
R. Kishokumar & K. Lakshika
Faculty of Commerce & Management, Eastern University, Sri Lanka
kisho767@gmail.com & klakshika90@gmail.com

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of Study

Increased emphasis on competition and radical technological advancements has resulted in organizations to be more competitive, agile, and flexible and customer focused. Consequently, organizations require, empowered employees possessing higher competencies and multitasking skills in order to ensure sustained growth at minimum operational costs. Employees working in organizations of the modern era most often encounter eternal challenge of performing well and are forced to devote most of their time at work in this enhanced competitive work setting. However, commitment towards self-development, allegiance to family and social life in order to fulfil the demands and duties along with organizational obligations are imperative for any individual employee. The balancing act of an individual in this three dimensional aspects of life namely organizational, societal and employee’s personal life as depicted in the diagram is termed as work life balance (WLB).

Understandably, any imbalance between organizational and personal commitments and the inefficient management of life priorities can lead to serious consequences in each or all of these domains. The consequences may in general manifest as diminished job satisfaction, poorer productivity and performance, lower organizational commitment, inferior career ambitions & success, increased absenteeism & intention to leave, as well as employee burnout, job stress, poorer physiological and psychological health, and diminished performance in personal life & family. Thus, WLB and employee perception of wellbeing have come to be recognized to be vital for the organizational growth and effectiveness.

Human resource management practices in modern organizations emphasize effective strategies that ensure employee well-being reflected in terms of organizational...
commitment through initiatives referred to as employee engagement. The importance of work life balance of the employees and the parameters that influence WLB in modern work and life settings cannot be over emphasized in this era of acutely competitive business environment and dwindling skilled manpower combined with ever increasing costs of employment. It is no wonder that this area of HR management has received great deal of focus from researchers, management, government and the media over the past few decades. This paper attempts to bring together salient and notable contributions on WLB and influence of different parameters influencing WLB in different organizational sectors not only towards presenting better conceptual understanding of work life balance through various, theories propounded and the measurement scales used in a range of studies, but also to identify possible directions for further.

1.2 Problem Statement

Work life and personal life are two sides of the same coin. Creating and managing a balance between the work and personal life is considered to be a work life balance issue. Increasing work pressures, globalization and technological advancement has impact on balancing professional life and personal life. With increasing demands and pressures of work-life, conflicts between work and personal roles seem to be increasing. Changed demographics of the workforce have been the primary force for the increased focus on family-work issues. Work-life balance is a term that is always used in context of employees, but nowadays students are also overburdened due to their academic work load and career issues. All this adds to the stress among Post Graduate students leading to imbalanced work-life equations. Thus, there is a need to study work-life balance issues regarding students.

There is certain research gap in this study. Most of studies were found that there exist a number of researches on stress among students but very few have focused on specific dimensions of work life balance of students (Young et. al. 1994). Most of the studies on students’ work life balance have been conducted in western countries (e.g. Warren 2004; Robotham 2001; Clark, Raffe & Schullar 2006; Theaker et.al 2007). In Sri Lankan Context, lack of research has been undertaken to study about Work Life Balance among Students. To fulfil this gap, this research was conducted to show about
Status of Work Life Balance among Post Graduate Students in Eastern Province, Sri Lanka. Hence, researcher has selected the Post Graduate Students in Eastern Province, study about the Work Life Balance with job related factors.

1.3 Research Questions

1. To what extent the work life balance among post graduate students in Eastern Province, Sri Lanka?
2. Whether the work life balance among post graduate students in Eastern Province are differ in terms of age, gender, experience and educational qualifications?

1.4 Research Objectives

Based on the literature, following objectives were considered for the study:

1. To identify the level of work life balance among post graduate students in Eastern Province, Sri Lanka.
2. To assess the work life balance of post graduate students in Eastern Province are differ in terms of age, gender, experience and educational qualifications.

1.4 Significance & Scope of the Study

The scope of the study was limited to the postgraduate students from Universities in Eastern Province regarding the challenges that they face in balancing professional life and personal life.

One of the noteworthy features of the Sri Lankan higher education system is ‘accessibility’ to education for all irrespective of ethnicity, gender, caste, class, religion or social background. However, for the purpose of this study the higher educational sector was chosen because it is more structured and has a stronger union representation who addresses worker’s welfare which is what WLB practices are centered around.

The concept of balancing work and life is important in more than one way. There can be many factors affect the balance of work and life, which may be social factors, psychological factors, Working Environment, Type of job, Job satisfaction, Family background, schedule at home and life stage. Work-life balance is an issue of strategic importance to organizations and of significance to employees especially for postgraduate students. Organizational awareness and action with respect to implementing work life balance strategies.
hinges on an Organization's need to attract and retain valued employees in a highly competitive labor market.

Since Independence, postgraduate students in Sri Lanka in general in particular have been playing a significant role in contributing the Economic and Organizational development. As such the success of any organizations depends on their contributions as well. Besides, there is an ever-increasing enrollment of girls in the professional courses, everywhere in Sri Lanka. In view of this scenario, there is need to study the issues affecting postgraduate professionals or employees. The student who is able to maintain balance between private and professional life can contribute more towards the success of the organization.

This chapter explained the introduction about various headings on work life balance along with its dimensions. Profile of the research area was also highlighted with its Universities and Students. Detailed statement of the problem and well organized need for the study were also given in this chapter. This chapter guides the reader to navigate deeper in to research arena.

2. Literature Review

Definitions of Work Life Balance

The array of theoretical models describing work–life balance includes multiple definitions and research variables, with the identified antecedents, moderators and consequences of work–life balance varying across the respective models. Work Life Balance is a person’s control over the responsibilities between their workplace, family, friends and self. A successful Work-life-balance strategy reduces stress levels and raises job satisfaction in the employee while increasing productivity and health care costs for the employer. The accurate evaluation of individual health and performance includes estimates of multiple role demands from work and non-work domains. Organizational researchers assessing the impact of the psychosocial work environment upon outcomes, such as occupational stress, employee well-being and commitment, increasingly include measures of non-work demands within their investigations (e.g. Burke and Cooper 2008).

Work-life balance is about the interaction between paid work and other activities, including unpaid work in families and the
community, leisure, and personal development. Work-life balance is about creating a productive work culture where the potential for tensions between work and other parts of people's lives is minimized. This means having appropriate employment provisions in place, and organizational systems and supportive management underpinning them. Work-life balance for any one person is having the 'right' combination of participation in paid work (defined by hours and working conditions), and other aspects of their lives. This combination will not remain fixed, but may change over time.

The term work-life balance is commonly used as a more comprehensive expression to describe policies that have been previously termed 'family-friendly', but are now extended beyond the scope of the family. Work-life balance refers to the flexible working arrangements that allow both parents and non-parents to avail of working arrangements that provide a balance between work responsibilities and personal responsibilities (Redmond Valiulis and Drew, 2006).

Benefits of work life balance are:

**To the organization:**

- Measured increases in individual productivity, accountability and commitment
- Better team work and communication
- Improved morale

**To the individual:**

- More value and balance in daily life
- Better understanding of individual’s work
- Increased productivity
- Improved relationship both on and off the job

Work-life balance is a broad concept, defined in different ways by different researchers using diverse dimensions. The origins of research on work-life balance can be essentially traced back to studies on women having multiple roles. Work life balance was initially termed as work family conflict, Kahn et al. defined as “a form of inter role conflict in which the role pressures from work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect.

**Various factors influencing WLB and their consequences**

The various factors can be broadly grouped based on the major dimensions of Work Life
Balance namely, individual, organizational and societal factors.

Individual Factors Influencing WLB
The Individual factors influencing the perception of work life balance among employees is explained in terms of personality, well-being and emotional intelligence.
- Personality and WLB
- Well-being and WLB
- Emotional Intelligence and WLB

Organizational Factors influencing WLB
The work related factors influencing the perception of work life balance among individuals is explained in terms of flexible work arrangements, work life balance policies and programmes, work support, job stress, technology and role related factors.
- Work Arrangements and WLB
- Work Life Balance Policies and Programmes and WLB
- Work Support and WLB
- Job Stress & WLB
- Technology and WLB
- Role Related Factors and WLB

Societal Factors Influencing WLB
The societal factors influencing the perception of work life balance among individuals is explained in terms of childcare responsibilities, family & social support along with other societal factors.
- Childcare Responsibilities and WLB
- Family Support and WLB

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Conceptual Framework

(Source: Saunders et al., 2012)
4. METHODOLOGY

Research Design
A research design specifies the methods and procedures for conducting a research work. According to Nargundkar (2006), research design is the plan, structure and strategy of investigation with an objective of obtaining answers or solution for the research question. It provides an overall operational pattern or framework of the investigation that stipulates what information is to be collected from which source and by what procedures. There are several ways to study and tackle a research problem. This research comes under the category of description study as the researcher is interested in determining the relationship between different variables. The strength of survey research is the wide scope to collect detailed information from a sample of a large population.

Questionnaire
Based on the review of literature, variables have been identified for this research. A structured questionnaire was designed using those variables. The questionnaire was divided into section I, section II. Section I contained question to elicit personal details of the respondents. Section II consisted of questions pertaining to measure the work life balance.

Measures
Findings of Schall (2003) on comparing four, five, six, seven and 10 point Likert scale reveal that five-point scale provides best results and recommended its usage especially for Educational sector. Hence, five-point scale has been used in the survey instrument.

Sample Size
The sample for the study comprises of all post graduate students in Eastern province to represent the population of all post graduate students that total to 380. Among that 100 post graduate students were selected in Eastern province. Simple random sampling which falls under random sampling was used as the sampling strategy.

Main Study
For the purpose of obtaining the data relating to various aspects, a well-structured questionnaire was prepared. Using questionnaire, the relevant data on various aspects have been collected.

The data collected in this study was done by using primary method. The data were
collected from the respondents who are the post graduate students in Eastern province.

In Sri Lanka, there are nine provinces, and each province has several number of Universities. Totally, there are 15 state universities and 3 campuses come directly under the authority of University Grants Commission, Sri Lanka. For the purpose of this study, Eastern province is selected as the sample area. The Eastern province selected based on the convenience of the researcher.

**Method of data analysis**

Data has been presented using tables. Meanwhile descriptive analysis was used for data analysis. Hence under the descriptive analysis, mean and standard deviation were derived. Statistical package of SPSS 19.0 has been used for this purpose.

**Personnel Information**

**Nature of Work place**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of the Organization</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi government</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over All</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**5. DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Reliability analysis for work life balance**

All the attributes of the work life balance were tested for reliability analysis. The cronbach’s alpha value for all work life balance attributes was 0.928 which indicates a strong internal consistency among the attributes. A cronbach’s alpha’s coefficient of 0.7 and higher is adequate and signifies High reliability (Jermier, & Berkes, 1979; & Sakaran, 2003). Therefore the variables used were conducted as reliable.

Altogether 40 questionnaires were distributed to the students and we have received 30 questionnaires only and the response rate is 75%.
In this type of analyze consider the respondent’s nature of work place such as government organization, semi government organization and private organization. In the above table shows that proportion of post graduates students employed from each sector organizations to analyze the status of work life balance.

**Gender**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over All</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The gender distribution of the post graduate students has been represented by the sample size of 30 about 74% represents male students and remaining 26% represents female students.

**Marital status**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over All</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above table showed that marital status of post graduate students, among that 43% are married, in to analyze the status of work life balance in different perspectives.

**Age Distribution**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age (Years)</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 40</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over All</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the age distribution, about 37% of students are 25-29 years, 40% of students are between 30-34 years, only 7% of students are between 35-39 years, and 16% of students are above 40 years.

**Experience**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience (Years)</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below 5</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The work experience of the post graduate students, who enrolled in Eastern province, has been represented by the sample size of 30 about 43% represents less than 5 years, 47% of employees have 6 to 10 years’ experience, 7% of respondents have 16-20 years’ experience and remaining 3% represents 11 to 15 years’ experience in the present job.

**Research Information**

**Objective 1:** To identify the level of work life balance among post graduate students in Eastern Province, Sri Lanka.

In this analyze consider post graduate students from Eastern Province, expect data collected from 30 respondents were analyzed by using descriptive statistics shown in following Tables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Decision Attributes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work life balance</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>0.997</td>
<td>Moderate level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The study variable of Work life balance has moderate level at its individual characteristic in influencing the factors (Mean $X_1 = 2.94$).

In addition, most of the respondents expressed the common opinion regarding the independent variable of Work life balance (SD = 0.402). It is also noted that about all respondents have moderate level of attribute. It shows that, work life balance among the student is moderate level.

**Level of Measurements of work life balance**
This work life balance includes four dimensions which are personal environment, personal expectations, work environment and work expectations. These dimensions show moderate level of influence in work life balance.

They have the mean values 2.87, 2.93, 3.03 and 2.94, respectively (see Table). Among 30 respondents, in work life balance, work environment has contributed to the affect work life balance among post graduate students, rather than personal environment, personal expectations and work expectations. These indicators show that moderate level of work life balance among post graduate students in Eastern province.

**Objective 2:** To assess the work life balance of post graduate students in Eastern Province are differ in terms of nature of the organization, age, gender and experience.

### Mean Comparison with personal information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of the organization</th>
<th>Work life balance (Mean)</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>.854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>.325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi government</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1.270</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even as considering the level of overall work life balance, the post graduate students who are working in government sector organization were perceived the moderate level of work life balance. In private sector, respondents were perceived the high level of...
work life balance. On the other hand, the
post graduate students who have been
working in the semi government sector, they
perceived the high level of work life balance
(see Table).

Mean comparison between work life balance & Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Work life balance (Mean)</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>1.089</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>0.975</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

About male respondents have high level
work life balance and when we consider the
female respondents, they have moderate
level work life balance of post graduate
students in Eastern Province. According to
the finding male of respondents have high
level of work life balance among post
graduate students in Eastern Province (See
Table).

Mean comparison between work life balance & Martial Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>Work life balance(Mean)</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>.809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>1.067</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among the 100 Respondents Single
Respondents have moderate level of work
life balance and Married respondents have
low level of work life balance among post
graduate students in Eastern Province (See
Table).

Mean comparison between work life balance & Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age (Years)</th>
<th>Work life balance(Mean)</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>0.719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>0.860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>1.590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above40</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>0.961</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to the finding in the age above 40 years of employees have high level of work life balance in post graduate students in Eastern Province (See Table).

**Mean comparison between work life balance & Experience**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience (Years)</th>
<th>Work life balance(Mean)</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below 5</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>0.809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>0.875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>0.745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.895</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source – Survey Data Analysis)

When considering the work experience respondents who have less than 5 years work experience they have moderate level work life balance. In 6 to 10 years work experience respondents have low level work life balance. In between 11 to 15 years work experience respondents have high level work life balance. Respondents who have 16 to 20 years work experience they have moderate level of work life balance. According to the finding respondents with 11 to 16 years work experience, they have high level of work life balance in post graduate students in Eastern Province (See Table).

6. **Conclusions, Directions For The Future Research And Managerial Implications**

**Conclusions**

The purpose of this study was to examine the status of work life balance on post graduate students and to identify the influence of demographic variables on students work life balance in Eastern Province. The research findings show the work life balance status of work life balance among post graduate students in Eastern Province having the moderate level (2.94). Therefore, the students need to improve the ability to balance their work with life.

It is found that since the respondents are almost of the different age, experience and nature of the organization, although there are similarities in their perceptions towards work life balance. Also, postgraduates...
students are studying universities in the Eastern province therefore, they have same social culture and surrounding environmental settings. The results collaborated with mean comparison it implies that, the students who are working in the government sector organization have low level work life balance than private as well as semi government sector. However, when consider the gender collectively, female students have low level work life balance than male students. And also the students have low level work life balance who are in the age between 30-34 and experience 6 to 10 years respectively.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

1. The study is limited to students of only two universities, so this study can be extended to compare the dimensions of work life balance with students of other universities.

2. The study was conducted in a limited time period on a limited sample. For the purpose of the future study and much better results, the sample size of the respondents can be increased.

3. Data collection was a problem because students generally are not serious about providing responses. Some respondents were so busy in their routine life that they are not easily ready to fill the questionnaire. An intensive follow-up and reminder mechanism is needed in future to enhance the rigor of the process.

Managerial Implications

It is a unique study because it has been in context of students as earlier there have been limited researches on this topic. It provides an insight to researchers for future study. It provides an understanding of issues which are of concern to students. It may therefore give insight to university authorities regarding the problems that students usually face in their lives. Interaction between teacher and students should be enhanced so that students can share their problems with their teachers. Interaction between authorities, teachers and students should be enhanced to understand WLB issues confronting students. Balance should be established between workload distribution, leisure time and extra-curricular activities so as to engender academic excellence.

7. REFERENCES


