



Women workers work life balance in garment industries a sociological study in Bangalore City

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Abstract

Indian sub-continent is the second largest manufacturer of garments after China being the global leader in garment production. India is known for its high quality garments for men and most of the garment manufacturers are in the Small and Medium scale industry. Bengaluru popularly known as Garden city, Silicon city and Garment city. It is having 1000 to 1500 big, medium and small garment factories, almost 5 lakh workers working. Women workers are 85% among them who are migrated from rural areas of Karnataka and neighboring states of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. They will come to Bengaluru with a lot of dreams that they are working women's and they can earn their women rather than depending on parents, family, monsoon or periodical wages. They live in the small rented houses. Beginning is colorful later the pressures from all sides will start and make their life miserable. This industry which mainly employs women, is rampant with all known forms of exploitation. Extreme work pressures, unsecured job, absence of essential facilities, extended working hours without sufficient Over Time allowance, denial of leave, bonus, gratuity, PF (Provident Fund), ESI (Employee State Insurance), which have all added to the depressed existence of these women in the city.

Keywords: work life balance, garment industry, working women problems, sexual harassments

1. Introduction

Work-life balance is about creating and maintaining supportive and healthy work environments, which will enable players to have balance between work and personal responsibilities and thus strengthen employee loyalty and deductively. Day's workers have many competing responsibilities such as work, children, housework, volunteering, spouse and elderly care and this places stress on individuals, families and the communities in which they reside. Here are five main reasons why companies participate in work life balance programs: high return on investment, recruitment retention of employees, legislation, costs and union regulations.

- Advantages:
- At Work
- Feeling more rested and energized
- Working more productively and getting more accomplished, leading to greater career success
- More fulfillment from work
- In Life
- Improves relationships with family and friends
- Better physical and mental health

2. Statement of the problem

"Balancing of work and life is become miserable to the women workers in Garment Industries of Bengaluru"

3. Objectives of the study

- To study the Work life balance of the working women in Garment Industries.

- To study the Work life conflict that is hindering the job performance & personal life
- To study the Work life provisions provided for the employees
- To determine the major factors influencing the effectiveness of balancing work & life.

3. Literature survey

Number of studies has addressed this issue in different perspectives. Some of the papers related to this subject are reviewed.

Vijaya Mani (2013) has revealed the major factors influencing the Work Life Balance of Women professionals in India such as role conflict, lack of recognition, organizational politics, gender discrimination, elderly and children care issues, quality of health, problems in time management and lack of proper social support.

K. Santhana Lakshmi *et al*, (March 2013) have examined that the Educational institutions should address the Work Life Balance related issues among their staff, specifically women and take a holistic approach to design and implement the policies to support the teaching staff to manage their WLB.

Kumari K. Thriveni *et al*, (2012) have studied and analysed the significant relationship between the demographic variables and WLB.

Shalini and Bhawna 2012 reported in their study, Quality of work life is being used by the organizations as a strategic tool to attract and retain the employees and more importantly to help them to maintain work life balance with equal attention on performance and commitment at work. Heather S.

McMillan *et al*, (2011) suggested that the individual harmony and its effects has developed a new Harmony based on conflict and enrichment.

N. Krishna Reddy *et al*, (2010) concluded that the married women employees indeed experience Work Family Conflict (WFC) while attempting to balance their work and family lives. Thus, Organization needs to formulate guidelines for the management of WFCs since they are related to job satisfaction and performance of the employees.

Niharika and Supriya (2010) have studied the work based factors and family related factors that are considered to contribute to work life balance. Work based factors are flexi time, option to work part time and freedom to work from home and the family related factors are child care facility and flexibility to take care of emergencies at home. Masako SETO *et al*, (2004) have examined the effects of work related factors and Work Family Conflict on depressive symptoms among working women living with young children in a Japanese Metropolis.

3.1 Life of hell: Bengaluru garment workers woes & challenges ahead ^[1]

It becomes common that in the production lines the unfinished garment clothes are thrown at faces, physically pushing around of the women and derogatory, humiliating abuses such as “Donkey”, “Dogs” etc. are used regular basis against the women worker. If any worker opposes then public rebuke awaits, punishing whole day, no work and no payment for that day. By these unbearable harassments some women workers have committed suicides like Ammu committed suicide in the toilet of the factory. 18 year old Renuka committed suicide by hanging herself in her house.

The bosses of the Garment industries have made fortunes of accounted and unaccounted wealth by disregarding the labor laws. The brands who claim high like GAP, Levis, Adidas, Reebok also doing exploitative practices. Both the Central authorities and Government of Karnataka are happy with the records.

3.2 Of exports and other exits: women in the garment industry ^[2]

GARMENT WORKERS dying in and around the premises of the factories. At Shalini Creations, Padmavathi aged about 39 years started vomiting by 9:30 am, she could not get the permission of leave also and Production manager shouted and sent back to work. After few hours when the vomiting not stopped she was allowed to leave. As soon as she crosses 50 meters away she collapsed. Passers carried her back to the factory immediately she shifted to hospital with the help of the colleagues and she passed away by 1:00 p.m. Pushparaj aged about 35 years died inside the same factory in October 2006. It shows the HR practices in the factory.

3.3 Exploiting women in Bengaluru’s garments units ^[4]

Nine-hundred women workers of Konnega International lost their livelihood in October 2009, when their employer closed shop and subsequently disappeared.

3.4 Garment industry - special exploitation zone ^[3]

Firstly denial of gratuity benefits and Pension benefits after 5

years of employment is become common practices by the company management. To deny the benefits the company ask the worker to rejoin and fresh employment.

Secondly nonpayment of Provident Fund to the concerned labor department and using this money to build as capital. The worker is unaware of this until the day of their resignation from the company.

Thirdly, health care services covered by the ESI which continues to be a regularly denied unless by bribing the concerned officials of the department.

Besides all these harassment by male supervisors, production targets, overtime without compensation, 9-10 hours per day work. Even basic facilities like drinking water, proper rest time, toilet facilities, lunch hours also lacking. Sexual harassment, rampant domestic violence commonly found in the homes.

4. Methodology

- Sampling design
- Sample size

We have taken a sample of 500 employees working in the Garment Industries in Bengaluru and have prepared questionnaires. Samples are given to the employees selecting randomly.

▪ Area

We have chosen shop floor employees in the organization of different sections to know whether the workers are balancing their work & life at Garment Industries.

▪ Research design

Research design is a purposeful scheme of action proposed to be carried out in a sequence during the process of focusing on the management problems to be tackled. It is only guidance for the research to enable to keep his track of his action and to know whether he was moving in the right direction in order to achieve his goals.

Research is a process of systematic & in depth study or search of systematic & in depth study or search for any particular topic, subject or area of investigation, backed by collection, completion, presentation & interpretation of relevant data. Research simply means search for facts, answers to questions and solutions to problems. It is a purposive investigation. It is an “organized inquiry” it seeks to find explanations to unexplained phenomenon, to clarify the doubtful facts and to correct the misconceived facts.

▪ Data collection

Primary data: Questionnaire: To generate primary data Questionnaire method was used and information was collected from employees. Personal interaction was conducted to get more information & suggestions regarding the study. Secondary data: The sources of secondary data were collected from company journals, reports, hand books. Internet Articles.

5. Limitations of the study

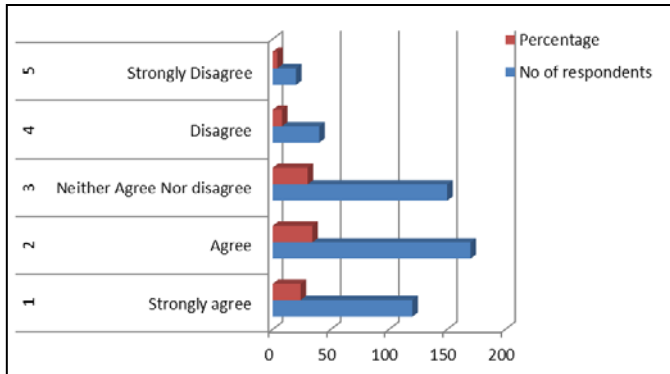
- Only important information is collected.
- Perceptions of individual differ from one to another and company to company.

6. Data analysis & Interpretation

Table 1: Being an employed man/woman taking care of children is easier.

Sl. No	Scale	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	100	20
2	Agree	130	26
3	Neither Agree Nor disagree	150	30
4	Disagree	100	20
5	Strongly Disagree	20	4

Source: Primary data



Analysis

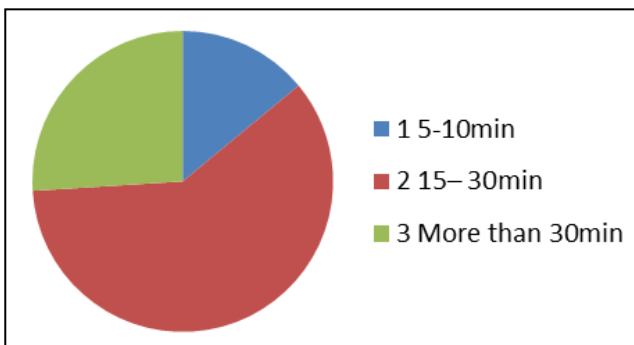
From the above table out of 500(100%) employees, 100 (20%) employees strongly agree, 130(26%) employees agree, 150(30%) employees neither agree nor disagree, 100(20%) employees disagree, 20(4%) strongly disagree.

Interpretation: The most of the employees neither agreed nor disagreed that it's easier to take care of their children.

Table 2: How many hours a day do you spend travelling to work?

Sl. No	Scale	No of respondents	Percentage
1	5-10min	70	14
2	15- 30min	300	60
3	More than 30min	130	26

Source: Primary data



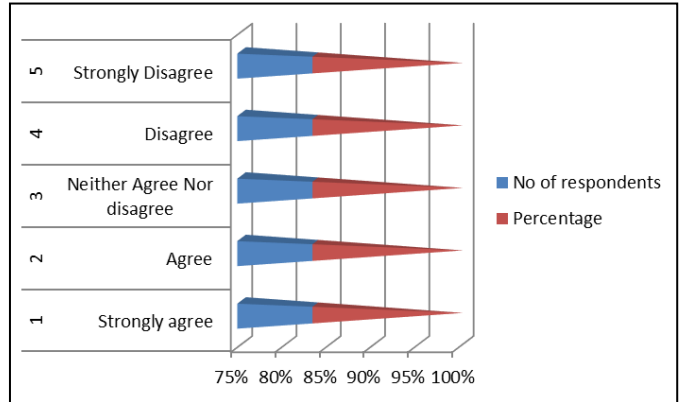
From the above graph out of 500(100%) employees, 70(14%) employees travel for 5-10min, 300(60%) employees travel for 15-30min, 130(26%) employees travel for more than 30min.

Interpretation: The time taken by most of the employees is 15-30min

Table 3: I am able to balance my work and life.

Sl. No	Scale	No of respondents	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	100	20
2	Agree	240	48
3	Neither Agree Nor disagree	120	24
4	Disagree	20	4
5	Strongly Disagree	20	4

Source: Primary data



Analysis

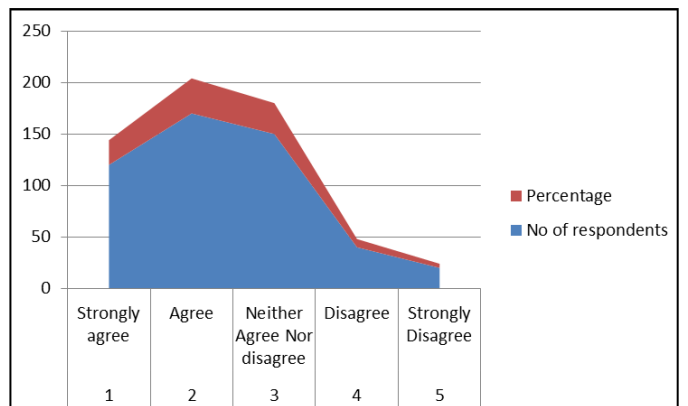
From the above table out of 500(100%) employees, 100(20%) employees strongly agree, 240(48%) employees agree, 120(24%) employees neither agree nor disagree, 20(4%) employees disagree, 20(4%) strongly disagree.

Interpretation: The most of the employees agreed that they can balance their work as well as life.

Table 4: I have spent few quality times with my family or friends without any work pressure.

Sl. No	Scale	No of respondents	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	90	18
2	Agree	150	30
3	Neither Agree Nor disagree	140	28
4	Disagree	80	16
5	Strongly Disagree	40	8

Source: Primary data



Analysis

From the above table out of 500(100%) employees, 90(18%)

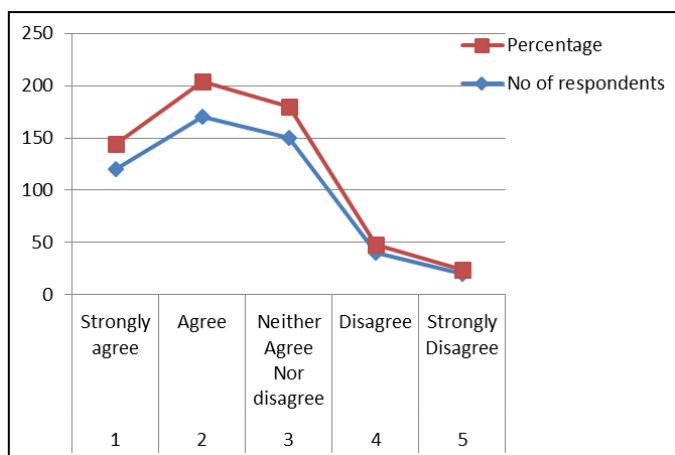
employees strongly agree,150(30%) employees agree, 140(28%) employees neither agree nor disagree,80(16%) employees disagree, 40(8%) strongly disagree.

Interpretation: Most of the employees agreed that they have spent few quality times with their family or friends without any work pressure.

Table 5: I feel satisfied about the amount of time I spend at work.

Sl. No	Scale	No of respondents	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	120	24
2	Agree	170	34
3	Neither Agree Nor disagree	150	30
4	Disagree	40	8
5	Strongly Disagree	20	4

Source: Primary data



Analysis

From the above table out of 500(100%) employees, 120(24%) employees strongly agree,170(34%) employees agree, 150(30%) employees neither agree nor disagree,40(8%) employees disagree, 20(4%) strongly disagree.

Interpretation: Most the employees agreed that they feel satisfied about the amount of time they spend at work.

Table 6: I often feel depressed because of work.

Sl. No	Scale	No of respondents	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	100	20
2	Agree	90	18
3	Neither Agree Nor disagree	100	20
4	Disagree	90	18
5	Strongly Disagree	120	24

Source: Primary data

Analysis

From the above table out of 500(100%) employees, 100(20%) employees strongly agree, 90(18%) employees agree, 40(8%) employees neither agree nor disagree.

100(20%) employees neither agree nor disagree,90(18%) employees disagree, 20(4%) strongly disagree.

Interpretation: Most the employees strongly disagreed that they often feel depressed because of work.

Table 7: Our Company has provisions for work-life balance.

Sl. No	Scale	No of respondents	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	320	64
2	Agree	140	28
3	Neither Agree Nor disagree	40	8
4	Disagree	0	0
5	Strongly Disagree	0	0

Source: Primary data

Analysis

From the above table out of 500(100%) employees, 320(64%) employees strongly agree, 140(28%) employees agree, 40(8%) employees neither agree nor disagree.

Interpretation: Most the employees strongly agreed that the company has provisions for work-life balance.

Table 8: The provisions provided by the company for work life balance

Sl. No	Scale	No of respondents	Percentage
1	Holidays/paid time-off	0	0
2	Job sharing	0	0
3	Counselling services for employee	0	0
4	Relocation facilities and choices	0	0
5	All above	500	100

Source: Primary data

Analysis

From the above table out of 500(100%) employees, 500(100%) agreed that they have all the provisions mentioned above.

Interpretation: Most of the employees strongly agreed that the organization provides all provisions for worklife balance.

Table 9: Our organization provides us yearly Master health check up

Sl. No	Scale	No of respondents	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	300	60
2	Agree	160	32
3	Neither Agree Nor disagree	40	8
4	Disagree	0	0
5	Strongly Disagree	0	0

Source: Primary data

Analysis

From the above table out of 500(100%) employees, 300(60%) employees strongly agree, 160(32%) employees agree, 40(8%) employees neither agree nor disagree.

Interpretation: Most of the employees strongly agreed that the organization provides yearly Master health check up.

Table 10: There are health issues arising due to work

Sl. No	Scale	No of respondents	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	150	30
2	Agree	100	20
3	Neither Agree Nor disagree	70	14
4	Disagree	100	20
5	Strongly Disagree	80	16

Source: Primary data

7. Hypothesis testing

The two hypothesis tests conducted using chi-square test are:

Hypothesis 1

- **Ho – Most of the employees feel that there are health issues arising due to work**
- **H1 – Most of the employees feel that there are no health issues due to work**

The calculation of chi-square test is conducted by referring the table no 10 in the survey.

At 5% level of significance for 4 degree of freedom the table value is 9.4 & calculated chi-square value is 3.8. The calculated chi-square value is lesser than the table value.

Conclusion: Null hypothesis is accepted that is Most of the employees feel that there are health issues arising due to work

Hypothesis 2

- **Ho – Employees feel that the company provides better counseling facility.**
- **H1 – Employees feel that there is no proper counseling facility provide by the company.**

The calculation of chi-square test is conducted by referring the table no 13 in the survey.

At 5% level of significance for 4 degree of freedom the table value is 9.4 & calculated chi-square value is 8.2. The calculated chi-square value is lesser than the table value.

Conclusion: Null hypothesis is accepted that is Most of the employees feel that the company provides better counseling facility.

8. Findings

From the study it is found that

- Most of the employees are able to balance their work and life.
- Most of the employees are able to spend few quality times with family and friends without any work pressure.
- Few employees are satisfied with their work.
- Most of the employees believe in provisions, counseling facility, provided by the company.
- Few employees often feel depressed by their work.
- Few employees are unsatisfied with the work environment.
- Few employees are unsatisfied with company policies.
- If the employee gets the salary at a proper day they will be very much satisfied.

- From the hypothesis test it is found that most of the employees feel that there are health issues arising due to work.
- From the hypothesis test it is found that most of the employees feel that the company provides better counseling facility.

From the Industry study it is revealed the

- Psychological and sexual abuse
- Public rebuke to working women
- Committed suicides
- Unaccounted wealth
- No leave on sick
- Overtime with no extra pay and harassment of women workers by male supervisors
- Unpaid salaries, severance dues and other benefits
- Dharnas and demonstrations at the offices of the labour commissioner by the workers
- Low wages even below Rs 2,000 per month
- Lacking secondary level school education
- Only access to two square meals a day
- Harsh production targets
- Overtime work without payment
- Monitored by male supervisors trained to extract work through severe verbal, sometimes physical, abuse.
- High levels of attrition in the industry, as workers leave jobs, unable to cope with the harshly implemented stiff production targets, often remain without jobs, or join the large army of domestic servants.
- For many women workers, subject to domestic abuse, alcoholic husbands, and lacking a traditional community support system in an unknown city, taking a monthly salary home is of greater urgency than pressing for workers' rights.
- Denial of gratuity benefits and pension benefits after 5 yrs of employment by a worker in a company by asking the workers to rejoin as fresh employees
- Another important right, concerns health care services covered by the ESI which continues to be a regularly denied unless by bribing the officials of the concerned department.
- Drinking water facilities, improper rest time, inadequate lunch hours, improper toilet facilities.
- Work place sexual harassment,
- Rampant domestic violence commonly witnessed in their homes.

9. Suggestions

- Recreation facilities like sports, excursion, cultural, etc... Should be provided to the workers by the company to overcome stress
- Better working environment like cleanliness, canteen facilities should be provided
- Policies & incentives should be fare and standard
- Motivate the employees by identifying & satisfying their unsatisfied needs
- Salary should be provided at correct date & time.
- Measures should be taken to reduce the health problems faced by the employees

10. Conclusion

Work-life balance is about creating and maintaining supportive and healthy work environments, which will enable employees to have balance between work and personal responsibilities and thus strengthen employee loyalty and productivity. Today's workers have many competing responsibilities such as work, children, housework, volunteering, spouse and elderly parent care and this places stress on individuals, families and the communities in which they reside.

There is Work life balance which exists in the company. But few employees are not able to balance there Work life due to issues arising in the organization. The management should identify the problems which is hindering the Work life balance. The company should provide better recreation facilities, work environment, counselling to motivate the employees.

From the hypothesis it is found that there is health issues arising due to work and also it is found that the employees are provided with better counselling facility. Hence the management should identify the problem and provide solution for the problem the employees are facing. This makes all employees to maintain a balance between their work and life. This improves the productivity.

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