WORK LIFE BALANCE OF WOMEN EMPLOYEE: A LITERATURE REVIEW

J. Sudha*1, Dr. P. Karthikeyan2

1Ph.D (Management), Research Scholar, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India.
2Asst. Prof., School of Management Studies, Kongu Engineering College, Perundurai, Erode, Tamil Nadu, India.

ABSTRACT
Career and goals are the most important factors in life. Most of the women are coming forward to work in order to support their family. This change is now natural and dynamic due to change of environment and economic conditions. The biggest challenge for women is how to balance the demands of family and career. The literature identifies the various aspects such as career advancement, Work Stress, Career aspiration, Work Family Conflict and Family Work Conflict, Child care in context with Work Life Balance (WLB) and its practices. This paper reveals the overview of the various challenges and issues faced by Women employees to achieve WLB. The sources referred in this paper include various journals, reports, internet sites etc. and the details has been given in the reference section.

Keywords: Work Life Balance (WLB), Women Employee, Family, Career etc.

1. INTRODUCTION
Work Life Balance of Women employee has become an important subject since the women are equally sharing the earning responsibility for the betterment of their family. Women are getting into jobs and they continue to work even after marriage. A married woman has more responsibility than man in taking care of young children and family. The working women efficiently overcome difficult situations by their commitment and perseverance. The participation of women in income generation activities lends them to satisfy their home needs to a greater extent. This paper aims to review the existing literature on Work Life Balance of Women Employee with an identification of various characteristics towards the achievement of WLB.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW
Number of studies has addressed this issue in different perspectives. Some of the papers related to this subject are reviewed.

Vijaya Mani (2013) has revealed the major factors influencing the Work Life Balance of Women professionals in India such as role conflict, lack of recognition, organizational politics, gender discrimination, elderly and children care issues, quality of health, problems in time management and lack of proper social support.
K. Santhana Lakshmi et al., (March 2013) have examined that the Educational institutions should address the Work Life Balance related issues among their staff, specifically women and take a holistic approach to design and implement the policies to support the teaching staff to manage their WLB. Kumari K. Thriveni et al., (2012) have studied and analysed the significant relationship between the demographic variables and WLB. Shalini and Bhawna 2012 reported in their study, Quality of work life is being used by the organizations as a strategic tool to attract and retain the employees and more importantly to help them to maintain work life balance with equal attention on performance and commitment at work.

Heather S. McMillan et al., (2011) suggested that the individual harmony and its effects has developed a new Harmony based on conflict and enrichment. N. Krishna Reddy et al., (2010) concluded that the married women employees indeed experience Work Family Conflict (WFC) while attempting to balance their work and family lives. Thus, Organization needs to formulate guidelines for the management of WFCs since they are related to job satisfaction and performance of the employees.

Niharika and Supriya (2010) have studied the work based factors and family related factors that are considered to contribute to work life balance. Work based factors are flexi time, option to work part time and freedom to work from home and the family related factors are child care facility and flexibility to take care of emergencies at home.

Masako SETO et al., (2004) have examined the effects of work related factors and Work Family Conflict on depressive symptoms among working women living with young children in a Japanese Metropolis.

3. WORK LIFE BALANCE

Work Life Balance means the competence to schedule the hours of an individual Professional and Personal life so as to lead a healthy and peaceful life. It emphasize the values, attitudes and beliefs of women regarding their age to work in organizing and balancing their work and personal life. (K. Santhana Lakshmi & S. Sujatha Gopinath, March 2013). The following variables influencing the experience of WLB were identified while reviewing the various literatures.

- Work Family Conflict and Family Work Conflict
- Women in various roles
- Career Advancement
- Work Stress
- Child care

Work Life balance is not something that just happens. It involves the efforts of a number of partners: the employee, the organization for which the employee works, the family with whom the employee lives and the society in which all are embedded. It involves mutual understanding and respect between all of these players. (N. Gayathri & Dr. P. Karthikeyan, August 2013).

3.1. Work Family Conflict and Family Work Conflict

Researchers define the incompatibility between the domain of work and the domain of family as work-family conflict. Conflict between these domains occurs when participation in one role is more difficult due to participation in the other role. Today, work-family conflict (work
interfering with family) is more prevalent than family-work conflict (family interfering with work) though both can occur. However, regardless of the direction of causation, when one domain is discordant with another domain, the result is conflict and increased stress on the individual. Attribution theory states that there are internal and external explanations for work-family and family-work conflict.

Krishna Reddy and Vranda (2010), discuss the issues of Family and Work Conflict and Work Family Conflict are more likely to exert negative influences in the family domain, resulting in lower life satisfaction and greater internal conflict within the family. Variables impact the experience of WFC and FWC.

Compensation theory suggests that people add more to one domain than the other in order to balance what lacks in either. In other words, life balance is a direct result of the amount of time and psychological resources an individual decides to commit to both domains. If the individual commits more time or psychological resources to work, then work-family conflict may increase. If an individual decides to commit more resources to family than work, but work requirements increase, then family-work conflict also increases. While the conflict between work and family may be inevitable, researchers such as Friedman and Greenhaus (2000) suggest alternative methods for reducing the stress. For example, more autonomy in the workplace and networking with peers can increase the quality of work life. Their studies show that individuals who work for organizations that allow individuals to spend more time at home, work in virtual employment, and make flexible time arrangements, tend to perform better as a parent than those who do not have these opportunities. Maintaining satisfaction on both fronts is important for reducing the feelings of conflict (Friedman and Greenhaus, 2000).

3.2. Role of Women and WLB

Women are mostly into full time services and are working 8 hours per day and 5 days in a week minimum and are confronted by increasing workload everyday. So, most of them carry work and responsibilities to home but balancing between these two complex situations in the present day fast life requires talent, tact, skill and caution. Women have to cope up with high work targets, office commitments, tight meeting schedules and the duties and responsibilities of life and home. Employers should concentrate on framing various policies and schemes to facilitate Work life balance to encourage and attract women employees. (SayantiGhosh, 2010).

Employees learn different kinds of behaviour from workplace life and private life. Since reciprocal interactions between both the life domains occur a Green Work Life Balance Concept is suggested to facilitate environmentally friendly behavior for them. (N.Gayathri, Dr.P.Karthikeyan, (2013).

Susi S & Jawaharrani.K (2011) agrees that a strong organizational culture increases employees intent to remain in the organization. Work life balance must be supported and encouraged at all levels of the organisation including senior management, line managers and all staff.

Louise Heslop (2005) have studied that the work and family outcomes such as role interference, stress strain and life satisfaction are related to several strategies and orientation.
3.3. Career Advancement and WLB

Different factors across three levels play a role to determine the progress of women through organizational hierarchy. (Dr. Ines Wichert, 2012)

**Framework of Women’s career advancement**

![Chart 1: Framework of Women’s career advancement](chart)

Amita Singh (2010), suggested that flexi time, home working, child care facilities, option to work part time are facilities that need to be introduced and recommended for building a supportive work environment in the IT sector in India.

Mathew and Pachanatham (2009) stated that the women workforce in India was mainly employed in non-managerial, subordinate or low profile positions in the past. At present, they occupy almost all categories of positions in the workplace. These changes in work culture have added to women’s duties and responsibilities to their family as well as to society.

3.4. Work stress and Work Life Imbalance

Vijaya Lakshmi et al (2013) have studied and find the issues and problems of women faculty working in educational institutions. Also found that women faculty members underwent severe stress in the process of attaining Work Life Balance. Continued work pressure resulted in poor performance. The result revealed that many female teachers have neglected their health in the process of improving the life of their family members and their students.

G. Shiva (2013) studied that “Women professionals in high position in their office have return from office in correct time, cook, clean and look after their family affairs. This makes them more stress and leads to some health problems. The leading cause of stress arises because of communication with Superior”

Mohan and Ashok (2011) explained that “Stress is often developed when an individual is assigned a major responsibility without proper authority and delegation of power, inter personal factors such as group cohesiveness, functional dependence, communication frequency, relative authority and organizational difference between role sender and forcal persons.”

Shahnaz & Jamie (2008) found that Work Stress and Work Life imbalance correlated with workaholic, regardless of gender. Women may be taking a more career minded view, while men are becoming more family oriented.

Gunavathy (2007) in the study among married women employees of BPO companies outlined the causes, consequences of work life imbalance and interventions for work life balance. The
study revealed that more than two third of the respondents reported work life imbalance primarily on account of work interference with personal life. Also concluded from this study, stress and burnout, ill-health and poor work performance are the consequences of work life imbalance.

3.5. Child Care

S. Padma & M. Sudhir Reddy (2013) studied that the demographics of the children has no significant influence on the Work Life Balance of School Teachers. There is a statistically significant impact of “Support in child care responsibilities from spouse and elder parents” on WLB of school teachers.

G.Shiva (2013) explained the working women having small children are forced to leave their child in daycare or in hands of maid. This creates more tension for them and less concentrate on their work and also not able to give proper care for them at times.

Lan Day (2006) stated in his study that the policies centred on extending parental leave and child care provision promotes a greater flexibility in employment.

\[ \text{WLB} = \text{Healthy life} + \text{Satisfactory lives both Professionally and Personally} \]

Daily schedule of WLB

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Getting ahead at Work</td>
<td>Spending valuable time with family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completing the task within time</td>
<td>Caring children and elderly parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commuting to/from work</td>
<td>Doing chores at home</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 2: Daily schedule of WLB

Work Life balance is a Pendulum. Pendulam is a rod with a weight that swings freely backward and forward and at the end it regulates the mechanisms of a clock. Like, Women employee has to satisfy both the work and family.

4. WOMEN EMPLOYEES CAREER AND LIFE PREFERENCES

The segregation of men and women into different occupations is the principal reason for earnings differences between men and women. The occupational segregation restricts people’s choice of career, especially in the crucial early years of adult life. This was the reason for both the European Commission and ILO belief regarding the occupational segregation can and should be eliminated (Catherin Hakim, 2006).

Rajesh K. Yadav, Nishant Dabhade (2013) have concluded that the women working in all types of professions demonstrating that there are no gender differences in work. The increasing demands at work place, the interface between work life and personal life needs more attention. It leads to stress and such situation affects person’s health both physiologically and psychologically.

Ramadoss (2012) observed in his study that high job control, supervisor support for family related issues and one’s own coping resources were significantly related to positive spillover from work to family and the direction of the relationships were positive for a women in IT enabled sectors.
5. CONCLUSION
To achieve WLB, every woman should set the goal and excel both in career and family. Some of the strategies and skills at work such as planning, organizing and setting limits can be used at home and work place for accomplishing a satisfying and fulfilling well balanced life both professionally and personally. Women employee should care the family both physically and financially to satisfy the family needs. Also work for the accomplishment of organizational objectives and individual upliftment to satisfy the career needs. Organisations need to adopt human resource strategies and policies to overcome the issues of the work life balance of women in the current business environment. Frances and Patricia (200&) concluded that Family Policy, Welfare state provision and labour market structure behave jointly to determine distinct models of work family balance and the financial consequences associated with them.

REFERENCES
[29] Seto M, Morimoto K, Maruyama S. Effects of work related factors and work-family conflict on depression among Japanese working
