

Work-Life Balance among Working Females: A Comparative Study of Female Employees in Government and Private Higher Academic Organizations in Dehradun District

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Abstract

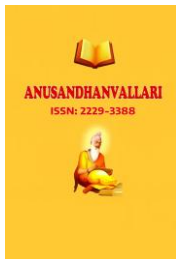
This research involves a research on the work- Life balance (WLB) of 180 female academicians working in government and private higher academic institutions located in the Dehradun District, Uttarakhand. The study based on the cross-sectional quantitative design and the use of the 15-item Hayman Work-Life Balance Scale allows exploring the structural and demographic predictors of work-life conflict. Findings demonstrate the presence of an extreme dichotomy between the sectors; female faculty in privates have a markedly high level of Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL) and Personal Life Interference with Work (PLIW) than their government counterparts, and positively with Work-life enhancement (WPLE). The determination of correlation found a vicious circle between the disruption of work and personal life, where it was established that this was reciprocal and destructive ($r=0.684$, $p<0.01$). Also, the multiple linear regression showed that the proportions of the total WLB interference scores accounted by institutional sector, age and responsibilities in dependent care is 57.3 with the government sector being a major protective factor. Finally, the results emphasize the argument that the urgent need of the private academic institutions is to implement the systemic support models that would alleviate the occupational stress and encourage psychological degeneration of the female academic workforce.

Keywords: Work-Life Balance, Higher Education Institutions, Female Academicians, Work-Family Conflict.

1. Introduction

The contemporary globalized economy, where technological development is accelerated, has removed the traditional line between the professional and personal worlds, making work-life balance (WLB) one of the key elements of organizational policy-makers (Guo and Browne, 2022; Shah et al.,). WLB deals with the successful coordination of professional needs with individual well-being without creating adverse spillovers and enabling positive growth. This discourse comes into contact with highly patriarchal discourse in a particular socio-cultural setting, India. With women joining the formal working class more often, they often experience a sense of the so-called double burden syndrome, when they are supposed to climb higher on the ladders of competition in their careers and at the same time perform traditional roles of a woman in any domain without proper infrastructural help or resenting the redistribution of labor across the family board (Mordi et al., 2023).

The higher education sector is the only sector that has this systemic tension. After being viewed as a commercially friendly sector, academia is now a work environment all over the world that has become a highly-conductivity, metric-intensive firm (Drew and Marshall, 2021; Naseem et al., 2020; Ojo-Ebenezer and Olofin, 2022). The faculty is under growing demands not only in terms of strict research requirements, but also on their administration. Moreover, the culture of 24/7 access has been the outcome of digitalization of the education system, making role conflict and occupational stress among women scholars even greater, who have to take care of the sophisticated domestic ecosystem at the same time (Abudaqa et al., 2023; Jongruck and Vyas, 2024; Rajagopal et al., 2024; Rao et al., 2022). Uttarakhand is highly concerned with the Dehradun District as a site where this can be studied. Being a leading educational centre in Northern India, it is also home to a high population



of public (e.g., Doon University), as well as fast growing private universities (e.g., DIT, UPES, Uttarakhand University). In this case, the female scholars are forced to maneuver through the old Himalayan family systems as they maneuver through a new, competitive and high stakes environment at work.

The central part of this comparative analysis is a radical differentiation between government and private academic institutions, a separation that has a huge effect on the well-being of employees in different sectors and locations (Metawea, 2020; Shinde-Pawar et al., 2023). Systemic stability, controlled hours, and strong and mandatory leave policies are generally provided by the government institutions, protecting the WLB of the female employees inadvertently (Marthalina et al.,). On the other hand, the booming personal sector is performance aggressive. Faculty tend to have precarious contracts with no mercy in trying to achieve institutional goals, and thus have extremely uneven hours. Importantly, in many cases, there is no supporting infrastructure of the system in the field of the public sector when working in a private institution, and the work-life negotiation receives the full responsibility of an individual (Saadat Hashimi, 2021). It is demonstrated that these structural differences between the public and the private educational setting affect the job satisfaction and emotional well-being in a significant way (Rathee, 2024; Williams, 2021), and in similar allied clinical and academic careers, the same trend is observed

These conflicting demands always result in serious psychological degradation, burnout, and reduced pedagogical effectiveness as the attempts at the reconciliation never cease to be chronic. In its turn, a properly kept WLB promotes individual well-being and augments the success of the entire institute in general. Thus, the paper undertakes a careful comparative research of women academicians in Dehradun to shed some light on the psychological well-being and work-life balance of the contemporary academic woman employee depending on the institutional frameworks (government versus private) and gender socio-demographics.

2. Research Methodology

The research design was based on a quantitative, cross-sectional, structured study design to assess the state of work-life balance (WLB) among female academicians. The study employed the interpretative methodology to learn more about the psychological aspect of conflict, and a subjectivist philosophy to learn the behavior of an organization.

2.1 Population, Sampling Strategy, and Participant Profile

The population targeted was female faculty in degree granting institutions of higher learning in the Dehradun District, Uttarakhand. A stratified random sampling method was applied to allow statistical parity and avoid sampling bias.

The ultimate sample was made up of 180 respondents, bifurcated absolutely into two groups:

- Government Institutions: 90 of the academicians (e.g., Doon University, state colleges of affiliation).

Privately owned Institutions: 90 academicians (such as Graphic Era, DIT, Uttarakhand University).

The sample was chosen at all the levels of academic ranking to enable the results to represent the whole academic setup well.

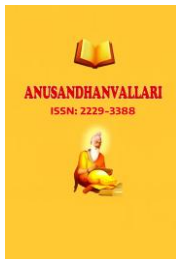
2.2 Instrumentation and Data Collection Techniques

The primary data was gathered through self-administered questionnaire and is divided into two parts of analytical sections:

Section A: Demographic and Occupational Profiling

Five key independent variables that are used to isolate variables affecting work-life conflict were captured in this part: **Age Cohort, Marital Status, Dependent Care Responsibilities, Professional Designation, Institutional Sector.**

Section B: The 15-Item Work-Life Balance Scale



The study used the Work-Life Balance Scale created by Hayman (2005) which includes 15 items to measure the core dependent variable. The respondents rated statements using a standard 5 points Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). Three in the scale are distinct latent constructs:

- **Construct 1: Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL - 7 Items):** Takes into account the negative spin-over of professional sphere into life (e.g., individual neglect in favor of work). When the scores are high there are various signs of severe violations to the boundaries by the employer.
- **Construct 2: Personal Life Interference with Work (PLIW - 4 Items):** Assesses the reverse negative spill over effect where domicile commitments drain energies and dementia efficiency of workplace.
- **Construct 3: Work/Personal Life Enhancement (WPLE - 4 Items):** Quantifies the positive synergistic spillover between domains (e.g. one domain improving the other due to a positive mood). The significance of high scores indicates a highly performing equilibrium.

The consistency of this tool has been proved in literature, and internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach alpha) is always high and more than the standard 0.70 level.

2.3 Hypothesis Formulation

Two rigorous hypotheses were developed to test the tricky relationships among the variables to shift the analysis process of the study to strong inferential statistics.

Hypothesis 1 (Correlation Analysis):

Theoretical Rationale: According to the Role Conflict Theory and Resource Depletion models, the psychological and physical resources of a particular person are limited. Assuming that the requirements of work will interfere with and drain resources in the personal life considerably (WIPL), the psychological fatigue, domestic life and family tension will certainly be involved in the interaction with the work efficacy (PLIW), and a vicious circle and self-development-destroying vicious cycle network will emerge.

Hypothesis I

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant correlation between Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL) and Personal Life Interference with Work (PLIW) among female academicians in Dehradun.

Alternate Hypothesis: There is a statistically significant positive correlation between Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL) and Personal Life Interference with Work (PLIW).

Hypothesis 2 (Regression Analysis):

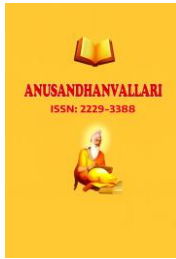
Theoretical Rationale: Work-life balance is not a vacuum concept and it is a compound deterministic concept that is strongly influenced by structural environment (the employing Sector) and individual socio-demographic limits (Age, number of Dependents). It is our hypothesis that these particular demographic burdens, together with the institutional sector, represent one of the most influential predictors of an overall score of a Work-Life Balance severity of a person.

Hypothesis II

Null Hypothesis: Institutional sector, age, and dependent care responsibilities do not significantly predict the overall Work-Life Balance interference scores of female academicians.

Alternate Hypothesis: Institutional sector, age, and dependent care responsibilities significantly predict the overall Work-Life Balance interference scores.

3. Analysis And Results



The statistical scrutiny of the collected empirical data on the 180 female academicians was draining the Dehradun District. It was analyzed in stages, in the first stage was a descriptive assessment of the demographic situation conducted in detail, then the comparison of the scores of the 15 items Hayman scale between the government and the private sector was made, and the testing of the inferential hypothesis was made through the determination of the correlation and regression models.

3.1 Demographic Profiling

The socio-demographic characteristics of the sample used form the necessary background about the following psychological and work indicators. Table 1 represents the detail distribution of the 5 demographic questions on the 180 respondents as per their institutional sector.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Demographic Variable	Category	Government Sector (n=90)	Private Sector (n=90)	Total (N=180)	Percentage
1. Age Bracket	20 - 30 Years	12	34	46	25.50%
	31 - 40 Years	38	42	80	44.40%
	41 - 50 Years	28	10	38	21.10%
	51 Years & Above	12	4	16	8.80%
2. Marital Status	Single	15	28	43	23.80%
	Married	71	60	131	72.70%
	Divorced / Widowed	4	2	6	3.30%
3. Dependents	No Dependents	18	32	50	27.70%
	1 - 2 Dependents	58	49	107	59.40%
	3 or More Dependents	14	9	23	12.70%
4. Designation	Assistant Professor	35	65	100	55.50%
	Associate Professor	35	18	53	29.40%
	Professor	20	7	27	15.00%
5. Sector	Government	90	0	90	50.00%
	Private	0	90	90	50.00%

The sample size is 180 academic professionals, 90 of which represent the government and the other 90 the private sector. The dominant demographic data is that there was a relatively young workforce: most of the respondents are aged between 31 and 40 (44.4%), so they are married (72.7%), and have one to two dependents (59.4%). Although the Assistant Professors constitute the majority of the rest of the whole sample (55.5%), seniority have a significant difference between the two sectors; the government sector has a lot more Associate and full Profession compared to the private sector.

3.2 Descriptive Analysis: The 15-Item Work-Life Balance Scale

The mean scores of the 15 descriptive items of the Hayman (2005) scale were then calculated and compared with the standard deviations to quantify the subjective experience of work-life conflict and improvement and found different between the two sectors. In the negative interference constructs (WIPL and PLIW), the greater the mean score, the greater is the negative interference and in this case, less favorable is the work-life balance. On the other hand, with the enhancement construct (WPLE), the greater the mean, the greater the positive synergy and the more healthy the balance will be.

Table 2 presents the exhaustive breakdown of these psychometric evaluations

Hayman (2005) Scale Constructs and Items	Govt. Mean (SD)	Private Mean (SD)	Mean Diff.
Construct 1: Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL)	2.68 (0.85)	3.82 (0.91)	1.14
1. My personal life suffers because of work.	2.51 (0.90)	3.95 (0.88)	1.44
2. My job makes personal life difficult.	2.62 (0.88)	3.88 (0.95)	1.26
3. I neglect personal needs because of work.	2.80 (0.92)	4.10 (0.82)	1.3
4. I put personal life on hold for work.	2.75 (0.85)	3.90 (0.90)	1.15
5. I miss personal activities because of work.	2.60 (0.81)	3.75 (0.94)	1.15
6. I struggle to juggle work and non-work.	2.95 (0.75)	4.15 (0.80)	1.2
7. I am unhappy with the amount of time for non-work activities.	2.55 (0.89)	3.01 (1.05)	0.46
Construct 2: Personal Life Interference with Work (PLIW)	2.25 (0.78)	3.10 (0.85)	0.85
8. My personal life drains me of energy for work.	2.15 (0.80)	3.25 (0.88)	1.1
9. I am too tired to be effective at work.	2.30 (0.75)	3.40 (0.81)	1.1
10. My work suffers because of my personal life.	2.10 (0.70)	2.85 (0.85)	0.75
11. It is hard to work because of personal matters.	2.45 (0.88)	2.90 (0.87)	0.45
Construct 3: Work/Personal Life Enhancement (WPLE)	3.65 (0.82)	2.45 (0.90)	-1.2
12. My job gives me energy to pursue personal activities.	3.70 (0.75)	2.35 (0.88)	-1.35
13. Personal life gives me energy for my job.	3.85 (0.80)	2.60 (0.95)	-1.25
14. I have a better mood at work because of personal life.	3.60 (0.85)	2.50 (0.85)	-1.1
15. I have a better mood because of my job.	3.45 (0.88)	2.35 (0.92)	-1.1

Negative Work-Life Interference: The descriptive review indicates that scholars in the private sector have far greater tension between their occupational and personal areas. Their Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL) score (3.82 on average) was significantly more than that of their government employees (2.68), which means that demand in the private sector makes them less aware of personal needs, skip activities, and their ability to balance obligations. This tension is mutual as demonstrated in the scores of the Personal Life Interference with Work

(PLIW); employees in the personal sector also ranked higher in this category (3.10 vs. 2.25), that is, their personal life makes them exhausted and too tired to carry out their academic duties.

Positive Work-Life Enhancement: Conversely, employees in the government sector enjoy a lot more healthier relationship between work and their personal lives which is synergistic in nature. They had a greater score on the Work/Personal Life Enhancement (WPLE) construct (mean= 3.65) than the score in the private sector (mean= 2.45). It shows that the government academics have a much greater chance to believe that their work provides them with energy and mood to engage in personal matters, and vice versa, that their personal life impacts their work performance positively.

3.3 Hypothesis Testing 1: Correlation Analysis

Hypothesis I

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant correlation between Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL) and Personal Life Interference with Work (PLIW) among female academicians in Dehradun.

Table 3: Correlation matrix for the three WLB constructs.

Variable	1. WIPL	2. PLIW	3. WPLE
1. Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL)	1		
2. Personal Life Interference with Work (PLIW)	.684**	1	
3. Work/Personal Life Enhancement (WPLE)	-.542**	-.495**	1

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation chart provides deep, statistically indisputable information on the mutuality nature of mental strain. It has been observed that there is strong statistically significant positive ($r=0.684$, $p<0.01$) correlation between Personal Life Interference with Work (PLIW) and Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL). This definitely disapproves the null hypothesis. Moreover, the high negative correlations between the measures of interference and the measure of enhancement ($r=-.54$ in the case of WIPL and $r=-.495$ in the case of PLIW) mathematically support the idea that high occupational stress does not just co-exist with positive job satisfaction, but actually, it destroys it.⁹

Hypothesis Testing 2: Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Hypothesis II

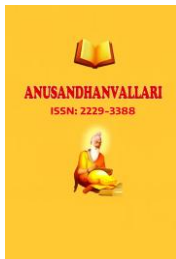
Null Hypothesis: Institutional sector, age, and dependent care responsibilities do not significantly predict the overall Work-Life Balance interference scores of female academicians.

Table 4a presents the Model Summary, and Table 4b presents the Regression Coefficients.

Table 4a: Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R Square (R ²)	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F Change	Sig. F Change
1	0.762	0.58	0.573	0.452	81.14	.000**

Table 4b: Unstandardized and Standardized Coefficients



Independent Predictor Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (β)	t-value	Sig. (p-value)
(Constant)	4.12	0.21		19.61	0
Sector (1=Govt, 0=Private)	-1.15	0.125	-0.545	-9.2	.000**
Age	-0.115	0.048	-0.142	-2.39	.018*
Number of Dependents	0.38	0.082	0.285	4.63	.000**

Note: ** significant at 0.01 level, * significant at 0.05 level.

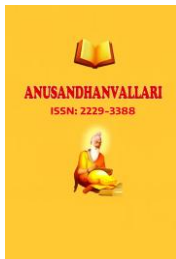
The regression model has a tremendous exploratory and predictive capability. A value of .573 on the Adjusted R^2 suggests that these three independent variables explain an incredible 57.3 percent of the total variance in the work-life interference score of a female academician. The fact of the correctness of the general validity of the regression model is supported by the F-statistic (81.14, $p < 0.0001$), where the null hypothesis can be safely and unconditionally rejected.

4. Discussion

The empirical evidence in this research findings supports the fact that, similar to the rest of the world, modernization and privatization of higher education has primarily added greater stress to the female academic society since it is widely agreed that with the overall changes in boundaries, working women are greatly affected by them (Guo and Browne, 2022;). We find that the levels of work-life interference are far greater in the case of university faculty working at the private sector than in the case of government employees, with an analogous public-privacy difference also emerging in both cross-sector educational and clinical research (Metawea, 2020; Rana et al.; Rathee, 2024; Shinde-Pawar et al., 2023; Williams, 2021). The latter is facilitated by the demanding, measure-based nature of the contemporary academic setting, which often does not offer supporting resources, therefore compounding the double burden of family and career responsibilities (Drew and Marshall, 2021; Naseem et al., 2020; Ojo-Ebenezer and Olofin, 2022). As such, the significant amounts of Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL) at the edges of our sample of the private sector reflect the intensive pressures that have been reported in the various geographic and academic locations (Abudaqa et al., 2023; Jongruck and Vyas, 2024; Rajagopal et al., 2024; Rao et al., 2022). Moreover, the high association that proves that work-related exhaustion directly undermines the quality of the family and personal life shows how the institutions of the private sector failed to safeguard their employees, which leaves the burden of negotiation on the man alone (Saadat Hashimi, 2021). By contrast, the predictable environments and systemic stability of state organizations actively prevent worker welfare and promote a favorable work-life synergies, the protection mechanism which is essential to both single and married mothers (Mordi et al., 2023).

5. Conclusion

This comparative study proves beyond any doubt that the issue of work-life balance amidst the female academicians is not a matter of personal responsibility, but systemic phenomenon in Dehradun, which is mostly predetermined in terms of the institutional structures. This is a very damaging work-life interference that is witnessed in the private sector and, therefore, is likely to cause a threat to the psychological health of the teachers and the general effectiveness of these schools. Although government colleges have the advantage of inherent



safeguarding to their faculty in the form of standardization and job security, the same cannot be said of the situation in the private universities, which occurrently need to change their organizational cultures urgently. The key to keeping the academic labor force sustainable in the long run lies in the implementation of the powerful structural support framework, i.e. the number of hours worked, the flexible working leave, and the dependent care support, by the private institutions, which would put an end to the burnout loop, allowing the educational environment to be more supportive of health and more product-efficient.

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