



A STUDY ON IMPACT OF WORK LIFE BALANCE AMONG THE MEDICAL AND PARAMEDICAL STAFF DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN HEALTH CARE SECTORS

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ABSTRACT

Employees are appearing for ways that will help them balance between work and personal life successfully. Researchers have also identified that work-life balance leads to positive organizational outcomes. Human resources are being considered as and hence, a study on work-life balance is both timely and relevant. It needs to be understood that medical and paramedical professionals are the essential component of any health care industry and hence their well-being is important especially during this COVID time. Therefore, the present study seeks to explore work-life balance and its relation to medical and paramedical professionals working in health care industries during COVID-19 in and around Chennai, Tamilnadu, India. The present study reveals that medical and paramedical work environment is not only related to how they feel in their workplace, but also how they think about their life. The analysis also reveals that six factors namely Job Nature, Family Domain, Organizational Support, Work Environment, Work load, Work-life Conflict constitute work-life-balance of medical and paramedical professionals. The result of the analysis also confirms that the internal consistency, reliability and convergent validity are established in the model among these factors and the measurement model represents sufficient amount of Discriminant validity. The developed structural equation model reveals that all the variables are found significant. Organizational support and job nature have negative effect on work life balance. Work load, work environment; family domain and work life conflict have direct effect on work life balance. The health care industries may consider the above four factors and modify their HR policies suitably and create conducive work environment to maintain work –life-balance among medical and paramedical professionals during COVID-19 so as to improve their performance. Thus, we can safely conclude that work and personal life needs to be integrated and balanced by organizations through work-life balance initiatives.

Keywords: Work-life balance, job satisfaction, paramedical professionals, work load, performance.

1.0: INTRODUCTION

In the recent years' employee engagement has been considered as the important criteria in human resource management in all the organizations especially in health care industries. Employers have gone to the extra mile of giving an opportunity for medical and paramedical employees to work at pace and many measures have been taken to retain employees during COVID-19. Flexibility in working hours, innovative ideas for making employees feel engaged in the organization has become an important criterion in human resources. HR professionals have taken options to create family friendly relationship in the organization externally and internally. Organizations which follow and practice the policies of work life balance are able to sustain employees in their organization. Successful organizations have a structured work

life balance policy. Due to the work life balance policies followed in health care industries in Tamilnadu, the absenteeism rate is reduced to some extent and the management gets the work done effectively. A strong organizational culture helps to increase medical and paramedical staff to be engaged in the organization effectively. Work-life balance should be supported and encouraged at all levels of the organization from top management, middle level executives to the supervisors. Any organization which encourages work-life balance policies and practices will have a positive employee engagement.

2.0: OBJECTIVE

The objective of the study is to analyze the impact of work life balance of medical and paramedical professionals in health care industries.

3.0: FORMATION OF HYPOTHESIS

H1: There is a significant direct effect of Organizational Support on Work life Balance

H2: There is a significant direct effect of Job nature on Work life Balance

H3: There is a significant direct effect of Work load on Work life Balance

H4: There is a significant direct effect of Work environment on Work life Balance

H5: There is a significant direct effect of family domain on Work life Balance

H6: There is a significant direct effect of work life conflict on Work life Balance

4.0: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

It is reported that the more a person involved in his job, the higher the work family conflict which eventually leads to increase job burnout, low satisfaction and reduced commitment (Adams et.al., 1996).

In the present business scenario, jobs are changing with the pace of changing technological advancement which is developing new trends in employment terms and conditions. This change is badly affecting the level of satisfaction as well as physical and mental health of the Workers (Cooper, 1999; Kenny et al., 2000).

Konrad & Mangel, (2000) in their research article titled “The impact of work-life programs on firm productivity” describe that the number of employees with responsibilities for the care of family members continues to increase. The increasing contribution of women in the labor force creates growing force for diversity management and WLB strategy. Although work life and mainly work family, clash is well known as an subject for both sexes, it continues to lay extra responsibilities on operational women, as they have tend to knowledge the major responsibility for domestic matters.

Another very important concept which has been studied widely and proven to be effective for organizational performance is organizational commitment. It has been defined as the extent to which an employee is loyal to his organization by accepting its values, willing to put high level of efforts and wish to maintain his membership in the organization. Mowday et al (1982) define the organizational commitment as a relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization.

Rajgopal (2007) in his research “work to live, don’t live to work: Across sectional study of the work life balance of elevated managers” shows that work life balance is at present in fashion among governments, organizations as well as researchers. Managers in organizations all over the world are exposed to significant pressures in their jobs, which further influence the balance between their work and private lives, job satisfaction and overall well-being. The enter findings in terms of the factors influencing advanced administrative are reported. They suggest that the individuals are influenced by several aspects. The liability for personal work life balance does not merely lie on persons, themselves but the organizations and governments engage in leisure a significant role in treating this issue as well.

Stewart Forsyth and Andrea Polzer-Debruyne (2007) did a survey of 1187 employees of organizations in New Zealand entitled “The organizational pay-offs for perceived work–life balance support” and found that employees’ perception that employers were providing support for WLB improved their job satisfaction and reduced work pressures. This, in turn, reduced their intentions to leave. The study provided evidence that initiatives which staff interpreted as supporting their WLB would have consequences for the organization. Staff turnover was likely to reduce intention to leave.

Vanitha (2012) in her work “A study on Work-life Balance of employees in Health care industry with reference to Kanchipuram district” tells that the employees of health care sector should be balanced in their physical, psychological, family, social and environmental interactions. If the interactions are balanced, they lead to efficiency and productivity. In order to maintain work efficiency among the work force at different work grounds, the satisfaction and WLB are imperative aspects and which also undergo frequent changes and trouble. It is also obvious to understand that these two aspects encounter troubles among the individuals at different circumstances.

5.0: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Primary data are collected for the purpose of the study by administering a structured questionnaire with 45 questions to the medical and paramedical professionals during COVID-19 pandemic. The components influencing Work life balance are measured by applying Likert type scale with 35 items excluding 10 demographic statements. The respondents are required to give their responses on a five-point scales ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The Primary data were collected from 211 medical and paramedical professionals as the respondents using convenient sampling method. The data are collected during May - Sep 2020.

6.0: RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

6.1: Validation of Measurement Model:

The results of the measurement model is based on consistent PLS algorithm Convergent validity and internal consistency are assessed on the basis of the output obtained from the analysis. Convergent validity is assessed by using Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Fornell and Larcker (1981) recommended the value of Composite Reliability (CR) must be equal or great than 0.7 to achieve internal consistency. Henseler, Ringle and Sinkovics (2009) suggested that a value of AVE less than 0.5 is not acceptable because it cannot explain more than half of the variance by the items or variables.

The table-1 shows the results of measurement model. The internal consistency, reliability and convergent validity are established in the model

Table-1: Measurement Model

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Job nature	0.905	0.94	0.84
Family domain	0.964	0.982	0.965
Organizational support	0.922	0.949	0.861
Work environment	0.92	0.949	0.862
Work Load	0.86	0.934	0.876
Work life balance	0.869	0.938	0.884
Work life Conflict	0.831	0.917	0.847

Discriminant validity is performed to check the dissimilarity between the different construct. Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggested that if the inter –construct correlations are less than the square root of AVE, then Discriminant validity is achieved.

Table-2 shows the diagonals represents the square root of AVE, while the off-diagonals represent the correlations between the constructs. The square root of AVE is greater than the inter-construct correlations. Hence the measurement model represents sufficient amount of Discriminant validity.

Table-2: Discriminant Validity

Constructs	Job nature	Family domain	Organizational support	Work environment	Work load	Work life balance	Work life conflict
Job nature	0.916						
Family domain	0.942	0.982					
Organizational support	0.665	0.38	0.928				
Work environment	0.69	0.669	0.374	0.928			
Work load	0.618	0.395	0.764	0.384	0.936		
Work life balance	0.883	0.783	0.635	0.802	0.757	0.940	
Work life conflict	0.621	0.375	0.871	0.594	0.766	0.717	0.920

Table-3: Fit Statistics of the Structural Model

Fit statistic	Recommended	Obtained	
		Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	≤ 0.08	0.049	0.049
NFI	≥ 0.90	0.909	0.909
χ^2	-	275.29	275.29
d_ULS	p > 0.05	0.359	0.359
d_G	p > 0.05	0.254	0.254

Source: Computed primary data

It is observed from the above table-3, Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) is 0.049 which is lesser than recommended value 0.08 ((Henseler et al., 2014), Normed Fit Index (NFI) is 0.909 which is more than recommended value 0.90 (Bentler and Bonet, 1980), The squared Euclidean distance (d_ULS) and the geodesic distance (d_G) are 0.359 and 0.254 respectively which is more than the recommended value p > 0.05 (Dijkstra and Henseler, 2015). Hence the fit statistics indicate that the model is acceptable.

6.2: Structural model

The structural model is given in the figure-1. The model represents the relationship between the various constructs. The relationships are tested by running bootstrapping procedure (1000 samples) in SmartPLS 3 software.

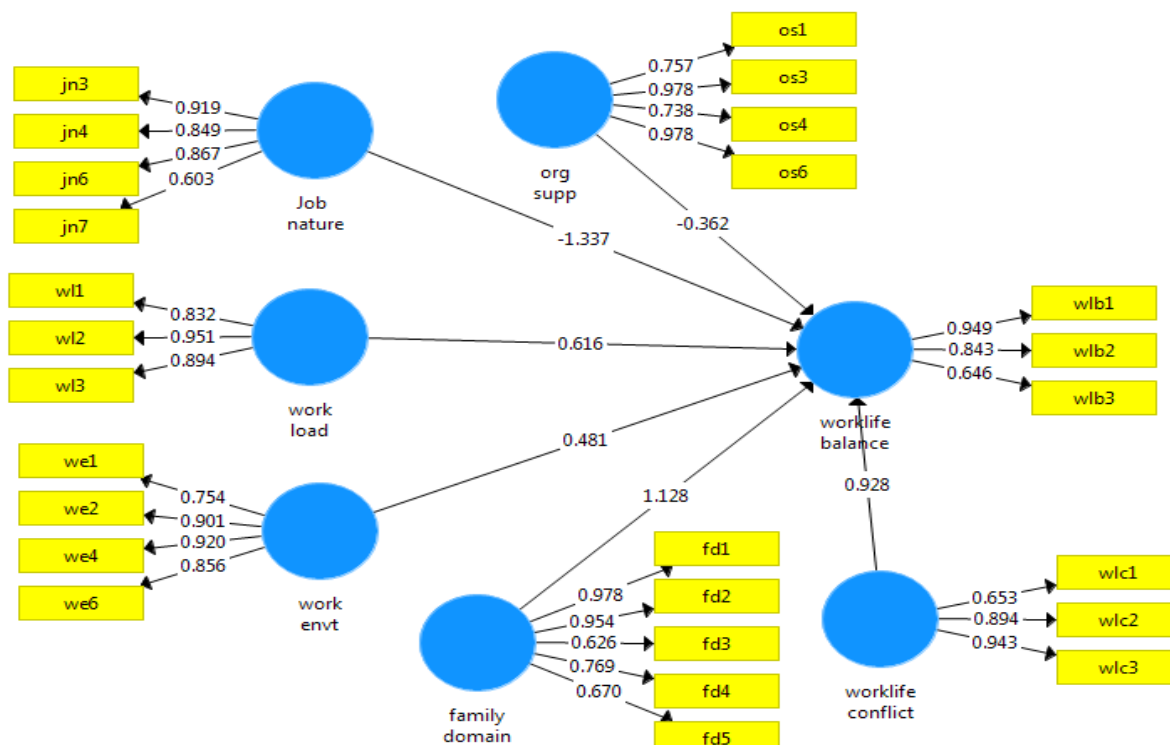


Figure-1: Standardized Estimates

The path coefficients generated by SmartPLS along with their t values are given in the table-4. The t-values are provided by the software by using the bootstrapping technique. The standardized path coefficient should be at 0.2 (Chin, 1998). It is found that all the variables are significant. Organizational support and job nature have negative effect on work life balance. Work load, work environment; family domain and work life conflict have direct effect on work life balance.

Table-4: Structural Model Analysis

Hypothesis	Path	Path coefficient	Std error	Model value (t)	p value	Result
H1: There is a significant direct effect of Organizational Support on Work life Balance	Org supp -> work life balance	-0.362	0.16	9.339	0.001	Supported
H2: There is a significant direct effect of Job nature on Work life Balance	Job nature -> work life balance	-1.337	0.085	3.591	0.001	Supported
H3: There is a significant direct effect of Work load on Work life Balance	Work load -> work life balance	0.616	0.033	6.48	0.001	supported
H4: There is a significant direct effect of Work environment on Work life Balance	Work envt -> work life balance	0.481	0.088	5.733	0.001	supported
H5: There is a significant direct effect of family domain on Work life Balance	Family domain -> work life balance	1.128	0.042	24.479	0.001	Supported
H6: : There is a significant direct effect of work life conflict on Work life Balance	Work life conflict -> work life balance	0.928	0.155	10.47	0.001	Supported

7.0: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Work-life-balance is an important issue in Medical profession. This study focused primarily on analyzing work life balance across disciplines while controlling for a variety of demographic and professional variables during the pandemic.

Many have argued that it is important to study Work Load, Work Environment because it can directly impact medical and paramedical retention. However, caution should be used while interpreting these results because not all medical and paramedical members leave their jobs solely because of heavy workloads and, similarly, not all medical and paramedical members stay because of moderate workloads.

Workload, Work environment, family domain and work life conflict of medical and paramedical were also shown to be affected greatly by organizational factors, such as leadership, mutual and patients' relationships, health care policies, climate and culture of the hospitals. Relationships with colleagues, patients and administrators, as well as perceptions of culture and climate of the hospital, can significantly impact staff job satisfaction. Mutual relationships are often a source of support and a mechanism of building networking capability for staff members. Satisfaction varies not only by gender but also by discipline. Analyzing satisfaction levels across disciplines can help hospital administrators, deans, and academic unit heads to identify factors that contribute to the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of medical and paramedical across different hospitals and academy.

In a broader sense, the study also revealed that medical and paramedical work environment is not only related to how they feel in their workplace, but also how they think about their life. The analysis also reveals that six factors namely Work load, Work Environment, Family Domain, Work life conflict, Organizational support and Job Nature constitute work-life-balance of medical and paramedical professionals. The result of the above analysis also confirms the positive significant effect among the four factors namely work load, work environment, family domain and work life conflict. The health care industries may consider the above four factors and modify their HR policies suitably and create conducive work environment to maintain work –life-balance among medical and paramedical professionals so as to improve their performance during the COVID-19 pandemic. The organizations may be sensitized to work-life-balance issues at all levels.

Conflicts Of Interest

Authors do not have any conflicts of interest to declare.

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