

# A STUDY ON WORK-LIFE BALANCE AMONG WORKING WOMEN IN PERAMBALUR DISTRICT

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**ABSTRACT:** This study investigates the work-life balance (WLB) among working women in Perambalur district. With the increasing participation of women in the workforce, maintaining a balance between professional and personal life has become a critical issue. The research aims to identify factors affecting work-life balance, assess its impact on health and productivity, and suggest measures for improvement. Using primary data collected through structured questionnaires from 150 working women across different sectors, the study finds that organizational support, flexible working hours, and family cooperation are significant determinants of effective work-life balance. The findings reveal that while many women manage to juggle responsibilities, challenges like long working hours, lack of childcare support, and societal expectations persist. Suggestions include promoting flexible work arrangements, implementing supportive HR policies, and increasing awareness about the importance of work-life balance.

**Keywords:** Work-life balance, working women, Perambalur district, flexible work, organizational support, gender roles.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, the role of women in the workforce has undergone significant transformation. More women are now contributing to household income and achieving financial independence. This shift has led to the rise of dual-income households, altering traditional family dynamics. As women take on professional responsibilities, they continue to shoulder the majority of domestic duties. Balancing these dual roles often leads to increased stress, fatigue, and burnout. In rural and semi-urban regions like Perambalur district, the issue becomes more complex due to the persistence of conventional gender norms. Limited access to supportive infrastructure such as childcare facilities and flexible work environments further exacerbates the situation. Social expectations often dictate that women prioritize family over career, creating internal conflicts. This imbalance not only affects the well-being of women but also impacts their work performance and career growth. The lack of organizational initiatives to support women in managing work-life demands remains a concern. Moreover, extended family pressures and lack of emotional support contribute to the struggle. This study aims to explore the dynamics of work-life balance specifically among working women in Perambalur. It seeks to uncover the major stressors they face and the coping mechanisms they employ. The research also investigates how employers and families can contribute to achieving better balance. By understanding these dimensions, the study aims to provide actionable insights for policy makers, organizations, and society at large.

## II. OBJECTIVES

- To identify the factors influencing work-life balance among working women in Perambalur.
- To analyze the impact of work-life imbalance on physical and mental health.
- To evaluate the role of organizational policies and family support in maintaining WLB.
- To provide recommendations for improving work-life balance.

## III. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of this study is centered on working women in the Perambalur district, specifically those employed in diverse sectors including education, healthcare, government services, and private enterprises. The research aims to capture a broad spectrum of experiences and challenges related to work-life balance across different professional backgrounds. The study focuses on women aged between 21 and 60 years, as this age range encompasses individuals at various stages of their careers and personal lives. To ensure relevance, only women who have been employed for at least one year were included, as this duration is considered sufficient to assess their experiences with work-life integration. The study seeks to explore the factors influencing work-life balance in these specific occupational settings, while considering demographic diversity, such as age and marital status, within the Perambalur district.

## IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

Work-life balance has been a topic of increasing interest among scholars, especially in the context of women's participation in the workforce. Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) first introduced the concept of work-family conflict, laying the foundation for further studies. According to Frone et al. (1992), job demands can interfere with family life, leading to stress and burnout. Parasuraman and Simmers (2001) emphasized that women face more intense work-family conflicts compared to men. In the Indian context, Rajadhyaksha and Smita (2004) highlighted that traditional gender roles heavily influence women's work-life experiences. Sharma (2019) suggested that flexible working arrangements significantly enhance women's ability to balance work and family responsibilities. Kaur and Singh (2020) argued that family support is crucial in managing work-life balance. Studies by Jain and Nair (2018) found a positive correlation between organizational support and employee satisfaction. Recent literature has also explored the psychological aspects of work-life conflict, linking it to mental health concerns. Bhatnagar (2016) noted the importance of employer-provided childcare facilities. Mehta (2017) found that urban women have better access to support systems than those in rural areas. Joshi (2019) discussed the rise of dual-income families and the resultant pressures on women. Global studies, such as those by UN Women, stress the need for gender-sensitive workplace policies. The World Bank (2020) emphasized the economic implications of gender imbalance in the workforce. Overall, the literature reveals a consistent need for structural and cultural changes to support women in achieving work-life harmony.

## V. METHODOLOGY

### 5.1 Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive research design. This approach is selected to capture and describe the actual conditions, experiences, and challenges faced by working women in managing their work and personal life. The descriptive design enables the researcher to systematically gather information on current practices, stressors, coping mechanisms, and support structures relevant to work-life balance in the Perambalur district. It helps to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon by exploring different variables and their interrelationships. By using this design, the study aims to draw conclusions based on observed facts and patterns rather than experimental intervention. It allows for a detailed analysis of real-life situations, making it particularly suitable for examining complex issues like work-life balance, which involves multiple personal and professional dimensions. The data obtained through this approach is analyzed to identify common trends, challenges, and successful coping strategies among the target population. Ultimately, this research design supports the formulation of evidence-based recommendations for policy and practice aimed at enhancing work-life harmony for women.

## **5.2 Sampling Method**

To ensure the sample is diverse and representative of the working women population in Perambalur, a stratified random sampling method was employed. This technique divides the population into distinct subgroups, known as strata, based on specific characteristics, and participants are then randomly selected from each stratum. Stratified sampling is particularly useful in this study as it accounts for the potential variability within different subgroups of working women, ensuring that the sample reflects the full range of experiences within the population. In this case, the total population of working women in Perambalur was divided into several strata based on key demographic and professional variables. The primary strata included occupation, age group, and marital status. By categorizing women into these strata, the study aimed to capture differences in work-life balance experiences that may exist across varying professional roles, age brackets, and relationship statuses.

### **5.2.1 Occupation**

Women were categorized into occupational groups, such as teachers, nurses, clerks, and private employees. This distinction is important because women in different sectors may face varying levels of stress, working hours, and support from their employers. For instance, teachers may experience a more rigid work schedule compared to those working in the private sector, where flexible working arrangements might be more common.

### **5.2.2 Age Group**

The participants were also grouped into age ranges of 21–30, 31–40, 41–50, and 51–60 years. This stratification ensures that women at different stages of their careers and family life are represented. Younger women may be at the beginning of their professional journeys, while older women may be dealing with more complex work-life demands, such as caring for elderly parents or managing the challenges of menopause. Age-related differences can influence a woman's ability to balance work and personal life.

### **5.2.3 Marital Status**

Another critical variable in the stratification process was marital status. Participants were categorized into four groups: single, married, divorced, and widowed. Marital status

significantly affects the work-life balance of women, as married women may have additional household responsibilities, while single women might have more flexibility but possibly face different societal expectations. Divorced or widowed women may experience unique challenges, such as being the sole caregivers for their children. Once the strata were defined, a random selection process was employed within each subgroup. This random selection ensures that every woman within a particular stratum has an equal chance of being included in the study, minimizing any potential bias that could arise from self-selection or other non-random sampling methods.

By using a stratified random sampling approach, the study ensured that all significant subgroups of working women in Perambalur were adequately represented. This method provides a more comprehensive and accurate picture of the factors influencing work-life balance and allows for more meaningful analysis and interpretation of the data across different segments of the working female population.

### **5.3 Sample Size**

The sample size for this study was set at 150 working women, a number carefully chosen to strike a balance between statistical reliability and the practical limitations of data collection and analysis. This sample size was determined after considering the total population of working women in Perambalur district, ensuring that the findings would be representative of the broader population, while remaining manageable for the scope of the research. A sample size of 150 participants is substantial enough to allow for meaningful analysis and the identification of patterns across key variables such as occupation, age group, and marital status. It provides a confidence level of around 95%, which is commonly accepted for social science research, ensuring that the results are likely to be statistically significant. Moreover, this sample size is adequate to detect differences in work-life balance across various sectors and demographic groups. In terms of feasibility, 150 women provided a manageable workload for both the data collection and analysis phases of the study. Conducting in-depth interviews or administering questionnaires to a smaller sample would have limited the scope of the findings, while a larger sample could have created logistical challenges, particularly in terms of time and resources. The sample was drawn from women working in a variety of sectors, including education, healthcare, government services, private enterprises, and self-employment. This diversity ensures that the study's results are applicable to a broad cross-section of working women in the district. By including women from multiple professional backgrounds, the research captures the varied experiences of women facing different work-related demands, thereby providing a more holistic understanding of work-life balance in the region. Further, a stratified random sampling method was applied to ensure the sample was representative of the population, accounting for differences in age, occupation, and marital status. This approach helped mitigate biases and ensured that all subgroups of working women were proportionately represented, allowing for more accurate conclusions. A sample of 150 was deemed appropriate, as it also facilitates the application of statistical tests, such as correlation analysis and regression modeling, which are important for identifying significant relationships and making generalizable conclusions. The sample size ensured that the study had sufficient power to detect meaningful patterns in data without overburdening the research process. In summary, the selected sample size of 150 working women provides a comprehensive yet manageable dataset for understanding work-life balance in Perambalur district. It enables the study to produce

robust, statistically reliable results while staying within the practical constraints of time, budget, and resources for data collection and analysis.

#### **5.4 Data Collection Tools**

The primary tool used for data collection in this study was a structured questionnaire, which was carefully designed to capture a comprehensive set of information related to the work-life balance of working women in Perambalur district. The questionnaire was developed with the objective of gathering both quantitative and qualitative data, allowing the study to explore both measurable aspects (such as hours worked and stress levels) and personal experiences (such as coping strategies and perceived barriers to work-life balance).

The questionnaire consisted of both open-ended and close-ended questions. Close-ended questions were included to gather quantifiable data, such as the number of hours worked per week, the level of support from family members, and the availability of flexible work options. These questions allowed for straightforward statistical analysis, including frequency counts and percentage distributions. Open-ended questions, on the other hand, provided respondents with the opportunity to elaborate on their experiences, challenges, and suggestions regarding work-life balance. This qualitative data provided richer insights into the personal experiences of the women and helped uncover issues that might not have been captured through closed-ended questions alone.

Key topics covered in the questionnaire included working hours, stress levels, family support, job satisfaction, organizational benefits, and personal experiences. Questions related to working hours examined the typical workweek for respondents, including any overtime or additional responsibilities they might have outside of regular office hours. Stress levels were assessed through a combination of direct questions about physical and emotional stress, as well as through indicators such as burnout and fatigue. The family support section focused on the extent to which family members, particularly spouses and children, helped or hindered respondents in managing their dual roles. Job satisfaction questions assessed the alignment of work roles with personal goals and whether respondents felt that their workplace supported their work-life balance. Additionally, the organizational benefits section explored the availability and use of workplace benefits such as flexible working hours, leave policies, and childcare facilities.

The questionnaire was carefully developed based on prior research in the field of work-life balance, as well as input from subject matter experts in human resource management and psychology. This ensured that the questions were both relevant to the local context of Perambalur district and consistent with existing theoretical frameworks of work-life balance. In order to refine the questionnaire for clarity and relevance, pre-testing was conducted with a small pilot group of working women who were similar to the study's target population. This pilot test helped to identify ambiguities in the questions, assess the flow of the questionnaire, and ensure that all questions were understood in the way they were intended. Based on the feedback from the pilot group, necessary revisions were made, and the final version of the questionnaire was distributed to the 150 participants.

By using a structured questionnaire with both open-ended and close-ended questions, the study was able to gather a comprehensive dataset that allowed for both statistical analysis and in-depth qualitative exploration. The combination of these two data types contributed to a nuanced

understanding of the challenges and factors that influence work-life balance for working women in Perambalur district.

## **VI. FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS**

The findings of the study indicate that 65% of respondents experienced moderate to high levels of stress due to work-life imbalance. Flexible working hours were identified by 72% of participants as a major contributor to improved work-life balance. The absence of adequate organizational support, especially in the private sector, emerged as a major concern. Family support was found to be a crucial factor in helping women manage work and personal life effectively.

Based on these findings, several suggestions are proposed:

- Promote flexible work schedules and remote work options to help women better manage time.
- Establish workplace daycare facilities to reduce the burden of childcare on working mothers.
- Conduct regular workshops and awareness campaigns emphasizing the importance of work-life balance.
- Encourage equitable sharing of household responsibilities among family members to reduce stress and time pressure on women.
- Implement gender-sensitive HR policies that provide maternity leave, paid time off, and counseling support.
- Create employee assistance programs focusing on mental health and stress management.
- Foster a supportive organizational culture that values employee well-being alongside productivity.

## **VII. RESULTS**

The study revealed that while women in Perambalur are increasingly contributing to the workforce, they face considerable challenges in balancing work and family responsibilities. These challenges include managing long working hours, fulfilling domestic duties, and coping with inadequate institutional support. A significant proportion of the respondents expressed the need for more flexible work arrangements, including the option to work from home or adjust work timings. Additionally, employer support through inclusive policies, paid leave, and workplace childcare facilities was recognized as a key factor that could ease the burden of dual responsibilities. The study also highlighted that spousal and familial support had a notable impact on women's ability to achieve work-life balance. Women with supportive spouses or extended families reported lower stress levels and greater satisfaction with their dual roles. Moreover, effective work-life balance was closely linked with improved mental well-being, enhanced job satisfaction, and increased productivity. These results affirm that organizational initiatives combined with familial cooperation can significantly influence the quality of work-life balance among women.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

Work-life balance remains a critical issue for working women, especially in districts like Perambalur where traditional gender roles are still prevalent. The study concludes that despite the growing presence of women in professional environments, a lack of support mechanisms—both at home and at the workplace—continues to hinder their ability to balance responsibilities effectively. Social expectations that place the primary caregiving burden on women further complicate this balance. To address these challenges, a multi-dimensional approach is necessary. Organizations need to implement gender-inclusive policies, offer flexible work schedules, and ensure a healthy work culture that prioritizes employee well-being. At the societal level, promoting equal sharing of household responsibilities and raising awareness about gender roles can pave the way for more balanced partnerships. Policy interventions such as subsidies for childcare and mandatory maternity and paternity leave can also contribute to better work-life integration. Finally, empowering women through education, leadership training, and access to resources can help them manage their roles with confidence and achieve sustainable work-life harmony.

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