

A review of Work-Life balance of married women in the Workplace

Badage Pratik Raju^{1*}, Dr. Anil Kumari²

¹ PhD Student, Kalinga University, Raipur (CG)

² PhD Guide, Department of Social Work, Kalinga University, Raipur (CG)

Abstract - One important factor is the involvement provided by social workers, who help married women by creating individualized support systems. Seminars, mentorship programs, and counseling services that focus on stress reduction, time management, and communication skills should all fall under this umbrella. The development of a mutually beneficial work environment is another important outcome of social group work. Married women may find a safe space here to talk about their lives, get advice from one another, and make connections that will help them in the long run. Evaluate married women's work-life balance in the workplace in this article.

Keywords - Women, Work-Life Balance, Children, Family, Housework, Social Group.

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INTRODUCTION

Efforts by women to do housework and raise children have grown more taxing as a result of structural shifts in family patterns away from the traditional joint family and towards the nuclear family model. They are having a harder time striking the work-life balance they seek because of the resulting imbalance between work and family, which in turn causes more problems. Specifically, unpleasant work experiences like involuntary contingent labour and role overload are being linked to technical, institutional, and demographic developments that have an impact on employment. More flexible, multi-skilled "knowledge workers" are also in high demand. Grenhaus and Beutell (1985) found a direct and indirect correlation between these experiences and family life quality. Supporters of the idea include officials from government, management, and employees, in addition to a large body of research and academic publications. A number of factors, including worries that [1]

Reduced health and bad performance results for people, families, and organisations might be the effect of unbalanced work-life connections. So, women need to find a way to keep their families and careers stable, and we need to help them understand the meaning of work-life balance.

There is an interconnected framework of principles, theories, and practices in social work, making it a fundamental scientific endeavour. The field of social work seeks to bring together a number of different ideas and practices in order to address social problems. These include: a theory of society and culture, which considers the individual's role in these

systems; a programme or policy that aims to change problematic situations; and a group of people, including professionals from social services, movements, networks, and other organisations, who are dedicated to implementing these changes using specific methods.[2]

The multi-faceted interactions between humans and their natural surroundings are the focus of social work in all its manifestations. Its goal is to help individuals avoid dysfunction, live their best lives, and realise their greatest potential. As a result, the goals of professional social work include transformation and issue solutions. Social workers have a key role in shaping the communities, families, and people they assist, as well as society at large.

The field of social work focuses on providing evidence-based care for those experiencing psychological and social distress. So, the profession is focused on two main objectives: (a) making people's lives easier so they can have a better quality of life, and (b) helping people in the community and on an individual level develop the skills they need to live their lives better and more creatively. To alleviate the difficulties married working women have as a result of the inherent conflict between their professional and familial responsibilities, social workers are poised to step in and provide solutions.

WORK WITH SOCIAL GROUPS

"As a method of Social Work whose purpose is the enhancement of the psychosocial functioning of individuals and improvement of their environments"

was the definition given by Trecker in 1948 while discussing social group work. Both therapy and prevention contribute to improved functioning. When a person's requirements may be better addressed via social contact rather than assistance in a one-on-one setting, small groups are the most suitable practice modality.[3]

The goals of social case work are closely tied to group work, which is sometimes referred to as "character building" due to its impact. When we talk about social group work's character-building outcomes, we're referring to the ways in which the process helps people in the community lead healthier lives and the kinds of things these groups do. The premise upon which group work is built is that all people have fundamental, shared needs, some of which may be met by coming together as a group. Thus, with very few exceptions, social group work does not constitute primary therapy. Depending on the kind of group, the professional worker employs a wide range of strategies when applying knowledge to group work.

The Social Group Work Method was used to conduct the current study. When thinking about social group work as an intervention strategy, it's important to keep in mind that it's a rather organised and methodical approach to dealing with groups of people. Individuals, groups, or entire communities can benefit from this approach, which involves a social worker or other trained professional guiding participants in programme activities to build relationships, learn from one another, and develop to their full potential in light of their unique needs and strengths. The individual, with the support of the social worker, uses the group dynamic as a catalyst for personal development, transformation, and growth in social group work. Both in industrialised nations and in countries like ours, where licenced therapists are in limited supply, group psychotherapy has matured into a respectable method in recent years. Groups of persons with personality or behavioural disorders in the home, school, or community may benefit from this approach, which social workers can implement (Gupta, 1998).

In 1964, the committee on practice of group work part of the national association of Social Workers proposed that group work was applicable for the purposes such as corrective treatment; prevention, normal social growth and development; personal enhancement; and citizenship indoctrination. Common needs addressed by Social Work groups include amongst other reasons coping with major life transitions and the need to improve social relationships; the needs to cope with illness; and to cope with feelings of loss or loneliness.[4]

WORK/LIFE BALANCE

A person's life is defined by their many jobs, and a good work/life balance is described as a suitable degree of participation or "fit" between them. Maintaining a state of equilibrium, or harmony in life generally, is often linked with work/life balance,

however reasons and definitions differ. Research on work/life balance looks at how well individuals handle all the many aspects of life at the same time. Time balance refers to the amount of time spent on work and non-work roles; involvement balance refers to the amount of psychological involvement or commitment to work and non-work roles; and satisfaction balance refers to the level of satisfaction with work and non-work roles. Despite the traditional assumption that work/life balance involves devoting equal amounts of time to paid work and non-work roles, the concept has recently been expanded to include additional components.

With the inclusion of time, engagement, and pleasure in this work/life balance model, a more comprehensive and inclusive picture may be shown. A person who works two days a week and spends the rest of the week with their family may not have a perfect work-life balance, but they may be balanced in their commitment to both their work and non-work roles. They may also be very satisfied with the amount of involvement they have in both their work and family lives.

(full contentment). A person may be seen as lacking a work/life balance if they work 60 hours a week. While the person's time is imbalanced, he or she may find balanced happiness in their increased engagement in paid job, similar to someone whose workweek is severely reduced. On the other hand, a person may be time-balanced but lacking in participation and happiness if they work 36 hours a week but hate their job and spend the rest of the time doing things they like outside of work. That is why it's important to look at striking a balance from different angles.

- **The Impact of Work on Mental Health and Well-Being**

The detrimental effects of mental illness on productivity in the workplace have been known for a while, and some progressive business owners have even come to see the workplace as a place that can help detect mental illness and get employees the help they need. On the other hand, research on the effects of the workplace on mental health and whether or not it plays a role in the onset of mental illness is lacking.[5]

Overwork, role stressors like conflict, ambiguity, and inter-role conflict; working nights and overtime; poor leadership; aggression in the workplace, such as bullying and harassment; and perceived job control are all factors that have a negative effect on mental health, according to a review of the extensive literature on the topic.

- **Control and Demand and Effort and Reward**

Karasek and Theorell's famous demand-control-support theory of job strain was created in the 1970s

and is considered a pioneering study. According to the argument, women were more likely to suffer negative consequences than males as they often had less influence over their jobs.

- **Work-Family Conflict**

The topic of work-life balance or work-family conflict has been getting a lot of attention recently as it pertains to workers' health. The findings of the research

Employee health, organisational health, families, and society are all impacted differently by the four main categories of work-family conflict: carer strain, role overload, work-family interference, and family-work interference.

- **Job Insecurity**

Some mental health issues, such mild depression, may have self-perceived job instability as their primary predictor. When people are constantly worried about losing their jobs, this becomes even worse. Psychological impacts are not always entirely alleviated when the danger of chronic work uncertainty is removed, even when those exposed to it recover a certain level of employment security.

- **Workplace Diversity and Inclusion**

Employees' emotional and physical well-being are influenced by and contribute to factors like work satisfaction and morale, but they are not essential components of mental or physical health. An inclusive organisational culture, which welcomes and supports people of all genders, ages, and abilities, is an important component of a positive work environment. One example is the correlation between fair accommodations for individuals with disabilities and increased productivity, trust, and alignment between business and worker ideals.

BALANCING WORK AND LIFE: A GUIDE TO MENTAL HEALTH

A person is considered to be in a condition of mental health if they are "able to realise his or her own abilities, cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully, and make a contribution to his or her community" (WHO).

In order to improve mental health for both the general public and those who live with mental illness, it is necessary to engage in mental health promotion. The idea of promoting mental health acknowledges that individuals' mental well-being is closely connected to their social relationships, lifestyle choices, and the level of control they have over their own lives.[6]

Achieving or striving for work-life balance is a matter of personal well-being that enables one to competently juggle many obligations at home, in the

community, and at work. To maintain a healthy body, mind, family, and community while avoiding burnout, stress, and other bad outcomes, it's important to strike a balance between work and personal life.

The goal of the ongoing Workplace Health Promotion Programme is to improve the health, happiness, and quality of life for all workers and management via a variety of programmes, policies, and activities. A better physical, psychological, organisational, and economic environment, as well as more personal agency and development opportunities, are the goals of these initiatives. When it comes to encouraging mental health in the workplace, the following eight tactics are crucial: health

Many things, both at work and outside of it, may have an impact on people's mental health. A company may be unable, unwilling, or unable to recognise mental health difficulties. An method to safeguarding and promoting workers' health that depends and develops upon employers' efforts to establish a supportive management system underpinned by employees' efforts to care for their own well-being is comprehensive workplace health promotion. Environmental (physical, psychological, organisational, and economic), individual (self-empowerment and development), and systemic (continuous improvement) aspects are all considered. The term "comprehensive workplace health promotion" refers to an organization's ongoing efforts to help its workers stay healthy via a variety of programmes and initiatives. An organisation is considered to be in good health if its practices, culture, and climate foster an atmosphere that supports the mental and physical well-being of its workers, along with their productivity and the overall efficacy of the organisation.[7]

EMPLOYERS AS A PLATFORM FOR HEALTH PROMOTION

Workplace hazards should not compromise workers' health and safety, according to the World Health Organization's Global Plan (2010). In addition, several crucial public health interventions for health promotion may be delivered in the workplace. In an ideal world, employees would be able to improve and maintain their physical, mental, and social health without undue hardship at work. Controlling occupational dangers, creating a physical, psychological, and social working environment, and encouraging healthy behaviour are all part of a holistic strategy to protect and promote health at work, which is essential for improving workers' health. By bringing together fields such as occupational health, health promotion and protection, human resource management, sustainable human development, and environmental protection, the healthy workplace approach offers a chance to address fundamental health issues. Therefore, according to this method, the workplace is seen as a "Setting of the Workplace" that may be

used to keep people healthy. Nevertheless, in order to implement and assess health interventions in such a workplace, careful preparation is needed, taking into account the organization's worksite, its culture, its formal and informal networks, as well as the surrounding environment, local communities, and the workers' families.

Creating work environments that promote mental and social wellness and the empowerment of people and work communities is a crucial part of the healthy workplace strategy, which aims to enhance the psychological and social working environment. In addition, the strategy has potential for application in the promotion of mental health, the integrated prevention of respiratory illnesses, and non-communicable diseases.[8]

Efforts to promote healthy lives via programmes like wellness, employee support, and drug screening in the workplace should not compromise efforts to minimise occupational dangers, even when these initiatives demand more facilities. As a result, employees are better able to manage their own health and wellness. determines and establishes a social, psychological, and physical setting in which individuals are able to make informed decisions about their health.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION

When it comes to investigating and addressing social policies around hazardous working conditions, social workers have played a vital role. Researchers, policymakers, and practitioners in the field of social work have long been in the front of efforts to understand how working circumstances affect individuals, families, and communities. Occupational social workers have expanded their practice beyond its original emphasis on helping people with drug misuse issues find gainful employment and better ways to deal with stress in the workplace.

Aspects of workforce development, such as offering job placement and skill training, have become standard in many areas of social work practice due to the shift in welfare policy from supporting to mandating employment.[9]

Encouraging individuals and families to thrive, especially those dealing with unique or challenging situations, is central to social work practice. Mental health, child well-being, and income production are just a few areas that families might feel the pinch of while trying to juggle work and family responsibilities. A growing number of people who receive welfare and other forms of low-income support are working to meet both their employment and family responsibilities, and this trend is likely to continue. Social workers can better advocate for and intervene in policies that are family-friendly in the workplace and help their clients find or negotiate work settings that may promote work-life balance and well-being if they

have a better grasp of the effects of public and employer-based policies.

Research on the effects of practical interventions on mental health, family well-being, and quality of life has been conducted by social work scholars (Institute for the Advancement of Social Work Research, 2003). However, there is a dearth of studies that specifically address or integrate work-family conflict. The results of this research not only helped develop a practical programme for balancing work and personal life, but they also have the potential to enhance both public policy and the policies of particular enterprises. Casework addressing a range of work-family issues with clients who have low income or children with disabilities, advocacy for policies that are family-friendly in the workplace, employee assistance programmes that include the development of employee-supervisor relationships, and individual counselling within a work setting were all aided by the study.

For many years, social workers have advocated on behalf of marginalised and at-risk communities. Nevertheless, given the uncertainty of today's unpredictable workforce, employed individuals are also susceptible and may be just as defenceless. According to Karls and Wanderi (1994), social workers are educated to see clients via an ecological lens and systems theory, which emphasises the significance of considering the client in their natural environment. It is only logical for social workers to provide supportive interventions in the workplace, where individuals spend a significant amount of time, using the PIE method. This kind of social work practice helps EAP workers identify and address the underlying causes of work-life balance issues by examining the client's immediate and extended environments.

Lambert and Henly (2007) found that many hourly entry-level occupations nowadays do not meet the positive standards of employment mentioned in this item, which puts the mental and physical health of their workers at danger. Henly, Shaefer, and Waxman (2006) found that low-level positions often had employer-driven shift scheduling with little to no prior warning. There is little room for employees to build mutually beneficial connections on the workplace due to the high turnover rate and strict supervision in these positions.[10]

THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE IDEA OF WLB

In the middle of the nineteenth century, industrial capitalism gave rise to the work-leisure dichotomy. Anthropologists say that the key to a happy life is minimising the boundary "between your work and your play." In the late 1970s, the term "work-life balance" was first used to describe the harmony between a person's professional and personal lives

in the UK. This expression made its debut in 1986 in the US.

The idea of work-life balance has its roots in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when reformers successfully fought against excessive manufacturing hours and proved that reducing working hours had no effect on production levels. An important body of early 20th-century research showed that there was a complicated link between the amount of time people spent at work and their level of productivity, lending credence to the effort to shorten working hours. Under certain conditions, these studies found that a decrease in working time increased production. They also found that there were optimal arrangements for the length of working time and intervals for rest pauses, depending on the specifics of the situation. The researchers also considered the significance of motivation and morale, fatigue, concentration, and attention.[11]

The level of paid overtime being "manufactured," as will be discussed later on, was a major point of contention in the 1960s. Within the context of collective bargaining, the investigation focused on the joint control of working practices and the informal organisation of work groups. Royal Commission on Trades Unions and Employers Associations study from the late 1960s focused on this strategy. The findings were based on the lessons learned from productivity negotiation during the last decade. It was acknowledged in productivity bargaining that groups of manual labourers often used informal, unilateral control over various parts of their work practices. Time and attendance policies that mandated premium pay for overtime were among the controls adopted in some cases. Extra long shifts were "manufactured" to increase pay rates even when they weren't really required. The end result was a work ethic that valued low output above short breaks and more compensation per hour. The solution was to come up with new productivity packages that contained a lot of changes to the way things were done at work. These improvements included more leeway in how employees were organised and paid, higher base salaries, and less overtime.

WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE

As seen in Figure 05, women often juggle several responsibilities at home and in the workplace. Some examples of these responsibilities include managing the day-to-day operations of the home, caring for one's spouse and children, and serving one's community and society at large. As a result of having too many responsibilities and not enough time, women often put their own health and other personal needs last. There will be no WLB and numerous WLB problems will arise as a result of all of these things. It is very challenging for women to achieve a balance between the demands of their roles and their personal

and professional lives since these demands are frequently incompatible.[12]

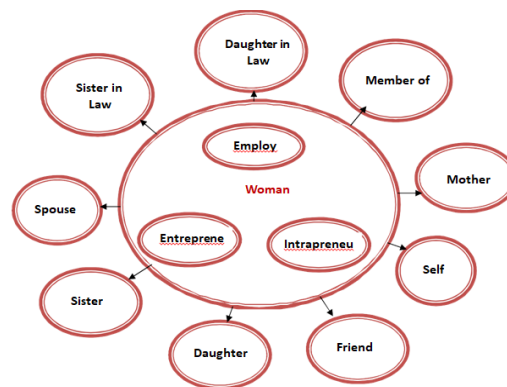


Figure 1: Different Functions Carried Out by Women

CONCLUSION

We need comprehensive methods and cultural support systems to help married women in the workforce achieve work-life balance. Better balancing of work and family life is possible with more adaptable work arrangements, such as telecommuting and flexible scheduling. Furthermore, it is critical to cultivate inclusive work environments that prioritize diversity and gender parity. Enacting laws that protect individuals from prejudice and encourage policies that are welcoming to families is an important responsibility of lawmakers. To establish conditions that are favorable to work-life balance, it is vital for people, families, businesses, and lawmakers to work together. We can improve productivity and social cohesiveness as a whole by putting married women's well-being first, and we can also help them lead more rewarding personal and professional lives. Finding a happy medium between job and personal life is important for married women for many reasons, including making our society more fair and sustainable for future generations.

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Corresponding Author**Badage Pratik Raju***

PhD Student, Kalinga University, Raipur (CG)