10.51)$  and p-value (0.97) depicts that the respondents both the rural and urban women employees did not participate in social activities and it shows negative correlation with variables.

Moreover it also shows the impact of job on social life of the respondent. About 31 (62%) of rural women employees agree that impact of job on social life limit a little, 13 (26%) no, not limit at all, 6 (12%) yes, limit a lot. Although 39 (78%) of urban women employees shows the impact of job on social life, 6 (12%) no, not limit at all and 5 (10%) yes, limit a lot. Hence the bivariate values  $\chi^2(3.54)$  and p-value (0.16) depicts impact of job on life and it limits little which shows the positive correlation with variables.

**Table No. 2**  
**Cleanliness Status of the Respondents (n=100)**

Parameters	Responses	Dwelling						x <sup>2</sup>	p-value
		Rural		Urban		Total			
		Frequency	Percent (%)	Frequency	Percent (%)	Frequency	Percent (%)		
Cleanliness status of house	Normal	13	26.0%	12	24.0%	25	25.0%	2.16	0.33
	Good	35	70.0%	38	76.0%	73	73.0%		
	Bad	2	4.0%	0	0.0%	2	2.0%		
	Total	50	100.0%	50	100.0%	100	100.0%		
Time for prayers	Yes	19	38.0%	18	36.0%	37	37.0%	4.23	0.83
	No	31	62.0%	32	64.0%	63	63.0%		
	Total	50	100.0%	50	100.0%	100	100.0%		
Buy materials for children	Yes	19	38.0%	7	14.0%	26	26.0%	7.48	0.97
	No	31	62.0%	43	86.0%	74	74.0%		
	Total	50	100.0%	50	100.0%	100	100.0%		

Table No.2 shows that most of the respondents have maintained standard and superior quality of cleanliness. About which 35 (70%) rural women employees concur their cleanliness status is good, 13 (26%) normal and 2 (4%) bad. While as 38 (76%) urban women employees agree that their status of house is good and 12 (24%) normal. Hence the bivariate values  $\chi^2(2.16)$  and p-value (0.33) shows the cleanliness status of house is good both in the rural and urban women employees and it manifests positive correlation with variables.

Further table reveals that majority of the women employees did not get time for meditation. Of which 31 (62%) of rural women employees did not get time for prayers, 19 (38%) get time for their prayers. However 32 (64%) of urban women employees did not get time for prayers and 18 (36%) get time for offering prayers. Hence the statistical values  $\chi^2(4.23)$  and p-value (0.83) depicts that the respondents both the rural and urban women employees did not have

time for prayers and it conveys highly negative correlation with variables.

Moreover it also depicts that most of the respondents 31 (62%) of rural women employees did not buy materials for their children, 19 (38%) buy materials for their children. In contrary 43 (86%) of urban women employees buy material for their children and 7 (14%) did not buy materials for their children. Hence the multivariate values  $\chi^2(7.48)$  and p-value (0.97) illustrate that the respondents both the rural and urban women employees did not buy materials for children and it shows negative correlation with variables.

Similar results were recorded by MS Bamji (2000) in his research paper Impact of Women's work on maternal and child nutrition.

### Recommendations

1. Should balance work and life in a clear line as they can give time to their family.

2. Time should be managed properly in such a way that they get the time for prayers which makes them pious.
3. Should participate in social activities because society plays an active role in our lives as we are social animals and we can't live in isolation.

## Conclusion

The present study is related to different situations which takes place in day to day life. In present scenario, perception about work life has gained more attention and everyone wants to make their life better. This study shows the various perceptions and their impact on the life of the respondents. Moreover the literature review and the discussion above supports the various parameters like Impact of job on life, budget maintenance, participation in social activities and Materialistic activities. It was observed that both rural and urban women employees' budget maintenance is carried out by their family heads. Rural women employees shows active participation in social activities as compared to urban women employees' hence urban women employees have more impact of job on social life. Rural women employees maintained superior quality of cleanliness of their home than urban women employees. Urban women employees did not have time for meditation nor buy materials for their children than urban women employees. Hence, concluded that the female respondents did not play the vital role in their materialistic life as they lack time management which results in negative impact on their lives. Thus, time flexibility should be maintained by women employees to balance their work as well as family life.

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