

Work Life Balance of Women Nurses in Corporate Hospitals in Chennai

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Abstract:

Nursing as a career helps in binding the human society with nurses exhibiting a kind of bonding by taking care and showing affection to the needy who are depressed because of illness. Nursing as a career requires nurses to play a truly integrated role by serving as a mediator between the doctors on one hand and the patients on the other. The objective of this research is study work life balance of women nurses in corporate hospitals in Chennai, identify factors affecting work life balance of women nurses and analyze how various demographical variables are related to stress level in balancing work and life. The results have shown that these nurses struggle to balance work life on account of which they face a lot of stress.

Key words: Work life balance, women nurses, stress levels, time spent with family

1. INTRODUCTION

Nursing as a career helps in binding the human society with nurses exhibiting a kind of bonding by taking care and showing affection to the needy who are depressed because of illness. As a career even years ago nursing has been accepted with a lot of importance as it is the nurses who deal with human life which is a very valuable and precious asset.

Nursing as a career requires nurses to play a truly integrated role by serving as a mediator between the doctors on one hand and the patients on the other. They are primarily responsible for providing care to the patients and serve as leaders by taking up a very compassionate and responsible role in their respective hospitals. It is also a known fact that nursing is a very demanding and challenging career which on the other hand may not be very rewarding. One is accepted as a good nurse when one demonstrates high levels of dedication and commitment with a focus on not only in satisfying the needs and wants of the patient but also on constantly updating their knowledge and skills with newly developed systems of health care. This often creates difficult to handle problems irrespective of how well the nurses in providing patient care. Even though they act as mediators between patients on one hand and doctors on the other, they ultimate become curators of patient care. This requires them to have a lot of patience along with good interpersonal skills apart from being sound in their medical education. Over the years nursing has come to be accepted as a noble career requiring a lot of sacrifices on the part of the incumbent.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The study conducted by Saranya & Gokulakrishnan (2013) it has been proved that the employees' perception of work life balance could have a positive impact on the development of any organisation. It is also seen that by bringing about changes with respect to human resource

management practices especially ones related to working hours, flexibility in work and offering superior employee supportive services which would ultimately result in well managed work life balance for the employees thereby reducing stress levels. This is seen to be especially true in the case of women employees who have distinct roles to play both at work and at the home front. The study has also proved that employees who are good at managing their personal affairs are better placed in managing the work related work in a more balance and effective manner ultimately resulting in better work life balance.

According to Anu Radhas (2015) demands related to one's life cannot be expected to reduce gradually over the years and hence learning to master the art of balancing work life is indispensable. However this art cannot be learned and practiced in a single day and would require systematic and meticulous efforts in mastering the art. She also believes that by having in place a very flexible work atmosphere along with congenial working conditions could go a long way in helping one in overcoming the stress related to any type of job including that of a nurse to a very great extent

Gokulakrishnan & Ramesh (2013) on the other hand have demonstrated that there could be a very positive association between conflict which arise in the process of trying to balance work life with family life with the level of satisfaction one derives from his or her job,. When level of job satisfaction is low it could result in high intentions to leave thereby making it difficult for the organisation. It has also been demonstrated that top management could bring about harmony in work life balance especially in the case of women by offering breaks from periodically from monotonous work and life chores and by working on creating an environment which envisages that women do not have to face any barriers especially with respect to communicating amongst them at the work place..

Senthil Kumar, Mohan et al., (2003) study has shown that nurses working in hospitals constitute a group of which strives to functions under conditions of high stress with new challenges to be faced day after day. The demographics of such nurses such as their gender, type of hospital in which they work, location of their hospital and their present status at work and the long working hours they need to put in depending on the causalities in their work place could indicate a significant influence with respect to their level of agreeability on factors which could causes stress among nurses. Further, the study also has shown that there is an urgent need for hospitals to ensure that the work environment is stress free so as to safe guard the well-being of its nurses.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To know the extent to which nurses are able to balance work life.
- To identify factors influencing work life balance of women nurses and the outcomes of the same.
- To analyze how various demographical variables are related to stress level in balancing work and life.

4. METHODOLOGY

The research design is descriptive in nature and the sample chosen for the study includes 100 nurses chosen from 10 corporate hospitals operating in Chennai. Primary data required for the study has been collected from nurses with the help of a structured, non-disguised questionnaire by meeting them at their work place. The sampling technique adopted was convenience sampling.

5. ANALYSIS & RESULTS

Table 1: Mean and SD of relating to Work content dimensions

| Statements relating to work content dimensions | Mean | S.D |
|---|------|-------|
| Appreciated for accomplishments at work | 2.74 | 1.181 |
| Opportunity to participate in decision-making | 2.93 | 1.210 |
| Cordial interpersonal relations with superiors | 3.86 | 0.987 |
| Regular feedback is provide on work done | 3.00 | 1.333 |
| Management respects nursing as a profession | 3.35 | 1.060 |
| Work related policies and procedures facilitate smooth flow of work | 3.12 | 1.067 |
| Physicians are appreciative of services rendered by nurses | 2.91 | 1.047 |
| Nursing staff are most willing to help each other | 3.41 | 1.084 |
| Team spirit exists among all team members | 3.30 | 1.126 |
| Career advancement opportunities are bright | 2.77 | 1.176 |
| Continuing education is possible without quitting the job | 3.00 | 1.075 |
| Support is extended for attending training programs | 3.89 | 1.059 |
| Adequate client/patient care supplies and equipment are available | 3.73 | 1.072 |

| | | |
|--|------|-------|
| A well-furnished break area is available for nursing staff | 2.84 | 1.199 |
| Physical and emotional protection is ensured | 2.90 | 1.198 |

The belief that support is extended for attending training programs has the highest mean score of 3.89 followed by cordial interpersonal relations with superiors of 3.86, adequate client/patient care supplies and equipment are available with the mean score of 3.73. A well-furnished break area is available for nursing staff with the mean score of 2.84, career advancement opportunities are bright with the mean score of 2.77, appreciated for accomplishments at work with the lowest mean score of 2.74.

Table 2 : Mean and SD of statements relating reduced absenteeism

| Statements relating to reduced absenteeism | Mean | S.D |
|---|------|-------|
| Work Life balance increases interest in work | 2.98 | 1.186 |
| Work Life balance reduces absenteeism | 3.86 | .977 |
| Work life balance encourages sincerity at work. | 3.71 | 1.085 |

Work life balance reduces absenteeism has the highest mean score of 3.86 , work life balance increases interest in work with the lowest mean score of 2.98.

Table 3 : Mean and SD of relating to improved performance

| Statements relating to improved performance | Mean | S.D |
|--|------|-------|
| Work life balance improves job related attitude towards work | 2.73 | 1.195 |
| Work life balance leads to superior performance | 2.93 | 1.207 |
| Work life balance improves productivity | 3.85 | .989 |

Work life balance improves productivity has the highest mean score of 3.85 , work life balance improves job related attitude towards work with the lowest mean score of 2.73.

Table 4 : Mean and SD of relating to higher employee retention

| Statements relating to higher employee retention | Mean | S.D |
|---|------|-------|
| Work life balance ensures retention of nurses | 3.00 | 1.333 |
| Work life balance directly helps in employee retention | 3.34 | 1.062 |
| Work life balance leads to enhanced employee engagement | 3.12 | 1.067 |
| Work life balance helps in reducing training costs | 2.91 | 1.047 |

Work life balance directly helps in employee retention has the highest mean score of 3.34 followed by work life balance leads to enhanced employee engagement with a mean score of 3.12, work life balance helps in reducing training costs with the lowest mean score of 2.91.

Table 5 : Mean and SD of relating to improvement in physical/psychological health

| Statements relating to improvement in physical/psychological health | Mean | S.D |
|---|------|-------|
| Work life balance reduces stress levels at work and home | 3.41 | 1.084 |
| Work life balance leads to improved health | 3.30 | 1.126 |
| Work life balance helps in ensuring better emotional peace | 3.87 | 1.069 |
| Work life balance increases energy levels | 3.71 | 1.084 |

Work life balance helps in ensuring better emotional peace has the highest mean score of 3.87 followed by work life balance increases energy levels with a mean score of 3.71, work life balance leads to improved health with the lowest mean score of 3.30.

Table 6 : Mean and SD of relating to job satisfaction

| Statements relating to job satisfaction | Mean | S.D |
|--|------|-------|
| Work life balance improves morale | 2.74 | 1.181 |
| Work life balance increases trust and commitment | 2.93 | 1.207 |
| Work life balance brings about greater focus and concentration in work | 3.86 | .985 |

Work life balance brings about greater focus and concentration in work has the highest mean score of 3.86, work life balance improves morale with the lowest mean score of 2.74.

Table 7 : Mean and SD of relating to improved interpersonal family relations

| Statements relating to improved interpersonal family relations | Mean | S.D |
|--|------|-------|
| Work life balance prevents social isolation | 3.00 | 1.333 |
| Work life balance helps in increased marital satisfaction | 3.35 | 1.060 |
| Work life balance reduces conflict between roles | 3.12 | 1.066 |
| Work life balance encourages team work | 2.91 | 1.047 |

Work life balance helps in increased marital satisfaction has the highest mean score of 3.35 followed by work life balance reduces conflict between roles with a mean score of 3.12, work life balance encourages team work with the lowest mean score of 2.91

Chi-Square Test:

Table 8 : Chi-Square for association between age and Frequency of Feeling Stressed in balancing work life

| Age | Frequency of Feeling Stressed | | | | Total | Chi-Square Value | P value |
|---------|-------------------------------|------------|--------|-------|-------|------------------|---------|
| | Often | Some times | Rarely | Never | | | |
| 22 – 28 | 3 | 9 | 3 | 3 | 18 | 14.738 | .022* |

| | | | | | | | |
|----------|----|----|----|----|-----|--|--|
| 28 – 35 | 17 | 17 | 18 | 9 | 61 | | |
| Above 35 | 12 | 6 | 0 | 3 | 21 | | |
| Total | 32 | 32 | 21 | 15 | 100 | | |

P value being less than 0.05, it is concluded that there is a significance association between age of nurses and the frequency of experiencing stress in balancing work life.

Table 5 : Chi-Square for association between marital Status and Frequency of Feeling Stress in balancing work life

| Marital Status | Frequency of Feeling Stressed | | | | Total | Chi-Square Value | P value |
|----------------|-------------------------------|------------|--------|-------|-------|------------------|---------|
| | Often | Some times | Rarely | Never | | | |
| Married | 23 | 22 | 17 | 15 | 77 | 6.370 | .095 |
| Single | 9 | 10 | 4 | 0 | 23 | | |
| Total | 32 | 32 | 21 | 15 | 100 | | |

P value being less than 0.05, it is concluded that there is a no significance association between marital status of nurses and the frequency of experiencing stress in balancing work life.

Table 9 : Chi-Square for association between experience and Frequency of Feeling Stress in balancing work life

| Experience | Frequency of Feeling Stressed | | | | Total | Chi-Square Value | P value |
|---------------|-------------------------------|------------|--------|-------|-------|------------------|----------|
| | Often | Some times | Rarely | Never | | | |
| 1 - 5 year | 10 | 10 | 4 | 0 | 24 | 34.106 | <0.001** |
| 5 -10 year | 10 | 13 | 3 | 15 | 41 | | |
| Above 10 year | 12 | 9 | 14 | 0 | 35 | | |
| Total | 32 | 32 | 21 | 15 | 100 | | |

P value being less than 0.01, it is concluded that there is a significance association between experience of nurses and the frequency of experiencing stress in balancing work life.

Table 10 : Chi-Square for association between type of family and Frequency of Feeling Stress in balancing work life

| Type of Family | Frequency of Feeling Stressed | | | | Total | Chi-Square Value | P value |
|----------------|-------------------------------|------------|--------|-------|-------|------------------|----------|
| | Often | Someti mes | Rarely | Never | | | |
| Nuclear | 26 | 16 | 7 | 0 | 49 | 29.805 | <0.001** |
| Joint family | 6 | 16 | 14 | 15 | 51 | | |
| Total | 32 | 32 | 21 | 15 | 100 | | |

P value being less than 0.01, it is concluded that there is a significance association between type of family and the frequency of experiencing stress in balancing work life.

6. MAJOR FINDINGS & CONCLUSION

Nurses are appreciative of the fact that support is extended for attending training programs, cordial interpersonal relation exists with superiors and adequate client/patient care supplies and equipment are available in their respective hospitals, a well-furnished break area is

available for nursing staff, with a reasonable scope for career advancement opportunities and appreciated for any outstanding accomplishments at work. It is also proved that work life balance helps in reducing absenteeism, improves performance of nurses at work and at the home front, directly helps in employee retention and brings about improvements in the improvement in physical/psychological health thereby leading to higher job satisfaction and improved interpersonal family relations. It is also proved that demographics to an extent influence work life balance of nurses.

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