CHAPTER – IV
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4.1 INTRODUCTION

The contribution of any form of industries through its human resources towards the national economy needs to be motivated by suitable instruments. The output that comes out of any industry either in terms of product or services accumulates into national output that requires the organizations under respective industries to work with consistent fashion. This can be achieved by the organizations with the support of human resources. But human resources can contribute with productivity only when their personal and social agendas are carefully addressed. In the personal agenda of any workforce, work-life balance is one of the important aspects needed to be addressed with due weightage.

The services sector constitutes a large part of the Indian economy both in terms of employment potential and its contribution to national income. The sector covers a wide range of activities from the most sophisticated in the field of Information and Communication Technology to simple services of the informal sector like vegetable sellers, hawkers and rickshaw pullers. Among the fast growing countries, India is distinctive for the role of the services sector. The changing economic conditions and social demands have changed the nature of work throughout the world in service sector. The concept of Work life balance is more and more relevant in an ever dynamic working environment.
Changes in the social, political and economic spheres of societies have influenced and continue to influence both the nature of employment and its relationship to life. Work life balance has emerged as a focal point of discussion in recent years and that is 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. In India, the economic activities are the prerogative of males and domestic work is the sole occupation of women. According to the survey conducted by Women era, historically, women in India have not enjoyed a good status in workplace settings whether in managerial or operative roles. Women have been burdened with work of all sorts all through their lives. From household chores to their role as worker is significant, unique and burdensome.

Work–life balance is the maintenance of a balance between responsibilities at work place and at home. Work and family are antagonist spheres, equally greedy of energy and time and responsible for Work–Family Conflict (WFC). These conflicts are intensified by the ‘cultural contradictions of motherhood’, as women seek self-fulfillment in demanding careers. Women face intensified pressures to sacrifice themselves for their children by providing ‘intensive parenting’, highly involved child rearing. Additional problems faced by employed women are those associated with finding adequate, affordable access to child and elderly care. Family–Work Conflict (FWC) is also a type of inter-role conflict in which family and work responsibilities are not compatible. The research suggests that FWC exert its negative influences in the home domain that will result in lower life satisfaction and greater internal conflict within the family unit.

Workplace characteristics can also contribute to higher levels of work life balance. Researchers have found that the number of hours worked per week, the amount and frequency of overtime required, an inflexible work schedule, unsupportive supervisor, and an inhospitable organizational culture increase the likelihood that women employees will experience conflict between their work and family role. Women who have multiple life roles (e.g., mother, wife, and employee) are less depressed and have higher self-esteem than women and men who are not
married, unemployed, or childless. There is a positive association between multiple roles and good mental health when a woman likes her job and likes her home life.

4.2 WORK LIFE BALANCE

Work life balance refers to the effective management of multiple responsibilities at work, at home, and in the other aspects of life. It is an issue that is important both to the organizations and to employees. In the current economic scenario, organizations are hard pressed for higher productivity and need employees with improved work-life balance as an employee with better work-life balance will contribute more meaningfully towards the organisational growth and success. This issue has come to the fore due to multitude of changes in the work place, in employee demographics and in the family sphere. Due to rapidly changing business environment, the organization is not able to provide secure employment. The attitudes and values of people in work are also changing and they are less willing to display unconditional commitment to the organization.

The attitude of employees at work places is influenced by many factors. Among these work life balance is an important aspect. The employees’ attitude towards work life balance, its entities and sources of influences, causes and outcomes are viewed by different dimensions by employees at work places. Family and personal life related factors include increasing participation of women in workforce, increasing participation of child bearing women in workforce, increasing participation of dual career couples in workforce, increase in single-parent/ single person households, increase in child-care/ elder care burden on employees and health and well being considerations. Work related factor include long hour culture and unpaid overtime, time squeeze, demand for shorter working hours, increase in part-time workers, work intensification, stress and changing work time.

4.3 CONCEPT OF WORK LIFE BALANCE

The change in the pattern of work and the concept of the workplace after the industrial revolution in the second half of the eighteenth century gave a new
dimension to the concept of work life balance. As time progressed, nuclear families increased. With improved education and employment opportunities today, most homes are ones in which both parents work, because of the necessity and the desire to augment incomes. The need to congenial conditions in which employees can balance work with their personal desires become a factor that companies have to take note of both to retain them as well as to improve productivity.

Work life balance means adjusting the pattern of work so that the employees can benefit from a better fit between their work and areas of their personal life and in long run hope to achieve sustainable development and profitability. The profitability and productivity of organization depend on two factors that are interrelated. Every employee has two aspects of life namely personal life and professional life. Both of these are difficult to separate and form a source of conflict. If an organization wishes better productivity and more committed employees, then they have to be happy and satisfied. The balance is achieved when an individual’s right to a fulfilled life inside and outside paid work is accepted and respected as a room, to the mutual benefit of the individual business and society.

Work life balance as harmonious and holistic integration of work and non-work. Work life balance comprises of four components. The first component is time, i.e., how much time is spent at work, and compared to how much time is spent engaged in other activities. The second component is related to behaviour, such as, work goal accomplishment, as work life balance is based on ones’ belief that he is able to accomplish what he would like at work and in his personal life. Two additional issues or components are strain and energy. Strain has been defined as a third source of inter role conflict. The rationale for including energy is consistent with the notion of time; energy is a limited resource and relevant to employee being able to accomplish work and/or non work related goals. Work life balance includes work/personal life interference as well as work/personal life enhancement and gives three dimensions of work life balance as Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL), Personal life Interference with Work (PLIW) and Work/Personal Life Enhancement (WPLE).
4.5 WOMEN EMPLOYEES’ ATTITUDE ABOUT WORK LIFE BALANCE

Attitude is the composition of cognitive, affective and behaviour components in the perspective of every individual towards the objects, abstracts, situation and environment. The attitude of individuals differs in different circumstances based on their personal, environmental, psychological make ups. The individuals produce consistent and inconsistent attitudes about the abstract in their life according to the demanding situation. In this aspect, work life balance is the concise abstract viewed either favourable or unfavourable by an individual at different circumstances. The reason for varying favourable and unfavourable views about work life balance among the individuals due to their personal encounters, status of working pattern, outcome of behaviours, experiences garnered during their interaction process. In this aspect, the attitude of women employees about their work life balance also needed to study for its consistency and inconsistency based on their personal, family and work, social, environmental and psychological backgrounds. In addition to that, the women employees’ attitude about their work life balance also needed to be studied in terms of the intersection of work and family and vice versa.

The composition of cognitive, affective and behaviour components towards the formation of attitude among the women employees in respective of their job and career profile, experience, working pattern vary in different circumstances. The outcome due to the work life balance and imbalances also significantly differ among them in terms of its attitude formation and process.

The attitude on work life balance among women employees in banking, healthcare and IT/ITES sectors in this study focused the measurement of existence of attitude variation among the women employees in terms of job, working condition, work nature, life satisfaction, influences of personal, family, social, psychological and environmental factors. The impact of work life balance and imbalances on personal, family, social, health, psychological and environmental aspects have also been verified for the existence of consistency and inconsistency. The strategies employed for managing work life balance also have been covered in this study.
The possession and process of attitude formation to outcome are verified in the study by using the pre-tested Attitude Measurement Scale (AMS) in the composition of itemized ranking, rating scales, Likert scales. The extents of variation have been measured for attitude formation to outcome in 1 to 5 point measurement index in this study. The outcomes of attitude process have been tested with the suitable statistical tools like Anova, Regression, Factor analysis and Cluster analysis.

4.5 PROFILE OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES IN BANKING SECTOR

Banking is the unique service sector that demands concentrative work culture from the employees since it deals with monetary transaction. It is also understood that it is the kind of venture where the customers evolve with sensational transactions. The work place and work environment in banking sector needs the employees to work with logical attitude. While performing the sensational task, the employees in banking sector are expected to deal with the customers and complaints in logical way. Banking is also a kind of service practice which requires the employees to deliver the work schedule almost throughout the day in the given work structure.

The pace of women employment in Indian banking sector is realized sincerely after the impact of globalization and the entry of foreign and private banks. Due to the fierce competition, the banking organizations focus on marketing concepts and customer retention. In this aspect, the new job avenues with customer centric approaches are designed and which is compensated by the recruitment of women employees.

Indian banking industries recruit and place women employees in top, middle and operational levels. In addition to that the changes in the demographic profile of working category of women in India especially with their educational background can get potential and viable job opportunities to work at different capacities in banking industries. The recent surveys indicate that the professionally qualified women are interested to work at operational level in banking sector. In
addition to that, working women have enriched their interpersonal, logical, leadership and decision making qualities that help them to attain the top level responsibilities in Indian banking sector.

But the practical issues indicate that even though women employees equip with work related qualities, due to the social and family pressure, their level of emotional intelligence is found to be less. There are some specific socio psychological issues which are unable to be addressed by women employees at their work places irrespective of their designation and responsibilities. Among them, work life balance is the issue faced by women employees.

The women employees working in the banking sector belong to the age group from 25 to 60. In private banking the age group goes beyond 60. The educational backgrounds of those employees are almost in tune with graduation. The family level of dependency for women employees are high and their marital status of marital mixed proportion. The recent changes in the emolument system of Indian banking sector provides a minimum guaranteed packages to women employees. The employment category also includes the rural women and who migrate to urban places after their employment. Most of the women employees prefer to live in nuclear family system with minimum of 3 to 5 members in their family. It is also observed that every family has minimum two earning members and equal contribution from the spouses. The scope for women employment in technical areas in banking sector is slowly extended. The women employees in banking sector prefer to work in urban and rural backgrounds. They also have minimum of five to six years of work experience. The preference of their banking jobs are due to their self interest, service attitude, career satisfaction, for monetary purpose, social and personal security and for status in the society. They are motivated through various sources of self, spouse, family members, friends, relatives and existing employee sources for preferring banking jobs. A majority of the women employees in banking sector are recruited through formal selection process and competitive examinations. The women employees working in private banks are recruited through campus interview, walk in and casual interview. The women employees working in banking
sector prefer to work under job rotation. The working system of women employees in banking sector in India happens through regular.

4.6 WOMEN EMPLOYEES’ ATTITUDE ABOUT WORK LIFE BALANCE IN BANKING SECTOR

The last decade has seen a systematic rise in the employment of women in the banking sector as the result of a multiplicity of factors, including profound social changes taking place in India regarding women's education and employment, the changing policies of management, especially after the nationalization and reorganization of the banks, the policies of the Indian government; international changes in banking and not least, the technological changes being effected in the sector. The women are working under the single and multi reporting systems based on the nature and work demands. Many of the women employees are not much familiar about their job roles due to their frequent job rotation, over workload, multi command, job duplication and role conflict. The women employees' job satisfaction about their job, working environment are varied based on their package, career prospectus, career growth, non recognition and support, working environment pressure, support, work place relationship and attitude of work groups. The job satisfaction of women employees are also influenced by their working condition, job content, salary & packages, recognition & rewards, working environment & culture, management support, co-worker support, family support towards job, non monetary benefits, need of social recognition and job autonomy.

The women employees in banking sector faces the issues related to work life balance irrespective of the types of organization, nature of job and their designations. Computerization has had positive and negative implications on the workforce. It has affected employment levels and workloads which have brought increasing pressure for flexibility. It has changed the content of work, and brought reduced job security and a shift towards more non-bargainable employees, which affect the nature and stability of the union. There are some changes in grading and pay, and in the means by which the workforce and information are controlled. The
autonomy of employees and their conditions of work, health and safety are also affected and that could become a reason on work life balance/work life imbalances.

Today’s working women are continually challenged by the demands of full-time work carrying more of the responsibilities and commitments. The attitudes of female workers have also changed. Women are growing more ambitious as they become key players in the world of work, contributing to major company successes. The impact of the female boss is considerably more powerful than ever before. The pressure for women to achieve drives them to work harder and for longer, especially when they want to prove themselves against their male counterparts. A majority of women work 40-45 hours per week. Their lives are juggling act that includes multiple responsibilities at work, heavy meeting schedules, and business trips, on top of managing the daily routine responsibilities of life at home. Successful achieving of work/life balance leads to productivity and success in the work place. Women employees look at their work in terms of career prospects and are keen on learning new skills and advancing in their careers, despite severe limitations. They are organizing themselves into unions and separate women's causes within and outside unions.

The banking sectors today offer more prospects for jobs for women both qualitatively and quantitatively. However there are some common problems faced by women managers, officers and clerical groups in banking in the course of their careers. These include the burden of the dual role, sexual harassment in the workplace, the refusal of men to accept women as colleagues or seniors, the need to work twice to gain recognition, and the lack of solidarity among women. 50 per cent of women complain that extra work is always shunted to women. They also complain about sexual harassment from colleagues, managers, or customers. Women also feel dissatisfied that they are not sent out for training. The promotions are linked with transfers; or women have difficulties in late working hours; or because women shy away from responsibility, having a low opinion of their own abilities and a negative attitude to accept recognition. Some women employees feel that these constraints are intensified by being forced to adopt the behaviour of the
'successful manager or officer' which has been established by men. They argue that women could find their own strategies which would achieve the same result.

One way of improving prospects for women could be to restructure the work, for example with flexible working hours, part-time job assignments, split location positions performed partly at home and job sharing. Some of these suggestions have already been tried out in Japan, where the results for women have not been entirely positive. None the less, examination of this experience could be a basis for working out alternatives which do not disadvantage women.

Indian banking system has not only made rapid strides in network expansion but it has undergone a complete transformation in its very objectives, approaches, and scale of operation. Technology has indeed played a significant role in this sea-change. The distinctive feature of Indian career women is that they do not abandon their conventional role of home maker. In the context of epoch making changes that the Indian banking scenario witnesses, their level of performance needs an in depth study. Women are supposed to blend judiciously the traditional love for home and professional excellence. They have inborn qualities of patience, tolerance, courtesy and affability most required for banking. They should enable them to handle with success even challenging situations and go up in the banking hierarchy. But the picture that the industrial scene unfolds points to the contrary. Only a small proportion of women hold high end jobs. In these days when the wave of social change is obliterating gender boundaries, what factors still dampen their spirit to become what they are capable of becoming also need critical evaluation. Therefore an appraisal of their executive role in banks assumes singular significance.

Job satisfaction is a mental feeling of favorableness which an individual has about his job. To the workers, job satisfaction brings a pleasurable emotional state that often leads to positive job attitudes. A satisfied worker is more likely to be creative, flexible, innovative and loyal. Achieving work-life balance yields benefits for both the employee and the employer. Exceptional organizations have leaders that create work environments where people can achieve work-life balance and well being as they define it for themselves. Job satisfaction is an emotion, a feeling, an
attitude and a matter of perception. It involves likes and dislikes as well as needs and wants which are internal and external to the employee. Higher financial benefits can be realized by organizations when the employees are committed. A satisfied workforce is essential for the success of organizations and their businesses. Dissatisfied employees make organizations dysfunctional in businesses, damaging their financial performance. Such employees, when unattended, do not have loyalty towards their organizations and therefore, making employees behave in a desired manner is extremely important for managers. Organizations are social systems where human resources are the most important factors for effectiveness and efficiency and they need effective managers and employees to achieve their objectives. Organizations cannot succeed without their personnel efforts and commitment. Job satisfaction is critical to retaining and attracting well-qualified personnel. In banking sector, the possession of job satisfaction of women employees helps them to concentrate on their respective job, concentrate on their family commitments and take interest on their personal development. In addition to that it also helps them to contribute their services to social requirements. Job satisfaction is believed as the strong source for work life balances.

The women employees also have an attitude about their influence of work life balance on their family and family balance influences on their job. As per their experience, work life balance is influence by their family related aspects like spouse support, family members support, nature of family, family roles, responsibilities, status in their family, mutual trust, contribution towards family growth, family social interaction and economic status of their family. The support of spouse, importance given for women in their families, their roles and responsibilities, family stress, conflict and mutual understanding among the family members also have the influence on their work life balance.

The women employees working in banking sector and their attitude about the impact of life satisfaction towards work life balance also significantly vary based on their peacefulness in life, mutual understanding and sharing, possession of material wealth, attachment of family, consciousness on health aspect of individual, family members and family scope for growth. The life satisfaction also influences
the work life balance based on interaction of work and family, self concept of working women about their life and family system, scope for empowerment in their life, status of family dependents and life related stress.

The work life balance related issues encountered by the working women in banking sector are due to spouse and family care, house maintenance, housekeeping, devotional activities, personal contributions for family ceremonial, need of family relaxation and devotional of energy for children education. The women employees working in banking sectors are able to manage their family responsibilities after their working hours by involving in family activities. They are able to reduce their level of stress and the support of family by sharing responsibilities. The women employees also encounter work life balance issues because of impact of family on their work like family role, support received from the family, level of work efficiency, work place relationship and learning abilities.

The work life balance and imbalances among the women employees in banking sectors are envisaged due to the job and organizational related factors like level of work, amount of work per/day, working conditions, superior support, co-workers/fellow workers support, monetary packages, promotion and career advancement, welfare measures, job security, work safety. The family related factors are due to nature of family, number of family members, spouse support, working sharing in family and economic condition of families.

The personal factors like age, gender, marital status, educational qualification and life style also influence the work life balance and imbalance of women employees in banking sector. The social status of women employees and their contribution in social commitments are the social related factors influencing their work life balance and imbalances. The women employees working in banking sectors are also influenced by their psychological make up like their personality, perception, learning and attitude. About their organization work, management, superior, subordinates and peers, environmental aspects. Being the women in general and banking employees in particular, the work place environment, family,
constitution and participation in society, personal alignments and psychological structure affect their work life balance.

It isvirtual to understand the women employees in banking sector are able to gain some advantages like stress reduction, physical fitness, concentration and commitment on their accountability, pleasure, mutual understanding at work and family, growth in their career, enrich the skill of patience, able to energise and dynamism. Due to the work life balance of women employees in banking sector, the concerned organization also gains benefits like productivity, efficiency and effectiveness, cost management, growth trends, revenue generation, loyalty management, customer retention and brand proliferation in market economy.

The women employees in banking sector normally employ the strategies like work sharing, openness in communication, emotional sharing, co-optation, negotiation, periodic counseling, meditation and yoga and focus on relaxation and time management. In addition to that they also aim to share the family responsibilities, spending time with family, family gatherings and trips, perform outreach programmes and visiting relatives’ houses.

4.7 PROFILE OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES IN HEALTHCARE SECTOR

The need of women employment in healthcare sector in India is an inevitable aspect in recent days. The healthcare sector comprises of service, operation, facilitation and revitalization of health related aspects of individuals. The healthcare sector in India aims to provide quality healthcare services by allowing foreign investments and corporate participation. Due to the healthy competition, the promotional aspects handled by healthcare sectors have been drastically restructured. The promotion and channelization of healthcare products through branding both in national and international markets force the sector to undergo for service expansion through portfolio investments, joint ventures, technological collaboration and outsourcing. It is particular to note that a new venue of HR practices need to intake in hospital sectors. The sourcing of best talents and who deserves to deliver the healthcare services as pure one rather than commercial, in
this aspect women employees contributions are highly needed for healthcare sector in various avenues ranging from technical to non technical and at different categories like doctors, nurses, administrative, quality control, marketing and selling. Today healthcare sector is one among the top most sectors which employs women in greater amount in Indian service sector.

The women employees working in healthcare sector belong to the age group of 18 to 50 and lesser percent more than the age group of 50. The qualified persons can attribute job opportunities in this sector starting from below metric to professionals. The married women are working in larger amount in comparison to unmarried; the recruiters also need to give priority for marital status in health care sector. The earning sources are comfortable for working women in healthcare sectors belonging to public, government and private categories. India is one among the countries that pays a comfortable salary and packages to women employees. The women employees in healthcare sector migrate from urban to rural and vice versa for the occupational purposes and live under the categories of nuclear, joint and extended family systems in equal propositions. The average members in the family are around 4 to 8 and most of them have minimum three members as earning sources in the family. The majority of married working women in healthcare sector have their spouse employment in government and private sectors.

The women employees’ occupation in healthcare sector in India rests on lower levels like technical, supporting and nursing jobs. The lesser percentage works in middle levels. But due to the recent changes in the industrial structure the opportunities for women employees to occupy middle and top level jobs in healthcare sectors are more. This is also due to the entry of new avenues of healthcare promotion and the entry of corporate sector in the industry. It also extends recognition for experienced women employees in the sector both in technical and non technical categories.

The women employees have chosen the healthcare sector for the reason of noble service and self interest. The monetary packages are given least priority by them. The influence of family and other references have placed a major influence for
the employees to choose the healthcare occupation by women employees. The recruitment sources are mainly through campus selection, employment exchanges and government selection modes. The women employees working in the sector do not have previous experience and even though if they possess it seems to be inadequate. The women employees shift their career to healthcare sector for the purpose of betterment than previous jobs. The women employees in healthcare sector prefer and expect to work more than 8 hours in both regular and shift basis. But the learning curve of women employees in healthcare sector outlines the poor job rotation systems. The reporting system of women employees in healthcare sector differ based on their nature of job, designation as single and multi level. A majority of women employees work under the multi reporting system in health care sector. Due to lack of job rotation, the women employees are clear about their job roles and task roles while comparing with other service sectors. The women employees are not aware of job roles clearly due to the reasons of work pressures and multi command systems.

4.8 WOMEN EMPLOYEES’ ATTITUDE ABOUT WORK LIFE BALANCE IN HEALTHCARE SECTOR

Nowadays, healthcare sector faces great competition and scarce resources than ever before. They are also severely challenged by the external and internal environment to achieve their goals effectively and efficiently. The women employees in hospital sector are playing an important role in determining the quality and cost of healthcare. It is argued that they have the potential to be part of solutions to key problems in healthcare systems. Work life balance of women employees’ are paramount importance for them because they are playing a crucial role in their organizations’ performance and their family well-being. Women employees’ work life balance is found to influence the work system performance and productivity.

Conflict within the family has been associated with high levels of work-family conflict of women employees in healthcare sector. Conflict is experienced when marriage, children and spouse employment patterns are incompatible with the demands of the other role domains whereas supportive spouses may protect each
other from experiencing high levels of work-family conflict. Additionally hours spent providing care, family social support, family-to-work social support and family role conflict are all positively related to family demand. There is also a positive correlation found between work-family conflict and the number of children respondents reported living at home. Some have used family responsibility which consists of four indicator variables: self-reported responsibility, number of people supported financially, number of children, and the number of dependents living with employee, to explore the relationship with work-family of women employees in healthcare sector. However, family responsibility is found relationship with work-family conflict.

Work-family conflict of women employees in healthcare sector has been affected by an employee’s personal orientation, by its influence on time commitment to the work role, marital status, and negative attitude such as gender bias and less opportunity for promotion state that there are means in relation to particular measure variables of work-family conflict. The basic needs of competence, autonomy, and relatedness are presented as important psychological benefits among the women employees and that directly impact within a domain and indirectly influence work-family enrichment and quality of life. Based on person’s categorization and social role of family-work conflict and women promotability, gender is the significant impact to upward mobility through managers’ attitude of family-work conflict.

The demand for women employees in healthcare sectors increases not only because of the attractive salary and job security but also because of the care and concern they provide, thus making a difference in others lives which are generally not found in many other careers. The role of women employees in healthcare sectors has expanded from a healthcare provider to health educator, diagnostic assistant, post care supporter, health advisor, physicians assistant, operation theatre assistant, health counselor, follow up, health promoter, administrator, health researcher, provider of appropriate reassurance to patients and family members, health supervisor, maintenance of health reports, records & documents. Other reasons for slowing down of the women employees in healthcare sectors population is mental stress and work pressure which leads to dissatisfaction. Factors that lead to mental
stress and work pressure are improper work life balance, physical health or fitness, improper working conditions, discrimination, distrust and unlimited work load. Emigration is also considered as a contributing factor to the increasing demand for women employees in healthcare sector.

Women employees in healthcare sector today are continually challenged by the demands of full time work and when the day is over in the office they carry on more of the responsibilities and commitments at home. Stress at work has been consistently related to lack of control over the working environment. In national surveys, more employed women than men have reported high levels of stress and stress-related illnesses, and 60 percent of the women respondents in one survey reported that job stress is their number-one problem. Working women still retain primary responsibility for dependent care and household chores. There are many challenges that female employees in healthcare sector must confront in balancing their multiple roles as women employees in healthcare sector.

Women employees in healthcare sector 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. During the past decade, in India the environment for healthcare sector has been quite volatile, with numerous challenges for the firms operating in this arena. However, throughout this period there has emerged a number of working women in the sector who have been recognized for their contributions to organizational excellence and leadership despite the environmental fluctuations. But invariably even a few years back women power were not so welcome to hold and glorify the top positions of different corporate houses. Due to the Indian social structure, prejudices and myths, women employees in healthcare sector face barriers while climbing up the corporate ladder. But time and again women employees in this sector have proven and they succeed in overcoming those barriers and make major contributions towards organizational excellence.
Good work life balance is most essential for women employees in healthcare sector to be more efficient and effective by attaining job satisfaction which in turn ensures successful treatment to patient community. Work life balance helps the women employees to be more productive in their work along with their personal commitments and family interest. It is necessary that the sector to eliminate impractical discrimination and provide equal opportunities for both men and women. Good work life balance reduces stress and leads to productive outcomes and the women employees in healthcare sector are able to give their best with high motivation and morale which is imbibed by their job and responsibilities. It also increases her professional skills and improves her working style. Her approach proves that a good work life balance results in the wellness of the women employees and also improves towards the service takers and enhances her contribution to her organisation. Moreover, good work life balance gives a feel of job satisfaction and makes her performance more productive day after day and retains her at her highest caliber. As for the institution, a good work life balance helps to achieve higher retention rates.

The working condition of healthcare sectors is totally different from other sectors and it is the ever demanding jobs in terms of its content. The reward and recognition systems also differ. The work cultures are highly interactive and need more focus in terms of its communication and delivery. The managements are always result oriented. The devotion of time by women employees on their family care is lesser than other sector. The non-monetary benefits are uncomfortable and the social anxieties are high. In these circumstances, the women employees in this sector frequently encounter the issues of work life balance.

The job satisfaction is needed to be self oriented and self realized. The women employees must always remain of service attitude and that leads to job satisfaction for them. The women employees in this sector need the job satisfaction to manage their work life balance also need to concentrate on their work and deliver effective healthcare services. But a majority of the women employees are unable to devote effective personal time with their family and that also have an impact on their work life balance and imbalances.
Women need the support of their family especially spouse for married women employees. It also differs based on their nature of family. The family roles are very important for them to manage work life balance and mutual trust is an indication for their effective work life balances.

Regarding the influence of work life balance on life satisfaction, women employees in health care sector assume that peacefulness in life, possession of material wealth by family, family growth and upliftment. The women employees have strong belief about the interaction of life satisfaction on their family through work life balances. The avenue of empowerment is also influenced by work life balance and imbalances. The work life balance and imbalances are managed by women employees in healthcare sector by relaxation, chatting and family interaction. In addition to that, comprehensive supportive programmes are needed to be provided by healthcare organisation for the managing of work life balance of women employees.

The effective work life balance by women employees help to reduce their work and occupational stress, provide physical and psychological match up and fitness, focus and concentration on their routine jobs and also on future career. It is also helpful for the organisation in terms of excelling productivity, avoidance of time and energy wastages increase work commitment and loyalty among the women employees and it is ultimately helpful human resource and cost management for the organizations. The better work sharing systems, enhanced communication network, family counseling, co-optation, attractive monetary packages will also help to manage work life balance related issues by women employees working in the sector.

4.9 PROFILE OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES IN IT/ITES SECTORS

Due to special recruitment drive in most of the IT sectors the ratio of men to women has increased from 75:25 in 2001 to 60:40. This percentage is expected to increase in near future in India. This credit goes to the pivotal role played by the IT industries in bridging the gender divide by ensuring no bias while offering positions to women candidates. The increase can be attributed to the gender agnostic
requirements of the sector and the flexible work environment provided by the sector. Companies have encouraged women participation through various initiatives which take care of the special needs of the female employees ‘pick-and-drop’ cab facilities, formation of anti-sexual harassment committees, provision of maternity leaves during pregnancy and creation of exclusive web portals for females.

The participation of women in the IT/ITES workforce is seen as a critical enabling factor for continued growth of the sector. Young women mainly fresh graduates, are the preferred workforce in the sector as a certain type of dynamism, communication and IT skills are required to ‘care’ for the customers, who in some sectors are predominantly men. Participation of women in the BPO sector increased from 25 percent of workforce in 2006 to 40 percent in 2008 and has reached around 45 percent by 2010. IT/ITES constitute around one-third of the total employment in the IT/ITES sectors and BPOs in India. IT/ITES in India prefer hiring young, educated women as they are perceived to be hardworking, patient, attentive, loyal, less aggressive and have better interpersonal and analytical skills than men. The IT/ITES employment requires “emotional labour”, for empathizing with the customers and women are stereotyped as best suited for this job.

The high pay packages of the transnational IT/ITES sectors also bring with its work pressure and stress. The work in call centre is highly pressurized, closely monitored and monotonously routinized. There are ‘call quotas’ for both inbound and outbound services, as much as 400 calls a night in some companies. On top of these, the IT/ITES cannot disclose their true nationality and even their names; they use a pseudo name in accordance with the client country they are serving. This creates the problem of dual identity, by being westerners by evening and Indians by day. The burden of work along with dual identity creates severe personal dilemmas. There is a strict time and motion regime with limited time (2-3 minutes) for making and answering call of customers, limited breaks and no interaction with employees while at work.

The IT/ITES employment help the women in learning new skills and they are shaping and remaking their work, lives and even territorizing public spaces.
The women IT/ITES employees learn a number of new skills and some even become more assertive as persons. The acquired skills, ranging from soft-skills such as communication, listening and interpersonal skills to produce knowledge and technical competency, have given women a sense of confidence in dealing with their customers and the society at large. While some women want to pursue a career in the IT/ITES sectors others take it as a short-term jobs.

4.10 WOMEN EMPLOYEES’ ATTITUDE ABOUT WORK LIFE BALANCE IN IT/ITES SECTORS

It has been noticed that IT/ITES sectors are the best place for women empowerment. This is the one among the sector, which has witnessed high growth for women and helped them move to the higher positions in large numbers. Gender equality, which is a distant dream in our society till now, is clearly visible in the IT/ITES sectors with the advent of the IT revolution and the BPO boom an increasing number of Indian women find their way to the job market and economic freedom. So much that Indian women joined in the US counterparts in terms of the number of women entering the IT/ITES sectors. Emerging trend in Indian IT sector indicates that women have spread their wings into various segments with prominent presence in financial, human resource, quality, facility creation and ITES work.

There are various reasons for this balance and imbalance and conflicts in the life of women employees in IT/ITES sectors. From individual career ambitions to pressure to cope with family and work, the reasons can be situation and individual specific. The speed of advancement of information technology, the increasing competition in the talent supply market have led to a performance-driven culture creating pressures and expectations to performance more and better every time. Also, many a time, many people find it difficult to say ‘No’ to others especially their superiors. They usually end up over burdening themselves with work. The increasing responsibilities on the personal front with age can also create stress on personal and professional fronts. New technologies place growing demands on many working people. They can be reached on a 24/7 basis and this 24/7 access may distract them from personal matters. Work-family conflict may increase along with
the extended work space and time. Work is no longer for many contained within the walls of the workplace. New technology blurs boundaries creating work-life imbalance, particularly those in the professional or managerial ranks.

Task culture or results-oriented culture may also bring pressure on WLB. This culture focuses on the superiority of the goals of the organisation over employees’ personal goals. In a task oriented environment, people may be driven to over perform to attract new clients and retain old ones employees are pushed to achieve the expected target. Such unwritten rules may lead to employees suffering from work-life imbalance.

The work life balance of Indian working women reveals the fact that more than 73% of the women interviewed felt that managing a home and a career was the primary reason for their stress and the resulting poor health. Inability to focus on one's own personal wellness, apportioning time for other activities such as gardening or other hobbies, become nearly impossible while juggling a demanding career and home. The strategy of employing part-time or flexi-time workers is one, which corporate India is slowly but surely testing out. Companies such as the Pantaloon Group, Unilever India Shares Services, Scope International, Barclays Bank, Cap Gemini, the Murugappa Group, Tata VSNL and several other FMCG, Telecom and IT companies have successfully implemented the Flexi-Career concept in their organizations.

The timings depend on the project undertaken by the employees. Depending on the project, the employees have to wait even after the working hours extending the timings till late night. Women employees find this difficult to manage especially the married women with kids.

The long work time with the timings changing continuously, accompanied by dual responsibility one at home and another at work place lead to many problems conflicting demands of the work place, the family and their role in society and place an unequal burden on women. The working women conclude that time based conflicts, work schedules, work orientation, marriage, children and
spouse; employment patterns may all produce pressure to participate extensively in the work role or family role. The prevailing notion that IT work involves long working hours and not conducive to family life inhibits women to pursue career in IT. The higher pressure on the women employee forces her to look for external help to resolve the conflict. There has been a jump in the demand for processed, ready-to-eat and ready-to-cook food. Amount of money spent by Indian on foods outside home has been assessed to have more than doubled over the last ten years. Also, it’s likely to double in the five years to come. The demands and pressures of work and family may give rise to work-family conflict in an individual.

Work life issues/concerns encompass all non-work related demands among the women employees in IT/ITES and hence are not restricted to only family demands. Equations both at the workplace and at home have changed in the networked era. While in the machine age, work and life are seen as two independent domains, in the networked age there is a complete overlap between the two domains. Women face conflicts between work and family demands as well as demands from family have increased over the years. This has made it difficult for organizations to ignore the significance of employees' non-work demands on their performance, commitment and job satisfaction. It is not enough for organizations to implement family-friendly practices such as flextime and extended parental leave, to reduce employees' work-life conflicts. It is more important to have a supportive culture that encourages employee utilization of work-life benefits. The extent to which individual managers are sensitive to and accommodating of employees' family needs, is the managers' responsibility to ensure that employees complete their leave entitlements of optional holidays for the years.

This phenomenon gets accentuated for women employees in IT/ITES are expected to play multiple roles, as caretakers at home and as professionals at work place. Therefore, much work-family balance has focused on work family conflict and its impact on stress, career growth and life satisfaction for an employee and poor performance, decreased job satisfaction, burnout and voluntary turnover for organizations. Although over the years women in India have struggled to establish an identity and create a mark in the social as well as in the organizational platforms.
However educational institutions training more and more women to enter professional careers have drastically changed the scenario.

The women employees in IT/ITES sectors and their family sphere changes that have impacted the work life balance of individuals in today’s context include nuclear families, single parent households, dual earning parents, parents working in different locations and increasing household work. Hence, it has become very difficult to meet the family demands. Another change is the entry of women in workforce in a big way, while still continuing with their earlier role of a homemaker. So, women are playing a dual role, that of a breadwinner as also a homemaker. It is generally women who take the primary responsibility for childcare and who, in situations of conflict, adjust their working lives to accommodate family pressures and this puts an extra pressure on women employees.

The factors influencing work and family life spheres into three namely family, personal, work related factors and others. Family and personal life related factors include increasing participation of women in workforce, increasing participation of child bearing women in workforce, increasing participation of dual career couples in workforce, increase in single-parent/ single person households, increase in child-care/ elder care burden on employees and health and well being considerations. Work related factor include long hour culture and unpaid overtime, time squeeze, demand for shorter working hours, increase in part-time workers, work intensification and stress and changing work time. Other factors include ageing population, rise of service sector industries, technological complexity of work skill shortages, loss of social support network, globalisation and demographic shift of workforce.

The women employees in IT/ITES sectors and their work-life balance is an effective resolution of the dilemma of managing work obligations and personal or family responsibilities. From the employers’ viewpoint, work-life balance poses the challenge of creating an organizational culture supportive of the family needs of the employees so that the employees can focus better on their jobs while at work. When an employer adopts policies favourable to work life balance, it is likely to be
perceived by the employees as a huge incentive, which can motivate them as much as other considerations like additional remuneration or provision of training opportunities.

The imperative of work life balance of women employees in IT/ITES helps to manage their occupational stress and work with optimum energy and dynamism. It also helps them inhale respective productivity, cost reduction, work efficiency along with their personal and organizational growth. The attitude of work sharing and team performance help the women employees in IT/ITES sectors to manage work life balance related issues. The work life balance management issues are managed by sparing time with family, holiday packages, outreach programmes and sharing family responsibilities.

4.11 CONCLUSION

The best work-life balance is different for each of us because all have different priorities and different lives. However, at the core of an effective work-life balance, definitions are two. They are daily Achievement and Enjoyment and ideas almost deceptive in their simplicity. Engraining a fuller meaning of these two concepts takes most of the way to defining a positive work life balance. The change in the pattern of work and the concept of the workplace after the industrial revolution in the second half of the eighteenth century gave a new dimension to the concept of WLB. As time has progressed, nuclear families have increased.

Problem is created within oneself and solution will also found with oneself. Striking an appropriate balance between one’s personal and professional lives is bit of an art and science too. Work life balance concerns adjusting working patterns so that women can combine work with their responsibilities. To achieve fulfillment and success at home and work, leisure and personal time must complement one’s job passion, work and responsibilities and reducing work family conflict and increasing work family enhancement. Eliminating pressure is not a solution to avoiding stress, one need to manage pressure. Yoga is technique for stress management. Yoga and meditation are used as effective methods of stress
relief. The ancient Indian science of yoga holds the key to combat these modern ages.

Work life balance of the employees has attracted the interest of researchers, educationists and the leaders of the world. Managing both professional and personal life effectively and efficiently has become a major challenge for the employees in banking, healthcare and IT/ITES sectors. Organizations need to make efforts to develop effective work life balance policies and encourage their employees to make use of the available policies. This will help increase organizational commitment, improve productivity, efficiency, retain best talent and motivate the employees to give their best. The work life balance creates organizational success and develops competitive advantage for the organizations. Thus the human resources team and the leadership team should take the initiative of enhancing and improving the emotional intelligence skills of their employees. Improved emotional intelligence skills will help an individual understand and manage the emotions better which will lead to high quality service delivery. It is therefore imperative for administrators to strive to create a bridge between emotional intelligence and work life balance in the organizations. Work life balance is an effective way to integrate, enhance and provide better work and family life. Understanding the potential and talent of women employees bring in and ensure the articulation of difference that employees bring to the work place and value them to make it a part of the organizational success. Leaders should focus on developing, formulating and implementing, better work life balance policies in order to build a sustainable and enriching organization. Nurturing work life balance and to make employees feel values must be adopted by the leaders.

The focus on women by the banking, healthcare and IT/ITES sectors is an acknowledgement of their growing role in India’s economy. There is a direct correlation between the employment of women and the economic well being of a nation. Companies have to understand the requirement of managing stress among women to make the environment conducive which can retain skilled talented women. Managements must provide continuous learning, mentoring, coaching, counseling, opportunities for self development, time management to handle their
responsibility at home along with office to encourage them to take higher responsibilities of onsite projects. Companies need to roll out today to give incentives to women workers and make the sector, as a whole an attractive and preferred carrier destination for them. With improved education and employment opportunities today, most homes are ones in which both parents work, because of necessity and the desire to augment incomes.

The need to create congenial conditions in which women employees can balance work with their personal needs and desires become a factor that companies have to take note of both to retain them as well as to improve productivity. It is a compulsion that they cannot afford to ignore. Having realized that, companies must start introducing schemes to attract and retain women employees and improve their productivity.
REFERENCES


