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### Work life balance perceptions of women it professionals in Chennai city

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#### ABSTRACT

Changing employment patterns together with changes in the demographic structure of the workforce have resulted in a different reality for the 21st century. Instead of trying to manage copious amounts of leisure time, many employees are instead trying to juggle numerous responsibilities with the increased, intensified demands of work. Such reality and in particular, transformations in the structure of both the workplace and the workforce imply that work practices and employers' expectations must change accordingly. The changing economic conditions and social demands have changed the nature of work throughout the world. The concept of Work life balance is becoming more and more relevant in an ever dynamic working environment. This study makes an attempt to analyze empirically perceptions of Information Technology (IT) sector women professionals on work life balance.

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#### Introduction

Changes in the social, political and economic fabric of societies have influenced and continue to influence both the nature of employment and its relationship to life outside work. Work-life balance has emerged as a hot topic in recent years—fuelled in part by changing trends in women's social roles. Whilst labor market participation has increased for women of all ages, women continue to shoulder the main responsibility for organizing and undertaking unpaid caring work.

Changing employment patterns together with changes in the demographic structure of the workforce have resulted in a different reality for the 21st century. Instead of trying to manage copious amounts of leisure time, many employees are instead trying to juggle numerous responsibilities with the increased, intensified demands of work.

Such reality, and in particular, transformations in the structure of both the workplace and the workforce imply that work practices and employers' expectations must change accordingly.

The traditional assumption that employees should be willing and able to make work their top priority in life is no longer tenable. Globalization, new technologies and business restructuring are challenging the long established patterns of paid work while imposing new burdens on families, individuals and households.

Until quite recently it was widely assumed, particularly in and concerning the richer countries, that working hours were steadily reducing, the amount of leisure time increasing and that these trends would continue. Many people looked forward to a golden age of leisure.

The changing economic conditions and social demands have changed the nature of work throughout the world. The concept of Work life balance is becoming more and more relevant in an ever dynamic working environment. This study makes an attempt to analyze empirically perceptions of Information Technology (IT) sector women professionals on work life balance.

#### Objectives of the study

The main objectives of the study are given below;

1. To examine demographic, economic and work related characteristics of the respondents (women IT professionals in Chennai city)
2. To study about work life pattern of women IT professionals in Chennai city
3. To analyze work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals in relation to demographic, economic and work related characteristics.

#### Research Methodology

This study is based on primary data. The quality of data is invariably tied to the method and technique used for data collection. Hence, survey method through structured questionnaire is adopted to collect primary data for this study as it is found suitable for this research. Sample population of the study is women IT professionals in Chennai city. Sample size is 383 which is determined on the basis of Krejcie and Morgan study.

#### Analysis and interpretation

##### Analysis of demographic, economic and work related characteristics of the respondents

The most important features of demographic, economic and work related characteristics of women IT professionals;

1. 48% of the respondents are single, 41.5% of the respondents are married, 8.4% of the respondents are divorcee and 2.1% of the respondents are widower.
2. Out of married women, 92.4% of the respondents (171 respondents) have only one child and 7.6% of the respondents (14 respondents) have two children.
3. Interestingly, most of the respondents (43.1%) are less than 20 years old, 26.1% of the respondents belong to the age group of 21 years to 35 years, 22.7% of the respondents belong to the age group of 36 years to 50 years and only 8.1% of the respondents belong to the age group of more than 50 years.
4. 52% of the respondents have completed post graduation and 48% of the respondents have completed under graduation.
5. 83.6% of the respondents have annual income of Rs 1,00,001 to 5,00,000 and 6.3% of the respondents have annual income of more than Rs 5,00,000.

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6. 38.1% of the respondents have 2 or less than 2 dependents, 48.6% of the respondents have 3 to 6 dependents and 13.3% of the respondents have more than 6 dependents.

7. 35.2% of the respondents have total experience of 3 or less than 3 years, 30.5% of the respondents have total experience of 3 years 1 day to 10 years, 20.4% of the respondents have total experience of 10 years 1 day to 20 years and 13.8% of the respondents have more than 20 years experience.

8. 35.2% of the respondents have total experience of 3 or less than 3 years IT sector, 28.5% of the respondents have total experience of 3 years 1 day to 10 years in IT sector, 22.7% of the respondents have total experience of 10 years 1 day to 20 years in IT and 13.6% of the respondents have more than 20 years experience in IT.

#### **Analysis of work life pattern of the respondents**

The work life pattern of women IT professionals is summarized below;

1. All the respondents (100%) agree that they have to work extra hours at least one day in a month and around 40% of the respondents work extra hours 10 to 20 days in a month. It indicates work stress on personal life of women IT professionals.

2. 65.5% of the respondents change their start time and quit time from the office.

3. 99% of the respondents enjoy the facility of "work from home" which is the indication of adoption of "work from home" policy by IT companies wide spread.

4. 35% of the respondents agree that it is very hard to find time for personal work during working hours and 13.3% of the respondents agree that it is not very hard to find time for personal work during working hours.

5. 65.3% of the respondents confess that job interferes the family or personal life and 34.7% of the respondents agree that job does not interfere the family or personal life.

6. Interestingly, 64.2% of the respondents confess that family or personal life interferes the job and 35.8% of the respondents agree that family or personal life does not interfere the job.

7. Very important revelation of the study is that 46% of the respondents engage other job apart from their regular job. It may have considerable effect on their work life balance.

8. 54.6% of the respondents say that they are permitted to have flexible working hours.

9. 45.4% of the respondents agree that they do not have crèche facility.

#### **Analysis of work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals**

Women have a number of roles that they play throughout life. Work-life conflict occurs when time and energy demands imposed by the diverse roles cannot be efficiently met, as participation in one role is made increasingly difficult by participation in another. Due to the Indian social structure, prejudices and myths women employees used to face barriers in work environment.

This study analyzes work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals in relation to their demographic, economic and work related characteristics.

The One way ANOVA Table – 3 shows that there is no significant difference between marital status and work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals. It means that work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals do not differ on the basis of marital status. All women IT professionals have almost same level of work life balance perceptions irrespective of their marital status which is evident from mean scores.

The One way ANOVA Table – 4 shows that there is no significant difference between number of children and work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals. It means that work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals do not differ on the basis of number of children of women IT professionals. All women IT professionals have almost same level of work life balance perceptions irrespective of their number of children.

The One way ANOVA Table – 5 shows that there is a significant difference between age and work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals. Therefore, work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals differ on the basis of age of women IT professionals. Mean scores of one way ANOVA indicate that women IT professionals aged more than 50 years (2.4850) followed by women IT professionals aged 20 years or less than 20 years have high level of work life balance perceptions (2.4755), women IT professionals aged 36 years to 50 years (2.1635) and women IT professionals aged 21 years to 35 years (2.1423).

The one way ANOVA Table – 6 reveals that there is no significant difference between education and work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals. Therefore, it can be said that work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals do not differ on the basis of their education level.

The One way ANOVA Table – 7 shows that there is a significant difference between gross annual income and work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals. Therefore, work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals differ on the basis of gross annual income of women IT professionals. Mean scores of one way ANOVA indicate that women IT professionals having gross annual income of Rs 1,00,000 or less than Rs 1,00,000 possess high level of work life balance perceptions (2.6317) followed by women IT professionals having gross annual income of Rs 1,00,001 to Rs 3,00,000 (2.2983), women IT professionals having gross annual income of Rs 3,00,001 to Rs 5,00,000 (2.2745) and women IT professionals having gross annual income of more than Rs 5,00,000 (2.0019). It should be noted that if gross annual income of women IT professionals increases, then, their work life balance level decreases. It may be due to corresponding increase of work responsibility when there is a increase of gross annual income.

The one way ANOVA Table – 8 indicates that there is no significant difference between number of education and work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals. Therefore, it can be understood that work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals do not differ on the basis of their number of dependents.

The One way ANOVA Table – 9 shows that there is a significant difference between total experience and work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals. Therefore, work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals differ on the basis of total experience of women IT professionals. Mean scores of one way ANOVA indicate that women IT professionals having total experience of more than 20 years possess high level of work life balance perceptions (3.2770) followed by women IT professionals having total experience of 10 years 1 day to 20 years (2.7523), women IT professionals having total experience of 3 years 1 day to 10 years (2.1744) and women IT professionals having total experience of 3 years or less than 3 years (1.7747). It should be noted that when total experience of women IT professionals increases, then, their work life balance level also increases. It may be due to ability of women IT professionals to adjust with job requirements while having more experience.

**Table 1. Demographic, economic and work related characteristics of the respondents**

No	Particulars	No. Of respondents	Percentages
1	Marital Status		
	Single	184	48.0
	Married	159	41.5
	Divorcee	032	8.4
	Widower	008	2.1
	Total	383	100.00
2	NUMBER OF CHILDREN		
	Only one	171	92.4
	Two	014	07.6
	Total	185	100.0
3	AGE		
	Up to 20 years	165	43.1
	21 to 35 years	100	26.1
	36 to 50 years	087	22.7
	More than 50 years	031	08.1
	Total	383	100.0
4	EDUCATION		
	Under Graduate	184	48.0
	Post Graduate	199	52.0
	Total	383	100.0
5	GROSS ANNUAL INCOME (Rs)		
	Up to 100000	039	10.2
	100001 to 300000	162	42.3
	300001 to 500000	158	41.3
	More than 500000	024	06.3
	Total	383	100.0
6	NUMBER OF DEPENDENTS		
	Up to 2 members	146	38.1
	3 to 4 members	095	24.8
	5 to 6 members	091	23.8
	More than 6 members	051	13.3
	Total	383	100.0
7	TOTAL EXPERIENCE		
	Up to 3 years	135	35.2
	3 years 1 day to 10 years	117	30.5
	10 years 1 day to 20 years	078	20.4
	More than 20 years	053	13.8
	Total	383	100.0
8	EXPERIENCE IN IT SECTOR		
	Up to 3 years	135	35.2
	3 years 1 day to 10 years	109	28.5
	10 years 1 day to 20 years	087	22.7
	More than 20 years	052	13.6
	Total	383	100.0

**Table 2. Work life pattern of the respondents**

No	Particulars	No. Of respondents	Percentages
1	EXTRA HOURS OF WORK PER MONTH		
	Up to 5 days	133	34.7
	6 to 10 days	110	28.7
	11 to 15 days	086	22.5
	More than 15 days	054	14.1
	Total	383	100.0
2	CHANGE IN START & QUIT TIME		
	Never	132	34.5
	Rarely	111	29.0
	Some times	087	22.7
	Often	053	13.8
	Total	383	100.0
3	WORK FROM HOME		
	More than once in a week	128	33.4
	About once in a week	109	28.5
	About once in a month	089	23.2
	Few times in a year	053	13.8
	Never	004	01.0
	Total	383	100.0
4	CHANCE OF DEVOTING TIME FOR PERSONAL WORK DURING WORKING TIME		

	Very hard	134	35.0
	Somewhat hard	108	28.2
	Not too hard	090	23.5
	Not hard at all	051	13.3
	Total	383	100.0
5	INTRFERENCE OF JOB IN TO FAMILY OR PERSONAL LIFE		
	Never	133	34.7
	Rarely	112	29.2
	Some times	086	22.5
	Often	052	13.6
	Total	383	100.0
6	INTERFERENCE OF FAMILY OR PERSONAL LIFE IN TO JOB		
	Never	137	35.8
	Rarely	107	27.9
	Some times	087	22.7
	Often	052	13.6
	Total	383	100.0
7	INVOLVING OTHER JOB		
	Yes	176	46.0
	No	207	54.0
	Total	383	100.0
8	FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS		
	No	174	45.4
	Yes	209	54.6
	Total	383	100.0
9	AVAILABILITY OF CRECHE FACILITY		
	No	174	45.4
	Yes	209	54.6
	Total	383	100.0

**Table 3. Marital status and work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals**

Marital status	Mean Value	F value	P Value	Result
Single	2.2673	2.160	.092*	Not Significant
Married	2.2693			
Divorcee	2.6463			
Widower	2.4602			

Source: Primary data

\*At 1% level of significance \*\*At 5% level of significance

**Table 4. Number of children and work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals**

Number of children	Mean Value	F value	P Value	Result
Only one	2.3698	3.786	.053*	Not significant
Two	1.9091			

Source: Primary data

\*At 1% level of significance \*\*At 5% level of significance

**Table 5. Age and work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals**

Age	Mean Value	F value	P Value	Result
Up to 20 years	2.4755	4.611	.003*	Significant
21 to 35 years	2.1423			
36 to 50 years	2.1635			
More than 50 years	2.4850			

Source: Primary data

\*At 1% level of significance \*\*At 5% level of significance

**Table 6. Education and work life balance perceptions of women it professionals**

Education	Mean Value	F value	P Value	Result
Under Graduate	2.3767	2.770	.097**	Not Significant
Post Graduate	2.2364			

Source: Primary data

\*At 1% level of significance \*\*At 5% level of significance

**Table 7. Gross annual income and work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals**

Gross annual income	Mean Value	F value	P Value	Result
Up to 100000	2.6317	3.240	.022*	Significant
100001 to 300000	2.2983			
300001 to 500000	2.2745			
More than 500000	2.0019			

Source: Primary data

\*At 1% level of significance \*\*At 5% level of significance

**Table 8. Number of dependents and work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals**

Number of dependents	Mean Value	F value	P Value	Result
Up to 2 members	2.2827	.952	.416*	Not Significant
3 to 4 members	2.2828			
5 to 6 members	2.4206			
More than 6 members	2.1952			

Source: Primary data

\*At 1% level of significance \*\*At 5% level of significance

**Table 9. Total experience and work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals**

Total experience	Mean Value	F value	P Value	Result
Up to 3 years	1.7747	86.000	.000*	Significant
3 years 1 day to 10 years	2.1744			
10 years 1 day to 20 years	2.7523			
More than 20 years	3.2770			

Source: Primary data

\*At 1% level of significance \*\*At 5% level of significance

**Table 10. Total experience in IT sector and work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals**

Total experience	Mean Value	F value	P Value	Result
Up to 3 years	1.8054	76.480	.000*	Significant
3 years 1 day to 10 years	2.1472			
10 years 1 day to 20 years	2.6938			
More than 20 years	3.2736			

Source: Primary data

\*At 1% level of significance \*\*At 5% level of significance

The One way ANOVA Table – 10 shows that there is a significant difference between experience in IT sector and work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals. So, work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals differ on the basis of experience in IT sector of women IT professionals. Mean scores of one way ANOVA indicate that women IT professionals having experience in IT sector of more than 20 years possess high level of work life balance perceptions (3.2736) followed by women IT professionals having experience in IT sector of 10 years 1 day to 20 years (2.6938), women IT professionals having experience in IT sector of 3 years 1 day to 10 years (2.1472) and women IT professionals having experience in IT sector of 3 years or less than 3 years (1.8054). It should be noted that when experience in IT sector of women IT professionals increases, then, their work life balance level also increases. It may be due to ability of women IT professionals to adjust with job requirements while having more experience.

Differences in work life balance perceptions of the respondents on the basis of demographic, economic and work related variables are analyzed and discussed in tables – 3.3 to 3.14 using one way ANOVA (F test) and post hoc test wherever it is required. Based on such analysis, comprehensive conclusions can be drawn on work life balance perceptions of sample respondents which are as follows:

❖ The study results exhibit that women IT professional, who may be either married or unmarried, either completed graduation or post graduation, aged more than 50 years irrespective of number of dependents with gross annual income of Rs 1,00,000

or less than Rs 1,00,001 having more than 20 years of total experience and more than 20 years experience in IT sector has higher level of work life balance perception.

❖ On the other hand, the study shows that women IT professional, who may be either married or unmarried, either completed graduation or post graduation, aged 21 years to 35 years irrespective of number of dependents with gross annual income of more than Rs 5,00,000 having up to 3 years of total experience and up to 3 years experience in IT sector has lower level of work life balance perception.

### Conclusion

The study has made an attempt to examine work life balance perceptions of women IT professionals. The respondents belong to Chennai city. The study results exhibit that women IT professional, who may be either married or unmarried, either completed graduation or post graduation, aged more than 50 years irrespective of number of dependents with gross annual income of Rs 1,00,000 or less than Rs 1,00,001 having more than 20 years of total experience and more than 20 years experience in IT sector has higher level of work life balance perception.

On the other hand, the study shows that women IT professional, who may be either married or unmarried, either completed graduation or post graduation, aged 21 years to 35 years irrespective of number of dependents with gross annual income of more than Rs 5,00,000 having up to 3 years of total experience and up to 3 years experience in IT sector has lower level of work life balance perception.

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