A STUDY ON WORK LIFE BALANCE AMONG WOMEN EMPLOYEES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO VEEYEL FRUIT PRODUCTS (P) LTD.,COIMBATORE.

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ABSTRACT

The role of working women has changed throughout the world due to economic conditions and social demands. This has resulted in a scenario in which working women have tremendous pressure to develop a career as robust as their male counterparts while sustaining active engagement in personal life. The ever-increasing work pressure is taking a toll on the working women leaving them with less time for themselves. The increasing responsibilities on the personal front with the technological blessings like advanced mobile phones, notepads, etc. that keeps work life integrated with personal life also creates stress on personal and professional fronts in this knowledge age. This affects the person's physical, emotional and social well-being.

Thus, achieving work life balance is a necessity for working women to have a good quality of life. This paper is an attempt to explore the tough challenges faced by working women in maintaining a balance between their personal and professional life. The various factors affecting the work-life balance of married working women have been examined in this study.

Keywords- Personal life, Professional life, Quality of life, Work-life balance, Working women.

INTRODUCTION

A popular topic in today's news is that of work life balance. Work/life balance is not simply a matter of the number of hours one spends at work. Nor is it just an issue of corporate policies on flextime and family leave. Work life balance issues are more a matter of the meaning and quality of life. The expression "work-life balance" was first used in the late 1970s to describe the balance between an individual's work and personal life

Work-life balance is about the interaction between paid work and other activities, including unpaid work in families and the community, leisure, and personal development. Employers and individuals can gain from improved integration for the individual. Work-life balance is an important contributor to both social outcomes (improving opportunities to adequately parent or provide care for others and fulfill cultural/community responsibilities and reducing indirect discrimination as well as enhancing personal well-being) and economic outcomes (efficient use of skills and talent, enhanced productivity and firm profitability). Work-life balance also relies on the provision of adequate and accessible services and community supports.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Everyone has a life and responsibilities outside work. Often people have children or other caring responsibilities, or want time to pursue other interests. Finding ways to accommodate this can make a real difference to employees and to business. Work-Life balance is about organizations identifying with their workforce to determine how both can benefit from a more imaginative approach to working practices. A group of leading employers have formed an alliance, Employers for Work-Life Balance, in partnership with the Government, to promote the benefits of work-life balance to the business community. Therefore, life represents everything that is not work - all the details and activities that make up a personal life, such as:

- Interacting with immediate family, extended family, and community.
- Attending to a home.
- Enjoying hobbies.
- Seeing to personal well-being.

The problems of work/life balance manifest as feelings of being overwhelmed and unable to satisfy all of one's responsibilities. When feeling overwhelmed, a person often eliminates those areas they control, such as personal recreation, exercise, and relaxation. In an effort to carve out more time, people often take shortcuts with food preparation. Fast-food restaurants become attractive as alternatives to planning, purchasing, and preparing food. The high fat, high calorie content of most fast food meals can compound the problem by adding concerns over weight gain and cholesterol levels.

WORK LIFE BALANCE OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES

Today's career women are continually challenged by the demands of full-time work and when the day is done at the office, they carry more of the responsibilities and commitments to home. Women reported that their lives were a juggling act that included multiple responsibilities at work, heavy meeting schedules, business trips, on top of managing the daily routine responsibilities of life and home. "Successfully achieving work/life balance will ultimately create

a more satisfied workforce that contributes to productivity and success in the workplace."

The changing economic conditions and social demands have changed the nature of work throughout the world. Originally, work was a matter of necessity and survival. Throughout the years, the role of "work" has evolved and the composition of the workforce has changed. Today, work is widely viewed as a source of personal satisfaction. A good balance in work and life can play a phenomenal role in the attainment of personal and professional goals.

WORK LIFE BALANCE POLICIES

Work Life Balance policies can be taken to mean those policies which assist workers in combining employment with their family life, caring responsibilities and personal life outside the workplace, while meeting the employer's needs. This broad definition includes statutory entitlements like maternity, adoptive, and parental leave, the carer's leave legislation and other measures such as childcare and employee assistance schemes.

Work-life balance business benefits include:

- Increased productivity
- Improved recruitment and retention
- Lower rates of absenteeism
- Reduced overheads
- An improved customer experience
- A more motivated, satisfied and equitable workforce.
- Becoming a good employer or an employer of choice
- Greater staff loyalty and commitment

EMPLOYERS ROLE IN WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Employees have realized that they're expendable, and consequently they're much less committed to their employers and more likely to leave for greener pastures. Since employers don't guarantee lifelong employment, employees want more flexibility in their jobs, and they're no longer as willing to give up personal time for the company. To remain competitive, and to retain their most talented employees, companies must provide more than a good salary and a medical plan. Companies have started implementing flexible work options like:

- Childcare Wellness programs
- Financial planning

These work/life benefits encourage employees to be more productive and committed to the company, and they make the company more competitive when recruiting new candidates. In a time when attrition is a major concern in all sectors, they feel it wise to adopt worker friendly practices. Employers can facilitate Work-Life Balance with many schemes that can attract employees and satisfy their needs. Some of these are:

- ✓ Facilities for child care
- ✓ Financial planning services for employees who need them
- ✓ Flexi timings
- ✓ Work sharing
- ✓ Maternity benefits
- ✓ Part time employment

- ✓ Leave plans, both paid and unpaid to suit employees' needs
- ✓ Insurance plans
- ✓ Counseling services for problems like managing work and the home
- ✓ Rest rooms, food preparation services
- ✓ Jobs with autonomy and flexibility
- ✓ Realistic work loads
- ✓ Review of work processes to see if the burden on employees can be lightened

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. **Lowe, Janet Gayle, Vernon (2007) :** A study on Exploring the work/life/study balance. This study explores the majority of the students in this case study combined study with work and/or family commitments, and the normal 'working' week was of 59-71 hours. Full time and part time students experienced different but equivalent demands on their time and were equally at risk of overload. Over half of the students achieved a good or manageable work/life/study balance, whilst some experienced stress caused by conflicting priorities. The students' success in balancing study with work and family life was influenced by their coping strategies and by the nature and quality of the support they received from families and employers.

2. **Dr Mervyl McPherson (2007)** Conducted A study on Work-life balance, workplace culture and employee engagement survey, Employee engagement predictably has the strongest relationship with self-reported productivity. These findings suggest that while there are clear links between work-life culture, employee engagement and productivity, and between work-life balance, work-life culture and employee engagement, the direct links between work-life balance and productivity, and between discretionary effort and productivity are not so strong.

3. **Siliconindia News Buereau (2008) :** Studied Working spouses fine with their work life balance. "This survey highlights the bitter-sweet implications of two careers. The stress on marriages and childcare is often perceived to blunt the economic upside. The continued difficulties for women looking to re-enter the workforce after a child break and the high unwillingness to move cities to follow their spouses' careers are the challenges for women spouses in the Indian workplace,"

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Some Research shows that mostly women are not able to balance their Work and Life. Today's career woman continues to be challenged by the demands of full time work and when the day is done at the office, they carry more of the responsibilities and commitments back home. Employee can facilitate work life balance with many schemes that can attract women employees and satisfy their needs. Because of this reason this study is important in the present circumstances.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ➢ To know about the hindrances in balancing work and life among the respondents
- ➢ To study the working arrangements of the women employees
- ➢ To study the support available for working women employees from family members,

team members and officers.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE:

A sample of 50 respondents is chosen. Convenience sampling technique used to collect the data. The study is on the basis of the primary information provided by the respondents. The Researcher collected the data through the questionnaire and the collected data was transferred to the master 'sheet in a systematic manner. Later the data were transformed into the table form and analyzed.

TABLE 1
DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

	Particulars	Frequency	percentage
Age	21 to 30 years	39	78
	31 to 40 years	10	20
	Above 40 years	1	2
Marital status	Married	18	36
	Unmarried	32	64
Occupational status	Officers	25	50
	Executives	5	10
	Designers	6	12
	Assistants	12	24
	Data entry operators	2	4
Educational Qualification	Diploma	6	12
	Degree	35	70
	Post Graduates	9	18
Monthly Income	Rs.3000-Rs.6000	33	66
	Rs.6000-Rs.9000	13	26
	Above Rs. 9,000	4	8

Source: Primary Data

Table 1 highlights demographic characteristics of respondents **78% of the** respondents **age are 21 to 30 years, 70% of the respondents are degree holders, 50% of the** respondents **were officers, 66% of the respondents monthly income is ranges between Rs, 3000 to Rs.6000.**

TABLE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY THE DEPARTMENT THEY WORK

S. No.	Department	Frequency	Percentage
1	HR Department	3	6
2	Quality Control Department	5	10
3	Accounts Department	17	34
4	Sales & Purchase Department	14	28
5	Computer Department	5	10
6	Production Department	2	4
7	Technical Department	4	8
	Total	**50**	**100**

Source: Primary Data

Table 2 shows that majority of the respondents (34 percent) were under the accounts department, 28 percent of the respondents were under the sales and purchase department, 10 percent of the respondents were under the quality control department, and again 10 percent of the respondents were under the computer department, 8 percent of the respondent were under the technical department, 6 percent of the respondents were under the HR department, and remaining 4 percent of the respondents were under the production department.

TABLE 3

OCCASIONS HELPING IN BALANCING THEIR WORK AND FAMILY COMMITMENTS OF THE RESPONDENTS

S.NO.	OCCASIONS	YES	NO	NOT AVAILABLE	NOT APPLICABLE
1.	Balancing work and family life	12	38	0	0
2.	Work life policies provided by the organizations	0	50	0	0
3.	Flexible starting times	41	4	1	4
4.	Flexible finishing times	40	5	0	5
5.	Part time and reduce work hours	5	9	3	33
6.	Time off during school holidays	3	6	4	37
7.	Compulsory over time hindrances	16	16	0	18
8.	Shift work hindrances	21	6	0	23
9.	Timing of work meeting/ Training hindrances	25	3	0	22
10.	Support from colleagues	28	7	1	14

11.	Support from team members	35	6	2	7
12.	Encouragement to use paid and unpaid leave	6	5	3	36
13.	Negative attitude of managers hindrances	3	42	0	5
14.	Negative attitude of colleagues	4	39	0	7
15.	Provision of working from home	27	18	0	5
16.	Usage of technology such as Laptops/cell phones	38	8	2	2
17.	Bring children to work on occasions	15	11	2	22
18.	Frequent travelling away from home hindrances	35	5	0	10
19.	Influence of work life balance on the success of the organizations	31	19	0	0

Source: Primary data

Table 3 highlights the occasions helping in balancing their work and family commitments of the respondents.

TABLE 4

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY THEIR OPINION ON HELP FROM ORGANIZATION IN BALANCING THEIR WORK AND FAMILY COMMITMENTS

S. No.	Help from organization	Frequency	Percentage
1	Satisfied	12	24
2	Reduce of work load and working hours	18	36
3	Provide proper shift and holiday	7	14
4	Increase the salary	2	4
5	No commends	11	22
	Total	**50**	**100**

Source: Primary data

Table 4 shows that majority of the respondents (36 percent) opined that reduce of work load and working hours helped in balancing their work and family commitments, 24 percent of the respondents were satisfied with the help from the organization in balancing their work and family commitments, 22 percent of the respondents had no comments, 14 percent of the respondents opined that provision of proper shift and holiday helped in balancing their work and family commitments and the remaining 4 percent of the respondents opined that increase in the salary helped in balancing their work and family commitments.

FINDINGS

- 100 percent of the respondents were not using any of the work life programmes provided by the organization.
- Majority of the respondents (82 percent) felt that flexible starting times helped in balancing their work and family commitments.
- Majority of the respondents (80 percent) felt that flexible finishing times helped in balancing their work and family commitments.
- Majority of the respondents (80 percent) felt that flexible hours generally helped in balancing their work and family commitments
- More than half of the respondents (66 percent) felt that part time or reduce work hours were not applicable in balancing their work and family commitments.
- Majority of the respondents (74, percent) felt that time off during school holidays were not applicable in balancing their work and family commitments.
- Nearly half of the respondents (36 percent) felt that compulsory over time were not applicable in balancing their work and family commitments.
- Half of the respondents (50 percent) felt that weekend work schedule were not applicable in balancing their work and family commitments.
- Nearly half of the respondents (46 percent) felt that shift work were not applicable in balancing their work and family commitments,
- Half of the respondents (50 percent) felt that timing of work meetings/training hindered in balancing their work and family commitments.
- More than half of the respondents (56 percent) felt that support from colleagues helped in balancing their work and family commitments
- Majority of the respondents (70 percent) felt that support from team members helped in balancing their work and family commitments.
- Majority of the respondents (72 percent) felt that encouragement to use paid and unpaid parental leave were not applicable in balancing their work and family commitments.
- Majority of the respondents (78 percent) felt that seeing other men use work/family policies were not applicable in balancing their work and family commitments.
- Majority of the respondents (84 percent) felt that negative attitude of managers did not hinder in balancing their work and family commitments.
- Majority of the respondents (78 percent) felt that negative attitude of colleagues did not hinder in balancing their work and family commitments.
- More than half of the respondents (68 percent) felt that negative attitude of team members did not hindered in balancing their work and family commitments.
- More than half of the respondents (54 percent) felt that provision of working from home helped in balancing their work and family commitments.
- Majority of the respondents (76 percent) felt that usage of technology such as laptops or cell phones helped in balancing their work and family commitments.
- Nearly half of the respondents (44 percent) felt that being able to bring children to work on occasions were not applicable in balancing their work and family commitments.
- Majority of the respondents (70 percent) felt that frequent traveling away from home

hindered in balancing their work and family commitments.

➢ Nearly half of the respondents (36 percent) opined that reduce of work load and working hours helped in balancing their work and family commitments.

➢ More than half of the respondents (62 percent) accepted that the success of the organization depended on work life balance of employees.

SUGGESTION

On the basis of this study the researcher would like to make suggestions to reduce the problems related to work life balance.

➢ The employees can be provided with adequate wages and training for enhancing work life balance

➢ Identify the need of the employees and introduce work life policies based on their needs.

➢ The employees can budget the time both in and out of the office and schedule their time efficiently at work and take some time for family commitments.

➢ The company could provide facilities to the employees like child care, work sharing, leave plans, insurance plans etc.

➢ The employer can increase the level of support to the employees like reduced work loads, good working conditions etc,.

➢ The company can give counseling to the employees regarding the attainment of work life balance.

CONCLUSION

In the present scenario, most of the women who are working in the industrial sector are not able to keep a balance between their work and family life. Nowadays, more women are coming forward to work in the industrial sectors, although they are committed to work under high pressure. It should be kept in mind that they are very much committed to their family. In such cases, some women may find it difficult to balance the work life with family life. Due to this reason it will much favorable, if the companies provide work life balance schemes (like child care, part time work, work sharing, flexible working hours, leave plan, working from home, maternity leave etc.) which can attract women employees and satisfy their needs.

The main aim of this study was that to find out the work life balance among women employees. From the study conducted, the researcher has concluded that majority of the respondents were not able to balance their work and family life. Also more than half of the respondents accept that the success of the organization is based on work life balance.

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