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WORK-LIFE BALANCE OF FEMALE NURSES: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

The Literature review is very important to understand about the research topics. It helps the researcher to define the problem, stating objectives, formulating hypothesis, selecting the appropriate research design, methodology and tools and interpreting the results. The literature review identifies its effect on various aspects of the Works-life Balance conditions of female nurses through the review of existing literature from various journals, thesis, working papers etc. The literature identifies its effect on various Works-life Balance conditions of the female nurses i.e Job Satisfaction, Work stress, Turnover, absenteeism, career growth, competitive working environment, work life policies and practices. This paper attempts to review on various literature of Work life Balance of female nurses.

Keywords: Work-Life Balance, Nurses, Literature Review

Introduction

Globalization and Modernization affects rapid changes in Indian families. Early centuries women were mostly confined to their kitchens and those who were employed in factories, farms or shops. Very few women had the access to higher education and they were forced to be at the mercy of their fathers' or husbands' attitudes towards women and work. Indian women belonging to all classes have entered into paid occupations. At present, Indian women's exposure to educational opportunities is substantially higher than decades ago, especially both in the urban and rural areas.

The biggest challenge for women is how to balance the demands of family and career. 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. Female nurses may struggle with work-life balance because of the nature of the job, long hours and shift work commitments. Some say nurses are especially vulnerable because they are socialized into a caretaker role, and the result is that they may put other's needs before their own. Nurses should pay extra attention to managing work-life balance to ensure they derive maximum satisfaction from their work while maintaining a healthy lifestyle. This paper aims to review the existing literature on Work Life Balance with an identification of various characteristics towards the achievement of work-life Balance. 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 diligence. The participation of women in income generation activities lends them to satisfy their home needs to a greater extent.

Work-Life Balance Literature Review

Enormous studies has addressed to work-life balance 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, and elderly and children care issues, quality of health, problems in time management and lack of proper social support.¹

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.²

KumariK.Thriveni et al, (2012) have studied and analyzed the significant relationship between the demographic variables and WLB.³ Heather S.McMillan et al, (2011) suggested that the individual harmony and its effects have developed a New Harmony based on conflict and enrichment.⁴

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.⁵

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.⁷ Drago and Kashian (2003) - Work life research is interdisciplinary, spanning the boundaries of disciplines such as sociology, psychology, organizational behavior, human development, labour economics, industrial relations, management, demography and women's studies. ⁸ Paula J Caproni (2004) - The hectic job requirements of the present day may undermine women's and men's attempt to live self fulfilling lives. The work-life discourse reflects the individualism, achievement orientation, and instrumental rationality that is fundamental to modern bureaucratic thought and action and such discourse may further entrench people in the work/life imbalance that they are trying to escape.⁹

Neats M (2010) -The demand for nurses also increasing not only because of attractive salary and job security but also because of the care they provide thus making a difference in others live which is generally not found in many other careers.¹⁰ K.Santhana Lakshmi &S.SujathaGopinath (2013) - 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 emphasizes the values, attitudes and beliefs of women regarding their age to work in organizing and balancing their work and personal life.¹¹

N.Gayathri & Dr.P.Karthikeyan, (2013)-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 withwhom the employee lives and the society in which all are embedded. It involves mutual understanding and respect between all of this players.¹²

Work Family Conflict 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

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life satisfaction and greater internal conflict within the family variables impact the experience of WFC and FWC.¹³

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.¹⁴

Frone M.R., Russel, M & Cooper, M.L (1992)- It was observed that job involvement, job stress, work support and work hours give rise to work- family conflict. If these work domain specific variables are balanced, work-family conflict will be minimum leading to family satisfaction. Continuing their study, they observed that family conflict, family stress, family support and family hours lead to family- work conflict. If these family domain specific variables are balanced, family to work conflict would be minimum, which will lead to job satisfaction.¹⁵ Noor (2004)-found that in terms of each conflict's impact of well-being in professional women, FIW conflict is more significant than WIF conflict.¹⁶

Women and Work-life Balance

Sayanti Ghosh (2010) - 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 every day. 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.¹⁷ N.Gayathri, Dr.P.Karthikeyan, (2013)-Employees learn different kinds of behavior 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.¹⁸ 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 organization including senior management, line managers and all staff.¹⁹ 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.²⁰

Career Advancement and Work-life Balance

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.²¹ 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.²²

Job Satisfaction and Work-life Balance

Day A (2010) - Studies have proven that factors like improper work life balance; work pressure, improper working environment, growth pressure, and salary and job security have great impact on job satisfaction. The job satisfaction of nurse is absolutely important for the smooth functioning and successful upcoming of health care industry.²³

Working hours and Work-life Balance

Sarah Holly and Alwine Mohnen (2012) find that offer greater understanding of the influence of working hour conditions on employee satisfaction. Compensated overtime has a positive effect on job satisfaction; therefore, companies can satisfy their employees, even those with high workloads, if they compensate them for overtime, whether in full, partially, or with additional holidays. Compensation for overtime also decreases employees' wishes to reduce their working hours.²⁴

Lambert E.G, Hogan N.L & I. Alzheimer (2010)- The role of nurses have expanded from health care provider to health educator, diagnostic assistant, post care supporter, health adviser, physician's assistant, operation theatre assistant, health counselor, health promoter, administrator, health researcher, health supervisor, maintaining of health report etc. Other reasons of slowing down of nurses populations is mental stress and work pressure which leads to dissatisfaction. Factors that lead to mental stress and work pressure are improper work life balance, physical health or fitness, improper working conditions, discrimination, distrust and unlimited workload.²⁵

Clare Kelliher and Deirdre Anderson (2010)- Flexible workers- those who work reduced hours and those who work remotely record higher job satisfaction, organizational commitment and work intensification.²⁶ Tausig Mark, Fenwick Rudy (2001)- The most consistent family characteristic predicting imbalance is being a parent. The most consistent work characteristic predicting imbalance is hour's worked.²⁷ Thornthwaite (2004) - Suggest that there is a strong, unmet demand among working parents for shortened working hours, part-time work and flexible working time. Management must communicate their organization's family-friendliness in such a way that all employees feel that they have equal access to alternative working time provisions.²⁸

Duffy et al (1989)- It has been suggested that part-time work offers the best of both world, enabling women to pursue career interests while still being able to spend time with their families.²⁹

Christopher et al (2000)- Part time work was associated with lower work-to- family interference, better time management ability, and greater life satisfaction while role overhead, family to work interference, and family time management, however dependent on job type.³⁰

Greenhaus and Powell (2006)- The concept of part time work does not coagulate with the teaching in full time academic course, hence an invariable juggle for women faculty members to reduce friction between work-family interference. As many organizations and employees seek ways to better manage the tensions between work and other life demands, there has been a growing body of research examining work-family and work-life issues.³¹

Work/ Personal Planning and Work-life Balance

DiljotSoin (2011)- Found that the careful planning, personal effort, and training in the skills and competencies of emotional intelligence which will assist in developing one's self-awareness leading to a change towards more adaptive attitudes and the augmentation of more positive perceptions of one's work life balance.³²

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Vijay Kumar, AshaPravin&J.Dhilip (2011)- It has been identified that working women, getting caught in WLB trap will continue to be an outgoing challenge. Careful planning and personal effort is needed to balance in both career and home life.³³ Satpathy I, Patnaik B.C.M &Panigrahi B (2011) - From the study it has been identified that for supporting staff working in educational institutions, the work life balance will continue to be an outgoing challenge. It is the employer who should review the system through HR department, as the HR is the important component for the organizational growth. So the employer and employee should find a solution to the issue. However, it is important that supporting staff should plan, prioritize and schedule as efficiently as possible. There is no fixed rule for the work life balance. It varies from case to case and at the same time the nature of work and other different factors. It is also true that these staffs are equally important for the growth of the organization. Their feelings, emotions and expectations cannot be taken for granted.³⁴

Job Performance/Absenteeism and Work-life Balance

Allen, Herst, Bruck and Sutton (2000)- In their research they found that as WFC increased, job satisfaction decreased, and evidence for this was found among individuals of both genders in diverse professions, various career stages and from different countries. They also reported that as WFC is associated very highly with turnover or the intention to leave. There were conflicting findings identified concerning the relationship between WFC and absenteeism.³⁵

Eby et al (2005)- Concludes that work-to family conflict is more prevalent than family-to-work conflict, but that work and family influence each other in a reciprocal fashion. They also suggest that gender differences and gender role issues must be considered to fully understand the interface between work and family. They criticize previous research for its focus upon objective characteristics rather than examining how these characteristics are perceived by the individual, i.e. having more children may actually be perceived as a positive factor, providing the individual with social support and other benefits, rather than being a negative factor associated with increased responsibilities. They also argue that the most useful measure for evaluating the impact of WLB is behavioral outcomes (i.e. job performance, absenteeism) rather than just attitudes towards work.³⁶

Work Stress and Work-Life Balance

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 under went 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.³⁷ 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"³⁸ 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, interpersonal factors such as group cohesiveness, functional dependence, communication frequency, relative authority and organizational difference between role sender and focal persons"³⁹

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.⁴⁰ Higgins & Duxbury, (1992)- While both genders are affected by the challenges of balancing work and family, women report higher level of difficulty and related stress.⁴¹

Steven L, Sauter (1999)- The work place has become the single greatest source of stress. Unfortunately, many women feel additional stress when they must decide what they feel is best for their families or what is best for their careers.⁴²

Nelson and Burke (2002)- Women in academic tend to experience chronic stressors such as the Glass ceiling, Workload and Role overload, maternal wall and inappropriate behavior and sexual harassment.⁴³ Parker R (2010)- When management provides healthy practices on work life balance, the outcome of health care provided is also healthy. Although some employers believe that workers should reduce their own stress by simplifying their lives and making a better effort to care for their health, most experts feel that the chief responsibility for reducing stress should be management.⁴⁴

K.S. Lakshmi, T. Ramachandran & David Boohene (2012) - This paper highlights the issues connected with work life balance of female nurses in Government and Private hospitals and the factors that determine the work life balance. It is found that government and private hospitals in Chennai district should address the work life balance related issues and to support the female nurses to manage their work life balance which would add to the performance of these staff members. The results also indicated that both government and private hospital nurse's the work life balance is challengeable one. Their needs to be periodically review in terms of their work and personal life satisfaction; otherwise they would be subject to sever stress.⁴⁵

Child Care and Work-life Balance

S. Padma & M. Sudhir Reddy (2013) studied that the demographics of the children has nosignificant 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.⁴⁶

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.⁴⁷

Byron (2005)- argues that family-interfering-with-work (FIW- family issues impacting upon the work domain) and work interfering -with-family (WIF-work issues impacting upon the family domain) have different antecedents, namely that work variables tend to be associated with WIF and non-work variables with FIW, and therefore studies should take account of both types of conflict/interference. Byron also comments that vary. Most studies focus upon caring for young children and don't consider the issues associated with caring for an elderly parent or spouse.⁴⁸

Career and Life Preferences

Catherin Hakim (2006)-The segregation of men and women into different occupations is the principal reason for earnings differences between men and women. The occupational segregation

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restricts people's choice of career, especially in the crucial early years of adult life this was there a reason for both the European Commission and ILO belief regarding the occupational segregation can and should be eliminated.⁴⁹

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 woman in IT enabled sectors.⁵⁰

Work-Life Policies

Sunil Joshi and Christina Pruna et.al (2002)- For true work life balance to occur, employees need to be responsible to adopt certain behavior which would help them balance work and the other aspects of their life (e.g. , family, friends, and self). Companies with long-term strategy on work-life balance will recognize this and provide employees with training which addresses personal shortfalls they might have that keep them from achieving work-life balance.⁵¹

DiljotSoin (2011)- Found that the careful planning, personal effort, and training in the skills and competencies of emotional intelligence which will assist in developing one's self-awareness leading to a change towards more adaptive attitudes and the augmentation of more positive perceptions of one's work life balance.⁵² Una Byrne (2005)- Work life balance is important because both the employer and employees can benefit if work-life balance is maintained across all levels in the organization.⁵³

Ross C (2010)- The management needs to assess the causes for improper work life balance and lay down strategies to overcome those hurdles and make the nurses productive. ⁵⁴

Person A.L etl.(2010) Issues related to work pressure, longer working hours, harassment etc, can be addressed by introducing flexi- timing , job rotation, job growth, family get together , children school funds and child care centre etc. which will motivate the employees to work at work place and give their 100% to their job.⁵⁵ Wilkerson B (2010) - The management support is also indicator for favorable treatment, patient satisfaction, employees satisfaction and long-term success of the hospital. Availability of good work-life balance leads to increased intake of skilled nurses, reduces turnover, increases the job satisfaction level, commitment, dedication and positive health care provisions at large. WLB related wellness activates are Training and development programs, health awareness programs, soft skill programs like stress management, conflict management, leadership skills, workshops on talent technologies in medicine and work life balance workshops can be introduced. ⁵⁶

Wise (2003)- reported that awareness of work-life balance by business and employees was low, and that work-life balance policies are often poorly understood by both line managers and employees, and that family friendly or flexible work arrangements are more commonly found in larger organizations and in the public sector. Many work-life balances policies focus on the care of young children and he suggested that more focus is needed on those with other caring responsibilities, as well as flexibility for those around retirement age. Positive benefits for business of investing in work-life balance policies are numerous e.g. flexitime has been found to reduce absenteeism.⁵⁷

Mesmer-Magnus &Viswesvaran (2006)- conducted a meta-analysis and conclude that having family supportive work culture is actually more important for WLB than having number of WLB

policies in existence. Negative relationships between WFC and supervisor support, co-worker support and work family culture were identified. They conclude firstly work family programme/policies/benefits e.g. flexible working, maternity leave, child care vouchers etc, and secondly a family friendly culture: the flexibility supportiveness of managers and colleagues.⁵⁸

Parsuraman & Greenhaus (2002) - suggest that the consequence of work-family conflict have been investigated widely, finding high level of conflict producing dissatisfaction and distress within both the work and family domains. However, the mutually enriching effects that work and family can have upon each other have been very rarely considered. They also suggest that there has been an over-emphasis on the impact of environmental and situational factors on WLB, at the expense of investigating individual differences, such as personality constructs.⁵⁹

Sucharitha Suresh and Dr. RashmiKodikal, (2017) In their studies Turnover rate of nurses is increasing in recent years, which is partially due to increasing pressure on nurses for higher productivity expectations and working conditions in the hospitals. Improving nurse retention is highly difficult challenge to an employer. This study identified key factors can be adopted by the organization by revising their HR policies and providing family friendly benefits to the nurses. Working conditions of the nurses can be improved in the form of salary, by enhancing interpersonal relationships through training programs and providing sufficient staff in the ward by maintaining nurse patient ratio and conducting training programmes in the form of Continue Medical Education (CMEs) to update them with recent advancements in the health care.

S.parameswarishobana et al (2016) in their studies they found that In government Hospital nurses, Excessive house hold work is the major factor affect in their work life and family life. In private hospital nurses, lack of leisure time and financial problems are the major factors affecting their work life and family life.

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