

Work Life Balance Is an Illusion: Exploring the Challenges Faced by Pakistani Working Women

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Abstract

Contemporarily, work-life balance has been subject to considerable discussion, predominantly from working women. Although work life balance remains a buzz word however, it remains an illusion particularly for working women in developing countries like Pakistan. It is imperative to recognize and acknowledge the difficulties women encounter in balancing their jobs and personal and familial obligations in the backdrop of increasing percentage of women as a part of workforce. The aim of this cross-sectional research is to analyse and investigate the challenges faced by the working women in Pakistan regarding work-life balance. Recognition of these issues would enable us to suggest methods, measures and policy interventions as well as regulations to further improve work-life balance in the working women of Pakistan.

Keywords: Work Life Balance, Pakistani Women, Personal Life, Professional Life, Family, Constraints, Time, Finances, Health, Working Hours, Culture, and Mental Health.

1. Introduction

The ability of a worker to sustain a positive equilibrium between their peculiar personal responsibilities, occupational duties, and familial life is referred to as "work life balance". Work and family life are considered in different ways across the nations. Thus, the idea and applicability of the notion of work life balance is rather cultural and not universal. Work-life balance is influenced by various elements, including family size, age, number and age of the children, working hours, and level of social and familial support. An

employee's sense of balance between life and work is strongly predisposed by their approaches towards their job and family responsibilities. Organizational obligations, independence, job autonomy and actual and supposed work overload are major factors to an employee's sense of balance. Hence, work life balance remains an illusion despite a widely discussed contemporary theme (Chawla, 2011).

Social circumstances and economic pressures have transformed the place of women in society globally. Resultantly, more and more female is entering the workforce; there are augmented concerns about work-family balance and how to strike that equilibrium between these two areas. Because of the obligations women accomplish at home and the overlap between their private and professional lives, work-life balance is one of the most difficult trials female professionals face in the twenty-first century. The employment can provide women with a sense of empowerment, but it can also present distinctive difficulties when it comes to managing job compulsions with personal liabilities and social expectations. Women continue to endure a lopsided share of the burden of childcare and home errands even in the face of greater feminine participation in the workforce. Therefore, the working women have additional challenges than men in handling work and family responsibilities (Mehta, 2012).

Organizational principles, management outlooks, or workplace cultural rules and norms encumbered the way to work life balance for female employees. Women's capacity to realize work-life balance is usually hindered by the uneven distribution of domestic responsibilities, which further leaves them with a reduced amount of time and energy to devote to their jobs (Pradhan, 2016). Working women are facing challenges of reconciling and balancing their professional and domestic lives as a result of overpowering occupational demands, inadequate personal time, and the responsibility to meet the expectations of family, society and the employers. High levels of mental strain, anxiety and discord at home, job burnout, and the failure to reach one's complete potential are some of the foremost effects of a poor work-life balance (Shiva, 2013).

Managing careers and families while feeling contented with the both remain an enormous challenge for Pakistani working women to surmount. To help working women overcome the conflict brought on by inadequate work-life balance, the organizations should frequently evaluate and assess their prevailing work procedures and practices to identify those that cause stress and job inefficiencies.

Through examining the nuances of work-life balance, this study eyes on shedding light on the numerous obstacles Pakistani working women confront as they manage their dual responsibilities as caregivers and professionals. The objective is to investigate a range of elements that may provide deeper insights into the work-life balance and stress experienced by female employees.

1.1 Contextualizing Work-Life Balance

A term that is becoming more and more popular in academic circles and business and governmental policy, "work-life balance" describes the balance people try to strike between their obligations in their personal lives and their obligations at work. Because cultural, social, and structural forces intertwine, this equilibrium is frequently elusive for working women. Women's employment in Pakistan defies long-standing assumptions that revolve around home responsibilities in a country where patriarchal norms and traditional gender roles are still strongly ingrained. The quest for work-life balance thus becomes a socio-political act that questions traditional gender standards in addition to being a personal one.

The balance and equilibrium between professional obligations at work and tasks outside of the realm of the paid employment are explained by the notion of work-family balance. A balance between the work and home spheres suggests that the concerned person is getting the necessary amount of balance. Several researches on work-family issues have been carried out in Western nations, but there has been dearth of research on the subject in countries like Pakistan.

1.2 Significance of the Study

Work-life balance is becoming more widely acknowledged as a crucial contemporary issue, but there is still little specific research carried out in Pakistan, especially when it comes to the work life balance of the Pakistani working women. This research aims to fill this gap by providing a comprehensive analysis of the state of affairs concerning work life balance in Pakistan. It also underscores the challenges being faced by the Pakistani working class particularly Pakistani working women in achieving and maintaining work-life balance. By examining the intersectionality of factors such as socio-economic status, marital status, and occupational aspects, this study seeks to offer nuanced insights into the diverse insights and realities as well as needs of Pakistani working women across different contexts. Thus, the study underscores the areas of intervention for the future policy initiatives for improving the work life balance of Pakistani working women.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

As the world becomes increasingly globalized with a quantum of working population more than ever throughout the human history, work life balance has assumed a crucial significance for the wellbeing of the workers, value of work and life alike. On average, OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries, full-time employees have around 14 to 16.5 hours of leisure per day (Mental Health Foundation, 2023). However, Pakistan remains abysmally low with regard to the cognizance, and realization of work life balance. According to the Global Work Life Index, Pakistan was ranked on 40th out of 60 countries (“Global Life-Work”, n.d.). In countries like Pakistan, work life balance is regarded as luxury and not a necessity. Situation with regard to the Pakistani working women is even worse as they have to wear numerous caps simultaneously. The issues, concerns and challenges of Pakistani working women remain off the radar of academic discourse as well as policy maker’s attention. This study is an attempt at finding out more about the difficulties experienced by Pakistani working women.

1.4 Scope of the Study

Balancing the professional and personal lives remain a vital issue for employees, companies and the governments across the globe. Keeping in view scale of the subject, the time and resource constrains of this research, the scope of this research has been restricted to the examination and the analysis of work and the life balance of Pakistani working women alone.

2. Objectives

- To identify the key challenges confronted by Pakistani working women regarding balance in work and personal life.
- To explore the bearing of current state of work and life balance on overall well-being of the women, job satisfaction, and career progression.
- To propose recommendations for organizations and policymakers to improve work-life balance for Pakistani women.

3. Research Question

RQ1: What are the key challenges that Pakistani working women have to face while striving to balance their professional work and personal life?

4. Literature Review

Literature on the work and life balance is increasing voluminosly as both the employees and the employers are increasingly concerned about it. However, most of the literature remains centred primarily around the work and life equilibrium in the developed countries and that too about their corporate sectors. According to Sujatha and Menaka (2020), work-life balance is becoming a concern for both the organizations/companies and workers/employees that is shared by all. The ability of an employee to sustain a positive balance between their personal obligations, job responsibilities, and family/ personal life is referred to as their "work and life" balance. The study's findings indicate that individuals who don't strike a healthy balance between their familial, personal and professional spheres also have an impact on the businesses they work for.

Workplace cultures and environments that show consideration for employees' life outside of work have a positive impact on work life balance, productivity and quality of life alike. Organizations ought to regularly revisit their work procedures in vogue and practices being employed to identify causes of employee dissatisfaction, stress as well as job inefficiencies (Shiva, 2013).

The concerns of the working women concerning the work life balance have also found their way in contemporary literature on work life balance as well. According to Gujirat and Kumar (2018), social pressures and economic circumstances have altered the position of working women globally. As a result, there is now extreme pressure on working women to adopt fulfilling careers while also maintaining a busy personal life. Because of the duties women perform at home and the intersection between their private and professional areas of life, work-life balance is among the most difficult challenges faced by the female professionals in the new millennium. This has an impact on their social, emotional, and physical health. Therefore, a good quality of life for working women requires attaining work-life balance.

Pradhan (2016) investigates how working women manage to accomplish their individual and professional lives. He has underscored that professional and family roles are regarded in a different way across nations, the conclusions drawn from these studies cannot be generalized to other nations. The literature makes clear that the experience of work and family is not universal but rather cultural. Therefore, an analysis of how working women in other nations manage work-family difficulties is necessary. Given that more and more women are entering the workforce, there is increased concern about work-family concerns and how to balance these two areas. In the case of male workers, there is a distinct divide between work and play.

There have been numerous sector specific studies about the work life balance as well. Ji (2014) asserts that the topic of work and life balance of women in the IT industry is becoming more and more popular. Conflict between the family and the workplace is more probable to have a negative impact on the family domain, which will reduce life satisfaction and increase internal conflict. Work-family conflict experiences are influenced by various

Work-Life Balance

aspects, including age, family size, number and age of children, working hours, and social support. Given the connection between work life equilibrium and performance and sense of job fulfilment of an employee, it underscored the necessity of developing organizational guidelines for managing work-life balance. His research offered an enhanced comprehension of the work-life equilibrium experienced by female professionals in the IT. The cross sectoral analysis exhibited that a sense of equilibrium in an employee is sturdily impacted by their particular frame of mind regarding the job, family obligations, and their time off from work. (Pandu, Poorani & Balu, 2013).

Mehta (2012) asserts that women in the workforce constantly balance the responsibilities of their personal and professional lives. For individuals who put their all into all they do, striking the elusive "work-life balance" can frequently seem like an unattainable ideal. Management of jobs and families in a contented manner can be a mammoth challenge in today's "do more with less" competitive world. Work and life balance have emerged as a foremost concern in the workplace as people navigate a life full of competing obligations and duties. The work and life equilibrium of women employed in the banking sector and the education sector differed significantly. Work and life imbalance was more common among working women in private banks than in public banks, even though it was less common among women instructors in schools and colleges.

Chawla (2011) states that both individuals and companies are concerned about work-life balance. Organizational commitment, job autonomy, and perceived work overload are major factors to an employee's sense of balance, according to a composite and sector-wise regression analysis. The professionals are searching for workplaces that can support them in managing their many responsibilities. This would improve a person's work and life balance and bears a knock-on impact on dedication and low attrition rates.

Furthermore, Sundaresan (2014) argues that the phrase "work and life balance" alludes to how well an employee balances their familial and professional spheres of life. Preserving a healthy balance between work and

family is crucial for working women, especially in the present environment where women face several obstacles and issues from both the home and the office. Working women folk are under immense duress as they have to manage virtually two full-time roles: one at home and the other in their office. Working women have more challenges than men in managing work and family obligations. Moreover, it is discovered that people encounter conflict more frequently because of work-related issues that overlap with personal lives than personal issues. Not only must working women compromise in one environment to flourish in another, but they also have to uphold multiple conventions and meet varying demands in each one. A considerable segment of employed women are facing challenges in reconciling their professional and personal lives as a result of overwhelming job demands, insufficient personal time, and the obligation to meet the expectations of others. Owing to the required overtime, the majority of working females encounter work and life balance issues. High levels of professional anxiety and inharmoniousness of family life, job related burnout, and the failure to realise one's complete potential are some of the foremost impacts of a poor balance between work and life. Their failure to accomplish job and family life usually makes them feel bitter and agitated.

The literature also suggested ways to maintain a healthy balance between the work and personal life that would have positive implications for working women. To help working women overcome the conflict brought on by inadequate work and life balance, the two work-life balance models namely role-analysis and three-factor models have been devised. With the help of these models, women can achieve a better balance and improve their intelligence, health, and happiness in all facets of their lives (Mehta, 2012).

5. Method

5.1 Study Design

For that reason, this research has utilised mixed-method approach where survey has been conducted to find out the overall status of working women, their working environments, working hours' s and challenges they experience

in balancing work-life. However, some interviews have also been conducted to get more insights into the challenges.

This research has employed an explanatory sequential research design where quantitative survey has been used as a method to collect statistical data primarily from the women, while qualitative in-depth interviews have been conducted to evaluate the work and life balance challenges among Pakistani working women.

5.2 Sample

A diverse sample of working women across different industries and job roles in Pakistan was selected. The sample size for survey was 100 while in-depth interviews was 20.

5.3 Data Collection

5.3.1 Survey Questionnaire

A structured questionnaire was administered to collect information on work hours, family responsibilities, and perceived work-life balance.

5.3.2 In-Depth Interviews

Qualitative interviews were used to explore individual experiences, coping mechanisms, and socio-economic, cultural and politico legal barriers faced by Pakistani working women with regard to maintain work life balance.

5.4 Data Analysis

SPSS has been used for the analysis of the quantitative data while thematic analysis is being employed for the analysis of qualitative data. R-values for regression analysis range from -1 to +1. So, in this case maximum values are close to +1 which shows good R-value.

6. Findings

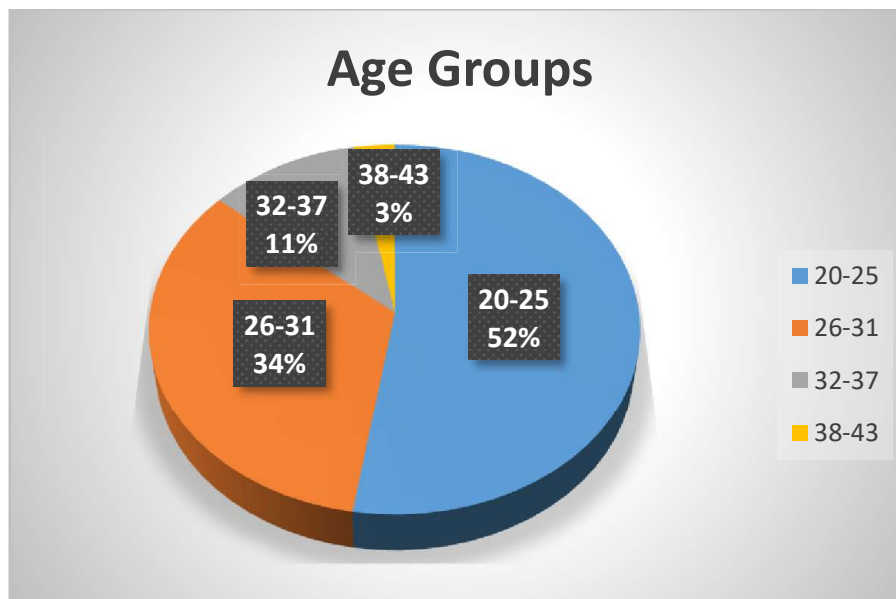


Figure 6.1 Age Division of the Respondents

According to the above figure, 52.5% of the respondent employees are in the 20–25 age group, 33.7% are in the 25–30 age group, and just 10.9% are in the 30–40 age group.

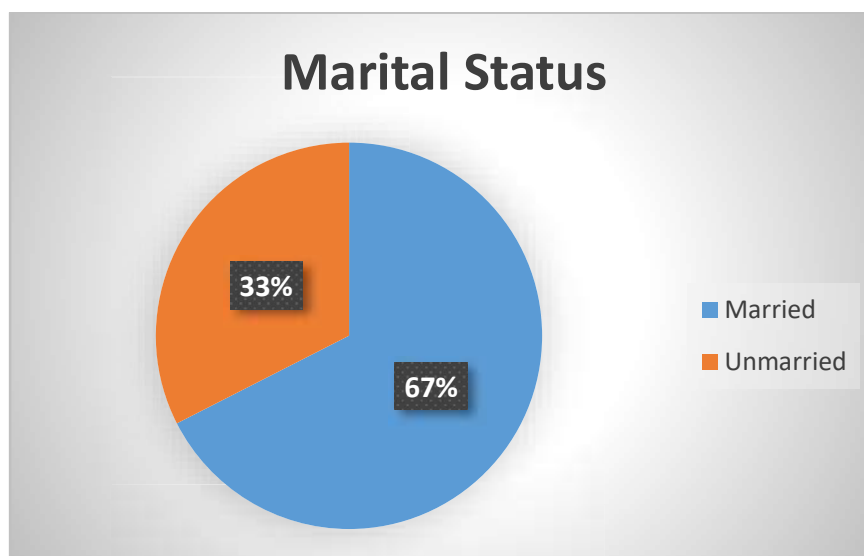


Figure 6.2 Marital Status of the Sample

It is evident from the above figure that 67% of the respondents working women are married while 33% are unmarried.

Work-Life Balance

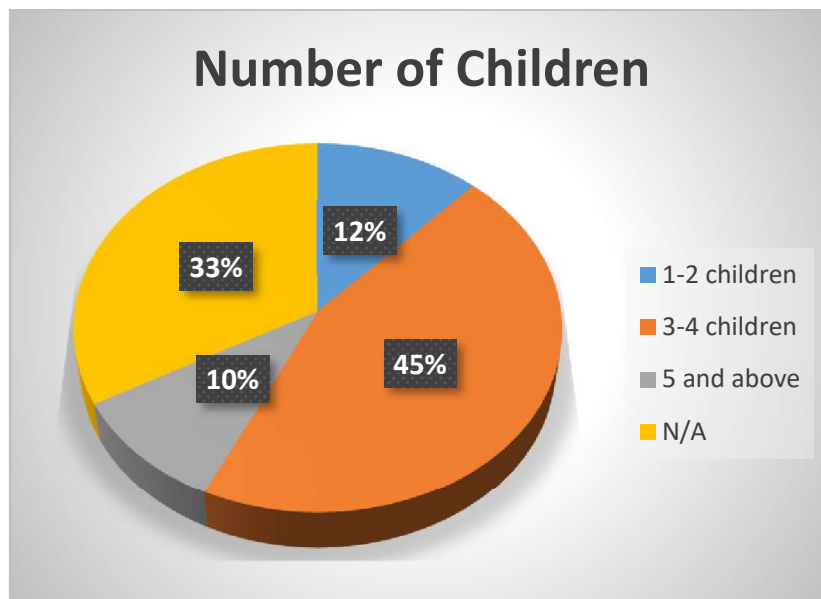


Figure 6.3 Number of Children

Above figure depicts the number of children, respondents have which directly shows the level of personal responsibility on their shoulders.

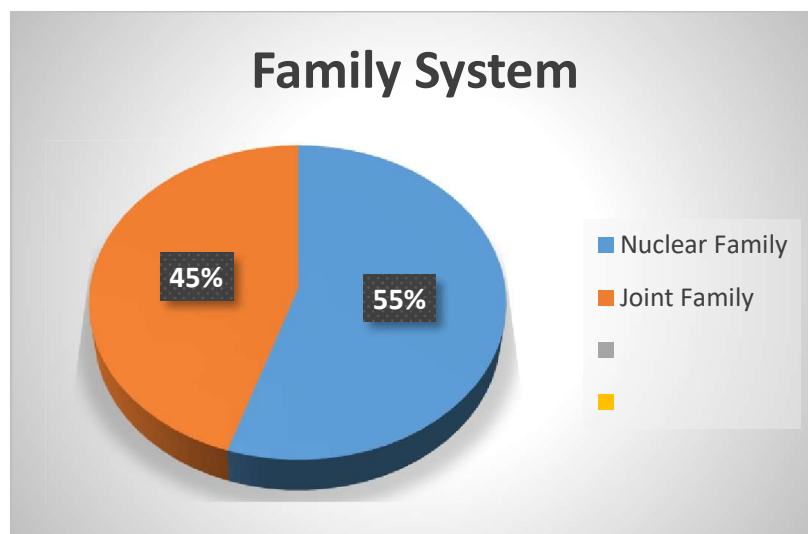


Figure 6.4 Family System

Both the joint and nuclear family systems have their peculiar positive and negatives. Living in a nuclear family system requires a working woman to manage children and domiciliary herself. She experiences problems of handling kids during office hours. Likewise, if one is living in joint family system, she is required to take good care of extended family and accomplish

domestic obligations being a daughter-in-law. Above figure illustrates the situation of the respondents.

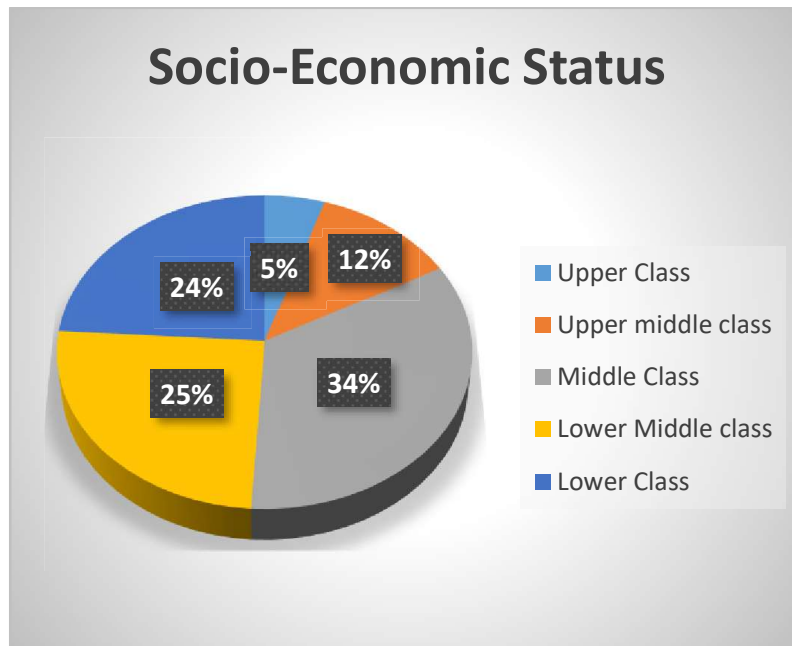


Figure 6.5 Socio-economic Status

Above figure signifies the socio-economic standing of the respondents which will help to comprehend whether they can manage to pay for the loss of jobs or not, and whether they can hire domestic helper or not.

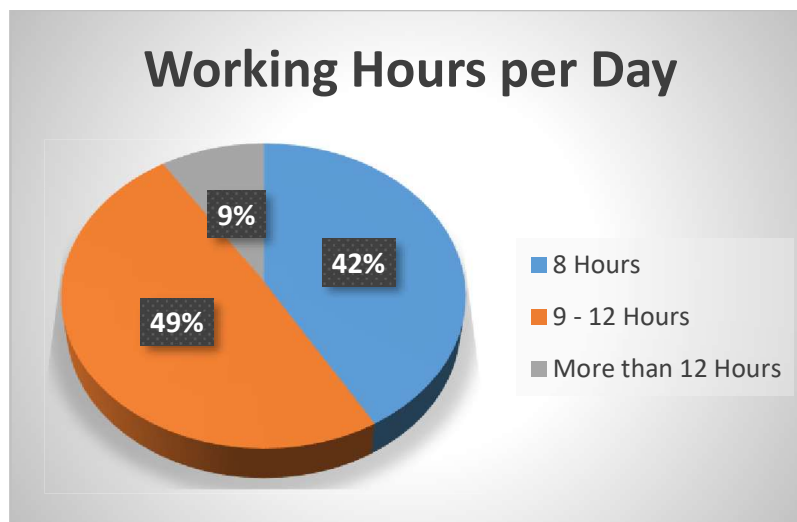


Figure 6.6 Working Hours of women per day

Above figure displays that majority of the women work 9-12 hours per day which makes it tough for them to balance their job and familial life.

Work-Life Balance

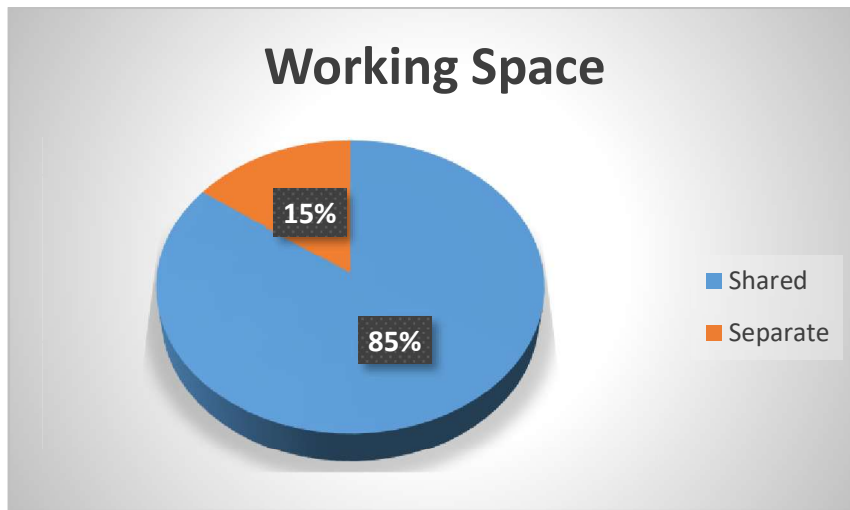


Figure 6.7 Working Space at their Workplace

Above figure illustrates that most of the women doesn't have separate working space which is another key challenge for them as they have no privacy.

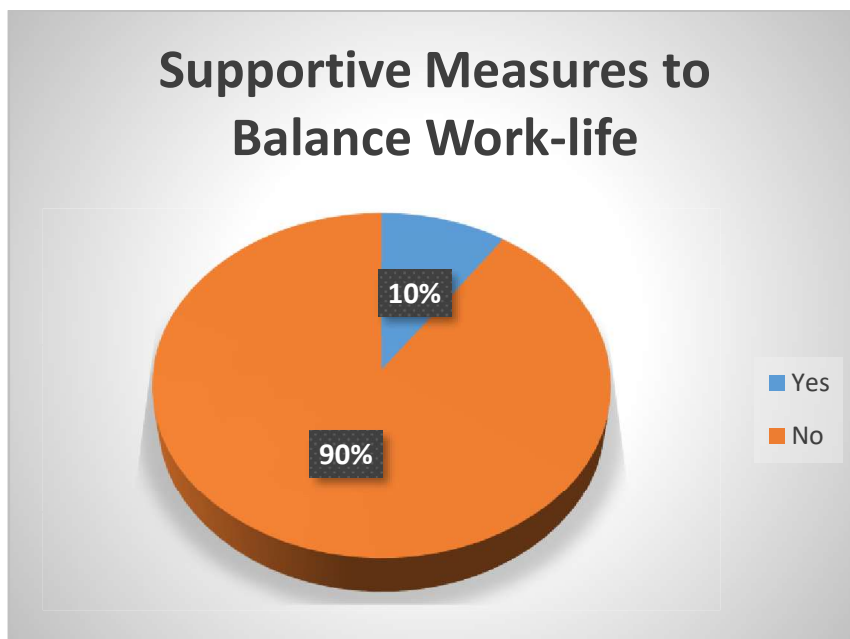


Figure 6.8 Presence of supportive measures to balance work-life

Above figure demonstrates that there is no availability of measures and steps that could be taken to balance the work and life struggles.

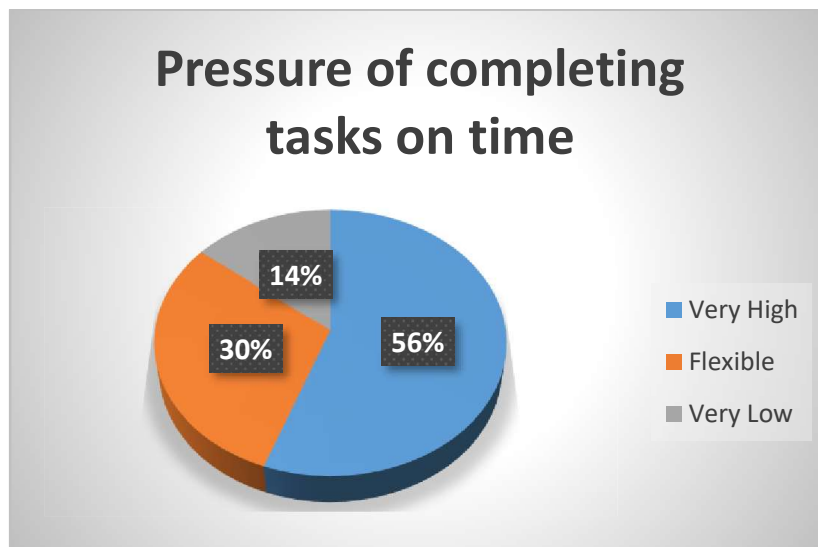


Figure 6.9 Work pressure to accomplish tasks on time

Above figure underlines that women experience severe pressure to accomplish the tasks in time which makes it difficult for them to perform their personal and familial responsibilities.

Table 6.1 *R-Values obtained using Regression Analysis*

Challenges in Work-Life Balance	R-Values
Role Conflict	.889
Gender Norms	.672
Workplace Culture	.722
Lack of Flexible Timings	.690
Financial Constraints	.689

Above table depicts from moderate to a very strong association between the factors and work-life imbalance for the working women. For instance, 0.6 r-value signifies moderate relationship which is for variables including gender norms, lack of flexible working hours, and financial constraints. While 0.8 R-

value represents strong relationship i.e., role conflict as a result of work and life imbalance.

7. Thematic Analysis

After conducting in-depth interviews, all recorded interviews were then transcribed and translated. By using thematic analysis of Braun and Clarke (2006), certain peculiar themes appeared from the analysis of collected data. The respondents are coded as following:

Table 7.1 *Demographic Particularities of Respondents for the In-depth Interviews*

Code	Age	Profession
P1	22-Years	School Teacher
P2	21-Years	Sales girl
P3	22-Years	Receptionist
P4	32-Years	Female Guard (University)
P5	36-Years	University Teacher
P6	42-Years	Lawyer
P7	22-Years	Bus Hostess
P8	25-Years	IT Professional
P9	23-Years	Reporter
P10	26-Years	Nutritionist

After coding the data carefully, following analysis has been carried out on the emerged themes:

7.1 Role Conflict

Education, affirmative action, and policies promoting economic empowerment are just a few of the measures that have made it possible for women to successfully pursue gender equality in the workforce in today's globalized society. Many working women, however, face difficulties managing their paid jobs and household responsibilities. In both urban and rural settings, their professional lives are an ongoing struggle to find a balance between the job demands and household responsibilities. Conflicts in Pakistan are often influenced by factors such as caste, class, religion, and geography. The role conflicts faced by women employed in information technology, retail establishments, and public transportation departments are examined in this study. The study's findings highlight a variety of aspects of women's managing several roles.

The interviewees claimed that their sadness was brought on by this unbalanced work-life schedule. According to three of the interviewees, they are taking medication and seeing a psychiatrist to help them deal with this issue. As a result of her recent bout of acute depression, one of the interviewees stated that she often attends professional counselling. Furthermore, all of the interviewees claimed that they have become obese as a result of not engaging in any physical activity due to their excessive attention on their careers. Furthermore, all of the participants reported having frequent headaches and feeling tense. Four participants have reported having hypertension in their personal lives.

7.2 Gender Norms

It is often the case that women are required to take care of the home and provide care for others. Because of the conventional division of labour, women have extra responsibilities that make it hard for them to balance their employment and household obligations. Because of internalized gender stereotypes or cultural expectations, women feel pressured to put family before career growth. Because of this, women choose to forgo career advancements or cut their work hours to fulfil their familial responsibilities. Furthermore, research reveal that women continue to suffer from lopsided

portion of the load of child care and home errands even in the face of more female participation in the labour. Women have less time and energy to dedicate to their families due to the unequal allocation of labour at home. Women's capacity to attain work-life balance is usually hampered by the unequal distribution of domestic chores, which further leaves them with less time and energy to dedicate to their jobs.

To maintain work and life balance, the study's respondents were asked what they personally wanted from the employer. A supervisor/senior who is supportive might alter the entire situation, according to the majority of respondents. In order to preserve work-life balance, 80% of respondents said they would like their supervisor's assistance. Of those surveyed, 72.5% wanted flexible work schedules from their employers. According to 67.5% of respondents, work-life imbalance can be lessened with family assistance.

7.3 Workplace Culture

A culture of long hours is encouraged in many places of employment, where workers are expected to show dedication by putting in extra hours and to be available at all times. Women find it hard to effectively bring about their personal and professional lives in this society, especially if they are responsible for providing care for others. Women's work-life imbalance is exacerbated by workplace cultures that place an extreme emphasis on efficiency and excellent performance. Sometimes at the expense of their health and personal lives, women experience pressure to always go above and beyond expectations and show their dedication to their work. A diversified approach is necessary to address workplace culture as a threat to women's work and life equilibrium. To achieve this, policies and practices that put well-being of the workers and balance between work and life for all genders first should be put in place. Other strategies to challenge gender conventions and stereotypes, promote flexible work arrangements, and create a welcoming and inclusive work atmosphere are also recommended. Workplaces can help women succeed both personally and professionally by fostering a culture that emphasizes work and life balance and supports the different requirements of workers.

7.4 Lack of Flexible Timings

It is difficult for the women to manage their work and personal life balance owing to strict work arrangements and inflexible timetables. Increased stress and tension result from women's difficulties fitting in personal obligations like child care, elder care, or other family duties around regular work hours. While telecommuting, part-time employment, and flexible hours help women achieve a better work-life balance, not all places of employment provide these opportunities. Organizational regulations, management attitudes, or workplace cultural norms provide obstacles for women seeking flexible work arrangements. Stressing work-life balance is stigmatized in some organizations, especially for women. Women who look for modifications or allowances to better balance their personal and work life sometimes worry about coming out as less devoted. Fearing that they may be viewed as less ambitious or dedicated, women who seek concessions or modifications to better balance their personal and work life do so out of concern for what might happen to their job chances.

Women have recommended that policies like work from home, flexible work schedules, and day care facilities be implemented by management, according to this survey. According to 40% of respondents, having the option to working from home will assist managers better strike balance in their personal and occupational responsibilities. Flexible work schedules are desired by 77.5% of respondents. Flexible work schedules will allow individuals to work more independently, which will ultimately result in job satisfaction, according to this study. In order to lessen this issue, according to 55% of respondents, the organization should offer day-care services. Day-care centres, according to the study, will entice more women to work for the company, preserving the gender balance in general.

7.5 Financial Constraints

The availability of supportive services, such as childcare assistance, eldercare support, or home help, that could lessen the burden of caregiving on women from lower-income households is restricted. Without these resources, it is hard for the women to manage their obligations to the families and their jobs.

It can be difficult to find high-quality, reasonably priced childcare, especially for women with low financial resources. Work-life imbalance that arise from women having to choose between pursuing their jobs and taking care of their children due to the high cost of childcare. Work-life imbalance is made worse by women who have low-paying or unstable occupations, which can lead to job instability. It is difficult for women to speak up for work-life balance or to take time off for personal or family matters if they are afraid of losing their jobs or experiencing financial instability. Financial hardships force women to work full-time jobs or take on additional jobs to supplement the family income in homes where both partners are employed. Work-life imbalance results from women managing numerous jobs and caring for others, leaving them with little time or energy for hobbies or self-care.

7.6 Mental Health Problems as a Consequence

Following mental health problems have been reported to have emerged during the interviews of the respondents:

- a. **Stress and Exhaustion:** Efforts on maintaining a work and life balance also tend to be highly stressed and burned out. Multiple demands, including caregiving responsibilities, work deadlines, and domestic chores, can become too much to handle, which can result in long-term stress and emotional tiredness.
- b. **Anxiety, Depression and Sadness:** Women who experience a persistently unbalanced work-life schedule are more susceptible to anxiety and sadness. Anxiety and depressive symptoms worsen and undermine mental health when one is constantly overburdened and unable to meet conflicting demands.
- c. **Disturbed Sleep or Sleeplessness:** Work and personal life conflicts throw off sleep cycles, resulting in insomnia or poor-quality sleep, among other sleep disorders. After work, women often struggle to decompress and rest, which makes it difficult for them to get asleep or stay asleep all night long.
- d. **Physical Health Problems:** Physical health is negatively impacted by ongoing stress brought on by a work-life imbalance. Numerous physical

health problems affect women, such as immune system damage, headaches, tense muscles, and digestive disorders.

- e. **Fatigue and Overtiredness:** When people manage work and personal obligations without getting enough sleep or relaxation, they become physically and mentally exhausted. It is difficult for women to participate in everyday activities and preserve general wellbeing when they are continuously exhausted and low on energy.
- f. **Relationship Problems:** Relationships with spouses, family, and friends are strained by a work-life imbalance. Women tend to feel alone, alienated, and isolated since they don't have as much time or energy to invest in maintaining personal relationships.
- g. **Reduced Productivity and Efficiency:** Their capacity for cognitive function, focus, and decision-making is hampered by chronic stress and burnout brought on by a work-life imbalance. The lower performance and productivity of women at work also contributes to their increased stress and discontent.
- h. **Hazardous Effects on Self-Care:** Women's capacity to prioritize their own health and well-being and participate in self-care routines is hampered by work-life imbalance. Due to time constraints and conflicting expectations, women typically overlook exercising, maintaining a healthy diet, and engaging in other self-care activities.

8. Discussion and Analysis

The assistance we receive from our families is just as important as the support we receive from our supervisors in maintaining a work-life balance. The respondents maintained that for preservation of a balance between work and life, family support is equally crucial. A supportive husband/in-laws is crucial to a woman's profession, as per the married interviewees who stressed the importance of a good married life. According to a six-year-married respondent with a child, she would have struggled if her spouse hadn't been encouraging and shared duties pertaining to family events. Flexible work schedules are beneficial to the majority of working women, according to both survey and interview data. An ability to work at their own pace leads to increased job satisfaction from flexible working hours. Participants in the

interview recommended opening a day-care centre at work. All of the interviewees agreed that keeping employees engaged and fostering a healthy work environment can be achieved through establishing robust policies regarding work and life balance.

Among others, a major concern is that their male co-workers do not treat working women with respect. Married working women are prohibited from traveling on business trips by their families. Another issue that women deal with regarding compensation is gender discrimination. Certain companies pay their female employees less than their male counterparts. Even high-ranking female professionals have responsibilities at work, including cooking, cleaning, and taking care of their families after work. They experience more stress as a result, which might cause health issues. Having to leave their child in day-care or with a housemaid they don't trust is another of the hardest issues working moms with tiny children deal with. Their tension increases and they become less focused on their work as a result. Despite hiring maids to handle household chores, working women must pay them extra. Because they don't have enough time off, working women can't attend family events or provide their families with the care they need.

9. Conclusion

Both lower-level and higher-level employees struggle with the same issues concerning work life balance. An empirical basis for the development of creative policies that address work-life conflict and lengthy work hours should be provided on the basis of findings of this study. Ultimately, the findings point to a higher risk of mental and physical health issues for employees who are exposed to prolonged periods of excessive work hours and high levels of work-family conflict. Furthermore, the research makes it abundantly evident that organizational cultures, manager behaviour at all levels, employee choice and flexibility in work schedules and arrangements, workload and job expectations, and flexible work arrangements are all essential components of any solution to these possible issues. Women encountered several obstacles in managing job and family obligations, according to this research. From the above discussion, it can be concluded that it is difficult to maintain balance between work and life especially for the

women in Pakistan. To achieve equilibrium between job and family responsibilities, public and private sectors are required to redefine their policies and approaches in this regard.

10. Recommendations

Some of the recommendations on the basis of findings are:

- The organizations should appoint a counsellor to learn more about the issues facing working women.
- The administrators need to foster an atmosphere where workers feel comfortable starting a family. Supervisors can create a welcoming atmosphere that allows for scheduling flexibility, telecommuting choices, individual time off, on-site child care, and other family-oriented initiatives.
- Working parents' internal social network, including a blog, mentorship program, and coaching services can also improve work life balance.
- Wellness/resource room (for prayer, meditation, and backup childcare) because it has an impact on employee performance and job happiness, firms must develop policies for their management.
- Scholars may investigate several viewpoints, including on job stress and strain, value of good life and psychological health to achieve a comprehensive picture of a worker's job and family life.
- Government may come up with specific policy interventions with strict implementations to improve work and life sense of balance across the sectors.
- Awareness among employees and the employers is imperative to improve work and life equilibrium.

11. Implications of the Study

For working women who must manage the challenges of both private and occupational lives, work and life equilibrium is an especially important. Examining the variables influencing women's work and life equilibrium, this study clarifies negative effects of an unbalanced lifestyle. Main implications of the study include:

11.1 Obstacles Working Women Encounter

Excessive work expectations cause stress and exhaustion for a considerable number of working women. Personal interests and self-care are often neglected when juggling job and family obligations. Women are frequently under pressure to live up to the expectations of others, both at work and at home.

11.2 Intrusion of job into Home

The majority of professional women maintained that occupational requirements continually interfere in their private lives. Long workdays and the erasing of distinctions between work and home life are factors in this problem.

11.3 Consequences of unbalanced work-life

Having to balance several responsibilities is hard on the body and mind. Anxiety and stress start to dominate. Family connections are impacted by a stressed work-life balance, which can cause arguments and discord. Burnout is a possibility for women who find it difficult to uphold a work and life equilibrium. Unbalanced work and life schedules can prevent women professionals from reaching their full potential in both work and life.

11.4 Role Models

Two models are suggested by the study for resolving conflicts:

The role-analysis model assists women in identifying and prioritising their responsibilities. The Three-Factor Model gives women the tools they need to combine career, family, and personal health.

11.5 Global Significance

These role models are important for women who labour everywhere. They enable women to successfully negotiate the intricacies of their complex lives, leading to more intelligent, healthful, and joyful results.

This research will further contribute to:

i. Enhanced Understanding:

By shedding light on the challenges faced by working women, we can create awareness and promote empathy.

ii. Policy Recommendations:

Evidence-based recommendations can inform workplace policies and practices.

iii. Gender Equality:

Improving work-life balance for women contributes to gender equality and economic empowerment.

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