Abstract

Recent years have seen rapid changes in economic, technological, social and cultural facets faced by individuals in India and across the globe. These changes have transformed work and social domain of individuals adding complexities through dimensions in their work-life interface. In response to these changes, the area of work-life interface generated considerable interest in academic, applied area and media. Several research concepts like work-family conflict, work-family enrichment, work-family balance and work-life balance were being proposed to capture the interface. In spite of increased research interest, considerable gap was seen in the conceptualization of the construct and operationalization of its measure. Culture-specific measure in the context of India was also found missing. In this context, an attempt was made to conceptualize work-life balance as a broad concept which takes into account individual’s sense of balance (between work and life), relative to his or her environment.

Based on this conceptualization the aim was to explore the factors measuring work-life and work and life antecedents. The study also aimed to explore the relationship between the explored factors and study gender differences in the experience of work-life balance. On basis of the previous research, some hypotheses regarding the relationship between work-life balance and work and life antecedents and work-life balance and gender were generated and tested. The research design involved three broad stages namely item generation, scale development and assessment of the scale after data collection. The study relied on survey method for data collection and responses were obtained by administering questionnaires to professional men and women. Respondents were identified initially through convenience and later through network of initial contacts. The analysis was done using statistical techniques such as factor analysis, multiple regression analysis, Z-test and ANOVA.
The results of the study indicate that:

1. Work-life balance is a bi-directional, multi-dimensional and four factor measure namely Work-life Interference, Work-life Enhancement, Life-work Interference and Life-work Enhancement.

2. Factor analysis of work antecedents yielded eight factors namely Development, Superior’s Support, Colleagues’ Support, Work Load, Work Role, Reward System, Commuting and Work Schedule.


4. Significant relationship was observed between factors of work-life balance and factors of work and life antecedents. Distinct work and life factors and relationship between the explored factors were unique to some extent in the Indian context and universal to some extent in world context.

5. Significant gender differences exist in the perceived experience of the work-life balance factors. Women were found to experience more work to life and life to work interference in comparison to men.

The results of the study are likely to be of interest to academicians and practitioners. Knowledge gained in the study led to development of quantitative measure of work-life balance and its antecedents. In particular the results are likely to provide better input for management of work load and superior-employee relationship. In a broader context it may lead to enhanced design and execution of programs that aid employees in achieving work-life balance and increase loyalty and productivity for organisations.