

Examining the Influence of Academic Position on Work Life Balance and Satisfaction of Faculty in India

C. Swarnalatha and S. Rajalakshmi

Department of Management Studies, Anna University,
Regional Centre Madurai, 625002 Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India

Abstract: Work-life balance refers to people spending sufficient time at their jobs while also spending adequate time on other pursuits, such as family, hobbies and community involvement. This research sought to determine if: Work life differs by academic position; job satisfaction differs by academic position and there is a relationship between faculty work life and job satisfaction and whether this relationship differs by academic position. Results indicated that the work life balance and job satisfaction has no significant among academic position. However, the results indicated that there is a significant relationship ($r = 0.689$) between work life and job satisfaction.

Key words: Work-life balance, job satisfaction, academic position, academician, policy makers

INTRODUCTION

Work-family or work-life balance has been of increasing interest in the past few years. Work-life balance is the degree to which an individual can simultaneously balance the emotional, behavioural and time demands of both paid work family and personal duties (Hill *et al.*, 2001). The concept of work life has been abstracted from the job satisfaction level of an employee which is an extrinsic factor of job satisfaction. It aimed to provide quality of life for an employee at the same time retaining the productivity levels of an employee at the work place. The balance work life score provides an organization with a productive and innovative employee (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2003) whereas disparity in the work life balance tends to develop depressed and dissatisfied staff (Kofodimos, 1993). In Asia, there has been a surge of work life balance research in the fields such as medicine, nursing and IT. But, there has been no evidence of engineering faculty stand in terms of work-life research. The present study addresses issues related to the work-life balance among engineering faculty in India.

Literature review

Work life balance: Work-family or work-life balance has been of increasing interest in the past few years. Work life balance is the phenomenon of striking an ideal balance between the professional life of an individual and their personal life with all of their respective associations

(Clark, 2000). For employees having a work-life balance means being able to strike a balance between fulfilling both work commitments and other activities that are important to them (Grawitch *et al.*, 2006).

The WLB activities include things like spending time with family, taking part in recreational activities, volunteering or undertaking further study. It also means minimising the conflict between work and family roles which when apparent diminishes employee perceptions of quality of both work and family life, consequently influencing organisational outcomes such as productivity, absenteeism and turnover. Breakspear and Hamilton (2004) suggested that employees nowadays seek a more balanced life and an employee without good well-being could be counterproductive to both the organization and other colleagues.

Frone suggested that people may be involved in multiple roles outside their family life (e.g., leisure roles and community roles). The term work-life balance is more inclusive than work-family balance where balance exists in the latter between work role and family role only. Because most research has focused on work-family balance, not much of it clearly distinguishes the term work-life balance from it. Blunsdon *et al.* (2006) suggested that work-life balance means that an individual can manage both work and other aspects of their life, such as the domestic or family sphere, without a conflict or without the opposition of one domain to the other.

Guest (2002) believed that work-life balance should be defined in both subjective and objective terms

whereby the subjective measure is the individuals subjective perception of individuals balance between work and the rest of life and the objective measure is the consequence of behaviour, for example time devoted to work or other demands. To provide a more appropriate context to place work life balance, the US Bureau of Labour Statistics (Clark, 2001) categorized 5 key trends that will affect individuals and workplaces during the 21st century. Among these trends was the movement to accomplish work life balance. The Bureau of Labour Statistics asserted that the changes in traditional gender roles, coupled with dual career families and single heads of households have exacerbated the lack of balance. Some of the investigations suggest that work-life balance of an employees induces an element of performance within their respective organizations, however there is no particular generalization presented yet about how this is done (Allen, 2001). For example, it has been found that work-life balance of employees contributes positively towards reducing 14 work load per head within the organization and helps developing an aspiring and motivational organizational culture where workforce is not exhausted and extra work is not considered as load (Allen, 2001). Similarly in contrast to ideal settings, a work-life conflict arises when an employee is not able to make justice with either or both domains of his/her life, i.e., work and home. The resulting situations in this case include (but not limited to) lower job satisfaction or contempt (Burke and Greengalss, 1999), less dedication and commitment towards work and organization (Frone *et al.*, 1997), random schedule and absenteeism (Allen, 2001), decreased workplace performance and contribution (Wayne *et al.*, 2004), biological dysfunctions and psychological stress (MacEwen and Barling, 1994) and lower socialization trends (Frone and Yardley, 1996; Tausig and Fenwick, 2001). These results reflect a negative contribution in organizational performance which slows down and disturbs the process of development within workplace.

According to McGinnis (1997), there are various benefits of maintaining a healthy balance between ones work and life. When all aspects are given attention they receive their due importance and this exchange provides us with a feeling of fulfilment which culminates in overall satisfaction. As revealed through the research of Motowidlo *et al.* (1986), it is a common sight that unsatisfied employees have trouble maintaining the quality of their work, since they lack fulfilment of purpose. This increases their levels of stress as well as anxiety. On the contrary, a satisfied individual is likely not to be stressed out by work that also helps them in maintaining its quality. Thus, satisfaction can be referred to as an effective benefit of work life balance in place.

Job satisfaction: Job satisfaction can be defined as the collection of feelings and beliefs about a current job (Jones *et al.*, 2000) as a positive attitude that is believed leads to high performance (Daft and Marcic, 2001) or as a reflection of an employees feelings about various aspects of work (Stone, 2005). Many researchers have defined job satisfaction but the definitions vary. According to Green, even though the definitions vary, a commonality among them seems to be that job satisfaction is a job-related emotional reaction. A job-related emotional reaction can be a sign of an employees emotional wellness can be affected by an employees behavioral influences and can be an indicator of overall organizational operations, therefore it is important to clarify the various levels of job satisfaction and the factors that it comprises.

Hackman and Oldham (1980) theory on job characteristics builds upon early organizational satisfaction theories of Maslow, Herzberg and Vroom which postulate that people have needs that have to be satisfied and that the job has certain characteristics which can meet these needs.

Higher education is not immune to the problem of low job satisfaction, in fact educational leaders have increased the number of research studies that try to identify factors that affect job satisfaction. In addition to educational leaders and community leaders, other offices and stakeholders within higher education have concern about the financial impacts that job satisfaction and faculty departures have on the institution. In a cross-national study of faculty from 16 different countries, 6 variables were rated a significant factors for faculty job satisfaction: Institutional affiliation, level of job strain, income, cooperative climate, locus of control and geographic location (VanderPutten and Wimsatt, 1999).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research framework: The model illustrates the hypothetical relationship between academic position, job satisfaction and work life balance. A represents the influence work life balance has on job satisfaction, B represents the influence academic position have on job satisfaction and C indicates the influence of academic position have on work life balance. In sum, the model assumes academic position directly and indirectly influences work life balance and job satisfaction (Fig. 1).

Data and sample: In order to gather data for this study, a random sample of 250 employees has been selected from the population of faculty of engineering in India. Out of total 250, the numbers of invalid copies detected were 23 and a total of 227 valid ones were detected.

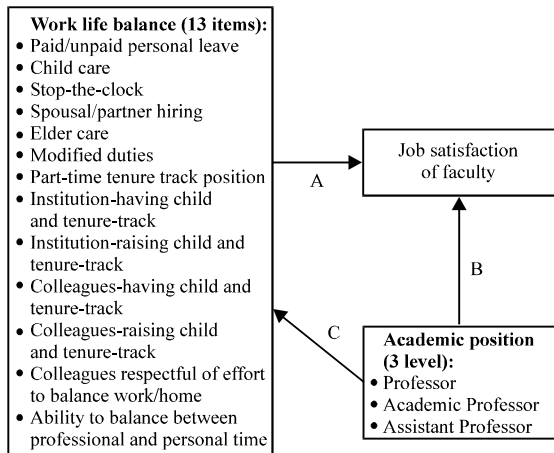


Fig. 1: The model of hypotheses relationship between academic position

Research questions:

- To what extent does the faculty work life balance differs by academic position?
- To what extent does the faculty job satisfaction differ by academic position?
- What relationship exists between work life balance and job satisfaction among faculty?

Work life balance: The items illustrated in Fig. 1 were used to determine work and life balance of faculty. The responses are in the 5 Likert-scales, ranging from 1 = Very ineffective, 2 = Ineffective, 3 = Neither effective nor ineffective, 4 = Effective and 5 = Very effective, the variables are categorical

Job satisfaction: In addition to work life balance, measures of faculty job satisfaction serve as primary variables. The 4 themes were used to measure faculty job satisfactions:

- Nature of work (overall)
- Nature of work (teaching)
- Nature of work (research)
- Global satisfaction

The 28 questions were used to measure the faculty's job satisfaction.

Academic position: The 3 level in the academic profession say Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor is considered for the study.

Data analysis

Research question 1: To what extent does the faculty Work life balance differs by academic position? To address the first research question, an ANOVA was

Table 1: ANOVA between Work Life Balance (WLB) and academic position

Groups	Sum of squares	df	F	Sig.
Between groups	1.769	2	1.050	0.227
Within groups	25.428	226	-	-

Table 2: ANOVA between Job Satisfactions (JS) and academic position

Groups	Sum of squares	df	F	Sig.
Between groups	3.786	2	1.329	0.236
Within groups	78.93	226	-	-

Table 3: Person correlation between work life balance and job satisfaction

Groups	WLB	JS
WLB	1.000	0.689
JS	0.689	1.000

conducted to find out the comparison between Work Life Balance (WLB) and academic position. The test of homogeneity of variances is not significant ($F = 1.050$, $p\text{-value} = 0.227 > 0.05$). From Table 1, the ANOVA result is not significant ($p > 0.05$) which means there is no significant difference between work life balance and academic position.

Research question 2: To what extent does the faculty job satisfaction differs by academic position? To address the second research question, an ANOVA was conducted in SPSS to find out the comparison between Job Satisfactions (JS) and academic position. Table 2 shows the ANOVA analysis results. The ANOVA result is not significant ($p > 0.05$) which means that there is no significant difference between job satisfaction and academic position.

Research Question 3: What relationship exists between work life balance and job satisfaction among faculty? To determine the relationship between Work Life Balance (WLB) and Job Satisfaction (JS), a correlation analysis using the Pearson correlation coefficient was performed. As revealed in Table 3, there is a significant relationship ($r = 0.689$) between work life balance and job satisfaction.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings revealed that faculty satisfaction towards work life does not have any differences among all academic position in Engineering College. Faculty member reported having considered being satisfied with their work and home factor regardless of their academic position. It should be noted that being in different academic position does not differ as a function of satisfaction across work and family issues. On the contrary, satisfied individual is likely not to be stressed out by work that also helps them in maintaining its quality. Thus, satisfaction can be referred to as an effective benefit of work life balance in place.

This result indicated that there is no difference between job satisfactions among academic position. Differences were observed in the amount of time expended by faculty in research and teaching, so position did not have an impact on job satisfaction levels.

There was a significant relationship between work life balance and job satisfaction among faculty the relationship between satisfaction balance and quality of life is likely to depend on the total level of satisfaction across work and family roles. Under conditions of high total satisfaction, there is more satisfaction to distribute across work and family roles.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study provide valuable insight for educators and policy makers who are interested in factors that contribute to work life and overall job satisfaction among academicians.

REFERENCES

- Allen, T.D., 2001. Family-supportive work environments: The role of organizational perceptions. *J. Vocational Behav.*, 58: 414-435.
- Blunsdon, B., P. Blyton, K. Reed and A. Dastmalchian, 2006. Introduction-Work, Life and the Work-Life Issue. In: *Work-Life Integration: International Perspectives on the Balancing of Multiple Roles*, Byton, P., B. Blunsdon, K. Reed and A. Dastmalchian (Eds.). Palgrave Macmillan, Hampshire, pp: 1-16.
- Breakspear, C. and C. Hamilton, 2004. Getting a life: Understanding the downshifting phenomenon in Australia. Executive Summaries. <http://www.professionalwealth.com.au/admin/file/content3/c2/PW%20Downshifting.pdf>.
- Burke, R.J. and E.R. Greengalss, 1999. Work-family conflict, spouse support and nursing staff well-being during organizational restructuring. *J. Occup. Health Psychol.*, 4: 327-336.
- Clark, S.C., 2000. Work/family border theory: A new theory of work/family balance. *Human Relations*, 53: 747-770.
- Clark, S.C., 2001. Work cultures and work/family balance. *J. Vocational Behav.*, 58: 348-365.
- Daft, R. and D. Marcic, 2001. *Understanding Management*. Southwestern Thomson Learning, Boston, USA.
- Frone, M.R. and J.K. Yardley, 1996. Workplace family-supportive programmes: Predictors of employed parents' importance ratings. *J. Occup. Org. Psychol.*, 69: 351-366.
- Frone, M.R., J.K. Yardley and K.S. Markel, 1997. Developing and testing an integrative model of the work-family interface. *J. Vocational Behav.*, 50: 145-167.
- Grawitch, M.J., M. Gottschalk and D.C. Munz, 2006. The path to a healthy workplace: A critical review linking healthy workplace practices, employee well-being and organizational improvements. *Consulting Psychol. J.: Pract. Res.*, 58: 129-147.
- Greenhaus, J., K.M. Collins and J.D. Shaw, 2003. The relation between work-family balance and quality of life. *J. Vocational Behav.*, 63: 510-531.
- Guest, D.E., 2002. Perspectives on the study of work-life balance. *Soc. Sci. Inform.*, 41: 255-279.
- Hackman, J.R. and G.R. Oldham, 1980. *Work Redesign*. Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., USA.
- Hill, S.E.K., M.H. Bahniuk, J. Dobos and D. Rouner, 2001. Mentoring and other communication support in the academic setting. *Group Org. Manage.*, 14: 355-368.
- Jones, G.R., J.M. Gorge and C.W.L. Hill, 2000. *Contemporary Management*. McGraw-Hill, Boston, MA.
- Kofodimos, J.R., 1993. *Balancing Act: How Managers Can Integrate Successful Careers and Fulfilling Personal Lives*. Proquest/Csa Journal Division, San Francisco, ISBN: 9780608247038.
- MacEwen, K.E. and J. Barling, 1994. Daily consequences of work interference with family and family interference with work. *Work Stress: Int. J. Work*, 8: 244-254.
- McGinnis, A.L., 1997. *The Balanced Life: Achieving Success in Work And Love*. Augsburg, Minneapolis, ISBN: 9780806635705, Pages 195.
- Motowidlo, S.J., J.S. Packard and M.R. Manning, 1986. Occupational stress: Its causes and consequences for job performance. *J. Applied Psycho.*, 71: 618-629.
- Stone, R., 2005. *Human Resource Management*. 5th Edn., John Wiley and Sons Ltd., Sidney, Australia.
- Tausig, M. and R. Fenwick, 2001. Unbinding time: Alternate work schedules and work-life balance. *J. Family Econ. Issues*, 22: 101-119.
- VanderPutten, J. and L. Wimsatt, 1999. Cross-national faculty departure: Development of a new model. *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education*, (ASHE'99), San Antonio, TX., USA -.
- Wayne, J.H., N. Musisca and W. Fleson, 2004. Considering the role of personality in the work-family experience: Relationships of the big five to work-family conflict and facilitation. *J. Vocational Behav.*, 64: 108-130.