A STUDY ON WORK-LIFE BALANCE OF JOURNALISTS

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ABSTRACT

Balancing the work life in media industry is a major problem for journalists and other employees. Due to continuous change in media profession irrespective of the gender all media employees work for long hours without any sufficient enough breaks causing very a difficult situation for media employees from an Indian viewpoint to balance their professional and private lives. This research advices media personnel's to involve in life boosting activities such as regular exercises, yoga and meditation, having proper sleep and diet hence enhancing career with flexible work timings, managing work load as the strategy to maintain a healthy balance. Current study strongly believes that the challenge of effecting a change rests with the attitude of the management and the media employees towards each other, who will be responsible for developing the work life balance of future employees and creating a safe and happy workplace.

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INTRODUCTION:

During the years of communal society, families were occupied in work for livelihood at home or close to home (Carlson et al 2005). While the late 18th and early 19th century due to division of labour and as a result of technological influence, dissociation of work from family was more stabilized and men took the key role of bread earners and women took primarily the charge of home and family work (Snooks et al 1996).

Later on the second fraction of the 20th century, categorisation based on gender was revoked as a result of the technological progress and mechanization lowered the dependence on physical stamina in industries thus easing higher involvement of women in the workforce (Snooks et al 1996). Further in early 21st century a wide group of socioeconomic features prominently controlled the work and personal life of employees. Three important groups of such elements are family and personal life, work and other influences (Naithani and Jha et al 2009).

The notion of work and family balance has developed substantial concerns in the academic and popular media. Academicians have understood that work family balance influence in individual well-being and which is a keystone for an invigorating and efficient society (Halpern et al 2005). Applied experts in policy and business fields toil to find answers to the questions which employees face in merging their work and family lives.

Later on 1950s, at organizational level a crucial emphasis on long hour culture, unpaid overtime, flexibility at work time and work escalation have also seen. As a result created higher work related stress, less involvement in home and family and employees demand for shorter working hours. Friction among family and work life intensified further due to 24x7 work culture becoming popular due to rise of service sector industry, technological complexities of the workplace, ageing population and loss of social support network.

Work life balance is at the centre of problems vital to human resource development. Factors of work life balance have been linked with high employee commitment, and job satisfaction (Allen et al 2000, Kossek and Ozeki et al 1999), and behaviour at organisation (Indovino and Rosner et al 2005). The lack of equilibrium, especially relating to conflicts in work and family, has been

connected to high turnover intention (Allen et al 2000, Kossek and Ozeki et al 1999) and high sickness absence (Jansen et al 2006). Additionally, work life balance has been associated to performance of the employees (Allen et al 2000, Kossek and Ozeki et al 1999). This shows either implicitly or explicitly, work life balance is at the essence of human resource development which can be a dominant leverage point for advocating individual and organizational strength. Undoubtedly, study on Fortune 500 companies suggested that organizational strategies that aid employees to improve their work and family lives are simply good business (Corporate Voices for Working Families, 2005).

CURRENT MEDIA INDUSTRY:

Media industry is progressively dynamic, developed from highly intrinsic coalition of individuals and multiple entity work groups (Blair et al 2001). Bounded with such a design, there is a lack of understanding among employers and employees, with unions and other groups relatively indecisive on concerns of wage negotiation and work policies with nearly on informal recruitment and selection procedures (Blair et al 2001). The key ideal of media production industry consists of growingly informal, regular, independent and project dependent work (Deuze et al 2011) with a development of microenterprises and rapid focus on creative entrepreneurship and freelancing.

Following the rapid growth in media sphere, employees struggle to endure the high usage of media networks to step into the risky work market. However network is a phrase that is always expressed in positive terms as a pliable, social and dynamic option to market forces and corporate bureaucracy (Smith and McKinlay et al 2009). In media industry, networks normally prefer individuals with influential levels of social and cultural resources. Male dominance can control media networks that order challenges to women (Walaby et al 2011).

Media industry operates not only on the foundation of the density of networks but also on the support of structural social conditions (Blair et al 2011). Although with strong based credentials overcoming the obstacles of male dominated system is difficult. Creativity and well disposition to choose risks is not enough (Smith and McKinlay et al 2009). This research studies not only the

work life balance but also looks into the area of gender neutrality, examining the cause and also the restrictions placed on women's agency to involve in the media industry.

RESEARCH PURPOSE:

The purpose of this research was to investigate the experiences of journalist working in fields of print and electronic media with respect to their work family life. Especially, this research focuses on the following research questions:

1.   How do journalists experience their work conditions in terms of stress, work load, time pressure, and work-life balance?

2.   What is the experience of journalists relating to work and family life balance initiatives?

3.   What are the available benefits and programs for the journalist? Do these existing benefits and programs promote work life balance?

4.   What are journalist's perceptions of their work life balance condition in their respective organizations?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

The research was undertaken with the following objectives:

1.   To investigate the existing quality of work life of journalists in Karnataka.

2.   To discover how quality of work life leads to high satisfaction and performance of journalists.

3.   To distinguish the crucial parameters that affects the work and family life of journalists.

4.   To identify the dependent and independent variables in work and family life.

5.   To propose the benchmarks to improve the Quality of Work Life in journalism.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Balance and Conflict Definition

It is vital to observe that the idea of balance and conflict share similarities which stretch and mould our sense of the work and life. The words conflict and balance describes the cross domain outcomes that exist in the work and life relationship (Friedman and Greenhaus et al 2000). Cross domain outcome are termed as those experiences and conclusions that occur in one field and are capable of affecting the other field.

Such a method presumes a bidirectional influence of joint and shared outcomes of the work and life areas. The bidirectional impact of the cross field outcomes are assigned with a positive or negative value, causing the possibility of four mutual effects among the fields of work and life (i.e., work positive - life positive, work positive - life negative, work negative- life positive, work negative - life negative) (Friedman and Greenhaus et al 2000). Finally, these key ideas show the interface between life and work is a dynamic and intricate that consists, affective, cognitive, behavioral and social aspects (Morris et al 2008).

Personal Life and Work Conflict

A form of inter-role disparity in which the role forces from the work and family fields that are jointly incompatible in some respects (Greenhaus and Beutell et al 1985). Furthermore the definition also contains the friction that happens when one role mediates with an individual's performance in the other role (Greenhaus, Allen, and Spector et al 2006). Hence, the importance of work and family conflict is inter role mediation, and work–family conflict could just as easily be referred to as work and family life mediation (Greenhaus et al 2006). Conflicts referred as a two way concept in which work can intervene with family and family can intervene with work (Frone et al 2003, Hammer and Thompson et al 2003).

The three different kinds of conflict that are identified are time dependent, strain dependent and behavioral dependent (Greenhaus and Beutell et al 1985). Time dependent disparity or conflict is regarded as the major kind of conflict (Hammer and Thompson et al 2003). It happens in one of two forms:

a)   The quantity of time spent in one role diminishes the quantity of time available for the other role.

b)   Fixation with one role alters the capability to perform in the other role, regardless of presenteeism i.e. individual's involvement. (Bartolome and Evans et al 1980).

Time dispute combines the schedule conflict and over work time with role overload (Pleck, Staines, and Lang et al 1980, Kahn et al 1964). Time dependent disparities also portrays scarcity

theory, in that the quantity of time and/or energy accessible to an individual is set and involvement in multiple roles reduces the quantity of time and/or energy accessible to fulfil all demands, hence creating conflict (Marks et al 1977) and struggle to an individual (Goode et al 1960).

Strain based issues are caused when the stress is experienced in one role creating difficultly to function in the other role (Greenhaus and Beutell et al 1985). It is also dependent on the notion of fatigue and irritability formulated from one role impacting the actions in the other role (Pleck et al. (1980). The conflict also depicts person and environment (P-E) fit theory (coined by Kahn et al 1964). P-E fit is founded on conflicting role demands, where consistency or fit is characterised as an agreement between an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) and the tasks to carry out. When these KSAs does not perform as per the requirements of the role (in private or in work), an inadequacy advances ultimately inducing to stress whether it may be positive or negative or both(Nelson and Simmons et al 2003). Job dependent stress issues has been decisively linked to work ambiguity and conversely connected to leader support and facilitation (Jones and Butler et al 1980). Job dependent stress has also associated to distressing events at work consequently causes depression and fatigue in the family role (Bartolome and Evans et al 1980, Jackson and Maslach et al 1982). The disputes that are in family happens when spousal career and family requirements are incompatible (Beutell and Greenhaus et al 1982).

Behavioral dependent disputes happen when the behaviors necessary in one role are disagreement with the behaviors essential in the other role (Greenhaus and Beutell et al 1985) behaviors which are necessary or suitable in the family role such as emotional sensitivity, expressiveness are regarded as unsuitable or functionally impaired when used in the work role (Parasuraman and Greenhaus et al 1997). The duplex nature leading to aggressive behaviors that may be important at work are regarded ill-suited at home (Hammer and Thompson et al 2003).

Work and Personal Life Balance

The term work private life balance gather sample cognizance and is normally considered in our day-today language by a large spectrum of audiences, on a generally accepted definition of the term within the work-life literature is cumbersome (Frone et al 2003). Few researchers (Pitt

Catsouphes, Kossek and Sweet et al 2006) have called the word as almost taken for granted metaphor. Consequently, work-family life balance has been given multiple, and at times, discordant characteristics throughout study.

The notion of work and personal life balance as per the convention regarded as the void of issues between the work and life areas. This definition helps in answering the question not only on the idea of zero sum gain but also on emphasising the harmony that can happen without spending extra amount of time in both roles. Some studies also suggest a categorisation of balance dependent on interaction type and direction of influence (Frone et al 2003). It also shows that balance happens when a person undergoes low levels of inter-role issues in association with high levels of inter-role enrichment. This portrays the spherical nature of work-life research that is seen in the many literatures.

Some definitions of work life balance which aimed to converge various fields based on factors such as equality (Clark et al 2000, Kirchmeyer et al 2000) and engagement (Marks and MacDermid et al 1996). Subsequently, they expressed balance as the magnitude to which a person is equally involved in and equally fulfilled with his or her work and family role (Greenhaus et al 2003). In conclusion, balance transforms a continuum with imbalance (in either role) anchoring one end and balance (again in either role) anchoring the other end. The study also propose three elements of balance such as

1.   Time balance, where time is evenly distributed among different roles.

2.   Participation balance, where a person has equal psychological involvement between roles.

3.   Satisfaction balance, achieved when an individual gains fulfilment from both roles.

Measuring Balance

The process of balance measuring has been complicated due to its inconsistency in definitions. In the past, such assessments of balance have been dependent on an individual's self-evaluation of balance and hence been limited in their interpretation (Greenhaus et al 2003). For some, work life balance is a dependent factor gauged using a compound score of five parameters assessing a person's capacity to balance his or her work and family demands (Hill, Hawkins, Ferris, and

Weitzman et al 2001). It also showed an intrinsic uniformity on a scale of α = 0.83 (Hill et al 2001). Few studies varied balance assessment from a subjective style evaluation to measuring the equality of time period, participation and fulfilment an individual felt in his other work and family roles (Greenhaus et al 2003). The measurement style substantiated the continuum theory (Deephouse et al 1996) based on development of a –1 to +1 scale where zero symbolized an equal amount of time period, participation, or fulfilment in both roles.

METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS:

A questionnaires list was given to journalists working in different sectors of media industry, with both hardcopy and online versions of the questionnaires were made available. The research was promoted through face to face meetings, telephonic conversations and various media network forums and associations. The data which are obtained from the questionnaires are analysed using statistical software SPSS and MS Excel. The total sample size for the research study was 73, representing approximately 75% of journalists from print media industry and remaining 25% from electronic media industry. The sample included 13 women (17.80%) and 60 men (82.20%). Most of the respondents were within the following age groups Below 30 years (21.9%), 31-40 years (38.3%), 41-50 years (30.1%) and above 50 years (8.7%). Many of the participants were married or having a spouse (78.1%), with 67.12% of participants having one or more children currently living with them. Among all respondent journalists, 47.9% are from Bengaluru, 24.6% are from Mandya, 7.3% each are from Mysuru and Chamarajanagara districts. Most of respondents were full time permanent journalists (46.8%). remaining 34.2% were limited term contract journalists, 16.4% were temporary journalists and 2.7% freelancers. In relation to managerial status or designation 78% of employees such Reporters, Correspondents, Camera Men, News Readers, Assistant Editors directly reporting to them, nearly 40% of the journalists worked 40 or more hours per week.

The participants were also required to specify the extent to which each of the items characterised their work life culture using a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (Strongly agree) to 5 (Strongly disagree), with higher scores depicting a more enabling work life nuance. Several items examined the views on managerial support of work life balance (Such as editors in your organisation are quite obliging of family related needs). Some items also evaluated perceived

work damage (Do you think that you would be productive and efficient as a result of your working conditions).

Items under organisational work and time demands were also analysed that may intrude with non-work activities (Such as Journalist in an organisation are expected to work more than 40 hours a week either at home or at workplace). Reliability measures such as Cronbach alpha coefficient were computed with the help of SPSS tool. In this study, the alpha value for authoritative support was 0.79and for organisational time demands was 0.71.

The level of control over workload when an individual can take time off was also measured. The items were rated using a 5-point scale an example question such as how much say do you have control over your job?. In our current study, the alpha value was0.72. Greater score shows higher individuals control over his or her job.

Work-life issues were measured using a work home interaction scale. In this research, the reliability measured by Cronbach alpha was 0.7. The items were rated using a 5-point Likert scale with higher scores indicating higher work-life issues. An example question consist like how frequently do the needs of your family intervene with your work

Other factors such as gender, age group, marital status, and number of dependents, tenure within the organisation, job type, work status and weekly hours worked. For analysis few demographic factors were reduced to less dimension variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

Table 2 Shows the Means, Standard Deviations of all variables

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation
Work Agreement	3.1233	0.7808
Work Shift	1.4795	0.6689
Overtime	1.6301	0.4861

Working Hours	2.9863	1.0992
Work at Home	3.5205	1.5909
Time for Personal Events	2.5890	1.1284
Work Intervention with Family Needs	2.3425	1.0030
Family Intervention with Work	2.9863	1.0340
Work Conditions	1.7945	0.4068
Learning New Things	1.4110	0.4954
Utilizing Skills in Work	1.5753	0.6437
Individual Respect	1.8767	0.7443
Work Security without Risk and Hazards	2.3288	0.9436
Work Conditions	2.1781	0.8390
Work Satisfaction under current employer	2.0000	0.7638
Community Based Activities	2.3288	1.0145
Work Freedom	2.2329	0.9933
Job Benefits	3.0274	0.9996
Work Relationship with Editor	2.3425	0.9750
Work Conflicts	2.1370	0.8711
Career Advancement	2.4384	0.8973
Job Security	2.7945	1.0403
Work Stress Management Program	1.8082	0.3964
Appreciation by Management	1.1918	0.3964
Work Salary	1.6164	0.4896
Work Layoffs	1.9589	0.1999
Colour or Caste or Religion Discrimination	1.8493	0.3602
Gender Bias	1.9452	0.2292
Sexual harassment	1.9452	0.2292
Age Discrimination	1.8493	0.3602

Work Anxiety	1.8082	0.3964
Physical Pain at Work	1.6849	0.4678
Overall Health Conditions	2.1233	0.7443
Sleeping Problems	2.7123	1.0990
Work Stress	2.2877	0.7542
Work Satisfaction	1.7671	0.6128

Table 3 shows Inter-Correlations among factors

	Work Stress management programs	Appreciated by Editor	Salary to meet family's expenses	Work Layoff	Colour or caste or origin Discrimination	Gender Prejudice	Sexual harassment	Work Bias	Work Anxiety	Physical pain at work	Work comparison with others	Overall health condition	Sleeping problems	Stressful job	Work satisfaction
Work agreement	-.147	-.033	-.311	.122	-.032	.116	.038	-.131	.212	.108	.024	-.074	.042	.080	-.200
Work shift	.037	.120	-.067	-.058	-.099	-.098	-.098	-.042	-.225	-.265	.032	.047	-.018	-.277	.107
Overtime	.131	-.131	-.021	.127	-.164	-.060	.190	.074	-.085	-.092	.156	.089	.240	-.009	.033
Work timings	-.006	-.121	-.165	.124	.030	-.003	.218	.030	-.038	.073	.179	-.032	.169	-.062	-.025
Work at home	-.038	-.006	-.025	.199	.139	.232	.079	.260	.205	.186	.117	.004	-.199	.163	.026
Time for personal events	.163	.179	.239	-.076	-.154	-.142	-.088	-.223	-.272	-.433	-.065	.342	-.433	-.479	.241
Work intervention with family needs	-.217	-.028	-.153	.140	.183	.204	.204	.222	.342	.322	.302	-.206	.380	.254	.019
Family intervention with work	-.040	-.061	-.230	.064	.106	.055	.173	.181	.163	.163	.219	-.034	.229	.148	-.049
Work conditions	.188	.105	.236	-.204	-.048	-.165	-.237	-.232	-.230	-.421	-.140	.409	-.019	-.148	.298
Productivity and Efficiency in current work conditions	.146	-.033	.008	-.218	.095	-.025	-.123	-.091	-.136	-.060	.022	.145	.130	.107	.133
Community Based Activities	.332	.083	.146	.136	-.053	.138	-.041	-.129	.090	-.042	-.208	-.110	.148	.292	.125

Table 4 shows Cronbach alpha reliability measure for all variables

	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
Cronbach's Alpha		
.811	.827	67

The standardised correlation for managerial support depicted a significant positive relationship among journalist, showing higher levels of managerial support were associated with media employees. The factors for demographics crucially showing that there is higher work initiative was positively correlated with children at home. A sample test indicated that the respondents who had children at home essentially use higher work initiative than the respondents who did not have children at home. However, those who used the work initiative such as working from home showed higher levels of work time demands than those who did not work from home.

Current study emphasizing media employees using more work life balance initiatives causing lower levels of work and personal life issues and higher levels of work attachment isn't completely substantiated. But those who worked in part time indicated lower levels of work life issues than those who did not use such work initiatives. Conversely, those who used the initiative like working from home indicated significantly higher levels of work and personal life issues than respondents who did not work from home. Individuals who had good management relationship, fewer work demands and higher levels of work control were also more likely to experience less work and private life issues.

The strongest predictor of work and personal life conflict was weekly working hours. A sample test showed that participants who worked 40 hours or more per week experienced crucial work life conflict who worked less than 45 hours per week. Longer working hours were strongly associated with higher levels of work and personal life conflict.

This research reveals some of work and personal life initiatives may hold a more important impact on work outcomes. The results also specify that the work culture is a more vital determinant of work attitudes and levels of work life conflict.

Research data highlights the significance of rendering training to managers and editors on work life policies and the need for management to openly discuss with employees the various options available to help them achieve a healthy work and personal life interaction,

With the adverse effect of high levels of work and personal life conflicts on the health and wellbeing of the individual journalist, the present study makes an important contribution by determining the factors that forecast work life conflicts in media industry. Steps to lower extra working hours is an critical policy challenge faced by most media industry and an field worthy of tackling to minimize work and personal life disputes. Figure 1 symbolizes overall work life balance of journalists in media industry.

WORK LIFE BALANCE PIE CHART
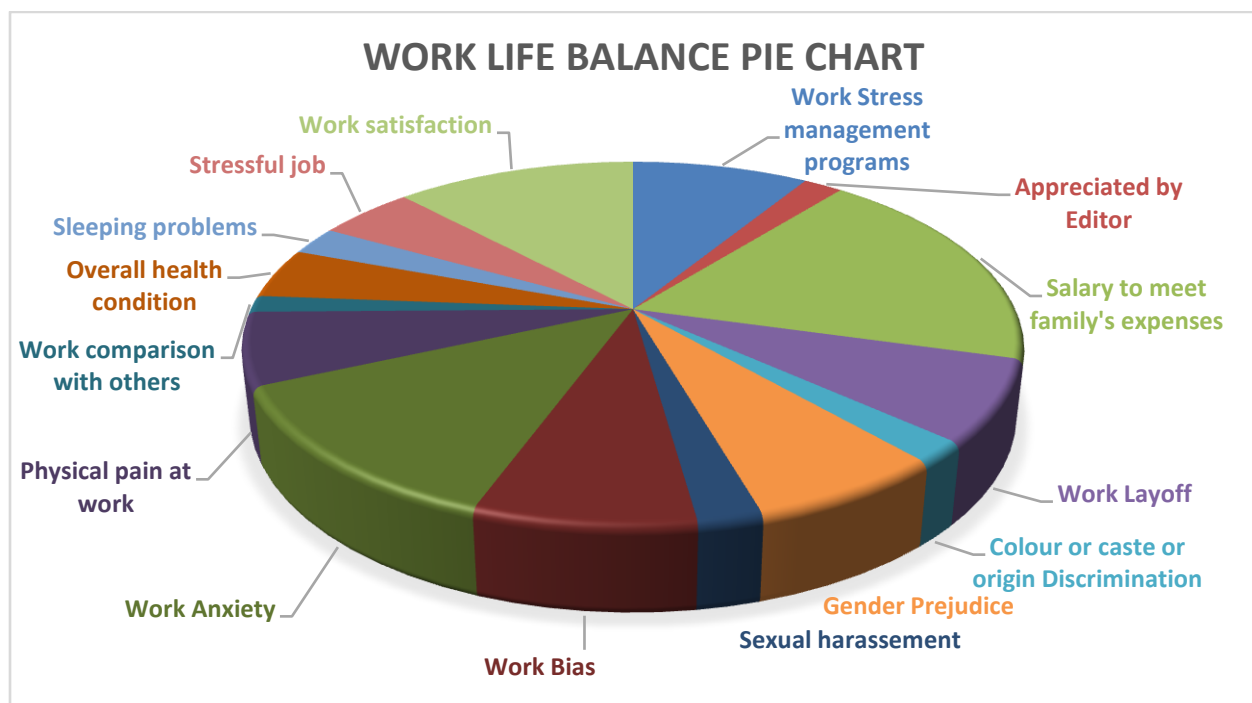
Figure 1: Overall Work Life Balance

CONCLUSION:

Balancing the work life in media industry is a major problem for journalists and other employees. Due to continuous change in media profession irrespective of the gender all media employees work for long hours without any sufficient enough breaks causing very a difficult situation for media employees from an Indian viewpoint to balance their professional and private lives.

Though the current research has been limited to only one group of the total population i.e. men in media sector, the results of the research have created several paths for further study with respect to work and family life. In India, following human population explosion the work place and its condition has been deprecating regardless of many efforts. The prime reason for such a hardship can be described due to inadequate initiatives of work life balance in the media industry and weak operational methods by the management and insufficient knowledge and training.

The sample includes majority of male participants only implying that the research does not contain the perspective of work life balance from a women's point of view. The study is carried under the presumption that the data given by the respondents are accurate and genuine comprising minimal bias in responding to the questionnaire.

This research advices media personnels to involve in life boosting activities such as regular exercises, yoga and meditation, having proper sleep and diet hence enhancing career with flexible work timings, managing work load as the strategy to maintain a healthy balance. This study strongly believes that the challenge of effecting a change rests with the attitude of the management and the media employees towards each other, who will be responsible for developing the work life balance of future employees and creating a safe and happy workplace.

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