Chapter - VII
Findings
CHAPTER VII
Findings Of Research

Introduction:
The findings of this survey reinforce the perceived importance of balance between both work and personal aspects of one’s life to enable greater success to be achieved in every area of life – including professional matters. With increasing working population and changes in perceived company commitment and loyalty, Work and Personal Life balance is a real issue for employers and employees alike. Employers can benefit from these policies too as they can help to develop a more committed and productive workforce. The findings are based on analysis of primary data as well as review of literature. The primary data is collected through structured questioner addressed to women employees under consideration also through unstructured interviews of some key resource persons in the organizations. These findings based on a survey of females employees in service sector of Pune City reveals some worrying facts about work-life balance of the respondents.

The finding of the undertaken research adheres to the following 11 questions:

1. How much important the work life balance is for employees?
2. How the employees perceive their work and life in regard to balance at present, in past and in future?
3. What are the Reasons/Need for female employees to take up the jobs?
4. Is there imbalance between personal and professional life?
5. What are the determinants of Work Life Balance?
6. What are the practices followed by women employees to manage professional and personal life?
7. What are the organizational practices addressing work life issues of employees?
8. What is the impact of Work Life Imbalance?
9. What are the benefits of Work Life Balance?
10. What are the barriers or challenges to Work Life Balance?
11. What are the Statutory & Non Statutory Arrangements towards WLB?
7.1 Importance of work life balance for the employees:
The participants rated work-life balance as the most important of the propositions. It also was rated lowest for the amount of attention being paid to it through the workplace. 100% of the female respondents said having work life balance is very important for them.

7.2 Perception of the employees about their work and life in regard to balance at present, in past and in future:

**At Present**: 78% female respondents have responded that their life is heavily weighted toward work. Only 4% female employees said their life is in balance at present. 18% female respondent said at present their life is little weighted towards personal life.

**In Past**: 57% female respondents said their life was heavily weighted toward work. Only 18% female employees said their life was in balance in past. 7% female respondent said their life was little weighted towards personal life.

**In Future**: 68% female respondents predict that their life will be heavily weighted toward work. Only 11% female employees said their life will be in balance in future. 21% female respondent said their life will be little weighted towards personal life in near future.

7.3 Reasons / Need for female employees to take up the jobs:
Following 8 reasons have been observed by female employees for taking up job rather than any other career option. Out of these reasons reason no 3, 4 & 7 are the prominent ones.

1. Past financial experiences
2. Present financial requirements
3. Future financial requirements
4. Use of educational qualification
5. Overcome boredom at home
6. Career Orientation
7. Taking care of dependents
8. Independence
7.4 Imbalance between personal and professional life:

The finding is based on the analysis of PART B Of the survey questionnaire. There is imbalance between the professional and personal life of female employees working in service sector.

The responses show that only 4% respondent said they had the right balance at present. It was observed that among those who reported that there is imbalance, majority said that it was work that dominated.

7.5 Determinants of Work Life Balance:

It is possible to identify a set of factors that have brought the issue of work-life balance to the forefront of policy debates. Demographic changes including the increase in the number of women in the workplace, dual career families, single parent families and an aging population have generated an increasingly diverse workforce and a greater need of employees to balance work and home life.

Following determinants have been identified which impact the issue of work life balance:

1. **Age of an employee / Life Stage Of Employee**: Any individual passes through 3 stages of life. Child, Youth and old age. Same is for female employees. The age of employee plays a very important role in the work life balance issues. The employees who are younger i.e. 18 to 35 years of age find their life in a little balance way. But after some age due to manifold responsibilities of family the employees find it difficult to find time for many things which they want to do.

2. **Marital Status**: Marital status of employee is a very very crucial factor relating to work life imbalance. Married women find it very difficult to manage with their responsibilities at personal front and job front. The time duration since which these women have been married also has relevance to the work life issues. The newly married women find a balance between their professional and work life. But the
women who are married since from a longer duration and have got small kids are finding it very difficult to manage the both fronts.

3. **No Of Members of family**: This parameter has got confusing impact. The female employees having less number of family members have found more work life balance as long compared to the female employees having more number of members in family.

4. **Type of Family / Family Structure**: The growth of single parent families, the privatization of family life has been a very important factor that has influence on work life issues.

5. **No and Age of the KIDs**: The issues that arise when caring and employment are combined without the support of flexible working arrangements, especially for those whose caring responsibilities develop suddenly or quickly, or who find they have to give increasing time and energy to the person cared for. The surveys confirm that women and those with dependent children also report a greater problem of work-life balance.

6. **No Of Dependents**: The ongoing parental role of those who have a disabled child (often now an adult) can be a source of tension in relation to employment, since managers or colleagues may assume that parental responsibilities have reduced at a time when, for this group, parental roles may demand even more time and energy. In the family, the demands, for example for someone who is young and single, may be very low while for those with dependent children or elderly parents, they may be very high.

7. **Present annual income of employee**: The female employees having less annual income find more work life imbalance as compared to females having good annual income. Such female employees try to work additional hours with the aim to gain higher income.
8. **Tenure in the present organization**: The female employees having worked for the organization for a longer time find more work life balance as compared to females with less tenure in the organization. The reason being as the female employees who joined newly were not having provisions of many leaves at the same time many were reluctant to avail the leave facilities provided with the fear in the mind that it will affect their performance.

9. **Department in which an employee is working**: This is also one of the deciding factor of work life issues. The female employees working in few departments find more balance as compared to female employees working in other departments. Example female employees working in HR, Admin department find more balance as compared to female employees working in Accounts, Marketing departments. e.g. Doctors and nurses find more imbalance as compared to admin staff.

10. **The type of company in which employee is working**: The researcher has got the respondents from service sector. The main focus of the survey was important 5 types of organization in service sector viz. Education, Banking and Financial services, Hospitals, Hotels, IT & ITES and few respondents besides these were put under others category. The employees working in education sector find more work life balance as compared to hospital and hotel sector. Banking and financial services sector employees find it difficult to balance during peak times as financial year ending. The employees in IT & ITES organizations find it easy to manage with work life conflict due to the major reason of availability of flexi working and working from home with the use of technology. Where as in case of Banks, Hospitals and Hotels the physical presence of employees is required as compared to IT & ITES companies.

11. **Nature of the job**: Whether the job is full time or part time matter while balancing issues of work and personal life. Female with part time find a balance between their professional life and work life.
12. **Educational Qualification**: The female employees who are graduates and undergraduates find more imbalance as compared to female employees having post graduation. The reason to this is that many female employees who are not graduate are trying to pursue graduation and those who are graduates are trying to pursue post graduation. So attending the classes, studies and examination and organizations less or nil support for such things affect the work life issue of female employees seeking further education.

13. **No Of Years Of Previous experience**: The female employees having previous work experience find it easy to manage with the present job as compared to totally fresher.

14. **Level of hierarchy in the organization**: Work Life Imbalance is more likely to be reported by those in managerial positions. As the employees climb the hierarchy in the organization with promotions, the responsibility also increases. As result of these the employees try to work some extra hours at work as a result of which they are not able to fulfill their personal obligations.

15. **Term Of Contract**: Whether the job is permanent or temporary matters to the work life balance issues. Those female employees having temporary jobs are striving for being permanent and for this they are reluctant to say no for any additional work requiring to stay back late at work. This affects their work life balance.

16. **Mobility from Native Place**: The employees who are natives of places out of Pune and specially out of Maharashtra find it difficult to give sufficient time for their elderly family members.

17. **Attitude & Values of person at work**: Attitude defines one’s likes and dislikes. Attitude is a way of thinking of feeling about something.

18. **Situational Factors**: Situational factors do affect the work life balance. Take a situation where mother-in-law is taking care of the kids of female employee. Now when there is conflict between female employee with her mother-in-law. After
conflict mother-in-law will be reluctant to take care of households when female goes to job. Same case may occur with conflict with boss or colleague.

19. **Psychological Factors**: Work Life Balance is substantially affected by various psychological factors like capability to work under pressure. How one reacts to a particular situation, how he manages work and peer pressure are some aspects of psychological behavior.

20. **Weekly working hours**: Weekly working hours was the strongest predictor of work-life conflict.

21. **Support from Employer & Management**: The management support must include actual behavioral support rather than just saying there is support. It is no use for management to say they are serious about improving work life balance for staff, then do things like stay late at work each night themselves, or set up meetings early in the morning when many staff may have child care responsibilities. There must be congruence between what management is trying to achieve and what management themselves do.

22. **Support from Colleagues**: It is very important the employees have healthy relations with the other colleagues in the organization they are working. So that in case of any arrangements for personnel front the colleagues support the female employees. If there are conflicts between the female employees and other colleague, the colleagues will be reluctant in giving the support needed.

23. **Support from family members**: It's utmost important for the family members to give the required support to the female employees whenever she requires to performing the balancing act of personnel life as well as work life.

24. **Family Friendly Policies**: On the positive side, those who reported that they worked in an organization with a friendly climate, where more human resource practices are in place and where they have more scope for direct participation and autonomy reported less imbalance. From a policy perspective, it is interesting to
note that the presence of family-friendly practices was not associated with a reported work-life balance. This implies that they were either ineffectively implemented or that they may have lessened but did not eliminate the problem.

25. **Technology and its use** : The pressures of work, for those in work, have been intensifying in recent decades. Factors such as the advances in information technology and information load, the need for speed of response, the importance attached to quality of customer service and its implications for constant availability and the pace of change with its resultant upheavals and adjustments all demand our time and can be sources of pressure. WLB is of very much concern for those who work from home and where the border between home and work is very porous. Part of the interest in the subject arises from the view that the scope for increased work from home, facilitated by new technology, has helped to blur the border between home and work.

26. **Energy Levels** : Energy levels are often ignored but in the context of high demand need to be taken explicitly into account. They may be linked to issues of personal control, including locus of control and capacity for coping with pressures of competing demands.

27. **Long Working Hours** : As expected, there was a strong correlation between working longer hours and a reported imbalance between work and the rest of life.

28. **Self High Expectations** : Sometimes the high expectations from self hamper the work life balance. 100% female respondents agree anonymously that keeping very high expectations from self impact the work life balance.
The determinants of work-life balance are located in the work and home contexts:

Table No : 35 Classification of Determinants of Work Life Balance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational Factors</th>
<th>Individual Factors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Present annual income of employee</td>
<td>1. Age of an employee / Life Stage Of Employee</td>
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<td>2. Tenure in the present organization</td>
<td>2. Marital Status</td>
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<td>3. Department in which an employee is working</td>
<td>3. No Of Members of family</td>
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<td>4. Type of organization</td>
<td>4. Type of Family / Family Structure</td>
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<td>5. Nature of Job</td>
<td>5. No and Age of the KIDs</td>
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<td>6. No of years of previous experience</td>
<td>6. No Of Dependents</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Level of hierarchy in the organization</td>
<td>7. Educational Qualification</td>
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<td>8. Term Of Contract</td>
<td>8. Mobility from native place</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Situational factors</td>
<td>9. Attitude and values of employee</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Support from employer and management</td>
<td>10. Psychological factors</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Support from colleagues</td>
<td>11. Support from family members</td>
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<td><strong>14. Long Working Hours</strong></td>
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</table>
7.6 Practices followed by women employees to manage professional and personal life:

1. **Time Management**: Majority of female employees agree with the statement that they do all the basic preparation of next day on previous night.

2. **Use of personal vehicle for commuting**: Majority of the female employees prefer to use their personal vehicle for commuting from their residence to their workplaces as against organization transport. This helps them to do small domestic work like purchasing grocery, vegetables or any other on their way home. This saves their time.

3. **Proper planning well in advance**: All the female employees agree with the statement that try to start 10 to 15 minutes before the stipulated time so that they reach on time comfortably.

4. **Seeking support of parents and in-laws in case of emergency at workplace.**

5. **Using Crèche facility for KIDS**: Majority of married female employees prefer to keep my kids in crèches rather than keeping with my in-laws.

6. **Seeking support from seniors**: Majority of female employees agree that they seek support of their seniors when the their personnel attention to family is required.

7. **Networking with the community members**: All the female employees agree that they network with the members of the community who can help me in alternative arrangements.
7.7 Organizational practices addressing work life issues of employees:

The range of Work Life Balance initiatives by the organizations available can be grouped into 4 main areas:

1. **Leave provisions (such as parental and family leave)**: Facilities like Carers Leaves, Opportunity for leave if Care arrangements for children or other dependents breakdown, Study / training leave, Career Breaks, Cultural / religious leave, Bereavement leave, Pooling of leave entitlements are offered by many organizations to the female employees to manage the work life issues. Maternity and Parenting policies like Unpaid maternity / paternity and adoption leave, Paid maternity leave, Paid paternity leave, Paid adoption leave, Opportunity to return to the same job after maternity / paternity and adoption leave, Safety at work during pregnancy (e.g. changing the work of pregnant women to avoid long periods of standing or lifting heavy objects), Pre-natal leave (e.g. time for pregnant women or their partners to attend medical appointments during working hours, either using additional leave or sick leave), Staggered return to work after pregnancy (employees being able to negotiate a temporary reduction in hours of work when they return to work) etc are adopted by many organizations to address the issues of work life balance.

2. **Flexible hours provisions**: Flexible work arrangements like job sharing, flexible start and finish times, Telecommuting, Cap on overtime, Opportunity to negotiate part-time work for full time employees, Time Off in lieu and rostered days off are offered by many organizations.

3. **Additional work provisions**: Telephone for personal use, Counseling services for employees, Referral services for employees personal needs, Health programs, Parenting or family support programs, Exercise facilities, Relocation or placement assistance, Equal access to promotion, training and development are some of the other provisions by the organizations to support the work life issues of female employees in service sector.
7.8 Impact of Work Life Imbalance:
It can be tempting to rack up hours at work, especially if you're trying to earn a promotion or manage an ever-increasing workload. Sometimes overtime may even be required. If you're spending most of your time working, though, your home life will take a hit. Consider the consequences of poor work-life balance:

1. **Fatigue or Low Energy Levels**: When you're tired, your ability to work productively and think clearly may suffer — which could take a toll on your professional reputation or lead to dangerous or costly mistakes. At the same time when employees feel fatigue due to tiresome work at professional front, when they return home they are left with no energy to interact with family members.

2. **More pressure on household work**: Due to excessive pressure at home front female employees complaint getting late very frequently to job.

3. **Lost time with friends and loved ones**: If you're working too much, you may miss important family events or milestones. This can leave you feeling left out and may harm relationships with your loved ones. It's also difficult to nurture friendships if you're always working.

4. **Increased expectations**: If you regularly work extra hours, you may be given more responsibility. This may lead to only more concerns and challenges.

Three broad sets of overlapping influences can be identified, those concerned with developments at work that might be seen as causing the problem of work-life imbalance, those relating to life outside work that might be viewed as consequences of work-life imbalance and those concerning individuals and their lives that give rise to the need to address the challenge of work-life balance as a contemporary policy issue.

The various roles we occupy as parents, partners and employees or employers bring with them different obligations which need to be reconciled. Balancing work, family and lifestyle commitments is often difficult and sometimes the different demands can be overwhelming and incompatible. The consequences include increases in juvenile crime, more drug abuse, a reduction in care of the community and in community participation and less willingness to take responsibility for care of elderly relatives and for the disadvantaged. While steps to redress these concerns transcend work and employment, it is nevertheless argued that the
demands of work contribute to a reduced participation in non-work activities resulting in an imbalance.

The result of work life imbalance at the workplace can be that employees:

- are less productive
- are absent more often, or for longer
- disguise the real reasons for their absence
- have lower levels of morale
- are more stressed
- are more likely to leave a workplace unsupportive of work-life balance issues.

It is possible that those in work do not perceive a problem but that teachers are aware that children are not being encouraged by busy parents to complete homework, do believe that the problem exists. So too may welfare workers, aware of the growth of alcohol and drug abuse as a way of coping with the pressures of demands at home and at work.

There has been a much larger body of research on the consequences of forms of work-life imbalance and in particular various manifestations of work spill over and conflict.
7.9 Benefits of Work Life Balance:

Work-life balance is an essential part of Corporate Social Responsibility. Corporations are increasingly recognizing that an inadequate work-life balance can have detrimental impacts on staff performance, satisfaction and retention. When employers target good work-life balance, they can see that reducing stress and frustration resulting from poor work-life balance can be beneficial to both parties.

Furthermore the adoption of work-life balance policies and practices can improve an organization’s ability to respond to customers’ demands for increased access to services and deal with changes in a way that can be satisfactory to both employers and employees.

Helping individuals and families achieve a balance between their work, family and lifestyle commitments by introducing work-life balance policies (i.e. policies that help people meet the needs of their work life and personal life) can provide benefits for both employees and employers.

7.9.1 Benefits to the individual:

Recognised benefits of work-life balance policies for employees include:

1. Improved work-life balance – a **reduction in the impact of work on home** and family life
2. **Reduced stress levels**
3. Control over **time management** in meeting work-life commitments
4. Autonomy to make decisions regarding work-life balance
5. Increased focus, **motivation and job satisfaction** knowing that family and work commitments are being met
6. **Increased job security** from the knowledge that an organisation understands and supports workers with family responsibilities
7. **Decreased Health Care Costs and Stress-Related Illnesses** : With increasing company focus on the high cost of health care, work/life programs are becoming an intelligent choice to help lower the number of health care claims.
7.9.2 Benefits to the organization

The benefits of work-life balance policies are not restricted to the employees using the policies, but also to the employer providing them.

Recognized benefits for introducing work-life balance policies for employers include:

1. **Reduced Staff Turnover Rates & increased Employee Retention**: The cost of employee turnover and accompanying loss of valuable company knowledge can be significant. Work/life programs offer a solution to retention woes. The highest performers are the most likely to consider their ability to balance work and personal responsibilities in a decision to stay with the company.

2. **Lower recruitment and training costs, associated with reduced turnover**: Getting and keeping the right staff can be achieved through good work-life balance policies. Finding and keeping good staff can be difficult especially in a tight labour market. Employers who can offer work-life balance and flexible work options are likely to have the competitive edge, gain access to a wider recruitment pool, and are more likely to hold onto existing staff. As a result of the flexible working arrangements and other work-life initiatives, Many companies have increased retention of graduates and women returning from parental leave.

3. **Becoming a good employer or an employer of choice**: Being an ‘employer of choice’ can give you the competitive edge for attracting talent. Employees who are positive about their workplace help to foster a positive attitude in the wider community. Increasingly businesses are adopting practices that make a positive difference for the environment and society. Staff are a vital business resource, so it makes sound business sense to develop and protect this resource. Work/life initiatives create positive employer branding, promote being an employer of choice, foster organizational citizenship, and support diversity initiatives.

4. **Increased return on investment in training as employees stay longer**: Good WLB initiatives by organization improves the retention rate.
5. **Reduced absenteeism**: Research has documented that work/life programs can reduce absenteeism.

6. **Reduced use of sick leave**: Good WLB initiatives from the organization promotes the health of the employees in turn reduced use of sick leave.

7. **Reductions in worker’s stress levels**: WLB policies and its use reduces the level of stress among the employees of the organization.

8. **Improved morale or satisfaction**: Poor work-life balance can lead to stress and absenteeism, and low output. Helping employees achieve work-life balance is integral to their general health and wellbeing, increasing their work satisfaction and motivation. They are likely to be more committed, more flexible and more responsive to the business and customers’ needs. Research indicates that company commitment to work/life initiatives is closely aligned with employee motivation and productivity.

9. **Greater staff loyalty and commitment**: Good work life balance policies in the organizations wins the loyalty and commitment from the employees.

10. **Improved productivity**: Getting and keeping the right staff and getting the best from them will help to increase productivity. Costs associated with recruitment, training and absenteeism will reduce and employees will be more engaged motivated and committed.

11. **Better teamwork and communication**: Good work life balance policies encourages teamwork and good communication.
7.10 Barriers or challenges to Work Life Balance:

1. **Only paper work no implementation**: Many organizations have the policies only on paper. There is very less concern for the implementation of the policies.

2. **Lack of communication**: Communication about work/life programs is essential. Although an organization may offer a rich menu of work/life benefits, the desired effect—yielding positive business results—is unlikely to occur if employees do not know about the programs or understand them.

3. **Team Work**: Introducing, operating and implementing work-life balance requires collaborative working and is very much an holistic process.

4. **Time Consuming**: Implementing a WLB strategy takes time. Timescales for implementation need to be realistic.

5. **Size and structure of organization**: The size and structure of an organization can present challenges when implementing human resources policy. Introducing elements of work life balance policy through a pilot programme e.g. home-working, may have been more advantageous than engaging the whole corporate body.

6. **Support of management**: Work-place initiatives of any sort are likely to fail if they do not have the full support of all levels of management. Supporting and training managers in the application of WLB is imperative. Early engagements with Senior Managers results in a higher level of commitment.

7. **Early Awareness**: Early awareness raising sessions for managers on the work-life concept could have helped alleviate initial concern.

8. **Delays in decision making**: Over dependence on working groups delaying decision making.
9. **Difference in interpretations**: Informal flexible working practices can lead to different interpretations leading to inconsistency of approach. Performance Management has to be dealt with in the appropriate way and not through WLB.

10. **WLB Champions**: Increased physical presence of project officer/WLB champion can enable better monitoring of pilot projects. Earlier use of dedicated intranet communication tool could have provided a stronger focus for communication on the work and outputs of the project. The need for clarity for terms of reference for working groups and the roles and responsibilities of group members.

11. **Isolated Vs. bundled WLB practices**: There is something of a puzzle about why family-friendly policies and practices do not appear to improve work-life balance to the extent we might expect. Isolated family-friendly practices will have little impact but that a comprehensive bundle of practices are associated with superior ratings of corporate performance. While their focus is on corporate performance, there may be similar implications for their impact on employees. One interpretation of the presence of a bundle of practices is that they have become embedded in the organizational culture whereas isolated practices operate on the margin. This would reinforce the importance of considering organizational culture/climate as a key unit of analysis as much as the specific practices.
### 7.11 Statutory & Non Statutory Arrangements towards WLB

**Table No : 36  *Statutory & Non Statutory Arrangements towards WLB***

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<th>Statutory Arrangements</th>
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<td><strong>Leave Arrangements</strong></td>
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<td>Maternity Benefit Act, 1961</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Employee’s State Insurance (General ) Regulation, 1950</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The Building and Other Construction Workers(Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Industrial Employment ( Standing Orders ) Act, 1946.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Flexible location</strong></td>
<td>eWorking (e.g. home-working/telecommuting.</td>
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<td><strong>Flexible leave</strong></td>
<td>Career breaks/sabbaticals</td>
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<td><em>Carer’s Leave</em></td>
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<td>Marriage leave</td>
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<td>Enhanced maternity/adoption leave</td>
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<td>Exam and study leave</td>
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<td><em>Force Majeure leave</em></td>
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<td>Compassionate leave</td>
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<td>Bereavement leave</td>
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<td>Cultural Leave</td>
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<td><strong>Flexible working time</strong></td>
<td>Part-time working</td>
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<td>Job sharing</td>
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<td>Flextime</td>
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<td>Personalized / flexible hours system</td>
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<td>Compressed working week</td>
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<td>Term time working</td>
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<td>Annual hours system</td>
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<td>Banking of hours</td>
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<td><strong>Other arrangements</strong></td>
<td>Childcare and eldercare arrangement</td>
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<td>Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP)</td>
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<td>Information and referral services</td>
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<td>Employee wellness programmes</td>
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Conclusion: With increasing working population and changes in perceived company commitment and loyalty, Work and Personal Life balance is a real issue for employers and employees alike. Employers can benefit from these policies too as they can help to develop a more committed and productive workforce.
Chapter VIII

Recommendations
CHAPTER VIII
Suggestions and Recommendations

Introduction:

Work-life balance is an integral and important part of Corporate Social Responsibility. Good employers need to recognize that part of their obligation to their workers is to ensure that they are not working so hard so as to damage their lives outside of work or lead to health problems. Long hours are not just potentially damaging to the individual employee but also to the company itself. Companies need to understand that long hours may lead to lower motivation, morale, turnover and productivity of employees and reputation in the labour market. Government also must be concerned with the social impact of long hours on the labour force which will ultimately be a burden on taxpayers in terms of higher health and related costs. There has long been a recognition that happy employees are more productive and less likely to leave. However, the reality in Pune is that there is often an assumption amongst some employers that simply getting staff to work longer hours will increase their work output.

Work-life balance has always been a concern of those interested in the quality of working life and its relation to broader quality of life. People achieve success when they have the flexibility to meet the demands of their professional lives and accomplish personal goals outside their offices. Whenever you focus too much on one at the expense of the other then you risk putting your entire system in distress. For an employee, balancing a challenging career with life outside work is a complex task. Work life and personal life are the two sides of the same coin. Maintaining a reasonable balance between both is very important.

The suggestions made in this chapter pertaining to WLB issues are divided in three parts:

1. Suggestions to the women employees
2. Suggestions to the organizations
3. Suggestions to the Government
8.1 Suggestions to the women employees:

As long as you're working, juggling the demands of career and personal life will probably be an ongoing challenge. Use following strategies to help you find the work-life balance that's best suits for you.

1. Time Management: Rather than thinking of the number of hours of work, think of the effective time spend at work. Many people spend a long time at work yet don't seem to accomplish their high impact activities. Track your activities and the amount of time you spend on them. Watch out for some common traps. Some of these include the constant use of email or blackberries. We've all been there, checking the email many times a day. This can be distracting and pull you away from you most important priorities. The consequence of this means you will spend more time at work and take away from time spent at home.

2. Drop activities that sap your time or energy: Many people waste their time on activities or people that add no value -- for example, spending too much time at work with a colleague who is constantly venting and gossiping. Take stock of activities that aren't really enhancing your career or personal life and minimizing the time you spend on them. You may even be able to leave work earlier if you make a conscious effort to limit the time you spend on the web and social media sites, making personal calls, or checking your bank balance. We often get sucked into these habits that are making us much less efficient without realizing it.

3. A little relaxation goes a long way: Don't get overwhelmed by assuming that you need to make big changes to bring more balance to your life. Setting realistic goals, like trying to leave the office earlier one night per week. Slowly build more activities into your schedule that are important to you. Maybe you can start by spending an hour a week on your hobby or planning a weekend getaway with your family once a year. Even during a hectic day, you can take 10 or 15 minutes to do something that will recharge your batteries. Take a bath, read a trashy novel, go for a walk, or listen to music. You have to make a little time for the things that ignite your
joy. As happiness has direct relation to productivity one must need to think of the things which make them happy.

4. **Be Honest**: Explain honestly to yourself about how much time you spend at work and why. Check whether you are staying late to accomplish your task or to impress your boss, or simply because you are not managing your time well during the day.

5. **Rethink your errands**: Consider whether you can outsource any of your time-consuming household chores or errands. Could you order your groceries online and have them delivered? Hire a kid down the street to mow your lawn? Have your dry cleaning picked up and dropped off at your home or office? Order your stamps online so you don't have to go to the post office? Even if you're on a tight budget, you may discover that the time you'll save will make it worth it. You could exchange gardening services for babysitting services. If you like to cook, you could prepare and freeze a couple of meals and give them to a friend in exchange for wrapping your holiday gifts.

6. **Set your priorities**: Work life balance can't be achieved without effective priority setting. Many people spend long hours at work without knowing the effective time they spend actually working. Set you priorities and arrange your time at the office according to that.

7. **Social Networking**: It is recommended that women should integrate themselves into various social network and high levels of social support, as this will greatly improve their mental health outcomes.

8. **Learn to say no**: Whether it's a co-worker asking you to spearhead an extra project or your child's teacher asking you to manage the class play, remember that it's OK to respectfully say no. When you quit doing the things you do only out of guilt or a false sense of obligation, you'll make more room in your life for the activities that are meaningful to you and bring you joy.
9. **Leave work at work**: With the technology to connect to anyone at any time from virtually anywhere, there may be no boundary between work and home — unless you create it. Make a conscious decision to separate work time from personal time. When you're with your family, for instance, turn off your cell phone and put away your laptop computer.

10. **Manage your time**: Organize household tasks efficiently, such as running errands in batches or doing a load of laundry every day, rather than saving it all for your day off. Put family events on a weekly family calendar and keep a daily to-do list. Do what needs to be done and let the rest go. Limit time-consuming misunderstandings by communicating clearly and listening carefully. Take notes if necessary.

11. **Bolster your support system**: At work, join forces with co-workers who can cover for you — and vice versa — when family conflicts arise. At home, enlist trusted friends and loved ones to pitch in with child care or household responsibilities when you need to work overtime or travel.

12. **Nurture yourself**: Eat healthy foods, include physical activity in your daily routine and get enough sleep. Set aside time each day for an activity that you enjoy, such as practicing yoga or reading. Better yet, discover activities you can do with your partner, family or friends — such as hiking, dancing or taking cooking classes.

13. **Seek help of Counselors**: Everyone needs help from time to time. If your life feels too chaotic to manage and you're spinning your wheels worrying about it, talk with a professional — such as a counselor or other mental health professional. If your employer offers an employee assistance program (EAP), take advantage of available services.

14. **Don't overbook**: This may seem unusual to people who try to crowbar as much as possible into every workday. The problem is: Things rarely go according to a prearranged agenda. That means a lot of time falling through the cracks chasing down appointments, unreturned phone calls and other items that simply aren't going to happen. Don't try to plan on doing too many things. Assume that only 50% of the things you plan on doing today will actually get done. If you don't, you'll just waste valuable time trying to find out why things didn't happen.
15. **Use technology** : Although personal habits and practices can do wonders for time management, don't overlook technology as yet another weapon to make the most effective use of your workday. Sticky notes are one of the worst things in the world. You should live by your database. That way, nothing is ever forgotten.

16. **Organize** : Bringing your time into line isn't just a matter of scheduling. The mechanics of how you operate can be every bit as important. That means organizing most every element to allow as smooth a workflow as possible. Everything in your business should be set up using logical systems so anyone needing anything can find it when they need it. Eliminating clutter and the chaos it causes will give you a gift of many hours every year.

17. **Use the facilities available for WLB in organizations** : WLB initiatives give employees flexibility and help ensure that dependents are cared for whilst employees are at work. Both work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict can be reduced when employees use WLB initiatives but not all employees make use of the initiatives that are available to them even when those initiatives would be helpful.

Remember, striking a healthy work-life balance isn't a one-shot deal. Creating work-life balance is a continuous process as your family, interests and work life change. Periodically examine your priorities — and make changes, if necessary — to make sure you're keeping on track.
8.2 Suggestions to the organizations:

1. **Integration**: Integrating work life balance issues into the organization’s management development program is advisable if not essential. ‘One size’ does not fit all, the process of introducing, operating and implementing work life balance has to suit the organization. Collaborative approach between management and Trade Unions assists with the process of introducing new initiatives. Embed the WLB agenda into the HR strategy.

2. **Offer Flexibility**: Work Life Balance initiatives can assist employers and employees to be productive and healthy in their work and community lives. Organizations can give employees greater flexibility in how they work. This will offer employers the competitive business edge in attracting and retaining employees. In today's labour market, flexible work arrangements are needed by all workers at different times in their lives to allow for: young people to study and work; parents to have time with children; everyone to maintain their health and be active in the community and for the older worker approaching retirement to have the opportunity to stay in the workforce on reduced hours. Extension of ‘Right to Request Flexible Working’ to all employees is needed to be incorporated by the organizations. Employers need to keep any application process for flexible working simple.

3. **Part time working during early stage of Child Care**: An innovative arrangement in employees’ working hours is proposed allowing for the better organization of working time. It is recommended that male and female employees working full time should be entitled to work part time for a period of between six and 12 months in the child’s first three years. When this period of part-time employment ends, they should be allowed to return to their previous full-time status. As an incentive to exercise this right, it is proposed that the employees would be granted unemployment benefit during the period of part-time employment.

4. **Childcare Centers at workplaces**: A further recommendation is to establish nurseries and child activity centers at workplaces, which would offer timetables
adapted to workers’ needs, along with high-quality services and competitive prices. It is envisaged that such services would offer an important source of assistance to working parents.

5. **Women-friendly workplace** : Organizations need to develop policies that create a women-friendly workplace environment. Removing core hours and implementing self-rostering – demonstrating trust. Assisting managers to manage remote workers by agreeing targets and deadlines. Promoting core team meetings where time off is negotiated and agreed between all staff.

6. **Parental Leave** : As regards parental leave, it is proposed to increase the duration of leave from the 13 weeks to which working mothers or fathers are currently entitled to 13 months each. Another suggestion is to pay beneficiaries parental leave benefits equal to unemployment benefits, since at present parental leave is granted without pay and this acts as a disincentive to those entitled to such arrangements. The study also recommends the introduction of paternity leave, to be granted to the father on full pay during the child’s first year, if the employee applies for it.

7. **Training Programs** : Employers need to establish training programs for women, such as mentorships, career guidance and leadership development. Train Managers and staff in the use of WLB policies

8. **Promote awareness** : Promote awareness initiatives that highlight the value of female employees. Early buy in by senior management to the strategic benefits of work-life balance is essential, as is a willingness to take risks by senior members of the organization.

9. **Women participation in strategy making** : Elicit input from women employees regarding policies, promotion and performance review processes. Involve staff at all levels of discussions and encourage ownership. Organizations need to ensure that policies are sustainable. The involvement of staff is the key to the success of any
policy. A good place to start is to find out what problems staff have with their current working arrangements and ask what options would help staff balance work and home lives. Set out below are various examples of what form such consultation should take.

10. Availability of accommodations: Make accommodations for women in areas such as need-based postings. That is, as done in civil services, have a policy to post both spouses to the same district or state.

11. Commitment during hiring: Organizations should have a true commitment to hire and promote women and include women in the annual business strategy.

12. Continuous Process: Work life balance is an ongoing process. Service provision and delivery, together with organizational change and structure will determine the WLB agenda in a given organization.

13. Nominating WLB Champions: Nominating WLB Champions in the organization to progress WLB. Delegating responsibility from working/task groups to nominated.

14. Benchmarking against similar organizations: Organizations should benchmark themselves against the other similar organization as regard the availability of work life policies in other organizations which are not present in the organization.

15. Communication: Use of internal communication systems as ‘one stop shop’ to promote WLB. Piloting new initiatives first to see if they work – changing them if they don’t and extending them when they do.

16. Survey questionnaire: Use of a questionnaire to form the basis of any business case for WLB, which encourages staff to consider their request carefully paying attention to what they want, why they want it and the benefits to service.
17. **Monitoring**  : Monitor and evaluate the process regularly to ensure that what you’re doing is working and benefiting the business and staff. If it’s not change it. Keep WLB ‘live’ by continuously monitoring, evaluating and changing where appropriate.

18. **Role of HR Department**  : Keeping Personnel staff involved each time new projects are formulated so that they are able to make any adjustments to timekeeping and other systems. Producing a generic guide to WLB for Managers – a WLB Pack, that includes sample Business Cases, Staff Questionnaires and Application Forms. Where HR is operated as a delegated function rather than a central function, nomination of WLB Officers in the delegated HR teams. Having a WLB section in the Staff Handbook. WLB is best embedded if it forms part of the overall HR strategy.

19. **Avoid as far possible the long hours of work for employees**  : Work-life balance is an integral and important part of Corporate Social Responsibility. Good employers need to recognize that part of their obligation to their workers is to ensure that they are not working so hard so as to damage their lives outside of work or lead to health problems. Long hours are not just potentially damaging to the individual employee but also to the company itself. Companies need to understand that long hours may lead to lower motivation, morale, turnover and productivity of employees and reputation in the labour market. There has long been a recognition that happy employees are more productive and less likely to leave. However, the reality is that there is often an assumption amongst some employers that simply getting staff to work longer hours will increase their work output.
8.3 Suggestions to the Government:

In today’s industrial society we live in an unparalleled era in that a higher proportion of women from all social classes are engaged in paid employment than ever before. In addition, the pressures and demands of work, reflected both in longer hours, more exhaustion and the growth of evening and weekend work leave less scope for “quality” family time. So it’s utmost important that Government pay attention to the issues of WLB of female employees.

When asked which authorities offer childcare facilities outside of school hours, 41% answered that none of the authorities did so, while 50% cited state and municipal authorities; only 5% of the respondents indicated that their employer provides such facilities. However, when asked whether employers could contribute to work–life balance, 78% of the respondents answered in the affirmative. Thus, the study underlines the significant need for greater family support by the state, through the creation of new initiatives targeting work–life balance issues.

1. The Government should introduce a White Paper on Work-Life Balance. This should pull together initiatives across government and look to future policy. It should consider how improved work-life balance and flexible working will contribute to achieving key public policy objectives: supporting families, tackling poverty and exclusion, reducing congestion and enhancing the environment, and creating a productive knowledge economy.

2. The Government should help promote a realistic work-life culture amongst employers by introducing a technology-based tax credit. This would be particularly designed to help small businesses to enjoy the multitude of benefits that flexible and mobile working can deliver.
3. The Government should set out **proposals of how various strategies will be used to deliver improved work-life balance** for service sector organizations and employees to improve efficiency and services.

4. **Creating and strengthening an accurate and authentic data-base on women workers** in all sectors of employment, covering both organised and unorganized sectors. This could be used as a tool of planning for both legislative as well as administrative intervention by the Government to protect and safeguard the interests of women workers in different fields of work and under different fields of work and under different conditions of employment.

5. **Nomination of a work-life balance inspectors**: As there are inspector appointed under various labour legislations, nomination of a work-life balance inspector with responsibility for promoting and monitoring work-life balance in the service organisation is a sensible first step, particularly for female employees which have thus far not given much consideration to work-life balance issues. Giving responsibility to a governor should help kick-start the whole process.

6. **Role of Government in protecting employees from long hours of work**: The Government must be concerned with the social impact of long hours on the labour force which will ultimately be a burden on taxpayers in terms of higher health and related costs.
Conclusion:
The results of this research indicate that a large proportion of people lack awareness of work–life balance issues and the laws governing them. The respondents’ answers show that both the state and employers are in a position to enhance work–life balance by providing benefits and proper information in this regard. The researcher recommend that the proposals to be put forth for debate and intervention by organised groups, especially by the social partners, for the creation of a targeted policy aiming to strengthen work–life balance.

There was a time when the boundaries between work and home were fairly clear. Today, however, work is likely to invade personal life — and maintaining work-life balance is no simple task. Still, work-life balance isn't out of reach. Start by evaluating your relationship to work. Then apply specific strategies as mentioned above to help you strike a healthier balance.