

Work-Life balance and Marital Satisfaction among working Men and Women

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ABSTRACT

In an increasingly busy and hectic society downsizing can either lead to more time and effort dedicated to profession in order to keep the current position or less involvement in work in favour of personal life, thus leaving the possibility to have a job to chance. At all cost the millennial choose to be more of a working and an independent individual. That comes down to the fact that both the couple in a marriage are already working or aspiring to work in a field of their choice. Amongst all their struggles to strive, this study will give us an insight on how each other balance their work life and personal life for a better marriage. Marital satisfaction is an unsaid necessity that needs to prevail for a healthy married life, and the work an individual does may have a direct or an indirect effect over their Marriage. The researcher aimed to explore the relationship between Work Life Balance and Marital Satisfaction among Working Men and Women. The exploratory research design was adopted for the study and the data from 407 Working men and women was collected using convenience and snow ball technique. The data was statistically analysed and the outcomes of the study indicate that work life balance had a significant positive relationship with marital satisfaction. Gender and type of marriage dint play a role in of these two variables.

Keywords: Work Life balance, Marital Satisfaction, Working Men and Women

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is the closet and most intimate relationship in life. It addresses the two basic needs in the life of human being, that is live and life. A marriage is a legally recognized union between two people, generally a man and a woman, in which they are united sexually, cooperate economically, and may give birth to, adopt, or rear children. In today's time one of the main reasons for marital satisfaction is work life and personal life balance. Both the individual's in the marriage are working and aspiring to work, this will have a major impact on their married life. The importance that one gives to the marriage directly depends on the priorities that they give to their work life and married life.

Marital Satisfaction

God, the best maker of all marriages, Combine your hearts in one. — William Shakespeare, Henry V

Marital satisfaction is a mental state that reflects the perceived benefits and costs of marriage to a particular person. If a spouse inflicts increased pressure or costs on the other person in the marriage relationship, the Marital Satisfaction would be considerably low. Similarly if there are decreased costs, the satisfaction is increased.

Marital satisfaction for this particular research is explained as a subjective evaluation of the relationship. It is a one-dimensional measure of the variable as it does not include communication patterns, behavioural and emotional reactions to conflict. However recent studies adapted this conceptualization because this has a clear cut inference, this method allows the antecedents, correlates, and outcomes of marital happiness to be investigated in a straightforward manner. Norms, customs, and expectations derived from culture and society play a huge role in marital relationships. Hence, the concept of marital satisfaction in India can be different from the concept of the same in western country due to the vast differences in what is considered normal.

Some of the studies showed that in general marital satisfaction does not differ from country to country. Interdependency in couples is a universally known fact; therefore, the distresses of one spouse will surely affect the other as well. It can be concluded that stress in marriage is almost always dyadic stress. Dyadic stress is simply stress that has an effect on and affects both spouses. Problems originating in the workplace, neighbourhood, extended family or children are the common external sources because though they affect the relationship they are not originating from the relationship itself. The impact of this stress is mediated by internal perceived stress and so it does not directly influence the association. On the other hand internal stress evolves within the relationship, conflicts, needs, and habits, difference of opinion, goals, or emotions related to their partner. This type of perceived stress has a direct effect on marital relationship. Marital satisfaction or marital quality is known as what an individual feels towards their spouse and also what they think their spouse feels about them. Much of the research has focused on the factors that

influence marital satisfaction. This research focuses on how factors such as division of labour, income, and parenthood affect marital quality. Studies shows that many factors play a role in the happiness spouses feel about their relationships.

. Marital satisfaction is relevant to mental health, general happiness, professional achievement and social interaction. Uniquely, it is a relatively stable attitude and attribute which reflects the individual's overall evaluation of the relationship.

Work life balance

A 'work life' balance refers to an employee's ability to maintain a healthy balance between their work roles, their personal responsibilities, and family life. Companies understand the importance of aiding their employees to reach this balance due to more staff experiencing conflict between roles in their personal and private lives. Today, many employees are seeing their personal responsibilities increase, from childcare and elderly care, to volunteer work, and family commitments. However at the same time work responsibilities are also increased, making the individual chose to flourish in one or undergo stress trying to reach a balance.

A factor which is constantly contributing to the difficulty in achieving a work life balance is the varying expectation in how and where employees are expected to work. Work is no longer restricted to the workplace thanks to technology. Employees can work from almost any location with the use of laptops, tablets, and smart phones; and telecommuting is on the increase. Unfortunately this means more cons than pros, an employee who is constantly available will have several intrusions in their personal lives.

Poor balance between work and personal life not only affect employers as much as the employees, in turn the company is affected. Employee stress can increase to the level of burnout, resulting in lower productivity at work, a higher potential for stress related health problems and absenteeism, with the associated costs related to these being passed on to the company. Employee satisfaction is very low so is employee to employer and within employee interaction.

There are several ways in which companies can help to encourage a work life balance for their employees, both in the policies that they implement and in ensuring that managers actively encourage employees to take advantage of these policies. Offering employees flexible working options helps employees design their work pattern to fit their personal commitments, ultimately reducing conflict between work and personal responsibilities. Flexible working options include allowing employees to work from home, adjust their working hours to meet personal commitments, use remote working, compressed work weeks, and job sharing. Managers should encourage staff to use annual leave and help employees to set boundaries by encouraging staff not respond to work related emails and calls during non-working hours. Some organizations are also implementing wellness programs, which include offering stress reduction and time management workshops, while others are creating wellness centers on the work site, helping to connect employees with physicians, mental health counsellors, or on-site gyms.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Aggarwal, Kataria and Prasad (2017) assessed and compared marital satisfaction and quality of life of depression patients and their spouses. They also measured these variables in terms of duration of untreated illness, illness severity and other demographic factors particularly gender. 50 patients diagnosed with Depressive Disorder with their spouses were selected for this cross sectional study. Both groups were evaluated individually for marital satisfaction and quality of life along with demographic details. A high level of marital distress found among both patients and their spouses whereas only patients reported poor quality of life. The increase in duration of untreated illness worsened both marital satisfaction and quality of life in spouses with no impact on patients.

Karkouljian, Srour and Sinan (2016) keeping in mind the important role that work-life balance plays in the well-being of employees, the literature devoted extensive research efforts in determining the impact of various variables on the quality of work-life balance. Here, the researchers probed into the compound association between external and internal locus of control, perceived stress at work, and work-life balance. It focused in exploring the role of gender in the association between the variables. 320 employees consisting of 160 females and 160 males working in the Lebanese banking sector contributed to the research.

Hartley, Barker, Baker, Seltzer, Mailick and Jan (2012) investigated the extent to which marital satisfaction across 7 years in 199 mothers was correlated with the characteristics like age, gender, household income, mother-child relationship and intellectual disability status of their child with an autism spectrum disorder. The results showed that closeness in the mother-child relationship and household income had a significant

impact on level of marital satisfaction. In addition variability in the slope of mothers' marital satisfaction was significantly affected the behaviour problems of the adolescent or adult child with an ASD. The grown child's departure out of the family home was not related to change in marital satisfaction.

Jones, Welton, Oliver and Thoburn (2011) investigated the association between spousal attachment, mindfulness, and marital satisfaction. The national participants included 104 married adults age ranging from 19–66 years. The outcomes showed partial support for the mediating impact of spousal attachment on the association between marital satisfaction and trait mindfulness. Even though the association between marital satisfaction and trait mindfulness described in this study is not the first, these outcomes served as a preliminary support for the role of spousal attachment as the process through which trait mindfulness may contribute to higher marital satisfaction. These results suggested that mindfulness training would have beneficial impacts for couples' therapy and relationship enhancement, and also to foster healthy spousal attachment.

Rehman, Janssen, Newhouse, Heiman, Munroe, Fallis and Rafaeli (2011) investigated 226 independent samples with a total sum of 101,110 respondents in the meta-analysis. The final results denoted statistically significant but still a very slight gender differences in marital satisfaction between the spouses, where wives were little less satisfied than husbands. The moderator analyses, anyhow, revealed that the difference was because the inclusion of clinical samples. The nonclinical community-based respondents had no significant gender differences among couples. In addition, moderator analyses notified that there were no gender differences when the levels of marital satisfaction of husbands and wives when dyadic data was compared.

Methodology

Aim

To investigate on Work-life balance, Spouse support and marital satisfaction among working men and women

Hypothesis

- There will be a significant relationship between work- life balance and marital satisfaction among working men and women
- There will be no significant gender difference in work life balance among men and women.
- There will be no significant gender difference in marital satisfaction among working men and women

Research Design

In the present study, the researcher has used exploratory research design. Exploratory research is conducted for a problem that has not been clearly defined.

Sample

The method of convenience sampling was used for the collection of data because the samples that were willing to participate in the research (who filled the questionnaires) were available when the researcher needed them. One of the most common types of non-probability sample is called a convenience sample was used to collect the data.

Prior conditions for selection of sample:

- Age Limit: 25 to 45 years
- Duration of marriage: Three years and above
- Job status: Employed

Statistical analysis was done for normality of distribution. The data was collected from working men and women from various organisations from Tamil Nadu. The sample consisted of both men and women. The sample size was 407, after rejecting the incomplete questionnaires.

Tools

➤ Psychometric Assessment of an Instrument Designed to Measure Work Life Balance – Jeremy Hayman (2005)

The scale consists of 15 items, divided into three factors: work interference with personal life, personal life interference with work, work/personal life enhancement. The responses were given using a seven point time related scale. Higher scores indicate lower work life balance. The resulting values of Cronbach Alpha for the three factors of the questionnaire were: 0.73 for factor 1, 0.78 for factor 2 and 0.76 for factor 3.

➤ **The Index of Marital satisfaction (IMS) Walter w Hudson (2001)**

The scale consists of 25 items. The response was given using seven point time related scale (for example 1 =none of the time, 4 = some part of the time, 7 = All the time). Questions items like 2,4,6,7,10,12,14,15,18,22,24, and 25 are scored reversed. Higher scores indicate lower marital satisfaction. The scale consistently achieves an Alpha coefficient of .90 or larger. It nearly always achieves validity coefficients of .60 or greater.

Statistical Techniques

The data was analysed statistically using SPSS package 20.0v for testing the hypothesis

- Pearson’s Product Moment Method of Correlation was used to explore the relationship between the variables
- Independent sample t test was used to analyse the gender difference among the variables

Results and Discussion

Table 1

Correlation between Work-Life balance and Marital Satisfaction

| Variables | Work-life Balance | Marital Satisfaction |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Work-Life Balance | 1 | -.766** |
| Marital Satisfaction | | 1 |

****Significant at 0.01 level**

From the parametric test, Pearson product moment correlation it was found that there is a significant negative relationship between work-life balance and marital satisfaction. The relationship denotes that the direction is on the same side, which is when one trait increases the other also increases. As mentioned in the methodology, high total scores indicate lower marital satisfaction and also work life balance.

It is also said that there will be no marital satisfaction if an individual is unable to manage his work and his personal life. It is difficult to have harmony at home if the work pressure is reflected on the family members and at the same time, it is difficult to concentrate on work when there is no peace at home. The outcome of the previous research showed partial support for the mediating impact of spousal attachment on the association between marital satisfaction and trait mindfulness. Even though the association between marital satisfaction and trait mindfulness described in this study is not the first, these outcomes served as a preliminary support for the role of spousal attachment as the process through which trait mindfulness may contribute to higher marital satisfaction. **(Jones, Welton, Oliver and Thoburn 2011)**

Thus the hypothesis stating that “There will be a significant relationship between work-life balance and marital satisfaction” is accepted

Table 2

Gender difference on work-life balance and marital satisfaction

| Variables | Gender | N | Mean | SD | t value |
|-----------------------------|--------|-----|-------|--------|---------------------|
| Work-life balance | Female | 240 | 58.71 | 27.32 | 0.573 ^{NS} |
| | Male | 167 | 57.15 | 26.69 | |
| Marital Satisfaction | Female | 240 | 75.85 | 48.216 | 0.473 ^{NS} |
| | Male | 167 | 78.1 | 49.626 | |

NS – Not Significant

Independent sample t test was computed to find if there was significant gender difference among the sample on Work life balance. In the total data N = 407, 240 were female and 167 were male participants. From the results it is inferred that “There is no significant gender difference in work life balance among men and women.”

In current scenario, both the gender have almost equal number of working members, who give importance to work and personal life balance. The taboo that men work more than women has been broken. Both the men and women take the equal amount of work load that greatly influences work life balance with both the genders. It is safe to say that gender plays no role in work life balance.

Thus the hypothesis stating that “There will be no significant gender difference in work life balance among men and women” is accepted

From the table above it is also noted that there is no significant gender difference between men and women on marital satisfaction among men and women

The results indicated the gender has role to play in connection with marital satisfaction. This might be due to the expectations that are common among men and women.

As a support to the present study, a research done by Rehman, Janssen, Newhouse, Heiman, Munroe, Fallis and Rafaeli (2011) to analyse gender differences in marital support between the spouses, where wives were little less satisfied than husbands. The nonclinical community-based respondents had no significant gender differences among couples. In addition, moderator analyses notified that there were no gender differences when the levels of marital satisfaction of husbands and wives when dyadic data was compared.

Therefore the hypothesis stating that “There will be no significant difference in marital satisfaction” is accepted

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