



Study of the Effect of 'Commuting & Working Hours' on Work Life Balance of Working Fathers in Mumbai

Santosh R S

(Research Scholar, Pacific University, Udaipur)

Dr Richa Jain

(Ph.D Guide, Pacific University and Professor at Thakur College of Science and Commerce, Mumbai)

ABSTRACT

In recent years, work-life balance has become a keyword for balancing working time and free time. In particular, TIME is a crucial resource for balancing work and life, because it can be allocated to either work or free time. We examine the effect of working hours and commuting time on Work Life Balance, with data collected from a survey.

Working time has been an important issue for the ILO ever since the founding of the organization. The establishment of limits on daily and weekly working hours was the subject of the very first ILO Convention: the Hours of Work (Industry) Convention, 1919 (No. 1). The recent economic crisis and the Global Jobs Pact of 2009 have put working-time issues back on the agenda. At the same time, recent trends such as technological advancements enabling tele-working have contributed to the creation of a "24-hour society" where line between work and non-work time is becoming increasingly blurred. This has been coupled with a significant shift away from the "normal" or "standard" working week towards "non-standard" work schedules, for example shift and part-time work, compressed workweeks, weekend work, on-call work etc.

The world has changed in the 24-hour, 7 day society, customers expect service at times that suit them. More and More people have to juggle responsibilities at home and in the workplace. And when employees are asked about the WORK LIFE, the three concerns that emerge out more frequently are long working hours, work intensity and commuting hours. Work-Life and Personal-Life are interconnected and interdependent. Spending more time in commuting and working can interfere and affect the Personal-Life, sometimes making it impossible to even complete the household chores. On the other hand, Personal-Life can also be demanding if you have a kid or ageing parents, financial problems or even problems in the life of a dear relative. With the growing diversity of family structures represented in the workforce in the new millennium, it is important that human resource professionals better understand the interface of work and family relationships and resulting impact in the workplace.

This paper is trying to bring out the effects of WORKING HOURS on Work Life balance of working men over their various aspects of Work Life Balance such as Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL), Factors impacting on work-life balance (FIWLB) and Factors impacting on Engagements with the children (FIEWC). Specifically, it has been focused here that the TIME MANAGEMENT lead to attaining equilibrium between professional work and other activities.

KEYWORDS : Working Hours, Commuting Hours, Work Life Balance

INTRODUCTION:

A decade back, employees used to have fixed working hours or rather than a 9 to 5 job from Monday to Friday. The boundary between the work and home has disappeared with time. But with globalization and people working across countries, the concept of fixed working is fading away. Instead of just 7 or 8 a day, people are spending as much as 12-16 hours every day in office. The technological blessings like e-mail, text messaging and cell phones which were thought of as tools to connect them to work being away from their workplace, have actually integrated their personal and professional lives. Now professionals find themselves working even when they are on vacations. The ever increasing working hours leave the individuals with less time for themselves and to pursue his hobbies or leisure activities.

Society is changing but the way we think about work life isn't. Everyone knows the present organization of work does not work, but nobody is ready to translate this into actual practice, despite the having serious implications for gender equality and life satisfaction. This is a global problem affecting workers in both the developed as well as developing worlds. Individuals, employers and societies around the world feel generally powerless to do much about this situation because the changes that would improve things seem to go against global economic trends. They go on to describe the situation in several countries.

In Norway, for example, the problem of work life imbalance still largely exists despite all the support the work-personal harmonization offered by the Norwegian state and companies.

In the Netherlands innovative government measures have also been implemented but global pressures seem to be undermining them because of the perception that competitiveness rests on 'commitment' through working long hours and the general intensification of work.

In Japan, the workplace is still heavily dominated by males and long

hours are the norm.

In India, work-life balance is seen as a luxury issue for growing middle class of professional workers and economic development is perceived as more urgent than social well being and people issues. In industries like IT, BPO and Service sectors the pressures and work intensity rivals anything in the US and UK.

In the UK, systematic change has been slow despite a slew of initiatives aimed at this problem. Long working hours and intensification of work seem to be getting more acute. Flexible working arrangements often associated with more work not less. For all the debate about Work Life Balance there is the feeling that the debate is feminized and stuck.

In the US, there has been a "Hand off" government policy toward this issue, leaving it completely up to the private sector to handle. So called "Flexible Working" practices are widespread but in the cases where policies and initiatives exist within companies, the intent is to increase amount of work. And in many cases, even these limited policies get undermined by the intensive working conditions and high pressure cultures.

Commuting distances and time spent travelling to work is clearly increased within recent decades along with increased costs to workers, organizations and to the environment.

There are various reasons of imbalance in Work Life of employees across the world.

This paper intends to examine the effect of commuting and working hours on work life balance of working men in India.

The main target of this study is to create awareness about the problem of increasing commuting and working hours which is largely af-

fecting the Work Life Balance.

NEED AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The concept of work – life balance is gaining importance across all organizations in India.

The project is examining how fathers in paid work, particularly in Metro City like Mumbai of India, combine work and family life, and measures the stress and wellbeing of fathers at work in relation to their integration of work and home life. In particular the project gives specific consideration of the extent to WORKING HOURS AND COMMUTING TIME among Working Fathers enables them to remain both a committed employee and a fully engaged parent.

The role of fathers is of importance as their direct involvement with their children's upbringing increases. The role of the father is changing. Fathers say that they want to spend more time with their children, and attitudes towards childcare and work are shifting.

This study aims at helping WORKING FATHERS manage their WORKING HOURS with respect to of work – life balance.

There is strong evidence that people perceive that working long hours leads to poor work-life

balance. Control over when an individual works is very important in the extent to which

working long hours will impact on home and family life.

According to studies related to stress; job dissatisfaction and job changes are influenced by commuting factors (*Novaco, Stokols, & Milanesi, 1990*). Recent study in the United States report that 48 % of working adults reported their job dissatisfaction as an impact of commuting, 32% took commuting into consideration when deciding their current job, 27% of the respondents stated that they could perform their duties from home and 15% of the respondents reported they would change their jobs for a shorter commute (*Road Wage Survey, 2011*). Also as stated by *Kluger (1998)*, long distance commuting can easily be associated positively with tardiness.

Very few studies have been done globally in relation to these variables. The present

study is a serious attempt to understand and explore in the Indian Working Fathers' context behavioral variations and their implications that these variables have on their WORK LIFE BALANCE.

The study is an attempt to contribute afresh with a new perspective to the field of human

resources and behavioral sciences with special reference to work – life balance in relation to

WORKING HOURS of working fathers of Mumbai. It is also an earnest attempt to bridge the

gap especially in this area by highlighting the relevance and importance of work – life balance

and WORKING HOURS to strike a balance between work and engagement with children, Relationship Management, and managing Role Conflicts.

We hope this study will initiate a series of serious and productive discussion on the subject.

The findings and outcome of this research will be beneficial to the Working Fathers of Urban Cities in India, which is a flourishing and contributes significantly to the GDP of the country and the talent pool of the world.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

To find out the INFLUENCE between WORKING HOURS and WORK LIFE BALANCE of working fathers

To find out the INFLUENCE between COMMUTING HOURS and WORK LIFE BALANCE of working fathers

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

This chapter is a documentation of the review of literature that has been carried out. It contains

empirical data that has relevance and significance to the present study. The review of literature

spans more than five decades. Trends in the review have been highlighted. The review is

presented variable wise and in reverses chronological order. The review contains studies on work

– life balance and emotional intelligence.

** TRENDS OF RESEARCH ON WORK – LIFE BALANCE

The literature of work – life balance is full of discussion about the lack of effective policies,

underutilisation of work – life balance programs, job satisfaction, performance management,

organizational commitment, productivity and other related concepts.

The most important form of flexible work arrangement used in organization is four days a week.

It supports mothers, but at a cost because of gendered assumptions. The gendered construction of

the ideal worker and ideas of competence conflated with hegemonic masculinity, remain

powerful. This, together with a prevalent “good mother” ideology, undermines both gender

equity and workplace effectiveness *Lewis & Humbert (2010)*. Indian organizations have to do a

lot to treat work-life balance practices as strategic aspect of organizational performance and

effectively communicate about the availability of different work-life balance practices, further

family contributes extensively to work in terms of enhancing performance and positive emotions

at workplace *Baral (2009)*. Firms that adopt better work life balance policies can improve the

level of job satisfaction and increase organizational commitment among their employees *Bloom*

and *Van Reenen (2006)*. Professionals viewed flexible workplace schedules as a key to employee

retention and placed this working condition at the top in order to control employee attrition *Burke*

& *Collinson (2004)*. Lack of formal policies, employees not been given the opportunity to

express their views over the introduction and implementation of policies, Policies are introduced

primarily to meet business needs, rather than those of employees. These are some causes for

work-life imbalance. Employees seem to be more effective when they are engaged and

encouraged to participate and given an opportunity to speak hoping

their work-life balance concerns can be expressed and hopefully addressed *Pyman, Cooper, Teicher & Holland, (2006)*.

Managers who supported and encouraged employees attempts to coordinate work and family demands reported several positive outcomes. Such employees felt less work/family conflict and at the same time reported less turnover, burnout, absenteeism and increased organizational commitment. *Ray & Miller (1994), Thomas & Ganster (1995) and Warren & Johnson (1995)*.

According to *Harrington (2001)* over 1 in 20 workers in Europe work extended hours. Extended hours are generally taken to mean working more than 48 hours a week. It is thought that individuals are working longer hours because of increasing workloads and job demands, job insecurity and performance standards and pressures (*Sparks et al, 1997*). The theory is that such long hours could affect an individual's health, well-being and performance.

This report agrees with *Spurgeon et al (1997)* that most research in the area of hours of work concerns shiftwork. Although partially relevant, this research is not totally applicable to the concept of long (yet 'normal daytime') working hours. *Spurgeon et al (1997)* note that shiftwork tends to imply working at times outside the normal daylight hours that humans are "programmed" to operate in, and this inevitably disrupts human circadian rhythms. Such working patterns are likely to have a much more complex interaction with health and safety than simple extensions to the "normal" 8-hour working day.

One area of the shiftwork literature considers the effects of longer shifts (for example 12-hour shifts). Twelve hour days are certainly 'long' and some studies have found adverse health and well-being effects associated with them (e.g., *Iskra-Golec, Folkard, Marek and Noworol, 1996*).

However, *Spurgeon et al (1997)* argue that 12 hour shifts should be considered in the shift work category because of their shiftwork properties, for example, rotational nature of the shifts and the different associated motivational factors, that sets them apart from non-shift working hours.

Commuting usually distorts the rational use of time, according to *Costa et al. (1988)*, it affects the proper organization of time, often due to the variability of the commuting conditions. As a result of this invariability, whether it is public transport or private vehicle use, or even for walking distances, lateness is frequently the outcome of any commute. Since travel time is not easily predicted for the most of the commuting modes, with their dependence of environmental factors, commuters tend to arrive late.

Especially in service organizations where physical interaction is essential, or wherever the work performed by the employee is critical, lateness becomes an extremely important concern (*Koslowsky, 2000*). This concern is raised in almost a-century-old highly cited work of *Motley (1926)*, and clearly lateness requires monitoring and control (*Blau, 1995*). Beyond concerns of labor productivity, it can be seen as a matter of punctuality and it is predecessor of future withdrawal behavior, all the way from shirking to absenteeism and finally turnover (*Clark, Peters, & Tomlinson, 2005*).

Costa et al. (1988) states that commuters and non commuters differ significantly on their levels of job satisfaction, only about 28% of the commuters were found to be satisfied with their jobs. As proposed in the work of *Brooke (1986)*; the relationship between the predecessors and withdrawal behavior is mediated by job satisfaction and this mediating relationship is pretty much consistent throughout studies.

The Regus Work-Life Balance Index for 2012 found that people who commute for longer than 45 minutes each way reported lower sleep quality and more exhaustion than people with shorter commutes. (*10 Things Your Commute Does to Your Body – Women Health/ Carolyn Kylstra*)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter focuses on research design and methodology adopted for the study. The chapter deals with the terms and concepts used in the study, which have been operationally defined.

Careful consideration has been given for the selection of the appropriate tools, collection of data and analysis of data. Hypotheses have been stated for empirical validation. The tools to collect data, description of the variables investigated and scoring procedure are also explained. The sample size and sampling technique adopted for data collection are also presented.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF THE VARIABLES UNDER INVESTIGATION

WORK LIFE BALANCE:-

The definition given by *Fisher-McAuley, Stanton, Jolton, and Gavin (2003)* is adopted for this study.

They describe work life balance as a competition for both time and energy between the different roles filled by an individual. Someone's life can be considered unbalanced when the amount of time one works causes some sort of conflict or stress in other areas of life. The choices people make about their priorities can cause conflict with bosses, coworkers and/or family members. Stress can also be due to spillover where a person is worrying about life issues while at work and worrying about work issues while at home. Stress can also come from feelings of guilt about the choices being made (*Quick, 2004*). Basically if someone feels that their life is balanced then it probably is and if they feel it is not balanced their life probably is not. It is based on their own perception of balance. Below three parameters of WLB are considered in the Survey:

- Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL)
- Factors Impacting on WLB (FIWLB)
- Factors Impacting on Engagement with Children (WIEWC)

This survey has 50 questions in three parts:-

- Part A:- Related to Personal and Professional Information (13)
- Part B:- Related to Work Life Balance (37)

SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE:

The area of study is Mumbai and its surrounding area. A random survey was conducted for more than 100 respondents. Out of them 103 found to be included for study. Judgmental sampling technique was adopted to collect the data from the respondents for the present study. 65.4% of total respondents were of age between 30 to 40 years

TOOLS ADOPTED FOR DATA COLLECTION

The questionnaire method was adopted to collect the data from the respondents.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

After the data had been collected, it was processed tabulated using Microsoft Excel – 2009 Software. The statistical techniques adopted are means, standard deviation, Pearson's Correlation, Regression and ANOVA. SPSS version 18.0 statistical software was used and the results obtained thereby have been analyzed and interpreted.

The analysis of data has been presented in the following order.
1. Descriptive Statistics

2. Differential Statistics (ANOVA)

INDICATING CRONBACH'S ALPHA RELIABILITY FOR THE TOOLS ADOPTED ON THE PRESENT SAMPLE

CONSTRUCT MEASURE	Number of Items	Cronbach's Value based on standardized Items
Work Life Balance	37	0.787
Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL)	21	0.949
Factors impacting on WLB (FIWLB)	5	0.285
Factors impacting on Engagement with Children (FIEWC)	11	0.856

Work Life Balance, Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL)	Mean	Standard Deviation
My personal life suffers because of work	3.04	1.379
My job makes personal life difficult	2.79	1.398
I neglect personal needs because of work	2.93	1.409
I put personal life on hold for work	3.00	1.314
I miss personal activities because of work	3.08	1.311
I struggle to juggle work and non-work.	2.84	1.319
I am happy with the amount of time I get for Non-work activities	2.84	1.178
I Work on my days off (e.g., On Weekends)	3.10	1.354
I brings things home to work on	2.88	1.316
I attend work related phone calls at home	3.72	1.312
I carry a cell phone so that I can be reached even after work hours	3.88	1.308
I check my office emails at home	3.48	1.420
I stay at work after normal business hours	3.42	1.354
I Work late into the night at home	2.78	1.448
I Attend work-related functions on personal time	3.12	1.323
I travel whenever company asks even though technically I don't have to	2.97	1.403
I work during my vacations also	2.85	1.382
I go to office before business hours	2.53	1.083
I volunteer for special projects in addition to my normal duties	2.97	1.004
I rearrange/alter/cancel my personal plans due to work priorities	3.17	1.147
I check back with office even when I am on vacations	3.23	1.352

Work Life Balance, Factors Impacting on WLB (FIWLB)	Mean	Standard Deviation
I feel exhausted at the end of days work	2.97	1.339
My family supports me in my professional life	3.75	1.186
My boss or company recognise the importance of my personal Life	2.96	1.298
Lack of work-life balance has had an adverse impact on my career	2.83	1.346
My colleagues have resigned or taken a career break due to poor Work Life Balance	2.63	1.365

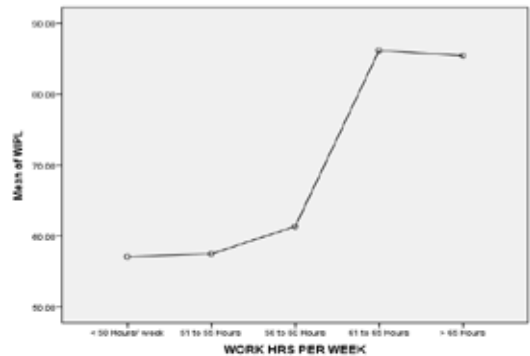
Work Life Balance, Factors impacting on Engagement with Children (FIEWC)	Mean	Standard Deviation
I get time to spend with my KIDS	3.49	1.128
I get break from my work to review progress of my children	3.17	1.213
Parenting is two person's job	3.91	1.329
My direct involvement with my children will increase their developments and upbringing	4.12	1.174
I keep thinking of my work at home which affects on my quality time with my partner and Children	3.45	1.152
I am always comfortable at work as I can reach to my family in no time (In case of urgency)	3.31	1.314
If my family member/ child is SICK, I can work from home	3.02	1.407
I can leave early from Office for my personal work	3.23	1.122
I know most of likes/ dislikes of my child/ children	3.73	1.077
I know academic progress of my child/children	3.78	1.028
I and my wife have discussed and agreed for development planning of our child/children	3.82	1.073

Work Life Balance, Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL)	12229.991	4	3057.498	11.031	.000
Work Life Balance, Factors Impacting on WLB (FIWLB)	107.717	4	26.929	2.527	.045
Work Life Balance, Factors impacting on Engagement with Children (FIEWC)	3038.338	4	759.585	18.505	.000

Scales of WORK LIFE BALANCE	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Work Life Balance, Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL)	12229.991	4	3057.498	11.031	.000

ANOVA

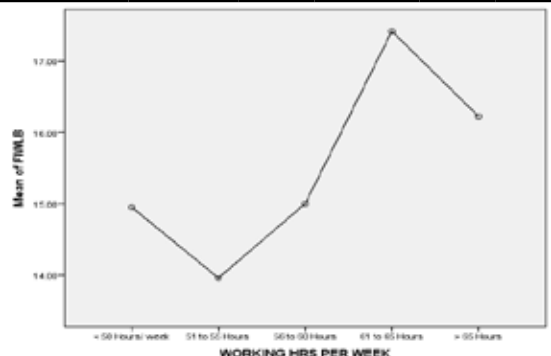
WIPL	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	12229.991	4	3057.498	11.031	.000
Within Groups	27162.242	98	277.166		
Total	39392.233	102			



Scales of WORK LIFE BALANCE	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Work Life Balance, Factors Impacting on WLB (FIWLB)	107.717	4	26.929	2.527	.045

ANOVA

FIWLB	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	107.717	4	26.929	2.527	.045
Within Groups	1044.381	98	10.657		
Total	1152.097	102			



HYPOTHESIS ONE:

WORKING HOURS of WORKING FATHERS will not influence their WORK LIFE BALANCE

Indicating ANOVA for WORK LIFE BALANCE and NO OF WORKING HOURS PER WEEK

Scales of WORK LIFE BALANCE	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.

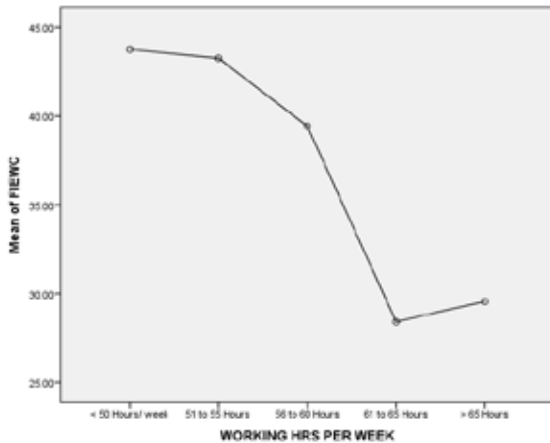
Scales of WORK LIFE BALANCE	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Work Life Balance, Factors impacting on Engagement with Children (FIEWC)	3038.338	4	759.585	18.505	.000

Work Life Balance, Factors Impacting on WLB (FIWLB)	226.227	4	56.557	5.986	.000
Work Life Balance, Factors impacting on Engagement with Children (FIEWC)	871.251	4	217.813	3.449	.011

ANOVA

FIEWC

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3038.338	4	759.585	18.505	.000
Within Groups	4022.652	98	41.047		
Total	7060.990	102			

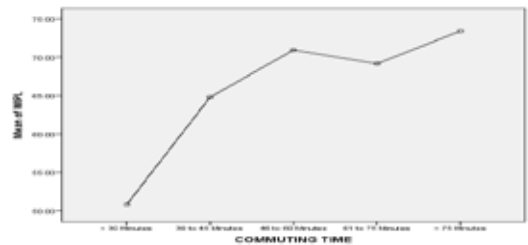


Scales of WORK LIFE BALANCE	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Work Life Balance, Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL)	8150.831	4	2037.708	6.392	.000

ANOVA

WIPL

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	8150.831	4	2037.708	6.392	.000
Within Groups	31241.402	98	318.790		
Total	39392.233	102			



FINDINGS ON HYPOTHESIS ONE:

It was found that there were significant differences in, work interference with personal life (WIPL), factors impacting work – life balance (FIWLB) and Factors impacting engagement with Children (FIEWC) with working hours per week.

Work interference with personal life (WIPL) was highest for professionals who worked more than 65 hours per week (3.75), followed by 60 – 65 hours (3.61), 55 – 60 hours (3.54), 50 – 55 hours (3.13) and was least for professionals who worked 40 – 45 hours

per week (2.48).

Factors impacting work – life balance (FIWLB) was highest for professionals who

worked more than 65 hours per week (3.40), followed by 55 – 60 hours (3.12), 60 – 65 hours (2.90), 50 – 55 hours (2.80) and was least for IT professionals who worked 40 – 45 hours per week (2.61).

Factors impacting engagement with Children (FIEWC) was lowest for professionals with who worked more than 61-65 hours per week followed by > 65 hours

**HYPOTHESIS TWO:
COMMUTING HOURS of WORKING FATHERS will not influence their WORK LIFE BALANCE**

Indicating ANOVA for WORK LIFE BALANCE and NO OF HOURS IN COMMUTING

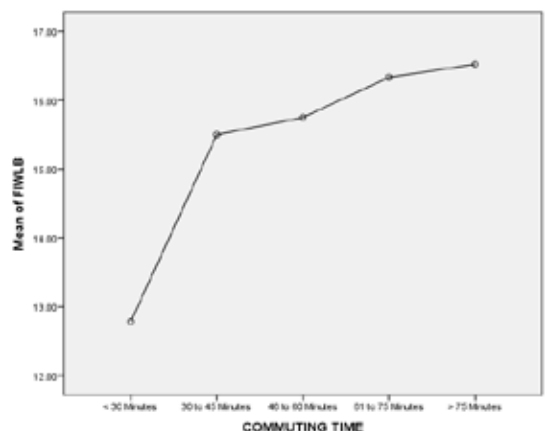
Scales of WORK LIFE BALANCE	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Work Life Balance, Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL)	8150.831	4	2037.708	6.392	.000

Scales of WORK LIFE BALANCE	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Work Life Balance, Factors Impacting on WLB (FIWLB)	226.227	4	56.557	5.986	.000

ANOVA

FIWLB

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	226.227	4	56.557	5.986	.000
Within Groups	925.870	98	9.448		
Total	1152.097	102			

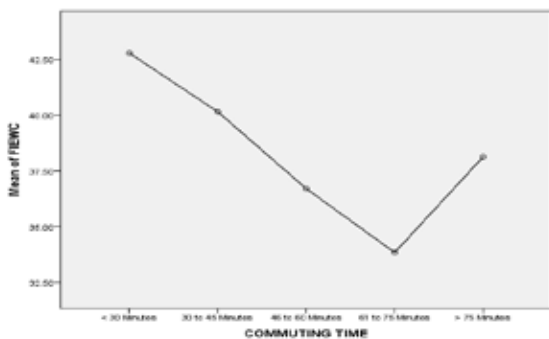


Scales of WORK LIFE BALANCE	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Work Life Balance, Factors impacting on Engagement with Children (FIEWC)	871.251	4	217.813	3.449	.011

ANOVA

FIEWC

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	871.251	4	217.813	3.449	.011
Within Groups	6189.740	98	63.161		
Total	7060.990	102			



FINDINGS ON HYPOTHESIS TWO:

It was found that there were significant differences in work interference with personal life (WIPL), factors impacting work – life balance (FIWLB) and Factors impacting engagement with Children (FIEWC) with COMMUTING HOURS per week. Work interference with personal life (WIPL) and Factors impacting work – life balance (FIWLB) was highest for professionals who spend >75 minutes in commuting per day. Factors impacting engagement with Children (FIEWC) was lowest for professionals with who spend 61-75 minutes per day.

CONCLUSION:

The study reveals that Long working hours and long commuting hours are seriously affecting the WORK LIFE BALANCE of working fathers in metro cities. There is need to research and investigate further on this subject in order to improve lives and productivity of working men in metro cities of India. There should be a clear boundary drawn between work and non – work activities. Human Resources and the Senior Management should take the initiative and communicate the importance of having a good balance between personal and professional life. The widespread perception that visibility = productivity should be changed. Focus on effectiveness rather than on length of work hours. Use communication technologies and skilful time-management strategies to boost output.

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