WORK-FAMILY BALANCE OF INDIAN WOMEN IN ACADEMICS: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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Abstract
One of the significant changes witnessed in the labour market in India has been the entry of women professionals in the rapidly growing services sector. As the women take on the role of working professional in addition to their traditional role of the homemaker, they are under great pressure to balance their work and personal lives. The working women are required to perform an accumulation of different roles simultaneously, each one with its unique pressure. Multiple role-playing has been found to have both positive and negative effects on the mental health and well-being of professional women. This study attempts to understand how work and family related factors influence the work family balance of Indian women in academics. The study is based on an exploratory qualitative study of 25 women professionals in the academic sector in Bangalore, India. This study is also conducted on how the effects of family life influence the profession. The narratives reveal six major themes: familial influences on life choices; multi-role responsibilities and attempts to negotiate them; self and professional identity; work life challenges and coping strategies; organisational policies and practices; and social support.

Keywords: Faculty, Work Life Balance, Human Resource, Educational Institutions.

Introduction
Human resources are the most valuable and unique assets of an organization. In today's fast paced society, educational institutions seek options to positively impact the bottom line of their faculties, improve faculty morale, retain faculties. Work life balance has been one of the major factors in influencing the organization's efficiency. Work life balance has always been a concern of those interested in the quality of working life and its relation to broader quality of life (Guest, 2002). The concept of work life has been abstracted from the job satisfaction level of an employee, which is an extrinsic factor of job satisfaction. It aimed to provide quality of life for an employee at the same time retaining the productivity levels of an employee at the work *V. Madhusudhan Goud &K. Nagaraju* 892 place. The balance work life score provides an organization with a productive and innovative employee (Greenhaus, 2003), whereas disparity in the work life balance tends to develop depressed and dissatisfied staff (Kofodimos, 1993).Though it is a very broad subject which speaks about both career development on one side and the family care on the other side, it is very necessary to know how the people balance the professional demands and domestic compulsions. Professional life means the aim to grow and earn respect in the organization and society at large and Personal life means taking care of family, children, parents, health and spending the leisure time effectively. With the development in educational, economical and social standards, things have improved to a great extent and the role of faculty in balancing their lifestyle is less taxing. Work – life balance for teaching professional has become one of the greatest challenges in today's world. Teachers work load not only demand their time in the institution but also extend to their home so as to get prepared for the following day, apart from maintaining student records and attending to various institution related functional requirements. Teachers need to spend extra hours every day to be effective and productive in their profession so that they could reach higher levels and face the challenging atmosphere. Moreover, teachers not only look forward towards teaching, but need to also focus on soft skills and life skills so that they not only produce good professionals but also develop good citizens. This article highlights the issues connected with work life balance of faculty in educational institutions and the factors that determine work life balance.

Review of Literature
Women professionals and the work family balance: literature review
Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2004; Hertz, 1999), and interpersonal support (Becker & Moen, 1999). Family support also includes the exchange of support among relatives (Voydanoff, 2002). The personal social support can be further conceptualised as emotional and instrumental support (Wayne, Randel, & Stevens, 2006). Instrumental

support refers to behaviours and attitudes of family members aimed at assisting day-today household activities, such as relieving the employee of household tasks or otherwise accommodating the employee's work requirements (King, 1997). This allows the family The work family balance has been conceptualised as an individual's orientation across different life roles, an inter role phenomenon (Marks & Mac Dermid, 1996), 'satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home with a minimum of role conflict' (Campbell-Clark, 2000, p 349), and 'a satisfying, healthy and productive life that includes work, play and love, that integrates a range of life activities with attention to self and to personal and spiritual development, and that expresses a person's unique wishes, interests, and values' (Kofodimos, 1984, p.xiii; Shaffer, Francesco, Joplin & Lau, 2003). Traditionally, research on the work family interface has been dominated by a conflict perspective focusing on negative effects such as stress (Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1999; Haas, 1999). To correct the bias of the dominating focus on the negative outcomes of the work family interface, a growing body of research is focusing on how work and family can benefit each other (Lauring & Selmer, 2010). Among the several proposed theoretical concepts include positive spillover (Demerouti, Geurts, & Kompier, 2004), enhancement and enrichment (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), and facilitation (Wayne, Grzywacz, Carlson, & Kacmar, 2007). The facilitation takes place when the gains obtained in one domain are transferred to and enhance the functioning in the other domain. One way a person can be facilitated in the work domain is by support in the home and work domains. The role of social support has consistently emerged in literature as an important factor that influences worke family balance in a positive manner. Social support outside of work labelled by Marcinkus, Whelan-Berry, and Gordon (2007) as personal social support may come from an employee's spouse or partner, parents, siblings, children, extended family, and friends. Numerous studies have demonstrated that personal social support is positively associated with the workefamily balance. Of particular importance is support from the husband who contributes in   a variety of areas including earnings and personal financial management (Kate, 1998), home and family responsibilities (Baron, 1987), career management and support (member to focus his/her time and preserve energy for work when it might otherwise be scarce; suggesting that it positively influences the individual's functioning at work. Emotional support refers to the expression of feelings to enhance others' affect or behaviour (Erickson, 1993). Emotional support contributes to positive affect that helps the individual in the work domain (Wayne et al., 2006). The role of workplace support, i.e., the support received from supervisors and co-workers (Voydanoff, 2002) is another critical element of work family balance. Ezra and Deckman (1996) found that organisational and supervisor understanding of family duties are positively related to satisfaction with the balance between work and family life. Workplace support via an organisational approach involves the implementation of family friendly policies, which are associated with satisfaction with the work family balance (Ezra & Deckman, 1996). Organisations offer a wide range of work family benefits and programmes to their employees, such as job sharing, telecommuting, job protected parental leave, part-time return to work options, flexitime, resource and referral services, unpaid family leave, dependent care assistance, shorter standard work weeks, improvement in job conditions, on-site childcare, support groups for working parents, sports facilities, day-care facilities, laundry facilities, and canteen facilities (Lobel & Kossek, 1996; Rajadhyaksha & Smita, 2004). Research shows that flexible work arrangements allow individuals to integrate work and family responsibilities in time and space and are instrumental in achieving a healthy work and family balance (Bond, Galinsky, Lord, Staines, Brown, 1998; Galinsky, Bond, & Friedman, 1993). While much of the literature review presented both women and men prefer working in organizations that support work-life balance. Men appeared to benefit more than women (Burke 2002). Men feel more satisfied when they achieve more on the job even at the cost of ignoring the family. On the other hand, women stress that work and family are both equally important and both are the sources of their satisfaction. For them the former is more important. When work does not permit women to take care of their family, they feel unhappy, disappointed and frustrated. They draw tight boundaries between work and family and they do not like one crossing the other (Burke 2002). Fisher and Layte (2003) consider three distinct sets of measures of work-life balance, viz. proportion of free time, the overlap of work and other dimensions of life, and the time spent with other people. Several reviews have highlighted other issues such as age, gender, life-cycle stage, ethnicity, citizenship, and childcare arrangements which also merit attention (Wallace and Cousins 2004; Jager 2001). 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.

Objectives of the Study
1. To identify the key factors influencing the work life balance.
2. Examine the effect of work life balance on faculties performance and work attitude.

Methodology
Since, to the best of our knowledge, there are no other studies in the context of the Indian academics, which attempt to capture the unique dimensions of women's participation in work and their experiences in managing life and work, we felt that an exploratory study such as ours was needed. A semi-structured interview protocol was used, which covered the following topics: educational, work- and family background, career development, expectations at work and experiences of success and failure, definition of their roles at home, the relationships with the family, the organisational and personal support received, and aspirations and dreams. Women were encouraged to illustrate the manner in which they arrived at decisions or the manner in which they coped with conflicts and challenges through specific examples. Women described their decisions to embark on their careers, the life changes they experienced and the decision that they had to make along their career journey. They also shared their dreams and their aspirations about where they saw themselves in the future.

They were frequently asked additional follow-up questions to clarify their feelings and their points of view towards the issues addressed. The clarifications for conflicting or unclear answers were sought either during the interviews or afterwards via informal email exchanges and telephone conversations. Extensive handwritten notes were taken, which were transcribed at the earliest possible time after the interviews. Judgment sampling (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) was used to locate information-rich key respondents and care was taken to ensure that the sample represented women with varying marital status and parental status. Women were identified for interviews through the professional and personal network of the second author and their participation was voluntary. All the women in the sample were teaching faculty with an average experience of eight years. Three women were married with two children, four women with one child, two married with no children, three were single women, and one woman was engaged to be married. Nine of the respondents were HODs and had about seven to nine people reporting to them. Three of the respondents had children who were in middle school while the others had children in primary school. Since this was an exploratory study, the researchers used inductive analysis to identify categories, themes, and patterns that emerge from the data (Janesick, 1994). To draw meaning from the data, a range of tactics was used, such as comparison/contrast, noting of patterns and themes, clustering, use of metaphors, confirmatory tactics, following up surprises, and checking results with respondents (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The coding procedures of Grounded Theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) were followed which resulted in identification of themes from the narratives that are presented in the section on findings.

Indian families are undergoing rapid changes due to the increased pace of urbanization and modernization. Indian women belonging to all classes have entered into paid occupations. At the present time, Indian women's exposure to educational opportunities is substantially higher than it was some decades ago, especially in the urban setting. This has opened new vistas, increased awareness and raised aspirations of personal growth. This, along with economic pressure, has been instrumental in influencing women's decision to enter the work force. Most studies of employed married women in India have reported economic need as being the primary reason given for working. Makowska studied psychosocial determinants of stress and well-being among working women. The significance of the work-related stressors was evidently greater than that of the stressors associated with the family function, although the relationship between family functioning, stress and well-being was also significant.

An increasing number of articles have promoted the importance of work–life balance. This highlights the current concern within society and organizations about the impact of multiple roles on the health and well-being of professional women and its implications regarding work and family performance, and women's role in society.

The following variables influencing the experience of work–life balance were identified while reviewing the international literature.

1. The multiple roles performed by women.
2. Role strain experienced because of multiple roles, i.e., role conflict and role overload.
3. Organization culture and work dynamics: Organizational values supporting work–life balance have positive work and personal well-being consequences.
4. Personal resources and social support: Several studies confirmed the positive relationship between personalities, emotional support and well-being
5. Career orientation and career stage in which women careers need to be viewed in the context of their life course and time lines
6. Coping and coping strategies: Women use both emotional and problem-focused coping strategies to deal with role conflict.

There is no single formula for attaining a balanced life. It is a personal decision how one combines their career, spouse/significant other, children, friends and self into an integrated whole. The key is to develop creative solutions as you approach the challenges of balancing the responsibilities and joys of your multiple roles. Some of the same skills and strategies you use at work such as planning, organizing, communicating, setting limits and delegating can be used effectively on the home-front for achieving a satisfying, fulfilling and well-balanced life both personally and professionally.

1. Build a Support Network
Ask for help and allow your self to be helped and contributed to. Get your children involved--work together as a team. Recruit friends, family, neighbours, bosses, work colleagues, etc. and ask for their support. Between work and family, surprises are inevitable. Be prepared by creating back-up and emergency plans; always have a contingency.

2. Let Go of Guilt
Guilt is one of the greatest wastes of emotional energy. It causes you to become immobilized in the present because you are dwelling on the past. Guilt can be very debilitating. By introducing logic to help counter-balance the guilt, you can avoid sabotaging your efforts toward work/family balance and stay better on course.

3. Establish Limits and Boundaries and Remember. They are Necessary for Balancing Work and Family. Boundaries are an imaginary line of protection that you draw around yourself. They are about protecting you from other people's actions. Determine for yourself what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour from other people. Boundaries and limits define how you take charge of your time and space and get in touch with your feelings. They express the extent of your responsibilities and power and show others what you are willing to do or accept. Without limits it's difficult to say "no". Remind yourself often that your boundaries are necessary for balancing work and family.

4. Determine Your Own Standards
Get rid of the notion of being a perfectionist. Wean yourself off it by making compromises--figure out where the best places to make the compromises are without short-changing yourself, your spouse, your children, your boss, etc. Live by your own standards rather than someone else's. Standards are about YOU and refer to the behaviour and actions you are willing to hold yourself to.

5. Create Time for Yourself
Being a good parent, partner and professional means being good to yourself first. Use your mind to make some affirmations for yourself. Find ways to relax, relieve tension and minimize stress. Taking some time off for yourself will not only benefit you, but it will benefit your work and family tremendously, as well!

6. Get Organized
Set priorities, work smarter not harder, delegate (and really let go!). Create lists and save them for re-use. Keep a main calendar centrally located to post everyone's activities.

7. Balancing Work and Family Requires You to Be Flexible
Forgive yourself when things don't get done. Understand that with children things change at a moment's notice. Be ready and willing to assume responsibility for any of the tasks that need to get done at any time. Never get too comfortable, because as soon as you seem to get things under control, they change! Also, realize that in order to achieve success many women have had to give up their original goals and substitute new ones with different but equal challenges. Negotiate for what you need.

8. Enjoy Quality Family Time
Spend quality/focused time with your family. Give them your full attention. Develop rituals you can all look forward to. Create relationships with your spouse and children that are not incidental but rather instrumental to your success.

9. Find Reliable Child Care
Leave your kids in capable hands. Find someone you feel comfortable and confident in. If you're feeling ambivalent about working or about leaving your child, etc. do not show it--your child (at any age) will pick right up on it. Feel proud when you've found someone who fits into your needs. Get involved with your child's care providers by communicating frequently and observing interactions between caregiver and your child.

10. Achieve an Integrated Life
Keep things in perspective. Create harmony in your life--a mixture of work, family and friends. Remember, there is no single formula for balancing work and family. It is a personal decision how one combines spouse, children and career.

Work–family conflict and family–work conflict
Work–life balance is the maintenance of a balance between responsibilities at work and at home. Work and family have increasingly become antagonist spheres, equally greedy of energy and time and responsible for work–family conflict (WFC). These conflicts are intensified by the "cultural contradictions of motherhood", as women are increasingly encouraged to seek self-fulfilment in demanding careers, they also face intensified pressures to sacrifice themselves for their children by providing "intensive parenting", highly involved childrearing and development. Additional problems faced by employed women are those associated with finding adequate, affordable access to child and elderly care. WFC has been defined as a type of inter-role conflict wherein some responsibilities from the work and family domains are not compatible and have a negative influence on an employee's work situation. Its theoretical background is a scarcity hypothesis which describes those individuals in certain, limited amount of energy. These roles tend to drain them and cause stress or inter-role conflict. Results of previous research indicate that WFC is related to a number of negative job attitudes and consequences including lower overall job satisfaction and greater propensity to leave a position. Family–work conflict (FWC) is also a type of inter-role conflict in which family and work responsibilities are not compatible. Previous research suggests that FWC is more likely to exert its negative influences in the home domain, resulting in lower life satisfaction and greater internal conflict within the family unit. However, FWC is related to attitudes about the job or workplace. Both WFC and FWC basically result from an individual trying to meet an overabundance of conflicting demands from the different domains in which women are operating.

Workplace characteristics can also contribute to higher levels of WFC. Researchers have found that the number of hours worked per week, the amount and frequency of overtime required, an inflexible work schedule, unsupportive supervisor, and an inhospitable organizational culture increase the likelihood that women employees will experience conflict between their work and family role. Baruch and Barnett found that women who had

multiple life roles (e.g., mother, wife, and employee) were less depressed and had higher self-esteem than women who were more satisfied in their marriages and jobs compared to women and men who were not married, unemployed, or childless. However, authors argued quality of role rather than the quantity of roles that matters. That is, there is a positive association between multiple roles and good mental health when a woman likes her job and likes her home life.

WFC and FWC are generally considered distinct but related constructs. Research to date has primarily investigated how work interferes or conflicts with family. From work–family and family–work perspectives, this type of conflict reflects the degree to which role responsibilities from the work and family domains are incompatible. That is "participation in the work (family) role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the family (work) role".

Frone *et al*. Suggested that WFC and FWC are related through a bi-directional nature where one can affect the other. The work domain variables such as work stress may cause work roles to interfere with family roles; the level of conflict in the family domain impacts work activities, causing more work conflict, thus creating a vicious cycle. Therefore, work domain variables that relate to WFC indirectly affect FWC through the bi-directional relationship between each construct. Family responsibility might be related to WFC when the employee experiences a very high work overload that impacts the employee's ability to perform even minor family-related roles. Such a situation likely affects WFC through the bi-directional nature of the two constructs. While no researchers have considered the relationship between these constructs in a full measurement model, Carlson and Kacmar used structural model and found positive and significant paths between WFC and FWC.

Work stress: Its relation with WFC and FWC
Work stress is usually conceptualized as work-role conflict, work-role overload, and work-role ambiguity (House *et al*., 1983). Each has the potential to affect WFC. With respect to work-role conflict, the more conflict among work roles, the greater the chances that stress will spill over and cause negative behaviours that interfere with fulfilling family roles. Role overload is the result of having too many things to do in a given time period. As time is constrained by having too many tasks to accomplish at work, the employee may need to use time allocated to the family role which could cause WFC. Work-role ambiguity occurs when workers are unsure of what is expected of them in a work role. As uncertainty concerning work roles increase, employees use more mental energy to decipher it. This requirement may drain mental energy and attention needed for their family roles. Carlson and Kacmar found that role overload and role conflict were predictors of WFC, yet did not find significant results for role ambiguity.

Kandel *et al*. Studied the nature of specific strains and stresses among married women in their marital, occupational and house work roles. They found that strains and stresses are lower in family roles than in occupational and household roles among the married women. These have more severe consequences for the psychological well-being of women than occupational strains and stresses. Strains predicted distress through role-specific stress, with strains deriving from contribution of role-specific stress. Chassin *et al*. found three types of conflicts in their study research on a sample of 83 dual worker couples with pre-school children.

These are,

  (1) Conflicts between demands of multiple roles.
  (2) Conflict between role expectations of self and spouse, and
  (3) Lack of congruence between expectation and reality of roles. The authors felt that self-role congruence in women leads to better mental health.

Research studies have identified several variables that influence the level of WFC and FWC. Variables such as the size of family, the age of children, and the number of hours worked outside the home, the level of control one has over one's work hours, flexible or inflexible work hours and the level of social support impact the experience of WFC and FWC. However, these variables have been conceptualized as antecedents of WFC and FWC; it is also important to consider the consequences these variables have on psychological distress and well-being of the

working women. Most of these studies revived are in western context; there is a scarcity of research in this area in the Indian context. Hence, the researchers made an attempt to study various factors which could lead to WFC and FWC among married women employees.

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