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Work-Life Balance: A Study On Female Employees Of Private Higher Academic Organizations In Dehradun Region

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Abstract: As the Dehradun Region progresses, women are increasingly required to juggle their traditional roles of family caretakers with the economic necessity of joining the paid workforce. This transformation is primarily influenced by the escalating cost of living and evolving perspectives, prompting more educated women to seek employment. Consequently, dual-career households are becoming more common than single-income families, mirroring global socio-demographic trends. This dual obligation imposes significant stress on women to achieve a healthy work-life balance. This study investigates the current work-life balance conditions among female employees in 30 higher academic organizations within the Dehradun Region, surveying 300 participants. The findings reveal a moderate level of balance, indicating potential for enhancement through initiatives such as flexible working hours, transportation and housing support, childcare facilities, job sharing, reduced workloads, and assistance for children's education.

Keywords: Work-life balance, disruption, vitality, duration, emotional state, assistance, Dehradun Area

I. INTRODUCTION

Over the last twenty years, the concept of work-life balance, along with the demand for a "good work-life balance," has been a central topic in numerous discussions among academics, practitioners, and policymakers (Kaviya, Priya, & Lekshmi, 2025). Work-life balance refers to the extent to which an individual can effectively manage the temporal, emotional, and behavioral demands of both their professional duties and family obligations (Das, 2020). It represents a scenario where employees can allocate the appropriate amount of time and effort to both their work and their personal lives outside of work (Gopinath, Mamatha, & Sridhar, 2022). The Employers for Work-Life Balance (EfWLB), a lobbying organization advocating for voluntary modifications in work arrangements, asserts that 'work-life balance is about individuals having a degree of control over when, where, and how they work, enabling them to enjoy an optimal quality of life. Work-life balance is realized when an individual's right to a fulfilling life both within and outside of paid employment is acknowledged and upheld as the standard, benefiting the individual, the business, and society as a whole.' Work-life balance pertains to flexible working arrangements that allow both parents and non-parents to access work setups that create a harmony between work obligations and personal commitments. The term 'work-life balance' is favored because it addresses the experiences and requirements of both parents and non-parents, providing a more progressive theoretical framework for considering innovative ways of living and working that are satisfactory for everyone. As work has transitioned to become more knowledge-driven, fluid, and intellectual, it has increasingly become challenging to disengage from it (Sahoo & Prakash, 2023). Employees can no longer easily separate their work from other aspects of their lives, as work has the potential to dominate their thoughts (Sharon & Vijayalakshmi, 2023). Furthermore, information communication technologies have eliminated the temporal and spatial limitations of work, enabling individuals to work at any time from any location (Mayya et al., 2021). This increased intensity of work complicates the pursuit of Indeed, from the very beginning of human civilization, women have played a crucial role primarily within the family, not only by nurturing children and managing household tasks but also by contributing to the family income through

handicrafts and various other means. The significance of women's roles is such that neglecting them hinders the progress and prosperity of both families and society in a balanced and meaningful manner. Given their contributions, they are often referred to as half of the body. However, over time, the nature and types of roles that women fulfill are evolving across different societies and cultures. Undoubtedly, a significant economic development in the past 50 years has been the notable and well-documented rise in women's participation in the labor force (Samuel & Mahalingam, 2022), with mothers increasingly becoming the primary or co-breadwinners in many families worldwide. Economic pressures over the last decade have greatly heightened the necessity for dual-income families, to the extent that most families now require two earners to cope with the rising cost of living (Sheron, 2024). Currently, women are entering the labor force in significant numbers, with a majority coming from the middle class and having children, which has either directly or indirectly impacted nearly everyone in society as mothers, wives, sisters, daughters, and friends transition from home to paid employment (Petare, 2013) of a satisfactory balance between professional responsibilities and personal life.

Consequently, the increasing participation of women in the workforce heightens the awareness that more individuals must concurrently navigate two spheres of life: family and employment (Lall & Sahay, 2021). Indeed, in various countries and professions, it remains predominantly women who bear the responsibility for childcare and eldercare, household tasks, and other family-related matters, and who, typically irrespective of the hours spent in paid work, undertake a "second shift" at home (Anonymous, 2021). Consequently, conflict and strain frequently emerge for those engaged in both domains, as role expectations are often at odds (Janiso, Shukla, & Reddy, 2021). The conflict tends to be bidirectional: work can disrupt family life, and family obligations can impede work (Simon et al., 2004). Work-related interference with family is generally a more significant concern than family-related interference with work (Asher, 2011). While both men and women encounter inter-role conflicts, women often find it more challenging to reconcile their professional and domestic responsibilities (Alberta Human Resources and Development, 2003). According to (The Guardian, 2024a), this challenge becomes a fundamental source of women's disadvantages in the corporate sector and accounts for their "concentration in low-paid, part-time jobs and their absence from the highest levels of management [in business]" (p. 433). Therefore, the issue of work-life balance is a reality faced by every working woman, and it is a topic that is extensively addressed in organizations and governments today. Women assert their right to achieve this balance, even if it necessitates formal intervention from organizations and governments (Uddin, 2012). However, it was not long ago that the concept of work/life balance was a whispered taboo or regarded as a personal issue to be dealt with privately (The Times, 2024). For an extended period, the majority of women did not feel entitled to a healthy equilibrium between their professional responsibilities and their personal lives, much less anticipate and obtain formal policies that endorse this balance. Even today, in numerous instances, the concept of 'work-life balance' is not fully comprehended or acknowledged both officially and socially. According to (Bhatnagar, 2018), striking a balance in this situation means giving both work and family responsibilities about equal amounts of time, attention, involvement, and dedication.

Historically, organizations have regarded the issue of work/life balance as a minor concern, unworthy of attention or action. Throughout history, organizations have predominantly been established by men and for men (Chandra & Varghese, 2019). As the roles of men in the workplace have remained largely unchanged since the Industrial Revolution, the challenges faced by women when entering these male-dominated environments received minimal attention. However, with a significant number of women now present in the workforce (Shrivastava & Shukla, 2017), both organizations and governments have been compelled to acknowledge women's concerns regarding work/life balance.

In Uttarakhand culture, an individual's identity is closely linked to that of their extended family. Most women continue to bear the primary responsibility for household duties, childcare, and all other aspects of home management (The Guardian, 2024b). Despite the traditional family structure in Dehradun, where men are typically the sole breadwinners, an increasing number of women are now entering the workforce. The rising cost of living and a shift in mind-set are the primary reasons for the growing number of educated women seeking employment outside the home. This trend has been gradually increasing in recent times. Consequently, the traditional family model is being supplanted by the dual-career family, leading to socio-demographic changes akin to those observed in both developed and developing nations.

Similar to other countries around the globe (Harrington & Ladge, 2009), the work-life balance of female employees has emerged as a significant issue in Dehradun. Therefore, what is the current status of work-life balance for female teachers employed in private higher academic organizations, considering various factors such as disturbances, energy levels, time management, mood, and cooperation? How do family dynamics and

organizational influences affect the work-life balance of female teachers in Dehradun? What strategies can be implemented to ensure the work-life balance of female educators in these organizations?

2. Methodology

To evaluate the current state of work-life balance among Female Employees, a structured survey utilizing a questionnaire was carried out. The research encompassed 30 Private higher academic organizations in the Dehradun Region, with a total sample size of 300 Female Employees. A stratified disproportionate random sampling method was used to guarantee diverse representation across various types of organizations. Female Employees were chosen as the primary focus group due to their significant role in shaping future generations and contributing to national development. Ensuring their well-being through enhanced work-life balance is crucial for both educational effectiveness and societal advancement. Responses were gathered using a 5-point Likert scale, enabling participants to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with different statements. In addition to the primary data obtained from surveys, secondary data were collected from books, journals, and related publications to bolster the research. The data were initially processed manually through tabulation, followed by basic statistical analysis, including percentage calculations to identify trends and patterns.

3. Need for Ensuring Work-life Balance of Female Employee

Organizations today are encountering intensified competition on a global level. Employees are experiencing mounting pressure to excel, and the amount of time spent in the workplace is increasing. High-performance organizations now demand higher levels of time, energy, and dedication from their workforce. These demands can be especially challenging for women, who often juggle the majority of household duties alongside their careers (Muben & Karim, 2018).

The struggle to achieve a healthy work-life balance can lead to significant repercussions, impacting nearly every facet of a woman's well-being. The strain of being pulled in various directions can adversely affect both mental and physical health. When women are overextended, trying to satisfy all the conflicting demands on their time, it becomes challenging for them to fulfil any of their roles effectively. Consequently, workplace productivity may decline, and the quality of personal relationships could deteriorate (Alboliteeh, 2019). The mental strain of attempting to meet both work and home responsibilities frequently results in physical health complications. Inadequate nutrition, lack of exercise, and elevated stress levels associated with an unbalanced work-life dynamic can lead to issues such as fatigue, headaches, sleeplessness, and back discomfort. If these challenges persist, they may escalate into more severe health problems like heart disease, which can pose long-term threats to both women and their families (The Guardian, 2024c).

Conversely, effectively managing work-life balance greatly enhances employee satisfaction. This not only benefits individuals but also the organizations they are part of. By promoting a healthier balance, companies can enhance their recruitment strategies, improve employee retention, decrease absenteeism and lateness, and elevate overall productivity. Such efforts also promote engagement in training initiatives, strengthen the organization's reputation, and enhance competitiveness in the job market (Choudhary & Singh, 2020).

Achieving work-life balance is not merely a personal concern; it is also a critical business objective. As women make up nearly half of the workforce, companies must acknowledge the significance of assisting female employees in juggling their work and home duties. Neglecting this responsibility can lead to diminished job satisfaction and a lack of dedication. Many women may opt for part-time positions or exit the workforce entirely when they do not receive sufficient support, resulting in increased absenteeism and turnover rates. This situation ultimately hampers the organization's capacity to attract and retain top talent (Kumar & Sharma, 2019).

The repercussions of work-life imbalance can be expensive for organizations, manifesting as decreased productivity, elevated healthcare and disability expenses, and heightened stress levels among managers. It also negatively affects social and family relationships. Therefore, fostering work-life balance is not only advantageous for employees but also a strategic initiative for organizations seeking to succeed in a competitive, globalized market (Verma & Gupta, n.d.).

4. Analysis and Interpretations of Regarding Work-Life Balance Among Female Employees of Private higher academic organizations Organizations of Dehradun Region

A survey has been conducted to accurately assess the work-life balance of female employees in the Dehradun area. Below are the analyses and interpretations of the survey findings.

Table 1: Work Life Balance

Statement	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
I am capable of handling the requirements of both my career and personal life.	9% (27)	13% (39)	39(117)	25%(75)	14% (42)
I wish to resign from my position due to the need for a better work-life balance.	45% (135)	32% (96)	13%(39)	6% (18)	4% (12)
My professional responsibilities and family obligations conflict with each other.	31% (93)	22% (66)	26% (78)	10%(30)	11% (33)

See in above table (table 1) As regards the statement, "I am capable of handling the requirements of both my career and personal life" 9% (27) of respondents expressed strong disagreement, while 13% (39) disagreed, indicating that 22% feel they cannot effectively handle the demands of their career and personal life. Conversely, a notable 78% of participants shared a positive or neutral perspective, with 39% (117) choosing neutral, 25% (75) in agreement, and 14% (42) strongly agreeing. This reflects a majority who believe they can successfully balance their work and personal life responsibilities. As regards the statement, "I wish to resign from my position due to the need for a better work-life balance" 45% (135) of participants expressed strong disagreement, while 32% (96) disagreed, showing that a considerable majority — 77% — prefer not to resign over concerns related to work-life balance. Conversely, 13% (39) remained neutral, 6% (18) agreed, and 4% (12) strongly agreed, amounting to 23% of respondents who demonstrated some form of agreement or neutrality, suggesting different levels of dissatisfaction regarding their work-life balance.

As regards the statement, "My professional responsibilities and family obligations conflict with each other" 31% (93) of the respondents expressed strong disagreement, while 22% (66) disagreed, totalling 53% who feel there is no substantial conflict between their job and family duties. Conversely, 26% (78) were neutral, and 10% (30) and 11% (33) agreed and strongly agreed, respectively — together, 47% of participants reported experiencing some degree of work-family interference.

Table 2: Family's impact on career.

Statement	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
My spouse, parents, and family are supportive in achieving a balance between work and personal life.	8% (24)	18% (54)	21% (63)	46%(138)	7% (21)
My personal or family circumstances have hindered my ability to perform at my best in my job.	17% (51)	39%(117)	22% (66)	10%(30)	12% (36)

We see in above table (table 2) that As regards the statement, "My spouse, parents, and family are supportive in achieving a balance between work and personal life." 8% (24) of participants expressed strong disagreement, while 18% (54) indicated disagreement, suggesting that 26% perceive insufficient support from their families in achieving work-life balance. Conversely, 21% (63) demonstrated some agreement, 46% (138) agreed, and 7% (21) strongly agreed, resulting in a total of 74% of respondents who feel their families provide support in maintaining work-life balance.

As regards the statement, "My personal or family circumstances have hindered my ability to perform at my best in my job." 17% (51) of participants strongly disagreed, and 39% (117) disagreed, suggesting that 56% feel their personal or family situations have not adversely affected their job performance.

In contrast, 22% (66) showed some agreement, while 10% (30) agreed and 12% (36) strongly agreed, indicating that 44% recognized that their personal or family obligations have influenced their capacity to work at their highest potential.

Table 3: Work's impact on family

Statement	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
My colleagues are supportive to maintain a work life balance.	13% (39)	8% (24)	26% (78)	45% (135)	8% (24)
My job has kept me disturbed from giving attention to my personal life/ family.	17% (51)	24% (72)	45% (135)	10% (30)	4% (12)

We see in above table (table 3) Regarding the statement, "My colleagues are supportive to maintain a work-life balance," 13% strongly disagreeing and 8% disagreeing, 21% of respondents felt that their colleagues were not helping them promote work-life balance. However, 53% of respondents (45% agree + 8% strongly agree) said that their colleagues are helpful in preserving work-life balance, whereas 26% were ambivalent. This indicates that 79% of respondents either agree or are undecided about how supportive their colleagues are. As regard for the statement, "My job has kept me disturbed from giving attention to my personal life/family," 41% of people believed their work did not conflict with their family time, with 17% strongly disagreeing and 24% disagreeing. On the other hand, 59% of respondents reported some degree of difficulty juggling their work obligations and family time, with 45% remaining indifferent, 10% agreeing, and 4% strongly agreeing.

5. How to Improve the Work-life Balance of the Female Employees of Dehradun Region

We asked the responders for suggestions on how to better balance their job and personal lives. Numerous variables were identified by the respondents as ways to improve their work-life balance. The following are the recommendations made by the respondents:

Table 4:

Factors	Weight (%)	Number of Respondents
Flexible working hours (roistered days off and family-friendly start/finish times)	27.19%	82
Transport facility	24.06%	72
Flexible work arrangements / job sharing	09.06%	27
Child care center	13.13%	39
Residential facility	13.13%	39
Child schooling	05.30%	16
Reduced working hours & workload	08.13%	24
Total	100%	300

The text outlines the perspectives of respondents regarding various employer-supported elements that can enhance work-life balance. A notable 27.19% (82) of the respondents indicated that flexible working hours—such as scheduled days off and family-friendly start and finish times—can significantly contribute to improving work-life balance. Flexibility in both working hours and location is widely recognized as a crucial factor in managing work and family obligations, and is therefore deemed essential for promoting women's careers and fostering equality in the workplace. Subsequently, 24.06% (72) of the respondents underscored the significance of transport facilities provided by employers, particularly in areas like Dehradun where commuting poses a considerable challenge. An equal emphasis (13.13% or 39 respondents) was placed on both residential accommodations and employer-sponsored childcare centers, as these resources assist in alleviating domestic stress and facilitating smoother daily routines for working women. Moreover, 9.06% (27) of the participants proposed that flexible work arrangements or job sharing could positively influence work-life balance, while 8.13% (24) pointed out that reduced working hours or workload might also yield a substantial impact.

Additionally, 5.30% (16) of the respondents expressed that support for child schooling provided by the employer could significantly contribute to work-life balance. These findings suggest that a combination of flexible scheduling, supportive infrastructure, and employer-provided services can greatly enhance female employees' capacity to balance their professional and personal responsibilities. When effectively implemented, such initiatives not only help mitigate work-family conflict and stress but also improve job satisfaction, motivation, and employee retention.

6. Conclusion and Policy Implementation

Although significant advancements in work-life balance have been achieved in the Dehradun Region over the past few years, there remains much to be done. According to the survey, 59% of female employees indicated that their jobs interfere with their ability to spend time with their families. Conversely, 44% of respondents stated that their personal or family lives hinder their performance at work. Consequently, the study indicates that both the family and professional lives of female employees in the Dehradun Region are adversely affected by the current work-life balance situation. This must change for the benefit of the organization, the teachers themselves, and their families. Indeed, women in the workforce can be a tremendous asset only when both their families and organizations receive adequate support from them. They will be able to contribute effectively to both spheres only if the organization provides flexible working hours (including rostered days off and family-friendly start and finish times), transportation facilities, housing options, childcare centers, flexible work arrangements or job sharing, reduced working hours and workload, and assistance with child schooling for female employees.

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