

Physical and Social Wellbeing of women in underpaid and overloaded Jobs



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The 21st century has seen a drastic transformational shift in the workforce. Women are actively participating in the workforce to have their own identity, source of income and career. There is no industry that women have stepped into, for instance automobiles, manufacturing industries, chemical industries etc. The penetration of women into white collared, pink collared and blue collared jobs are high compared to 19th and 20th century. Even though women have started to bloom in their career, they are still bounded by traditional family responsibilities. Due to which women face many struggles in balancing their work and family. This paper discusses about the factors that hinder the survival and growth of women employed in underpaid and overloaded jobs. This empirical paper also narrates the effects of conflicts with family members, workplace conflicts, hindrance factors that make blue collared women to struggle to complete the related task leading to poor work-life balance.

Key words: Work life Balance, Conflict factors, Blue collar jobs

1. Introduction

Gender studies have stated that women's work experience and educational attainment have seen an exponential growth in the past four decades. Women have better credential than before but the job and income prospects are not notable in jobs where women are underpaid but overloaded. Women make up two-thirds of the nearly 20 million workers in the low-wage workforce—though they make up less than half of all workers. "Women's progress in the workforce in the last decade has not meant greater access to quality jobs, nor has it brought an end to discrimination", mentioned by Mary Chinery-Hesse, ILO Deputy Director-General and leader of the ILO delegation to the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, September 4-15). This paper discusses on the challenges of women employed in underpaid and overloaded jobs.

Women who are employed in SEZ face more financial demand in their family and they are not able to lead a better quality of living with the changes in the economy and cost of living. Women employed in underpaid jobs have less support for household chores and their job demands are high. In the Indian family context women are expected to take care of the household chores and take care of children. It was found the women sleep lesser as they have to make themselves to be prepared to handle both the roles. The lifestyle builds the stress and it is reflected on their family life.

1.1 Women in Work Force

Women occupy 60% of industrialised world and the rate of employment is growing at a faster pace. It is inferred that the number of economically-active women in the member States of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) grew by 24%, twice the rate for men. In the developed countries, a high percentage of women are in the workforce: Sweden and Denmark, 75%; United States, 60%; United Kingdom, 59%; Canada, 58%; France and Germany, 57%; and Switzerland, 53%.

In developing countries, it is found that women contribute to 31% in the formal labour force. It is stated that these women face discrimination and are rarely able to rely on an organization to protect their rights. The ILO has found that economic hardships in developing countries resulting from structural adjustment programmes were forcing more women into the overcrowded, informal sector as men lose jobs in the formal sector (Source ILO).

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Women and Career

Andal (2002) stated in their studies economic well-being of women is enhanced and improved by their earning which contributed for their self-esteem and better household status and development of their family well-being. It is stated that gender gap in the ownership and control of property is the significant contributor for the gender gap in the economic wellbeing, social status and empowerment of women'. Afrin, Islam and Ahmed (2010) 'in their study analysed the constraining factors as issues related to financial management, skill, creative urge, self-interest, use family fund and family involvement. New job, employment of family members, independence, knowledge of business and family experience, economic necessity, self-confidence technical knowledge, money earning, want for suitable job and contribution to economic growth are some of the aspirations women feel.

2.2 Legal Indian Admin (2010) informs that ‘Indian women still face blatant discrimination at workplaces. A major problem faced by the working women is sexual harassment at workplaces. Women employees working in night shifts are more vulnerable to such incidents. Nurses, for example, face this problem nearly every day. There is nothing that is done in hospitals to tackle and address the danger they face

2.3 Women Employed in Non-Prestigious Jobs

There exists difference between women who are employed in white collar and blue collar jobs . It is observed that Women employed in good quality jobs have quality of working environment and support for house hold than the women who are employed in non-prestigious jobs which are overloaded and underpaid .Women working force of this category face more challenges .Talwar, Usha (1984) stated that ‘women engaged in prestigious jobs earned more than those who engaged in non-pretigious jobs. Undoubtedly, they worked to meet their financial demands in family and they did face more economic pressure. The domestic tasks which these women had to do was different from women who were employed in high paid jobs.

Voydanoff (1989) inferred in their study that the financial rewards and pay has significance impact on the positive mental health of working women and on the contrary non-working women and less paid women have poor mental health when analysed on the financial independence .

2.4 Physical and Social Well Being of Women Work Force

Women who play the dual role face the pressure of meeting the expectation at the workplace and family life. The gender stereo type which prevails creates a societal pressure to meet the roles in the family and expectation in the work enhances the need to satisfy the demands at workplace and degree of support they receive at work place and family influences their social wellbeing. Women find less time to take care of their health. Sudhinta (2017) in her study conducted among respondents of working women and house wife found that working women received less social support compared to the house wives. It was also inferred that their mental wellbeing was good but their physical wellbeing was not found satisfactory.

Michel (2017) stated that family role stressors as family involvement are predictors of family-to-work conflict. Study stated that family-to-work conflict plays a mediating role affecting work outcomes of job performance and has an outcome on withdrawal behavior. The study has identified that family to work conflict has a relationship on the family involvement.

Kandel in their studies of women employed in high paid jobs their mental health was good as it was an impact of balance between rewards and roles played as wife; mother and paid worker roles exhibited negative relationship between depression and working roles .

3. Objectives of the study

- To study the variance between obstructing and conflicting factors on work-life.
- To know the preferences of SESZ women workers towards social factors.

4. Research Methodology

4.1 Type of research

The researchers have adopted descriptive type of research to study overworked and underpaid women groups.

4.2 Sample Design

The sample size for this study was 200. The responses were collected from women workers belonging to SESZ. The researchers have collected filled questionnaire from the women workers working in footwear companies and garments from Chennai. Convenience sampling method was adopted to collect the responses.

4.3 Data analysis and Procedure.

Using SPSS software, ANOVA was used to analyse the data. ANOVA was used to find the significant variance between the variables. Weighted average method, was adopted to learn the preferences of women workers when it comes to social factors.

5. Data Analysis and Interpretation

5.1 ANOVA

H1: There is a significant variance between obstructing and conflict factors on work life balance.

H1a: There is a significant variance between prolonged working hours and the respondent’s responses towards there is an imbalance between work- life.

H1b: There is a significant variance between issues of workplace infuriates me at home and the respondent’s responses towards there is an imbalance between work- life.

H1c: There is a significant variance between I miss family events because of work responsibilities and the respondent’s responses towards there is an imbalance between work- life.

H1d: There is a significant variance between I feel Guilty for not devoting enough time with my family and the respondent’s responses towards there is an imbalance between work- life.

H1e: There is a significant variance between Family issues bothers me at work and the respondent's responses towards there is an imbalance between work- life.

Table 5.1 Descriptive

Attributes		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Prolonged working hours	Strongly agree	58	2.11	1.383	.127	1.86	2.36	1	5
	Agree	98	1.52	.990	.071	1.38	1.65	1	5
	Neutral	23	2.76	1.283	.156	2.45	3.08	1	5
	Disagree	17	2.67	1.379	.166	2.34	3.00	1	5
	Strongly disagree	4	1.73	1.162	.168	1.39	2.07	1	5
	Total	200	2.01	1.298	.058	1.89	2.12	1	5
Issues of work place infuriates me at home	Strongly agree	58	3.74	1.004	.092	3.56	3.92	1	5
	Agree	98	3.56	.988	.071	3.42	3.70	1	5
	Neutral	23	2.85	1.149	.139	2.57	3.13	1	5
	Disagree	17	3.54	1.008	.121	3.29	3.78	1	5
	Strongly disagree	4	3.98	.601	.087	3.80	4.15	1	5
	Total	200	3.54	1.031	.046	3.45	3.63	1	5
I miss family events because of work responsibilities	Strongly agree	58	4.03	.858	.079	3.87	4.18	1	5
	Agree	98	3.63	.816	.058	3.51	3.74	1	5
	Neutral	23	3.09	.910	.110	2.87	3.31	1	5
	Disagree	17	3.70	.960	.116	3.47	3.93	1	5
	Strongly disagree	4	4.56	.848	.122	4.32	4.81	2	5
	Total	200	3.75	.941	.042	3.67	3.83	1	5
I feel Guilty for not devoting enough time with my family	Strongly agree	58	4.50	.919	.084	4.33	4.66	1	5
	Agree	98	3.75	.682	.049	3.65	3.85	1	5
	Neutral	23	3.10	1.053	.128	2.85	3.36	1	5
	Disagree	17	3.80	.833	.100	3.60	4.00	1	5
	Strongly disagree	4	3.92	.767	.111	3.69	4.14	1	5
	Total	200	3.86	.928	.041	3.78	3.94	1	5
Family issues bothers me at work	Strongly agree	58	2.93	1.382	.127	2.68	3.18	1	5
	Agree	98	3.71	.824	.059	3.59	3.83	1	5
	Neutral	23	3.19	1.026	.124	2.94	3.44	1	5
	Disagree	17	3.78	.921	.111	3.56	4.00	1	5
	Strongly disagree	4	4.48	.743	.107	4.26	4.70	2	5
	Total	200	3.54	1.111	.050	3.44	3.64	1	5

Table 5.2 ANOVA

Attributes		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Prolonged working hours	Between Groups	121.400	4	30.350	20.878	.001
	Within Groups	119.582	195	1.454		
	Total	240.982	199			
Issues of work place infuriates me at home	Between Groups	46.143	4	11.536	11.799	.000
	Within Groups	283.975	195	.978		
	Total	330.118	199			
I miss family events because of work responsibilities	Between Groups	73.621	4	18.405	24.715	.006
	Within Groups	168.627	195	.745		
	Total	242.248	199			
I feel Guilty for not devoting enough time with my family	Between Groups	49.875	4	22.469	32.750	.000
	Within Groups	289.603	195	.686		
	Total	329.478	199			
Family issues bothers me at work	Between Groups	104.159	4	26.040	25.169	.000
	Within Groups	212.119	195	1.035		
	Total	316.278	199			

From Table 5.1, it infers that the highest mean value for the first attribute is 2.76, which shows that around 68 respondents are neutral with their opinion that prolonged working hours causes an imbalance between work and home life. The lowest mean value for the first attribute- Prolonged working hour is 1.52, so about 196 respondents agree with the statement that prolonged working hours causes an imbalance between work and home life. The second attribute- issues of work place infuriates me at home has the highest mean value of 3.98, where about 48 respondents strongly disagree with the statement that the issues at workplace infuriates me at home causes an imbalance between work and home life. Whereas around 68 respondents with the lowest mean value 2.85 are neutral towards it.

The third attribute- I miss family events due to work responsibilities has a maximum mean value of 4.56 which shows that about 48 respondents strongly disagree with the statement that I miss family events due to work responsibilities creates an imbalance between work and home life. The minimum value of the third attribute is 3.09, which shows that 68 respondents are neutral towards the statement I miss family events due to work responsibilities that creates an imbalance between work and home life. The fourth attribute I feel guilty for not devoting enough time with family has a maximum value of 4.50, about 119 respondents strongly agree that they feel guilty for not devoting enough time with family that causes imbalance between work and home life. Whereas about 68 respondents are neutral towards it.

The fifth attribute- Family issues bother me at work has the highest mean value of 4.48, which shows that 48 respondents strongly disagree that family issues bothers me at work that causes an imbalance between work and home life. Whereas 119 respondents having the lowest mean value of 2.93 strongly agree with the same. The maximum mean value of the sixth attribute- family conflict affects routine activities at home, is 4.02, which shows that 48 respondents strongly disagree with the statement that family conflict affects routine activities at home creating an imbalance between work and home life. The minimum value is 3.08, which shows that 119 respondents strongly agree with it.

From the above Table 5.2, it is inferred that there is a significant variance between obstructing and conflict factors on work-life. Since the corresponding significance value is lesser than 0.05. Accept alternative hypothesis, H1a, H1b, H1c, H1d & H1e. Therefore, from the table it is inferred that there is a significant variance between obstructing and conflict factors on work life balance.

5.2 Weighted Average Method

Table 5.2.1 Coefficient of Variations

Social Factors	Achieving targets	Helping colleagues at work	Helping colleagues in their personal problem	Team work	Motivating colleagues to achieve targets	Interpersonal relationship	Counselling to friends
N Valid	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
N Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	6.94	6.86	8.64	9.94	10.7	9.42	8.30
Std. Deviation	4.39	4.64	4.39	4.22	5.34	4.98	4.00
Coefficient of variation %	63.3	67.6	50.8	42.4	49.9	52.8	48.1

Table 5.2.2 Ranking of Social Factors

Factors	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5	Rank 6	Rank 7	Weighted Avg	Rank
Accomplishing Targets	56	90	13	25	15	0	1	40.8	1
Helping colleagues at work	16	80	65	20	10	5	4	37.17	2
Helping colleagues in their personal problem	13	15	26	96	37	6	7	29.4	5
Team work	7	28	8	17	95	27	18	16.6	7
Motivating colleagues to achieve targets	58	38	12	70	8	6	8	33.2	4
Interpersonal relationship	20	19	32	25	65	5	34	36.3	3
Counselling to friends	17	68	17	17	15	23	43	29	6

From the Table 5.2.1, it infers that there is a greater coefficient variation (67.6%) for their responses towards helping colleagues at work and there is a lesser coefficient variation (42.4%) for the teamwork. The second greater coefficient of variation (63.3%) was

accomplishing targets. It also reveals that most of the respondents gave the same kind of response towards the attribute team work when compared to helping colleagues at work.

Table 5.2.2, infers that the majority of the respondents prefers to concentrate on accomplishing targets, help colleagues at work, interpersonal relationship and motivating colleagues at work. The respondents would not prefer activities such as team work and counselling friends.

6. Findings and Conclusions

6.1 Findings

- The analysis of variance is used to find the variance between the variables. Hence, through this the researcher has found that obstructing factor such as prolonged working hours and conflict factors such as issues of workplace infuriates me at home, family issues bother me at work, I feel guilty for not devoting enough time with my family has a significant variance in creating an imbalance between work -life.
- Using a weighted average method, the researcher found that most of the respondents prefer social factors such as to concentrate on accomplishing targets, help colleagues at work, interpersonal relationship and motivating colleagues at work. The respondents would least prefer activities such as teamwork and counselling friends.

6.2 Conclusion

Work life balance is considered as an art to be practiced by women. Transformation in the HR policies to support WLB has been source of boon to women in white collar jobs but the policies to support work life balance of women in blue collar jobs who are underpaid but overloaded need to be considered by the organization. Working women believe the biggest support they can get is from family. Awareness to be given to the family members, hence, the family members could take initiatives to share the family responsibilities and help the women workers to balance the work-life roles by avoiding the traditional societal belief that women must only look after family responsibilities.

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