

Work–life balance (A Comparative Analysis of Women in Academics and Corporate)

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Abstract

Work–life balance is a concept including proper prioritizing between "work" (career and ambition) on the one hand and "lifestyle" (Health, pleasure, leisure, family and spiritual development/meditation) on the other. Related, though broader, terms include "lifestyle calm balance" and "life style choices".

The work life balance is more predominant in women compared to men due to the role and the expectations of the women in the society. Though today's women have made a remarkable place in the society, they still have to face many obstacles to grow. The women of today not only support the family in earning a living but also do the household chores and take care of the family. This makes the life of women very busy and tedious. This leads to the work life imbalances. If the women have support from her family members and also some supportive organisational policies, her burden can be reduced to some extent and this can be a boost for her to balance her work and life.

This paper on the topic 'Work life balance' will focus on woman as a centre of its discussion. The main objective of this paper is to have a comparative analysis of woman in two different sectors namely, academic and corporate with respect to the work life balance. Both the primary and the secondary data would be collected for the study. The primary information will be collected by administering a questionnaire to the respondents. The questionnaire will have five sections namely work, health, family, women empowerment and organisational policy.

Keywords: work life balance, women, society, academics, corporate

1. INTRODUCTION

Work-life balance for any one person is having the 'right' combination of participation in paid work (defined by hours and working conditions), and other aspects of their lives. This combination will not remain fixed, but may change over time. It is a concept of including proper prioritizing between "work" (career and ambition) and "lifestyle" (Health, pleasure, family and spiritual development/meditation).

Work-Life Balance does not mean an equal balance it simply means trying to schedule an equal number of hours for each of your various work and personal activities Individual work-life balance will vary over time, often on a daily basis. The right balance for an individual when one is single will be different when one marries, or if she/he has children; when one start a new career versus when one is nearing retirement. The best

work-life balance is different for each of us because we all have different priorities and different lives.

Times have changed. From the time the husband went out to earn, and the wife was confined to the four walls. To the time now when both the husband and wife earns and support each other in the living. The life of a wife is no more restricted to the four walls but she has now come out and done wonders in this wonderful world. She has left no field untouched and left her mark everywhere. Although, over the years women in India have struggled to establish an identity & create a mark in the social as well as in the organizational platforms, but she still does the household chores and takes care of the children apart from earning which makes it tougher for her to balance her work at the home and also at the work place.

The challenge of work/life balance is a reality for every working woman, and it is an issue that is widely discussed in organizations and governments today.

If women do not receive adequate support from employers in managing their work and home demands, they are more likely to opt for part-time work or leave paid employment entirely. This has significant business costs associated with absenteeism and turnover, and ultimately limits women's full participation in the productivity. By implementing a work life balance strategy employers can help to reduce stress in their employees. This can lead to a more motivated and loyal workforce, increased productivity and reduced absenteeism.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective of the study is to understand the work life balance and to do the comparative analysis of the implications of work life balance on women of the corporate field and teaching field. It is to understand the problems faced by women in balancing both the personal and the professional life.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper is basically a research paper and will focus on various problems faced by woman in corporate and academic life and how do they balance their work life problem. This

paper has used the information both from the primary and the secondary sources. The survey is done on a small sample size of woman working in corporate and academic profession in three major cities of India namely, Kolkata, Delhi and Hyderabad.

Primary information is collected from the answers collected from the women employees of academics and corporate in 3 selected cities. Secondary information is collected from the books, journals magazines and books.

Sample size: The sample size is 240 with 40 respondents in the academics and 40 in the corporate each in Delhi, Kolkata and Hyderabad.

Sampling Procedure: Simple Random Sampling Procedure is used to choose a sample from the population.

Statistical Technique: Percentage and average method are used to analyse the collected data from the questionnaire.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

Work/life balance is defined as “a situation in which you are able to give the right amount of time and effort to your work and to your personal life outside work, for example to your family or to other interests” (Work-life balance, 2009). Women feel entitled to claim this balance, even if it requires formal intervention from institutions and governments. Yet it was not very long ago that work/life balance was a whispered taboo or seen as an individual’s personal problem to be resolved in private (Rice, 2000). For a long time, most women did not believe they deserved a healthy balance between their work and their lives outside of work, let alone expect and receive formal policies supporting this balance.

Women now make up half the workforce, and if organizations want to compete in the globalized marketplace, they have to maximize their use of the available talent pool. Work/life imbalance takes a toll on women’s job satisfaction and commitment to the organization (Kinman, 2001).

5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

A survey was conducted in Delhi, Kolkata and Hyderabad to understand the work life balance of the married women both in the field of academics and corporate. The survey report was based on parameters of work, health, family, woman empowerment, and organisational policy.

- i. Work: In this parameter women were asked as to how are they able balance their work life concerns. Women were asked career options against their life options and priorities.
- ii. Health: Healthy woman performs better in any firm. Questions were put forth whether woman are able to lead a healthy life due to pressure from work and life concerns

iii. Family: Woman were asked about their quality time devoted to their family.

iv. Woman Empowerment: This empowerment is in terms of how they are treated at home and office by their male counterparts. If they feel a sense of depression, anxiety due to male dominated society.

v. Organisational policy: This parameter focused on the issue of the firms in which the woman worked. Does their firm take care of their work/life imbalances. Did the firms have a separate policy of work/life balance.

6. ANALYSIS OF KOLKATA REPORT

The fig 1 shows the comparison of the women in the academics and the corporates in Kolkata with respect to the five dimensions.(work, Health, family, women empowerment and the organisation policy.)

It can be analysed from fig 1 that Kolkata woman working in academics are able to give some time to work and life whereas the corporate woman spends less time in personal life. Women in the academics are able to balance their work and life better than those in the corporates but only sometimes and not completely. Health is a problem in both the cases. As the women find it difficult to balance their work and personal life, it shows negative impact on their health as they get very little time for themselves. Woman in academic spend enough time with their family. They are able to do that as they spend less number of hours in the work as compared to the women in the corporate.

Whether the women are working in the field of academics or are in corporate, they find it difficult to manage both the personal and professional life. But there is a sense of satisfaction in academicians that they are able to spend more time with their family when compared to the women of corporate.

7. ANALYSIS OF DELHI REPORT

The fig 2 shows the comparison of the women in the academics and the corporates in Delhi with respect to the five dimensions.(work, Health, family, women empowerment and the organisation policy.)

The women in the academics are able to manage both the personal and professional life better than when compared to women in the corporate. They are also able to handle the responsibilities towards their families and their families are also more supportive when compared to that of the corporate. As they have quite free time they are also able to take care of their health. Surprisingly, the women in the corporate are also able to balance the work and life to some extent as the organisational policies in Delhi are very supportive like work from home or flexi time. The policy in the corporate are more supportive than the academics as the women in corporate are in more need of help from the organisation to manage their

work life balance. But the women of both the academics and the corporate are not able to spend satisfactory time with their family as in this city travelling takes more time.

8. ANALYSIS OF HYDERABAD REPORT

The fig 3 shows the comparison of the women in the academics and the corporates in Hyderabad with respect to the five dimensions.(work. Health, family, women empowerment and the organisation policy.)

As per the Fig. No. 3. it can be analysed that the women employees in the corporates and also in the academics are facing problem in balancing their work life and home life but the stress in the corporates is more than that of the academics. The women in academics are more empowered than the women of corporates as the women of corporates face more competition than their male counterpart.

9. CONCLUSION

Work life Balance is imperative in today’s extremely competitive world. To combat this severe competition the corporates put lot of stress on the employees. This stress becomes very difficult to be handled specially for the women who have the responsibilities to be handled at home and perform at the organisation without giving any personal excuses.

As per the survey done in Kolkata, Delhi and Hyderabad, it was found that the stress is faced by the women both in the field of corporates and also in the academics. Though this survey is restricted with time frame and selected sample size, but the result show that stress in the academics is somewhat less than that of the corporates due to the less working hours and the holidays in the academics. But in both the cases woman face the problem of health. The organisation policy is more supportive in the the corporates specially if it is an MNC with with employee supportive policy like flexi time and work from home. The policy in academics is supportive in the sense that the academics get the permission or can go early when there is a possibility and emergency. The women faces the discrimination whether in corporate or academics. The glass ceiling still has to be broken. Nowadays academic institutions are also in the line of becoming corporate institution.. The day will come soon when woman in academics also face the same problem of work/life imbalance.

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APPENDIX

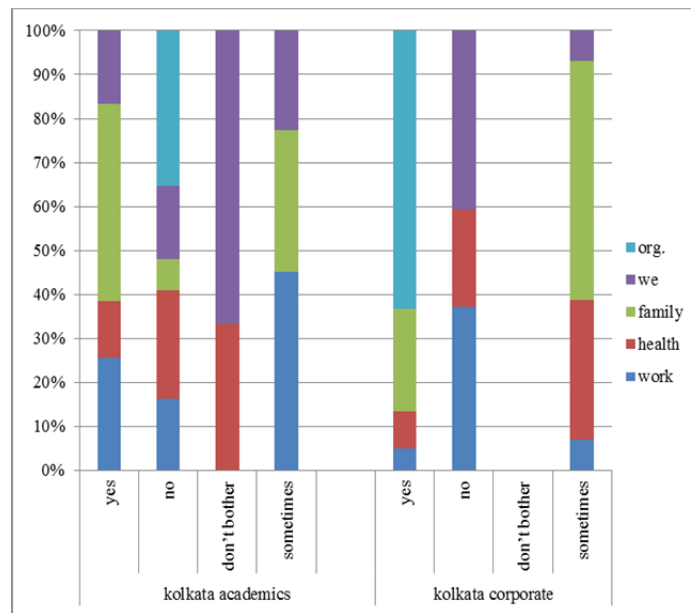


Fig. 1

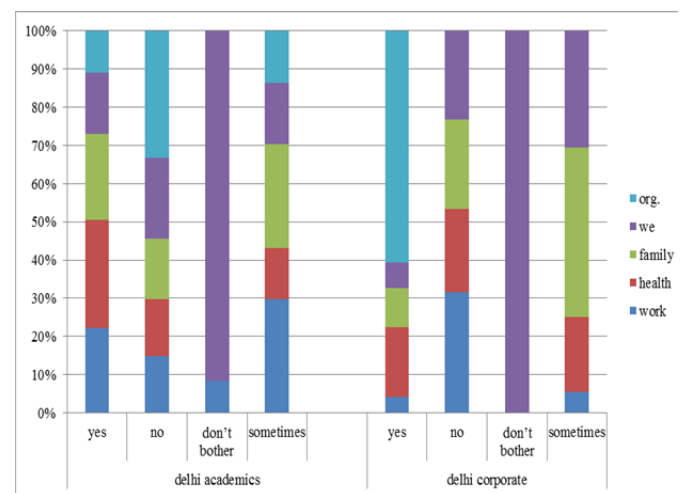


Fig. 2

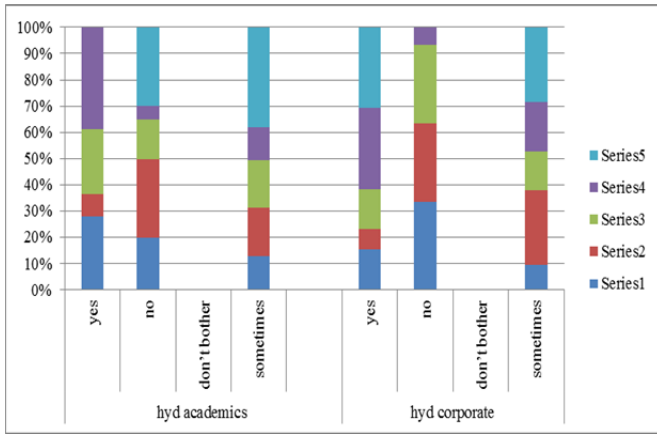


Fig. 3