

VALIDATION OF WORK LIFE BALANCE SCALE ON FEMALE EMPLOYEES

Tika Ram*

Associate Professor, Haryana School of Business
Guru Jambheshwar University of Science &
Technology, Hisar (Haryana) India

Laxmi**

Research Scholar, Haryana School of Business
Guru Jambheshwar University of Science &
Technology, Hisar (Haryana) India

ABSTRACT

The study aims to develop and validate the instrument for measuring work life balance of female employees and to examine work life balance on the basis age, marital status and type of family. Nature of the study is exploratory cum descriptive. Respondent of study are working females in Delhi/National Capital Region of India. Data has been analysed through descriptive statistics, Cronbach's alpha, Independent sample t-test, confirmatory factor analysis and One Way ANOVA. After analysing the fit indices and regression weights, it is concluded that the dimensions of flexible work arrangement, family friendly policies, health promotion activities and extra work pressure are valid and reliable to measure work life balance of female employees. Divorced female employees are found to have more balance in work and personal life. The work life balance of female employees is not affected by the type of family (nuclear or joint) does not affect. Female employees in the age group of 20-30 years' experience more work pressure in comparison to the employees in the age groups of 30-40 years and above 40 years.

Keywords: Work Life Balance, Flexible Work Arrangement, Family Friendly Policies, Health Promotion Activities, Extra Work Pressure, Marital Status, Type of Family, Age, Confirmatory Factor Analysis.

1. Introduction

Work life balance is also known for work stress, health issues and multiple role conflicts. The uncongenial aspect of work life balance (WLB) puts it in public interest. Work life balance is a burning issue globally specifically in the context of female employees. With changing social, economic and cultural environment, Indian females are ready to face challenges while managing multiple roles. Females' participation in employment is increasing day by day. They are effectively availing employment opportunities with their multi-faceted talent by managing multiple roles. WLB facilities enable female employees to manage their commitment to both employer as well as family. These facilities create possibilities for employers to enhance productivity and simultaneously boosting confidence of employees to deal with personal life and their engagement in jobs. Work life balance is important as it enhances overall satisfaction leading to improvement in quality. It has been examined that persons who have better control over work environment and perceive their family life positive and happy

are less stressed (Parasuraman and Alutto, 1984).

Work life balance is an important determinant of health and wellbeing of female employees. Psychological wellbeing, satisfaction and harmony in life depend upon work life balance settings of person to a large extent (Clark, 2000). Considerable research studies (Papalexandris and Kramar, 1997; Osterman, 1995) have been carried out on flexible work arrangements, family friendly policies, work hours and equal wages etc. There are number of research studies which highlighted the importance of work life balance for organizations and wellbeing of employees (Purohit, 2013; Bell et al., 2012; Lowe, 2006; Sarah Holly and Alwine Mohnen, 2012). No prior research study has been found which incorporated the instrument of health promotion initiatives in reference to work life balance. Therefore, there is a need to include health promotion initiatives while achieving work life balance.

1.1 Current Scenario

The phenomenon of work life balance in India is gaining huge attention unlike before. Inequality for females still exists in society; different standards of behaviour are still being followed for male and female employees (Mathew and Panchanatham, 2011). Indian females are struggling for equality, financial independence and social recognition. Kasthuri and Rajkumar (2011) stated that there is no legal provision of paternity leave. Women have to take care of their small babies. Indian organizations are not doing very well in helping employees to balance their work and personal life. However, in present social setup female employees are ignoring their health and wellbeing while struggling to manage different responsibilities. Indian legislation is offering progressive WLB policies i.e. family friendly environment, compressed working hours, parental leave, career break option in public sector companies. Multinational companies have been found more conscious about work life balance issues. These companies provide regular yoga classes and social events at workplace but these have little to do with family wellbeing and work life balance (Joshi et al., 2002). Organizations are bound to provide various kinds of benefits to employees, essential for personal growth of employees. The main focus of these programs and initiatives is to increase productivity and retaining competent talent within organizations. "MAITREE" is an initiative of Tata group for spouse of employees to bring family together. Tata group is at the top to identify unique needs of employees. It has introduced various programs for benefit of employees' i.e. adult education programs, creche facilities in organization with more than 20 female employees, community development programs, flexible work arrangements and five days week. "PIZZA AND COKE" meeting in Zenzar is arranged for employees to interact with seniors freely (Baral and Bhargava, 2011).

Enormous researches have been conducted on work life balance in different time settings. Most of these focused on work life conflicts rather than work life balance. Work life conflict reflects the critical situation when it becomes very intricate to manage different domain (work, family and personal) of life at same time (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985). Work life balance shows broad and positive aspect of

coordination by human beings while performing multiple roles (Jones et al., 2006). There has been very little focus on health aspect of work life balance particularly in the context of female employees. The need of work life balance arrangements is often felt by females as they are exposed to greater health risk due to multi roles and responsibilities (Brezinka & Kittel, 1995). Therefore, there is a need to develop and validate the instrument to measure and examine work life balance of female employees.

2. Theoretical background

Work life balance is an outcome of joint efforts of employee and employer for mutual benefits. It was firstly invented in United Kingdom in 1970s (Publication in: New Ways to Work and the Working Mother's Association in the United Kingdom). Work life balance is a dynamic construct as the proper balance solely depends upon personal and work circumstances. Manageable work load and flexible work arrangements will be helpful to those who find it harder to manage personal and professional life. "It is Individual's attempt to find suitable time arrangements and time options that allow the best possible co-ordination in requirement of work with requirements of personal life. The work-life balance reflects social change, such as a rise of dual-career families, single parenthood and the extension of care to cover older family members, but also the need to maintain employability in an uncertain labour market" (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EFILWC), 2006).

Female employees in India are managing multiple roles while working in organizations. Now they are not limited to specific type of jobs. Krings (2007) stated that in some specific professions i.e. information technology (IT), females can only be successful if they sacrifice their family life altogether. Work life balance is important as it enhances overall wellbeing leading improvement in quality. Work life balance initiative is a powerful strategy for organizations which consider employees as its assets (Purohit, 2013). Quality of work life is a major contributing factor in job satisfaction of employees. Susi and Jawahrrani (2011) observed that mere inclusion of policies is not enough until these are not included in objectives and culture of organization. Education programs should be organized to create awareness regarding work life balance (WLB) policies available to them.

Numerous studies have been carried which examined different aspects of work life balance. Swamy et al. (2015) have measured quality of work life of employees of mechanical manufacturing small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Bolhari et al. (2011) examined work and life of information technology staff on basis of safe and healthy work environment, fair and adequate compensation, growth and security, social relevance, total life space, social integration, constitutionalism, and development of human capacities. Five items work life balance culture scale is also an effective tool with overall good quality for employees (Nitzsche et al., 2014). Work life balance is important for professional growth of employee because it increases the productivity and efficiency (Kasthuri and Rajkumar, 2011). Organizational changes due to globalization and demographic

transition have insisted business houses to formulate strategies for healthy work life balance. The aim of present study is validating WLB scale to measure work life balance in Indian cultural settings and to examine the work life balance on the basis age, marital status and type of family.

2.1 Research objectives

1. To validate work life balance scale on Indian female employees.
2. To compare work life balance of female employees on the basis demographic characteristics:
 - i) To compare work life balance of female employees on the basis of marital status.
 - ii) To compare work life balance of female employees on the basis of type of family.
 - iii) To compare work life balance of female employees on the basis of age.

Hypotheses

- 1) *H_{a1}: There is significant difference in work life balance of female employees on the basis of marital status.*
- 2) *H_{a2}: There is significant difference in work life balance of female employees on the basis of type of family.*
- 3) *H_{a3}: There is significant difference in work life balance of female employees on the basis of age.*

3. Research methodology

Respondents of the study have been divided into four strata i.e. teachers, health professionals, bank/insurance employees and corporate employees on the basis of occupation by using stratified random sampling. Nature of the study is exploratory cum descriptive. Respondents of the study are working females in Delhi/National Capital Region of India. The data has been collected from February 2013 to April 2014. The study is based on primary data collected through self-administered questionnaire. Items of the questionnaire have been extracted from various research studies conducted in similar context (Joshi et al., 2002; Harris, 2007; Harma, 2006; Baral and Bhargava, 2011; Aggarwal, 2012; Susi and Jawaharni, 2011; Hooker et al., 2007; Kirsten and Karch, 2012; and Sarah, 2010). Items have been rated on five point likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). WLB questionnaire contains four dimensions of flexible work arrangements, family friendly policies, health promotion activities and extra work pressure. Data has been analysed through descriptive statistics (Mean and percentage), Cronbach's alpha (reliability), Independent sample t-test, One Way ANOVA and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) by using AMOS 18 and SPSS version 18 (SPSS, Chicago, IL, USA). Cronbach's alpha coefficient has been used to check the internal consistency. Analysis of variance has been used to compare the work life balance of female employees on the basis of marital status and age. Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the respondents.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Variables	Description	Frequency	Percent &
Marital Status	Married	446	54.1
	Unmarried	353	42.8
	Divorced	13	1.6
	Widowed	12	1.5
Family type	Nuclear	474	57.5
	Joint	350	42.5
	20-30	475	57.6
	30-40	177	21.5
	Above 40	172	20.9

4.0 Data analysis

4.1. Validation of Work Life Balance (WLB)

Originally the construct of work life balance contained 27 items categorized into 04 dimensions of flexible work arrangement, family friendly policies, health promoting

activities and extra work pressure which have been validated through confirmatory factor analysis. Extra work pressure measures negative aspects for work life balance. Table 2 demonstrates the goodness of fit indices of the original and the modified model of the factors structure of work life balance (Figure 1).

Table 2: Goodness of Fit Indices for Work Life Balance

Model Fit Summary								
Original Model								
Model	CMIN	DF	CMIN/DF	GFI	CFI	AGFI	TLI	RMSEA
Default	2436.4	318	7.66	0.78	0.64	0.74	0.60	0.09
Modified Model								
	482.06	112	4.30	0.95	0.89	0.91	0.87	0.06

Source: Primary Data

It is seen that original work life balance model poorly fits the data; therefore initial modifications have been made to develop a model that fits the data properly. Modification indices (MI) have been analysed and improvements have been made in the proposed (original) model. It is observed from modification indices that item WLB8 (You get enough time for your family by working with your organization), WLB19 (Opportunities for personal development), WLB12 (You get enough family support for your job), item WLB10 (You feel job pressure while you are at home), WLB11 (You feel any pressure of family life problems while at workplace), WLB17 (You have time saving home appliances like microwave oven and washing machine), WLB4 (Your organization keeps a limit on overtime working hours), WLB16 (The better public transportation system between your home and workplace), WLB20 (Your organization provides employees assistance programs for their problems) and WLB9 (Availability of creche facility) have been removed from the model due to cross loadings and lower regression weights on the concerned

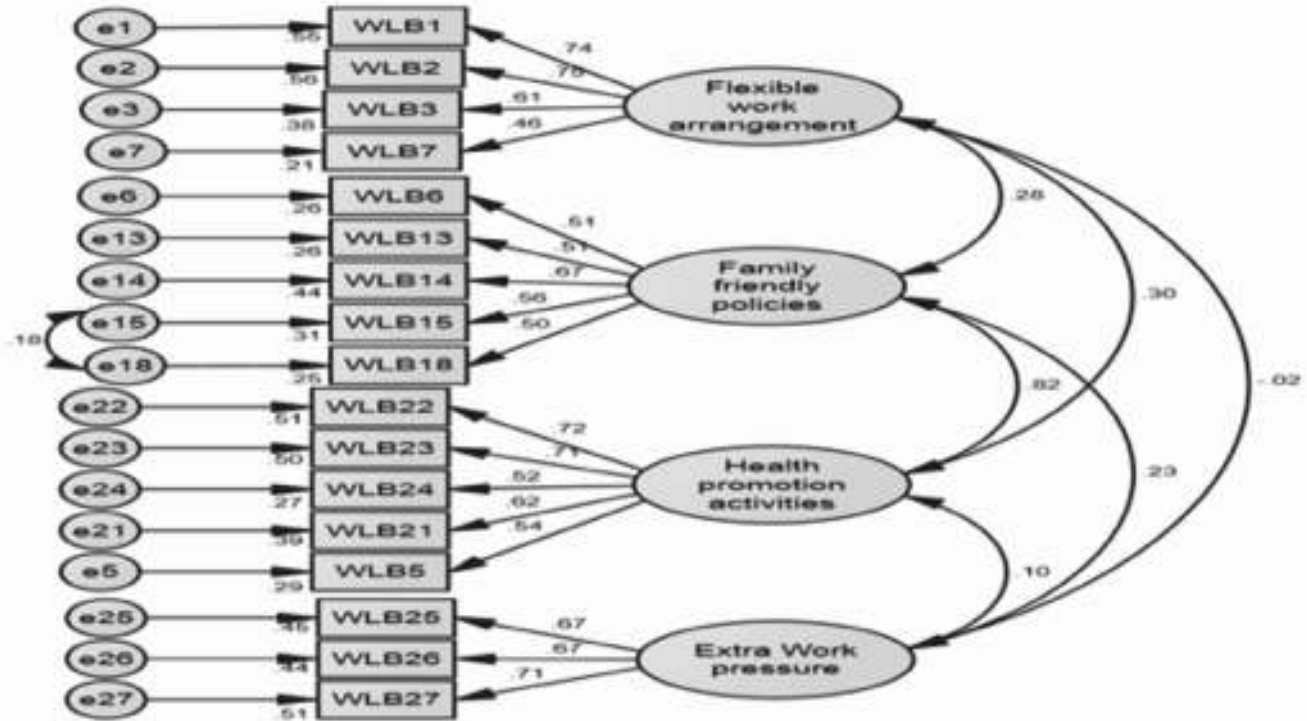
dimensions. It is also observed from the modification indices that measurement error e15 (WLB15) and e18 (WLB18) are correlated (Figure 1). Gerbing and Anderson (1984) stated that correlated errors undoubtedly indicates dramatic improvement but at the cost of conclusion drawn from the model. Therefore theoretical justification is essential while correlating the error terms. Error e15 is related to the organization provides you allowance for leisure time activities (WLB15) and e18 is related to the organization provides holiday programs for children (WLB18). Both the statements are related to similar set of activities. Therefore their error terms (e15 and e18) can be related. After making the modifications in the original model, the modified model of work life balance retained 17 items (Table 3 and Figure 1). The modified model has improved fit indices (Table 2). Table 3 shows the reliability and the items loadings to the dimensions of Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA), Family Friendly Policies (FFP), Health Promotion Activities (HPA) and Extra Work Pressure (EWP), of Work Life Balance (WLB).

Table 3: Factor Loadings and Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient Work Life Balance (WLB)

Items	Description of items	Factor Loadings	Cronbach's alpha	Overall Cronbach's alpha	
Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA)					
WLB1	Your organization provides you the facility of flexible timing and work sharing	0.73	0.729	0.784	
WLB2	Your organization provides you family friendly workplace	0.74			
WLB3	The organization facilitates you to release your work pressures	0.61			
WLB7	You get supportive environment from your colleagues	0.45			
Family Friendly Policies (FFP)					
WLB6	The organization provides you the option to work at home	0.50	0.687		
WLB13	The organization provides the facility of cell phone and computer for personal use	0.51			
WLB14	Your organization provide you a good transportation facility	0.66			
WLB15	The organization provides you allowance for leisure time activities.	0.55			
WLB18	The organization provides holiday programs for children.	0.50			
Health Promotion Activities (HPA)					
WLB5	Your organization has separate policy for work life balance issues.	0.53	0.755		
WLB21	The organization arranges health programs time to time.	0.62			
WLB22	The organization provides gym facility.	0.71			
WLB23	There is availability of healthy food at workplace.	0.70			
WLB24	Get enough time for exercise and sleep.	0.52			
Health Promotion Activities (HPA)					
WLB25	You frequently get office work at weekends.	0.67	0.724		
WLB26	You often get office work during the evening.	0.66			
WLB27	You frequently get office work at unexpected hours.	0.71			

Source: Primary Data

Figure 1: Factor Structure of Work Life Balance (WLB)



Fit Indices: CMIN/DF = 4.3; GFI = 0.93; AGFI = 0.91; CFI = 0.89; TLI = 0.87; RMSEA = 0.06

Table 4: Covariance among the Factors of Work Life Balance

Variables		Estimate	C.R.	P
Flexible work arrangement	<—> Extra Work pressure	-.009	-0.48	.626
Flexible work arrangement	<—> Family friendly policies	.117	5.15	***
Health promotion activities	<—> Family friendly policies	.444	10.10	***
Health promotion activities	<—> Extra Work pressure	.054	2.13	.033
Flexible work arrangement	<—> Health promotion activities	.088	5.43	***
Family friendly policies	<—> Extra Work pressure	.176	4.49	***
e15	<—> e18	.203	4.21	***

Source: Primary Data (Significant at $p < 0.001$ ***)

The unstandardized regression weights of work life balance are significant by critical ratio test ($C.R. > \pm 1.96$, $p < .05$). Standardized regression weights (Table 5 and Figure 1) of observed variables in concerned dimensions ranges from

0.456 (WLB7: organization provides holiday programs for children) to 0.748 (WLB2: organization provides you family friendly workplace).

Table 5: Standardized Regression Weights and Squared Multiple Correlation of WLB

Standardized Regression Weights: (Default model)					SMC
Variables		Estimate	C.R.	p	Estimate
WLB7	<— Flexible Work Arrangement	.456	-	-	.208
WLB3	<— Flexible Work Arrangement	.613	10.45	***	.375
WLB2	<— Flexible Work Arrangement	.748	11.13	***	.560
WLB1	<— Flexible Work Arrangement	.739	11.11	***	.546

Standardized Regression Weights: (Default model)					SMC	
Variables			Estimate	C.R.	p	Estimate
WLB24	<—	Health Promotion Activities	.521	-	-	.272
WLB23	<—	Health Promotion Activities	.705	13.03	***	.497
WLB22	<—	Health Promotion Activities	.715	13.11	***	.512
WLB14	<—	Family Friendly Policies	.667	-	-	.445
WLB13	<—	Family Friendly Policies	.510	11.88	***	.260
WLB6	<—	Family Friendly Policies	.509	11.85	***	.259
WLB27	<—	Extra Work Pressure	.711	-	-	.505
WLB26	<—	Extra Work Pressure	.666	13.10	***	.443
WLB25	<—	Extra Work Pressure	.674	13.11	***	.454
WLB15	<—	Family Friendly Policies	.558	12.64	***	.311
WLB18	<—	Family Friendly Policies	.497	11.44	***	.247
WLB21	<—	Health Promotion Activities	.625	12.25	***	.390
WLB5	<—	Health Promotion Activities	.537	11.17	***	.288

Source: Primary Data (Significant at $p < 0.05^{***}$)

It is observed that WLB1 (Your organization provides you the facility of flexible timing and work sharing), WLB2 (Your organization provides you family friendly workplace), WLB3 (The organization facilitates you to release your work pressures) and WLB7 (You get supportive environment from your colleagues) are related to flexible work arrangements and load on flexible work arrangements only (Figure 1). Similarly, remaining observed variables are also loading to their concerned dimensions only i.e. family friendly policies, health promotion activities and extra work pressure. The results of standardized regression weights completely satisfy the

condition of zero cross loadings which indicate that the 17 observed items of the study are significantly represented by 4 latent dimensions of work life balance. Squared Multiple Correlations (SMC) which show the explanatory power of regression model ranged from 0.208 to 0.560 (Table 5 and Figure 1). Results indicate that WLB7 (supportive environment from your colleagues) explains 20.8 percent variance and WLB2 (organization provides you family friendly workplace) explains 56 percent variance in flexible work arrangement.

4.2 Work life Balance of Female Employees on the basis of Marital Status

Table 6: Comparison in Work Life Balance on the basis of Marital Status

Marital Status	WLB	FWA	FFP	HPA	EWP
Married	2.88	3.25	2.76	2.83	2.69
Unmarried	3.00	3.15	2.88	3.03	2.96
Divorced	3.17	3.15	3.60	3.21	2.71
Widowed	2.64	3.16	2.25	2.61	2.52
F	5.03	0.97	6.70	4.25	5.99
P-value*	0.002*	0.404	0.000*	0.005*	0.000*

Source: Primary Data (Significant at $p < 0.05^*$)

Table 6 shows means of work life balance (WLB) and its dimensions on the basis of marital status of female employees. Statistical significant differences have been observed in overall WLB and its dimensions i.e. family friendly policies, health promotion activities and extra work pressure on the basis of marital status ($p < 0.05$). It has been noticed that female employees who mentioned their marital status as divorced scored highest mean (3.17) in overall

WLB, family friendly policies (3.60) and health promotion activities (3.21). As far as extra work pressure is concerned, unmarried females have higher mean scores (2.96). Insignificant difference has been observed in flexible work arrangements ($p > 0.05$) on the basis of marital status.

4.3 Work Life Balance of Female Employees on the basis of Type of Family

Table 7: Comparison in Work Life Balance on the basis of Type of Family

Type of Family	WLB	FWA	FFP	HPA	EWP
Nuclear Family	2.92	3.20	2.78	2.88	2.82
Joint Family	2.95	3.20	2.86	2.98	2.78
t	-0.906	0.006	-1.404	-1.526	0.575
p- value*	0.365	0.995	0.161	0.127	0.565

Independent sample t-test has been used to make the comparison of work life balance on the basis of family type (Table 7). When the comparison has been made between nuclear family and joint family, no significant differences have been explored in overall WLB and its dimensions ($p>0.05$). It

is observed that there is absence of differences in work life balance on the basis of type of family. They have similar work life balance.

4.4. Work Life Balance of Female Employees on the basis of Age

Table 8: comparison in Work Life Balance on the basis of Age

Age (years)	WLB	FWA	FFP	HPA	EWP
20-30	2.97	3.19	2.84	2.96	2.88
30-40	2.91	3.22	2.83	2.88	2.73
Above 40	2.86	3.21	2.74	2.87	2.64
F	2.21	0.09	0.88	0.89	4.89
p-value*	0.110	0.90	0.412	0.410	0.008*

Table 8 shows means of work life balance (WLB) and its dimensions on the basis of age of female employees. Age has been categorized into three groups i.e. 20-30 (lower), 30-40 (middle) and above 40 (upper). No significant difference has been found in overall WLB and its dimension i.e. flexible work arrangements, family friendly policies and health promotion activities on the basis of age of respondents ($p>0.05$). As far as extra work pressure is concerned, significant differences have been found on the basis of age of respondents ($p<0.05$). It has been observed that lower age group has highest mean score in extra work pressure (2.88). It is concluded that in the initial time period of job, females have higher work pressure in comparison of middle and upper age group of the employees.

5.0 Findings

The observed items of the study loaded distinctly on the four latent dimensions of flexible work arrangements, extra work pressure, family friendly policies and health promotion activities, together measuring work life balance. The results indicate that work life balance especially in the context of health shows sufficient internal consistency. Female employees differ in work life balance on the basis of marital status and age. The types of family do not influence work life balance of female employees.

6.0 Discussion

Work life balance scale demonstrated greater internal consistency when used in Indian female employees. All the observed variables are significantly represented by their respective latent factors. Dimensions of work life balance scale are clearly distinct from each other, as demonstrated by

confirmatory factor analysis. These are homogeneous in nature indicated by their internal consistencies. Statistical properties are satisfactory to examine work life balance of female. Observed variables of flexible work arrangements, family friendly properties, health promotion activities and extra work pressure are significantly represented by concerned dimensions. Correlation coefficient between flexible work arrangements (FWA) and extra work pressure (EWP) has been found negative because FWA supports work life balance while EWA has adverse effect on WLB of females. Milkie et al. (2010) also observed that number of work hours is negatively related with work life balance. It has been observed that female employees who mentioned their marital status as divorced possess more balance in work and personal life. They scored highest in family friendly policies and health promotion activities. As far as extra work pressure is concerned, unmarried female employees feel more pressure if they get work at unexpected hours. Findings are compatible with the results of Aggarwal (2012) who stated strong relationship between marital status and work life balance; and perception and need of employees on the basis of marital status. It is observed that family type (nuclear or joint) does not affect work life balance. They have similar work life balance in both the types of families. It has been observed that lower age group feel more work pressure. It is concluded that in the initial time period of job they have higher workload in comparison of middle and upper age. Findings are consistent with the findings of Nordenmark et al. (2012) and Doble and Supriya (2010) who have mentioned that higher the age higher will be the work life balance of a person. Dubey et al. (2010) also divided life into six quadrants that are family and friends, work, hobbies, sleep and exercise. Extra work pressure

prevents them to have enough time for family, sleep and exercise.

7.0 Conclusion

The four factor structure of work life balance which incorporates the health promotion initiatives of organization is an effective tool to measure work life balance of female employees. Statistical properties of the scale make it appropriate to measure perceived work life balance settings of employees and risk factors. Results show that the four dimensions are significant predictor of work life balance. It has been observed that female employees who mentioned their marital status as divorced have mentioned more balance in work and personal life. Family type (nuclear or joint) does not affect the work life balance. It is also concluded that in the initial time period of job, female employees experiences higher work pressure in comparison of the employees of middle and upper age.

8.0 Implication

Results indicate that health of employees depends upon work life balance facilities available to them. Different policies and facilities of organisations such as gym, healthy food at workplace, health programs and enough sleep are important to live healthy, prosperous life which can be achieved through combined efforts of employees and employers. Therefore present scale incorporated practices which need efforts by organisations in helping employees to balance between work and life. Employees' health and productivity can be improved by offering programs specifically designed to balance work and personal life of female employees.

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