



Impact of Role Overload and Working Hours on Work-Life Balance in Service Industry

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Main purpose of this study is to determine the hindrances found in work-life balance among genders in Service Industry.

Methodology/Sampling: Data is comprised of 250 samples out of which 10 were discarded due to provided wrong information however rest of 240 were used for the analysis out of which 120 are males and the rest 120 are females. To test the reliability of constructs SPSS Software version 21.0 is used and calculated through Cronbach Alpha. Frequency test, Cross-tabulation, Graphical representation, Correlation and Regression analysis were used for data analysis.

Findings: Findings shows that the organizations used in the study did not give any support to work-life balance idea. These organizations promote overtime and extended working hour culture. Even male employees are unable to meet their family demands due to late sittings and found carrying stress related diseases most commonly headaches. In contrast female employees were found in better conditions regarding fulfilling their family commitments because they are not pressurized by their employers for late sittings.

Practical Implications: This study is useful for the organizations that if they implement flexible hours policy to maintain work and family life. It will be more beneficial to the employees and employers for the better results.

Keywords: Work-life Balance, Role Overload, Long-working hours, Flexible hours.

JEL Classification: M510, M520

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1. INTRODUCTION

To live healthy life it is important for an employee of organization to maintain balance between work and their social lives which is called a work-life balance. If a person spends his life using idea of work-life balance then he can minimize those tensions which could be result by extra load of work. Mostly people do not spend their quality time at their homes just because of mismanagement, they usually cannot handle personal relations not even maintain their body health and spiritual health due to which they go under depression. Work-life balance is the only solution of all such problems and employees can be easily guided for this by their employers by offering them holidays paid time off, flexible working hours, career break and family events. (Heathfield 2013)

Across the globe pressure of workload is increasing and values of personal life are decreasing. All employees want to improve both, their professional as well as their social life for success. Therefore, idea of work-life balance was defined by Human Resource department of many organizations because employers want their employees to work efficiently and devotedly. (Wikipedia 2009)

First rule regarding work-life balance was defined according to that employees should work not more than ten hours per day. But this idea was applied on women because men were bound to work whenever their employers were called them. It was observed that working for long hours per week decline the efficiency and health of workers and increases the chances of mistakes in their given tasks. So it was decided that Saturday should be a holiday or half day. The idea of two days off in a week was strongly appreciated by the people. (Wikipedia 2009)

There are behavioral differences between males and females towards work-life balance. In old times mostly females were house ladies but now a day's time is changed and females are equally participate in work as men do. It is observed that female's employees are more intelligent than males to make balance between their occupation and home. The quality of women to handle their work and life efficiently is decreasing the professional demand of men in organization. Another reason is that due to mismanagement of male employees between work and life they usually get absent from their work. It is needed that organization should handle this problem and create certain rules for both the male and female employees to maintain their work and family life. (Wikipedia 2009)

The role of HR regarding managing work-life balance is that only HR can design and implement to promote work-life balance policies in the organizations to make business profitable. Usually senior employees do not want to change their daily routine as they are habitual of it. So, this is the responsibility of HR to motivate and guide such people so that they can change their routine life with an enthusiasm in an enjoyable way. (Clutterbuck 2003, pp.4)

1.1 Significance of the Study

This study will help the organizations and employees that how do they manage and improve their work and personal life. By this study employees and employers would also know about the main factors behind of work-life imbalance. It will also be beneficial for the employers when they adopt the policy to give flexibility in the working atmosphere to those who



have a lot of pressure on them or do late sittings after office hours just to meet their targets so that the employees will feel to work in a free environment and give positive results. Therefore, the work-life imbalance will also effect on employee's health and also cause a high level of frustration due to stress and they are less motivated in a stressful environment.

The purpose of this study is to find out the main factors that affected work-life balance among both the genders. This study also helps the employers and employees to manage or control their imbalance work and personal life. Work-life imbalance can cause a high pressure of work and depression in employees.

1.2 Research Hypothesis

Following are the research hypotheses that are tested in this study:

H1: There is a positive relationship between Role Overload and Work-life Imbalance.

H2: There is a positive relationship between Long-working hours and Work-life Imbalance.

H3: There is a positive relationship between Flexible working hours and Work-life balance.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Work-Life Balance

Clutterbuck (2003) defines work-life balance in his book as every human being should give equal proportion of his hours and strength to professional as well as personal life. It enables the person to conduct more successful occupational and private life. Different people have different perception towards leading their life. Some people give just importance to their work however other fascinates their home life. Both the perceptions are not appreciable, for a successful life there should be a significant balance between both the lines.

Employees should smartly implement the rules of work-life balance in their lives. They should not take their work in a negative way that will increase their mental stress. However, they should give some precious time to their hard work and secure rest of the time to spend on themselves, their loved ones and social community. The results were found through exploratory research that by applying the policy of work-life balance in the organization the employees got much more interested in their work which facilitated improvement in group task and resulted in high percentage of business benefits. (Pherson, 2007)

Work-life balance does not only apply on males but also apply on females and it gives beneficial effects on gender's life. Males and females can significantly use laws of work-life balance to create resonance between labor hours and spare time. HR department of any organization is bound to guide their male and female employees how to create stability between their career life and personal life. (Durham 2007)

Research showed that many people leave their jobs just due to high level of workload. As a result business of the company's goes under the loss and economy of the country gets down.

To solve this problem major aspect is to utilize time in a better way. An employee is not good if he/she giving all the working hours to just one project or on a worker who cannot assist other employees. To be an excellent head of the organization it is necessary that person possess good moral character. If a human being is a devoted manager but not a good spouse or parent then he or she would really be in trouble regarding home life. Usually people think that giving more time to work will secure their jobs, however right thing is to give quality time during work hours and save rest for their families because love in life improves working ability of any human being. (Weinstein, 2009)

Mostly successful administrators have right rules in their organizations for work-life balance. Only those managers are highly successful who already have a settled life in their homes which results in excellent performance in their organization such employers allow their employees comfortable environment and in return create a bond with them. However, typical managers do not apply work-life balance they already have given their lives to their organization and have declared their own rules. In work environment this behavior is unhealthy because it results in unhappy behavior of employees towards their work and family members are not satisfied with such people. (Cramm, 2005)

2.1 Causes of Work-Life Imbalance

2.1.1 Role Overload

The main cause of work-life inequality is workload stress. In our environment usually people face a lot of occupational stress. There are many reasons of their work stress mainly employees are given workload; they are assigned undefined and uninterested work. On the completion of any task they are not rewarded as well as not given any promotion or improvement in their professional career. The only result to solve these problems is that employees. Another reasons of stress at work involved political and rational behavior of bosses and other colleagues, sometimes they are negatively pointed out due to their physical appearances. These unhealthy behaviors of employers lead to destructive environment in an organization. (Pestic, 2006)

Work and non-work are the two aspects of one's life. To create psychological and biological health of body it is necessary to make balance between both. In Canada, now a day's only a few people face conflict between their career and home. However rests of the high percent of people give comfortable time to their families as well as quality time to their task. (Higgins et.al 2008)

Half percent of employees showed work satisfaction and rest of half person were satisfied with their personal lives. Some people needed to seek physiological and psychological treatment due to increasing pressure of heavy task. Such individuals got habitual to be absent from their workplace and started to think leaving their jobs, in worst cases some individuals broke the laws. For the improvement it is the responsibility of employers to minimize the task pressure on their employees. (Higgins et .at 2008)

Good employers have sufficient knowledge that extra load on employees declines their performance in organizations. Therefore they take care a lot the employees by giving them such projects which they can easily handle and also allow them peer support. Other than



that supervisors offer advantages to their subordinates in the firm like pick & drop, medical allowances, life insurance, appreciation reward and promotions. Employers also should arrange and sponsor task presentation and seminars regarding side effects of workload on the employees and their solutions in order to solve this problem. On applying such special attention to the employees, employers can easily improve their work ability and intern can give benefits to their organization. (Nicoll, 2013)

H1: There is a positive relationship between Role Overload and Work-life Imbalance.

2.1.2 Long Working Hours Culture

In Australia average amount of workers give 44 hours in a week while 1/5 citizens are bound to perform their task 50 hours in 7 days. UK, New Zealand and USA also have employees who spend long time at their work. Organizations even do not have rules to maintain it but it is observed that since past 20 years increasing the task time did not increased the results, so the employers are trying to reduce overtime in their firm. Unfortunately, employers are in great under pressure because they are not getting significant success in controlling their problems; however it doesn't mean that they are insincere with their employees. (Knight, 2009)

3/4 citizens in United Kingdom are permanent employees and perform 48 hours work in a week. However in certain firms laborious work reaches to hundred hours in 7 days without letting knowing the employers of the organizations. Mostly males spend much time to their work as compared to females. (Kodz, 1998)

There are certain reasons for working extended hours. First main cause of working late hours is workload pressure. Second cause is that certain firms bound their employees for overtime. Thirdly there are some cultures in which people increase their task time to prove themselves. Fourth big reason is getting more money, however last reason is that some people are workaholic and love to perform task for long hours. (Kodz, 1998)

Research shows that working extra hours have many adverse effects. Giving more time to the work ultimately results in destruction of personal, family, friends and social life and also creates mental and physical health issues. Long hours work also decreases the chance of employment for those people who are not willing to work for long time. (Kodz, 1998)

H2: There is a positive relationship between Long-working hours and Work-life Imbalance

2.3. Best way to improve Work-life Balance

2.1.3 Flexible working Hours

To facilitate working timings organizations should allow their employees to differ amount of time according to their needs. For example, employees are allowed come late and use lunch timings to complete their task. Offering part time jobs is also facilitating the employees

working hours. Females should also be allowed to change their timings during their pregnancies or after deliveries. (Hogarth et.al, 2000)

Most of the employers facilitate the timings of working timings of employees in such a way that they allow them to complete their tasks from their homes. Usually working from home is preferred by male employees rather than females. People can easily manage their home assignments by performing their works at home as well as they are easily able to take care of their personal and social life. (Hogarth et.al, 2000)

Employers allow maternity leaves for their female employees during and after their pregnancies. Usually females after maternity break shift their full time job into part time so that they can easily take care of their babies. Employers can also give the facility to take paternity leaves, sick leaves, mourning leaves, taking leave for caring other and career breaks to their employees. (Hogarth et.al, 2000)

Most of the employers giving workplace facilities for those employees who mostly do travelling on jobs or do sales job. The facilities are given like fitness clubs, child care centers and stress management programs to balance their work and family life. (Hogarth et.al, 2000)

H3: There is a positive relationship between Flexible working hours and Work-life Balance

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework shows the relationship between dependent and independent variable. For the hypotheses test the variables have been used of this study are as follows:

Dependent Variable:

- Work-Life Balance

Independent Variable:

- Role Overload
- Long-working Hours
- Flexible working Hours

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For this study explanatory type of research is used and the quantitative research technique is applied to find out the correct and relevant information from the respondents. This research study is based on Karachi only. Collections of data are gathered by filling questionnaire from the employees working in Financial Institutions, Travel & Tourism, Education, IT Solutions, Business Provider Solutions, Fast Moving Consumer Goods and Petroleum sectors. Quota sampling is used to draw the sample. The sample size consists of 240 respondents and equally distributed among males and females employees of different sectors of Service Industry. Primary data was collected through questionnaires.

Quantitative research technique is used to conduct the study. The questionnaires were designed in a way that it will help to find out the main factors of work-life imbalance and what will be the better ways of balancing work and life among genders. To measure the employees responses for a particular variable four types of scale were used in questions that include Frequency, Likert, Dichotomous and Category scale.

IBM SPSS Statistics version 21.0 software is used to analyze the data. The data collected from 250 respondents in which 10 questionnaires were excluded due central tendency error, rest 240 questionnaires with 120% males and 120% females respondents were be coded in software.

4. DATA INTEGRATION

Questionnaires were filled by the professionals of multiple organizations in Karachi.

4.1 Demographic Analysis

Table 1
Frequency Distribution of Gender

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	120	50.0	50.0	50.0
Valid Female	120	50.0	50.0	100.0
Total	240	100.0	100.0	

The sample size of the respondents is 240 with 120% males and 120% females were selected from multiple organizations in service industry.

Table 2
Cross Tabulation of Age*Marital Status*Gender

Gender			Marital Status			Total
			Single	Married	Single Parent	
Male	Age	under 30 years	29	8		37
		31 - 40 years	9	41		50
		over 40 years	1	32		33
	Total		39	81		120
Female	Age	under 30 years	57	27	0	84

	31 - 40 years	7	22	1	30
	over 40 years	1	4	1	6
	Total	65	53	2	120
	under 30 years	86	35	0	121
Total	Age 31 - 40 years	16	63	1	80
	over 40 years	2	36	1	39
	Total	104	134	2	240

Table 2 shows the frequency distribution of marital status in which 43.3% sample size falls into the category of single, 55.8% are married and 0.8% are Single Parent. The table also shows the cross tabulation analysis of age, marital status and gender. Majority of the employees working in service sectors are married. The male and female respondents in the age category falls under 30 years are 86% single, 35% are married and there is no single parent in this age group. In the age category of 31-40 years represents 16% single, 63% are married and 1% is single parent. Over 40 years age category represents 2% single, 36% married and 1% is single parent.

Table 3
Cross Tabulation of Gender*Work Experience

	Work Experience				Total
	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	more than 15 years	
Gender Male	38	38	10	34	120
Female	73	35	6	6	120
Total	111	73	16	40	240

In the above table 3 the work experience has been defined into four groups in which 46.3% are in 1-5years, 30.4% are in 6-10 years of work experience, 6.7% having work experience of 11-15 years and 16.7% are from more than 15 years of experience. It is observed in table 6.2 that majority of the female respondents having working experience of 1-5 years.

4.2 Hypothesis Testing

Regression Analysis

The dependent and independent variables are tested through simple linear regression technique.

Table 4
Regression Analysis of Role Overload with Work-Life Balance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.554 ^a	.307	.304	1.56565
a. Predictors: (Constant), Role_overload				

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	258.895	1	258.895	105.617	.000 ^b
	Residual	583.401	238	2.451		
	Total	842.296	239			

a. Dependent Variable: Work_Life_imbalance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Role_overload

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.987	.531		1.859	.064
	Role_overload	.239	.023	.554	10.277	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Work_Life_imbalance

Model summary shows the coefficient of determination r^2 is +0.307. Therefore, 30.7% of the variation in Work life Imbalance is explained by Role overload. Coefficients table shows the value of $a = 0.987$ and $b = 0.239$ where 'a' represents a constant value and 'b' represents a slope whereas p-value shows the level of significance if p-value is ≤ 0.05 , it shows predictions can be made as the relationship is significant.

Therefore,

Y = dependent variable (WLIB)

x = independent variable (Role Overload)

Regression equation is as follows:

$$Y = a + b \cdot x + \epsilon$$

$$Y = 0.987 + 0.239 \cdot x + \epsilon$$

In such a way by putting any value of Role Overload(x) we can predict WLIB(y).

$$\text{WLIB} = 0.987 + 0.239 (\text{Role Overload}) + \epsilon$$

Hence it is proved that *“There is a positive relationship between Role overload and Work-life imbalance.”*

Table 5

Regression Analysis of Long-working Hours with Work-Life Imbalance

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.627 ^a	.394	.391	1.46496		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Long_working_hrs						
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	331.520	1	331.520	154.474	.000 ^b
	Residual	510.776	238	2.146		
	Total	842.296	239			
a. Dependent Variable: Work_Life_imbalance						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Long_working_hrs						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.153	.200		20.747	.000
	Long_working_hrs	.708	.057	.627	12.429	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Work_Life_imbalance						

Model summary shows the coefficient of determination r^2 is +0.394. Therefore, 39.4% of the variation in Work-life imbalance is explained by Long working hours. Coefficients table shows the value of $a= 4.153$ and $b=0.708$ where ‘a’ represents a constant value and ‘b’ represents a slope whereas p-value shows the level of significance if p-value is ≤ 0.05 , it shows predictions can be made as the relationship is reliable.

Therefore,

Y = dependent variable (WLIB)

x = independent variable (Long-working hours)

Regression equation is as follows:

$$Y = a + b \cdot x + \epsilon$$

$$Y = 4.153 + 0.708 \cdot x + \epsilon$$

In such a way by putting any value of Long-working hours(x) we can predict WLIB(y).

$$WLIB = 4.153 + 0.708 (\text{Long-working hours}) + \epsilon$$

Hence it is proved that “There is a positive relationship between Long-working hours and Work-life imbalance.”

Table 6

Regression Analysis of Flexible Working Hours with Work-Life Balance



Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.518 ^a	.268	.265	1.60974		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible_hrs						
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	225.578	1	225.578	87.054	.000 ^b
	Residual	616.717	238	2.591		
	Total	842.296	239			
a. Dependent Variable: Work_Life_Balance						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible_hrs						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.254	.247		17.211	.000
	Flexible_hrs	1.372	.147	.518	9.330	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Work_Life_Balance

Model summary shows the coefficient of determination r^2 is +0.268. Therefore, 26.8% of the variation in Work-life balance is explained by Flexible working hours. Coefficients table shows the value of $a= 4.254$ and $b= 1.372$ where ‘a’ represents a constant value and ‘b’ represents a slope whereas p-value shows the level of significance if p-value is ≤ 0.05 , it shows predictions can be made as the relationship is reliable.

Therefore,

Y= dependent variable (WLB)

x = independent variable (Flexible working hours)

Regression equation is as follows:

$$Y = a + b \cdot x + \epsilon$$

$$Y = 4.254 + 1.372 \cdot x + \epsilon$$

In such a way by putting any value of Flexible hours(x) we can predict WLB(y).

$$WLB = 4.254 + 1.372 (\text{Flexible working hours}) + \epsilon$$

Hence it is proved that “*There is a positive relationship between flexible hours and work-life balance.*”

5. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Critical Debate

It has been found that majority of the respondents i.e 84.6% answered that work-life balance is important for them and organizations should customize work-life balance policies for individual needs whereas 15.4% of the respondents do not agree with the idea of work-life balance because they think if they would give more time to work they will be more successful in their professional life. It is observed that role overload and long-working hours are the main barriers in maintaining work life balance because due to late sittings employees have an extra work load which causes stress. Those employees who usually do late sittings in their offices and also come on Saturday's could not get enough sleep. Overburdened work makes them depress all the time hence they are not productive during office hours. Male employees are usually working 9-10 hrs. or sometimes more than 10 hrs hence they are bound to give overtime in their organizations. In Service industry high percentage of employees are unable to manage work life balance due to long working hours in their firms whereas fewer amounts of respondents answered that their personal life is well managed and able to manage negative attitude of their bosses as well as their colleagues. It is also observed that by providing flexible working hours to the employees they are able to better maintain their work and life balance. Mostly female employees have ability to give quality time to their families because they usually do not spend extra time at their work as compared to male employees. Usually female employees in education sector have flexible timings. However, unfortunately male employees are usually bound to perform their work whenever their employers call them hence it is difficult for them to maintain work life balance.

5.2 Findings

Data shows that most of the employers do not make any rule for implementing work-life balance, not even flexible timings and job sharing facilities for their employees. Employees are not given facilities for career breaks because most of the organizations do not have such ideas. Only few percent of employees answered that they are given career breaks. The response rate in IT solutions and Petroleum sector was low because they do not want to share their organization's information. Male employees have enough workload pressure like managers, officers and workers in technical workers are forced to work more than nine hours per day and 6 days per week. Data shows that employees face long-working hour's culture in service industry. There is not any extra payment for the employees who are doing overtime in their organization. In Travel & Tourism, Financial Institutions, Education and IT solutions male employees are suffered from stress related diseases like frequent headaches and hypertension as compared to female employees. Due to long-hours culture mostly male employees cannot make balance between their work-life and family life. Mostly male employees complain that their families are suffered because they can't spend quality time with them due to spending more hours at their work place. However, female employees are found to be relaxed regarding family issues because they just spend 9-5 hours at work.

5.3 Conclusion

Research found that work-life balance idea is not found in most of the organizations and there is significant workload pressure on employees. However some benefits are given to employees at work like salaries increment, paid time off, health and life insurance, pick & drop and get together. In Travel & Tourism and IT solutions, financial institutions workers faced a lot of depression and cannot balance work and home life due to long working hours. However, there salaries are increased but this increment cannot replace their wish to spend quality time at home. It is found that workload pressure increases mental stress in employees which intern results in misbalancing between work and home life. Usually stress related diseases like insufficient sleep, hypertension, obesity and headaches are found in employees. Organizations have do not have any way out to release their pressure. They just give health insurances to their employees. Organizations should offer such policies which can facilitate employees to make balance between their work life and their home life.

5.4 Recommendations

There should be certain rules for implementation of work-life balance in every organization. In order to minimize workload pressure Saturdays must be declared as off day or at least half day. Otherwise alternate Saturdays should be given off. HR department should allow flexible working hours to work in their organizations for employees as well as for employers. The employers should give career breaks to their employees so that they can perform well on returning to work. Organizers should arrange family dinners and outings for their employees to release their mental pressure. On staying long at workplace the workers should be given extra payments. The employees should be appreciated as well as given promotions due to hardworking. To provide latest knowledge to the employee's workshops and training programs should be promoted in the organizations. The biggest advantage of implementing the rules of work-life balance in organization is that employers can perform their work with interest and great stimulation in stress free and healthy environment.

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