



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Commerce

WORK LIFE BALANCE OF FEMALE NURSES IN TENKASI DISTRICT

KEY WORDS: Personal Life, Work Life, Nurses, Work Life Balance

Dr. R. Raghadevi

Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce (Self-Finance), Sri Parasakthi College for Women, Courtallam - 627802.

ABSTRACT

In health care industry nurses play the major role, because they take care of the patients and bring back their smiles with their altruistic and dedicated service, by working collaboratively with various people and they work 24/7, always alert on toes. The pressure from extended working hours, compulsory overtime, chances of getting diseased, increased stress, family demands, and family problems lead to higher attrition rate and low morale. Therefore, an attempt is made to study their work-life balance with the research question of whether they have the interference of personal life in work-life and whether they face work-life interference in personal life. For analysis, the primary data were collected from 60 female nurses through questionnaire and the collected data were analyzed by using percentage analysis, mean score ranking and "Z" test. The result revealed that female nurses have a problem with balancing their personal life and work life.

INTRODUCTION

"Health is Wealth"

Health is considered as the most important phenomenon in today's world. A man with better health can motivate himself and others to live happily, attain their desired goals in life and they determine the wealth of the country also, as they live longer, more productive and they save more. While discussing the people's health, the health care sector came into play which provides high-quality health care services and effectively co-ordinates the strong public health system. In health care industry nurses play the major role, because they take care of the patients and bring back smiles on patients' faces with their altruistic as well as dedicated service, by working collaboratively with physicians, therapists, patients, patients' family, and other team members and they work 24/7, always alert on toes which cannot be seen so much in other professions. The pressure from extended working hours, compulsory overtime, chances of getting diseased, increased stress, family demands, and family problems leads to higher attrition rate and low morale. Roy (2017)¹ warned that "going by current trend, around half of private hospitals and most of government hospitals in the country will have to close down in the next five years because of an acute shortage of nurses". In this context, an attempt is made to study the work-life balance of female nurses which may help the health care sector to drastically reduce the attrition rate and to provide high-level job satisfaction to the female nurses.

REVIEWS RELATED TO THE STUDY

Santhana lakshmi et al (2012)² compared the work life balance of female nurses from government and private hospital in Chennai to identify the influence of work place environment and stress related issues on the emotional status of female nurses. They collected primary data from 105 female nurses through questionnaire. Their study suggested that both government and private hospitals in Chennai district, should address the WLB related issues and to support the female nurses to manage their WLB which would add to the performance of these staff members. They need a periodical review in terms of their work and personal life satisfaction. Otherwise, they would be subjected to severe stress.

Viveka Marie and Umesh Maiya (2015)³ analysed about the work life balance of female nurses from Multispeciality Hospitals, Mysore city. Their study objectives were to identify the stress experienced by female nurses and to know the causes of stress among female nurses. Their study revealed

that majority of the respondents had real problem in striking balance between work and family and though many of them enjoy their work in serving people they are facing stress related health issues. Most of the respondents feel if proper work scheduling and timely support provided by both family and hospitals they will be stress free to some extent and will be able to strike balance between work and family. Their study recommend to the hospital authorities to initiate work-family friendly policies which will help the female nurses in striking balance between work and family.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To examine whether the female nurses have interference of personal life in work life.
- To know whether the female nurses face work life interference in personal life.
- To identify the level of importance of various work life balance policies in hospitals.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

- Work life balance of female nurses is not influenced by their personal life.
- There is no significant difference between the work life balance and work life of female nurses.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Both primary data as well as secondary data were used for the analysis. The primary data were collected from 60 female nurses working in both government and private hospitals in Tenkasi District through questionnaire by adopting Stratified Random sampling technique. The collected data were analyzed by using percentage analysis, mean score ranking and "Z" test. Secondary data were collected from various journals, magazines and reports.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

"Don't confuse having a career with having a life." - Hillary Clinton In today's world, the demand of nursing professionals has increased because of the tremendous growth of population and transformation in the lifestyle of the people. It creates heavy pressure on nursing professionals and it may affect their personal life as well as work life. Such pressures at the workplace may lead their work-life balance at stake. Regarding these aspects, statements were given to the female nurses to obtain their opinions with a five-point scale and the scores are given in the Table 1.

Table 1 Interference of Personal Life in Work Life

Statements	SA	A	N	DA	SDA	Total Score	Mean Score	Mean Score Rank
Family matters reduce the time I can devote to my job.	34 (56.67%)	15(25.00%)	3(5.00%)	5(8.33%)	3(5.00%)	252	4.2	I

Family problems distract me from work.	6(10.00%)	24(40.00%)	12(20.00%)	15(25.00%)	3(5.00%)	195	3.25	IV
Family activities stop me getting the amount of sleep I need to do my job well.	10(16.67%)	10(16.67%)	17(28.33%)	13(21.67%)	10(16.67%)	177	2.95	VI
Family obligations reduce the time I need to relax or be myself.	14(23.33%)	12(20.00%)	14(23.33%)	11(13.33%)	9(15.00%)	191	3.18	V
The relationship with family suffers because of career.	26(43.33%)	10(16.67%)	12(20.00%)	7(11.67%)	5(8.33%)	225	3.75	II
Work related stress reduces the time I spend with my children.	12(20.00%)	15(25.00%)	19(33.67%)	7(11.67%)	7(11.67%)	198	3.3	III

Source: Primary Data
(Figures in Parentheses are Percentages)
Neutral Score: 180

Marital Status	Married	33	21.28	3.60	1.36
	Unmarried	27	19.89	4.20	
Family Type	Joint	38	21.71	3.86	5.17 *
	Nuclear	22	20.14	3.03	

As per the Table 1 the female nurses felt that, their family matters reduce the time they devote to job so they give highest score for it. The relationship with family suffers because of career is given second rank. Work related stress reduce the time spend with children is given the third rank. Family problems distract work is given the fourth rank. Family obligation reduce the time to relax or be themselves is given the fifth rank. The lowest score is given to the statement "Family activities stop me from getting the amount of sleep I need to do my job well".

It proves that the female nurses have inference of family in career. The Table 2 shows the mean, standard deviation and "Z" value of opinion scores of female nurses.

Table 2 "Z" Test on Opinion Scores of Female Nurses on Interference of Personal Life in Work Life

Factors	Categories	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Z - Value
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Table 3 Interference of Work Life in Personal Life

Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total score	Mean Score	Mean Score Rank
My job reduces the time I can spend with my family.	35(58.33%)	15(25.00%)	5(8.33%)	4(6.67%)	1 (1.67%)	259	4.32	I
Problems at work made me unstable at home.	13(21.67%)	25(41.67%)	12(20.00%)	8(13.33%)	2(3.33%)	219	3.65	III
My work involves a lot of time away from home.	12(20.00%)	13(21.67%)	23(38.33%)	7(11.67%)	5(8.33%)	200	3.33	IV
My job takes up all my energy. So, I can't pay attention at home.	11(18.33%)	12(20.00%)	14(23.33%)	16(26.67%)	7(11.67%)	184	3.06	V
The career suffers because of my family life and responsibilities.	33(55.00%)	14(23.33%)	6(10.00%)	4(6.67%)	3(5.00%)	250	4.17	II
Having a family has slowed down my career development.	10(16.67%)	10(16.67%)	12(20.00%)	12(20.00%)	16(26.67%)	166	2.77	VI

Source: Primary Data
(Figures in Parentheses are Percentages)
Neutral Score: 180

As per the Table 3 the female nurses felt that their job reduces the amount of time they can spend with their family so they give highest score for it. The career suffers because of their family life and responsibilities are given second rank. Problem at work made me unstable at home is given third rank. "My work involves a lot of time away from home" is given fourth rank. "My job takes up all my energy. So, I can't pay attention at home" is given fifth rank. The lowest score is given to the statement "Having a family has slowed down my career development". It proves that the female nurses have inference of work life in personal life. The Table 4 shows the mean, standard deviation and "Z" value of opinion score of female nurses.

Table 4 "Z" Test on Opinion Scores of Female Nurses on Interference of Work Life in Personal Life

Factors	Categories	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Z - Value
Marital Status	Married	33	20.82	2.97	0.4
	Unmarried	27	20.04	4.79	
Family Type	Joint	38	20.18	3.84	0.75
	Nuclear	22	20.95	3.81	

Source: Primary Data

The Table 4 reveals that irrespective of marital status and family type the female nurses have same opinion on interference on work life in personal life. Therefore the "Z" value is less than 1.96 in both factors.

Table 5 Level of Importance of Work Life Balance Policies in Hospitals

WLB Policies	Very Important	Important	Moderately Important	Slightly Important	Not Important	Total Score	Mean Score	Mean Score Rank
Paid Maternity Leave	41(68.33%)	9(15.00%)	1(1.67%)	1(1.67%)	8(13.33%)	254	4.23	I
Counseling Services for Employees	5(8.33%)	36(60.00%)	7(11.67%)	5(8.33%)	7(11.67%)	207	3.45	III
Staggered Return to Work After Pregnancy	11(18.33%)	12(20.00%)	21(35.00%)	8(13.33%)	7(11.67%)	189	3.15	V
Career Breaks	8(13.33%)	21(35.00%)	11(18.33%)	13(21.67%)	7(11.67%)	190	3.17	IV
Child Care Center at the Hospital	24(40.00%)	19(31.67%)	10(16.67%)	2(3.33%)	5(8.33%)	235	3.92	II
Transfer Policy	12(20.00%)	10(16.67%)	14(23.33%)	13(21.67%)	11(18.33%)	179	2.98	VI

Source: Primary Data
(Figures in Parentheses are Percentages)
Neutral Score: 180

As per the Table 5, the female nurses felt that paid maternity leave is very important to balance work and life as it provides a positive effect on infant and maternal health, and reduces the stress and depression for mothers. So they give the first rank for it. Childcare center at the hospital is given second rank as it allows them to spend more time with their children during the workday. Counseling service for employees is given third rank. A career break is given fourth rank. Staggering return to work after pregnancy is given fifth rank and the transfer policy is given sixth rank.

CONCLUSION

This research article provides some clear indications of female nurses' views on work-life balance. In personal life, they are yearning for their spouse and other family members' support to get relief from family responsibilities like childcare and eldercare. If they get that, it reduces their stress level, helps to take sound sleep and they can focus on career development. In work life, they are expecting that the hospital management should be empathetic towards their needs by having some important work-life balance policies. Among various WLB policies, they consider paid maternity leave as a very important one. But most of the private hospitals don't have such a policy. Hence, private hospitals should come forward to provide paid maternity leave to their staffs. Hospitals should make more efforts to implement work-life friendly policies and create a working environment that suits its female nurses' welfare and lifestyle to ensure work-life balance, this is as important as nurses with balanced life's yield best results and it ultimately increases the hospitals' performance also which saves many lives.

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