

WORK LIFE BALANCE OF WOMEN PROFESSIONALS IN MEDIA INDUSTRY IN INDIA

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Introduction

Media industry is known to be ‘work hard, party hard’ industry. Globalization, Market economies, technology have affected all facts of life, be it religion, education, politics, employment, fashion and health care. With the influence of computers and telecommunication, media industry has also undergone a vast change. Media industry in India, until 2 decade ago was the morning papers, radio broadcast and sole TV network dominated by ‘Doordarshan’. Then media played a ‘reporting’ role.

Today , we see the media and entertainment industry a vibrant and high growth sector with CAGR of 14.3% to touch 2.26Trillion by 2020 (Live Mint- March 2016) Media has also been instrumental in shaping, modeling and influencing public opinion.

Although the presence of women in media has more than doubled in two decades, they constitute only 28.6 percent of the media workforce in Asia and the Pacific. Men outnumber women 4:1 in India In spite of all these changes and growth, this sector is highly stereotyped towards the favor of men. This could because the industry is highly demanding and competitive. Light night negotiations, last minute work on Ad space, corporate entertainment, demanding culture of ‘presence of mind’ and pressure

of ‘perfect smile’ takes a toll of media professionals more so on women. 62% of women professionals experience burnout, depression, anxiety, despair due to lack of Work life balance among nurses. (Natasha Kamisha, and Karl Peters)

In today’s fast changing work context, the essentiality of embracing WLB strategies is indispensable for every company. The HRD function has to continuously plan and execute policies which enable their employees to balance their personal and professional life. A good Work life balance is instrumental to enhance productivity, reduce absenteeism and enable retention and enhance satisfaction. Structural changes in society and culture like many nuclear families, working and travelling parents, far away from extended families, single child families has made the importance of WLB practices and policies all the more necessary.

Work life balance is no more a women related issue, it is concern of today’s workforce. India being a emerging economy should with younger population in the work force, should be more proactive towards their concerns. The term work life balance includes a lot of aspects like duration of work, timings of work, how they work, support of family in work related issues, number of dependents in the family. Work life balances are observed in career

decisions like part-time work, work from home, flexi-working hours, compressed working weeks, career breaks. Previous researchers has proven that employees are more attached to organizations that offer family-friendly policies, regardless to the extent to which they might benefit from those policies (Grover and Karen, 1995) . In organizations terms, this translates to better talent attraction, retention, enhanced productivity and better employer branding (Byrne 2005). A mismatch between work and non-work roles can be dysfunctional and disadvantageous for both the employees and the employers. It is the reason for organizations to adopt work life policies like child-care facilities and offering emotional support (Lapierre and Allen 2006)

Work life balance is considered for this study because it is one of the issues and reasons why media industry has poor women representation. Media industry people work in high stress levels and untimely hours of the day has put off many women professional away from this industry.

Need for the Study

Employees across several verticals find it extremely challenging to maintain the elusive work-life balance. Media professionals are one of the unlucky few who have a tough time sorting out their personal and professional lives. From extreme work stress to confrontations at home, finding mental peace becomes quite a catch. One report on women journalists in India points out that woman from small towns and rural areas who migrate to the

cities with a journalist's job find safe and good accommodation a big hindrance towards continuing at the job. Many girls from modern and progressive families are ready to leave their cities in search of employment in publications and news channels and radio stations. But the dearth of working women's hostels in big cities creates blocks in their careers. The report states that due to non-availability of such hostels they end up living in dingy rooms in narrow lanes of urban villages

Methods

A structured questionnaire was designed based on content interviews and literature review, which had 42 close ended questions.

Data related to Work life balance was collected from a sample size of 80 women professional working as small time journalist and TV anchors in the city of Bengaluru. Content analysis revealed that there were 27 dimensions affecting the WLB issues. These dimensions turned out to be similar to what the literature on WLB suggested. This paper is an attempt to identify the issues that guide media industry to take decisions with respect to designing and implementing WLB policies to support more number of women professionals.

The data collected from these respondents were coded and analyzed using SPSS 17.0 using statistical tool like percentages analysis, cross-tabulation and chi-square tests.

Data and Analysis

The respondents in the study are dominated by the age group of 26 to 35 years with 67% followed by 16% of 36 to 45 years. This is a clear indication that this age group will have dependent children. Majority of respondents were content writers and journalists by designations.

40% of the respondents had children and 35% of them did not have any children but were married. Majority of respondents that is 40% of were not taking care of their parents,

36% of respondents had parents to take care of at home. 48% of respondents felt they feel missing their life due to fatigue and pressure of work sometimes only.

Music and entertainment are considered by majority of respondents at is 41% to help in reducing the imbalances of work and life, women in general have dominated the social phase, this study has acknowledged the fact that women have taken the social media by rage, and majority of respondents feel social media can bring a better life balance.

For the question “awareness of WLB policy” the respondents were in the affirmative and knew some form of WLB, 24% of the respondents agreed in flexi starting time and paid holiday as the major type of employee benefits schemes to bring in WLB.

Factors facilitating WLB included multiple answers, and majority felt that support from home as well as colleagues were every important for experiencing Work life balance.

X^2 Test Results

The X^2 tests were conducted on various attributes of the responses and the results are presented accordingly. Taking into account the obtained value of Asymmetry significance (2 sided), it is concluded that having children and quality if time at work are dependent on each other (Table 2)

Taking in account the obtained value of asymmetry significance (2 sided) it is concluded that having dependent adults and quality of time at work are independent of each other

Taking into account the obtained value of asymmetry significance (2 sided) it is concluded that age and factors facilitation working life balance are depended on each other (Table 4)

Taking into account the obtained value of asymmetry significance (2 sided) it is concluded that designation and factors facilitating WLB are dependent to each other (Table 5)

Findings of the study:

- Content writers and Journalists are the popular type of designations women media professionals are seen
- Majority of them do have children to take care
- Majority of them do feel tired too often and have a sense of missing life.
- Yoga, music are some of activities to indulge in to avoid stress
- Social media is the very popular media opted by women professional, and they feel it is stress free

- The two most important factors crucial for WLB is “ support from family’ and ‘Use of technology’ in media industry would help in bring about balance in work and life
- Having dependent children is dependent to quality of time spent on work
- Having dependent adults is independent to quality of time on work
- Age of respondents and factors facilitating WLB is dependent on each other
- Designation of respondents and factors facilitating WLB is dependent to each other

The media women professionals are not much exposed to WLB practices and even their employers have not much in terms of designing and implementing WLB policies and practices in true sense. There is a need to design such policies and programs to enable the community to balance their work and personal life need. The result of this study indicates that there are differences in perception regarding the need for WLB policies based on their designations and background. International studies from Europe and US reveals the fact WLB practices have the potential to enhance employee satisfaction and organizational

commitment. The corporate world, has adapted this process of WLB and introduced 5 day work week, but, media industry is highly hectic and time bound. Flexi time may not be the ideal policy to build on.

References

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Table 1

Demographic variable /WLB dimensions	Characters	Frequency	Percent
Age	<25	7	8
	26-35	53	67
	36-45	11	13
	46>	9	12
Designation	Content writer	26	34
	Reporter	3	3
	Anchor	2	3
	Journalist (news collector)	26	34
	Editor	9	12
	others	14	14
Having Children	Yes	32	40
	No	28	35
	Not married	20	25
Dependents to be taken care of	Parents	29	36
	Disabled adults	10	12
	Disabled children	5	6
	No	36	45
Sense of missing Life	Never	12	15
	Rarely	23	28
	Sometimes	39	48
	Always	6	7
Sense of Feeling Tired	Never	7	8
	Rarely	25	31
	Sometimes	37	46
	Always	11	13
Options for managing work Stress	Yoga	18	22
	Meditation	12	15
	Entertainment	21	26
	Dance	19	23
	Music	25	31
	vacation	12	15
	Others (hobbies)	21	26
Opinion regarding Media option which can bring in	Television	11	13
	Radio	13	16
	Social media	39	48

better WLB (ranked first)	Newspaper	2	2
	Advertising	12	15
	Outdoor sales and Ads	0	
	others	03	3
Awareness of WLB Policy	No policy	17	21
	Not aware	14	17
	Holidays/paid time off	21	26
	Flexi timing/hours	9	11
	Help in Child care	5	1
	Job sharing	14	17
	Flexible starting time	21	26
	Flexible ending time	8	1
Factors facilitating WLB	Working from Home	13	16
	Use of Technology	26	32
	Occasionally bringing children to work	2	1
	Support from colleagues	26	32
	Support from family members	44	55
	none		

Table 2: Having children and quality of time at Work			
Pearson Chi-square between having dependent children and Quality of Time at Work	value	df	Asymp.sig
	4.129 a	3	.248
	<i>The minimum expected count is 0.41</i>		

Table 3: Having dependent adults and quality of time at Work			
Pearson Chi-square between having dependent adults and Quality of Time at Work	value	df	Asymp.sig
	62.099	12	0.000
	<i>The minimum expected count is 0.03</i>		

Table 4: Age of respondents and Factors facilitating WLB			
Pearson Chi-square between Age of respondents and factors facilitating WLB	value	df	Asymp.sig
	1.593	5	0.902
	<i>The minimum expected count is 1.31</i>		

Table 5: Designation of respondents and Factors facilitating WLB			
Pearson Chi-square between designation and factors facilitating WLB	value	df	Asymp.sig
	20.678	2	0.000
	<i>Minimum expected count is 3.26</i>		