
AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON THE WORK LIFE BALANCE AMONG WOMEN ACADEMICIANS IN HIGHER EDUCATION WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO NAVI MUMBAI

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ABSTRACT

Women are the building blocks of the society especially the teachers. It is very difficult for women to work throughout the day by managing the work schedules as well as the family when small kids are around. In Indian system majority of females prefer teaching over corporate jobs. It is because this profession it is less prone to work life balance. But today there is a change in the working of Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) due to increased regulations from statutory bodies like UGC, NAAC, NBA etc. The women academicians find it hard to manage and so called work life balance. Indian working women are faced with lot more challenges and role stress than their counterparts in other parts of the world. And taking into consideration the gender bias, social and traditional state of affairs Indian working women has to also fulfill her additional roles as mother, wife, homemaker etc. This research study made an attempt to find the level of work life balance among women teaching professionals in HEIs in Navi Mumbai. The study is mainly based on primary data collected from women academician (Assistant Professors, Associate Professors and Professors). A total number of 100 questionnaires had been administered among faculty members working in HEIs. To achieve the objective of the study a Descriptive Research was conducted to assess the level of work life balance among married women academicians and what measures are needed to be taken to improve their work-life balance.

Keywords: *Work-Life Balance, Working Hours, Work Arrangements, Support from Others, Indian Value System*

1. INTRODUCTION

The Quality of work life is a philosophy as set of principles, which holds that people are most important resource in the organization as they are trustworthy, responsible and capable of making valuable contribution and they should be treated with dignity and respect. (Straw and Hecker 1984).

Many people think of work- life balance only in the framework of what the company does for the individual. However, work- life balance is a two prong approach which gives insight about quality of work life. The other prong of work- life balance, which many individuals overlook, relates to what individuals do for themselves. Work- life balance is most frequently used to describe the equilibrium between responsibilities at work and responsibilities outside paid work; having a work- life balance means that this equilibrium is in the right position for the individual concerned (Fiona Visser Laura Williams). **Work-life balance** can be termed as **Work-life integration** that can be planned and achieved, just like any other important aim in life. Living a balanced work –life an individual experiences better quality of life, improved health and improved relations. Research on the topic of work- life balance is still in its early stages; this research paper takes an opportunity to contribute to growing literature on the topic.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Arunkumar B, Saminathan R. in their research paper titled as “*Work Life balance among women teachers of self- financing college (SFC) in Thanjavur district Tamil Nadu*”, published in IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science. (2017) says that depending on personal satisfaction, professional satisfaction, organizational support, work environment, HR intervention policies, professional pride for a women managing both personal and work life is not an easy thing. The strategies used by women for the management depends completely on situation. This also increases the quality of life of women teachers which leads to job satisfaction. **Dhanya JS, Kinslin D.**, in their research paper titled as “*A Study on work life balance of teachers in engineering colleges in Kerala*”, published in Journal of Chemical and Pharmaceutical Sciences (2016) reveals that work life balance for teaching engineering course has become one of the greatest challenges in today’s world. Teachers need to spend extra hours every day to be effective and productive in their profession, so that they could reach higher levels and face the challenging atmosphere. The study reveals that the level of work life balance varies in government, private and aided engineering colleges. They say that the best practice for work life balance includes 5 days’ work per week, planned vacation, leave facilities including maternity leave. This study also observed that the stress level for higher levels of teaching are more compared to middle and primary schools. **Shreyas B.** in her paper titled as “*Work life balance of married female teaching staff of selected schools of Dakshina Kannada district*”, published in International Journal of Commerce, Business and Management (2017) says that the time has changed from men alone caring for family living, to both men and women equally sharing responsibilities of earning for the betterment of their family life. Considering the historical data of employment survey in India which indicates that the employment rates of women has increased by 3.6% per year from 1991 to 2001. This shows that the women are able to have job satisfaction including enjoyment and at the same time we also have respected place in any carrier that is her

achievement. As she grows older, the burden increases, hence she withdraws her work due to simple reasons like for the concern of her children, aged in-laws/ parents and other family pressures. From the data collected for the survey, it shows that the adequacy of the work is fairly good which means women have a better balance in the both areas. It was found that, out of 30 women 14 preferred working in the weekends while the rest preferred work during morning or evening. Also, the survey found that most of these women work for financial reasons. **Maeran R, Pitarelli F, Cangiano F. Rancisco** in their research paper titled as "*Work life balance and job satisfaction among teachers*", published in Inter disciplinary Journal of Family Studies 2013 studied work life balance and job satisfaction among teachers, based on the factors like teachers job has a detrimental or a beneficial effect on family life and vice versa, level of teaching, employment contract, qualification obtained, family status and presence of children. Based on these factors the study says that, the female workers are very busy and it is a stress for the mothers to work. The level of stress depends on the teaching experience, the degree of schooling which they taught. Work family conflict affects both the teachers' attitude and organizational behavior.

3. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study is limited only to married women academicians in the higher education institutions in NaviMumbai. Therefore, its findings cannot be generalized.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out the area of difficulty for women academicians to balance work life.
2. To find out the impact at work responsibility on their social life.
3. To find out the impact of home responsibility on their professional life.
4. To find out the factors for smoother balance of work and family commitments.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is an Exploratory Research. A total number of 100 questionnaires had been administered among women faculty members working in higher education institutions. To achieve the objective of the study a Descriptive Research was conducted to assess the level of work life balance among women academicians. Both Quantitative & Qualitative methodologies were used. The primary data was collected through the questionnaire directly from the respondents and the secondary data was collected from books, journals and magazines etc. Due to the time and geographic limitations a sample survey was conducted using Convenient Sampling. The survey measured the work-life balance among

women academician mainly into five categories: **Working Hours, Support from Others, Impact of Work on Home, Impact of Home on Work and Work Arrangements.** The category on working hours deals with issues like; Duration of work, over time, need to work on holidays. The next section of the survey deals with issues like support from other: negative attitude of colleagues, negative attitude of spouse/family, excessive load of house hold work. The third section covers the impact of work on home; feel tired, affect to house hold activities, job stress affect personal relationship, child Care. The section four impact of home work on work includes; responsibility at home, family problems, stressors at home, social responsibilities. The fifth section on work arrangements deals with issues like excessive college work and travelling away from home for work. Data collected from the respondents has been shown in the bar chart and is followed by interpretation of the responses.

6. OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH FINDINGS

In light of the objectives set forth the collected data has been presented in the following manner:

Category I Working Hours:

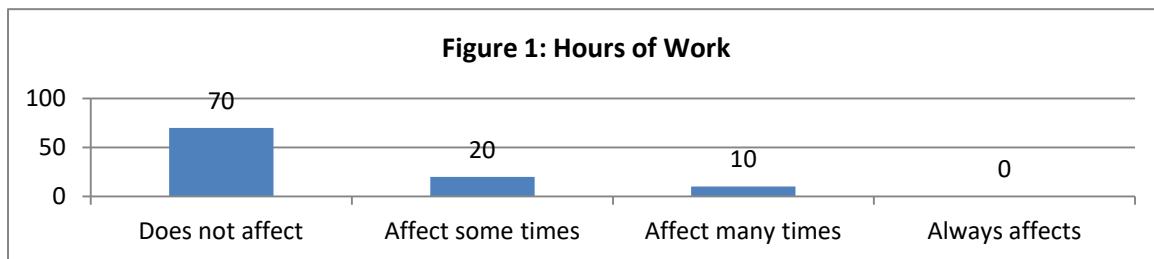


Figure 1 reveals that 70% women respondents do not affect by the hour of work, 20% affect some times, 10% affect many times and 0% always affect.

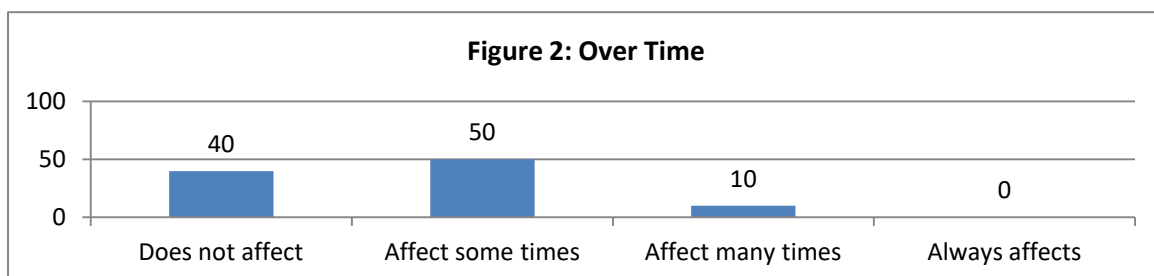


Figure 2 reveals that 40% women respondents do not affect by over time, 50% affect some times, 10% affect many times and 0% always affect.

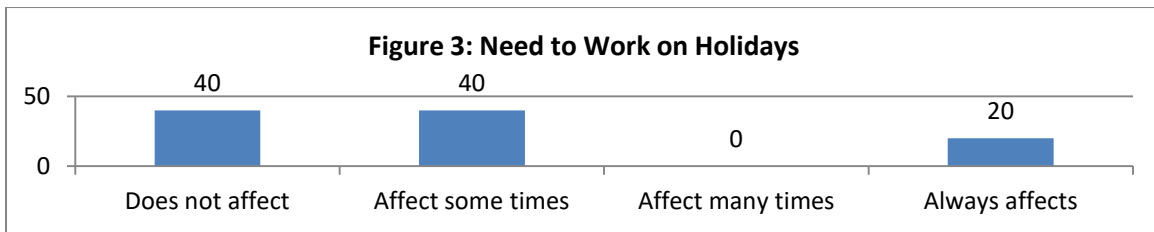


Figure 3 reveals that 40% women respondents do not affect work on holidays, 40% affect some times, 0% affect many times and 20% always affect.

Category II Support from Others:

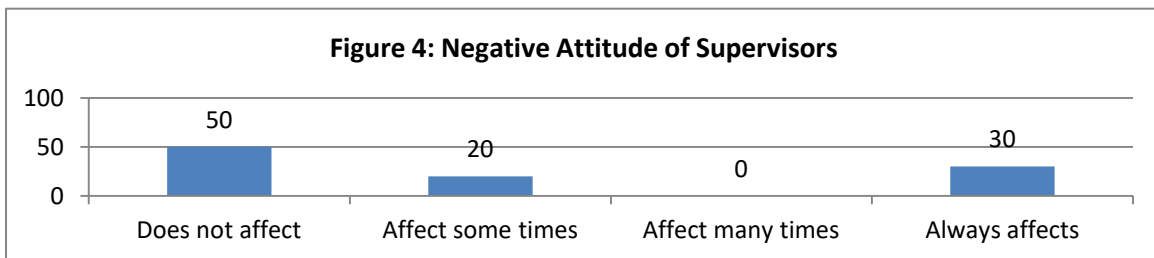


Figure 4 reveals that 50% women respondents do not affect negative attitude of supervisors, 20% affect some times, 0% affect many times and 30% always affect.

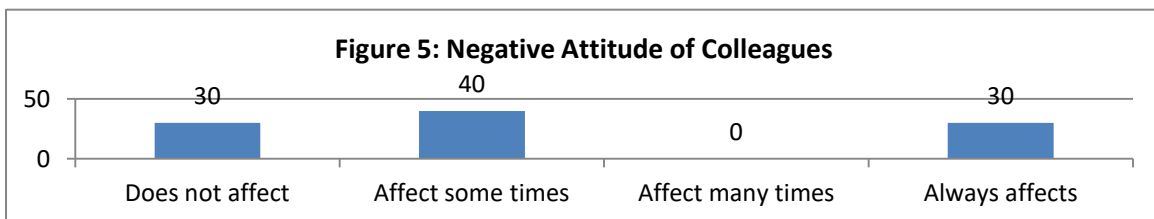


Figure 5 reveals that 30% women respondents do not affect negative attitude of colleagues, 40% affect some times, 0% affect many times and 30% always affect.

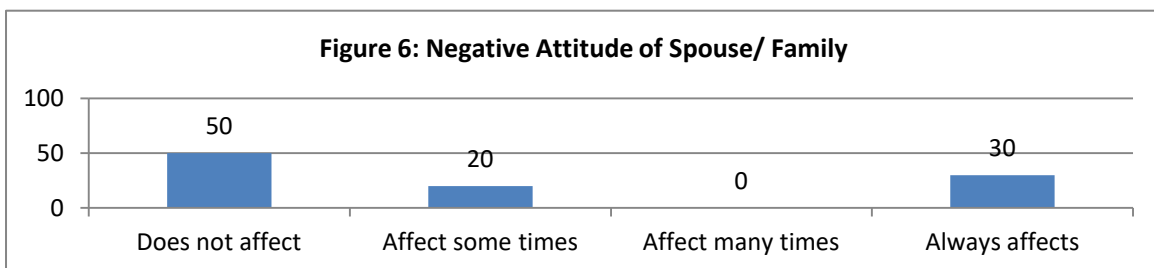


Figure 6 reveals that 50% women respondents do not affect negative attitude of spouse/family, 20% affect some times, 0% affect many times and 30% always affect.

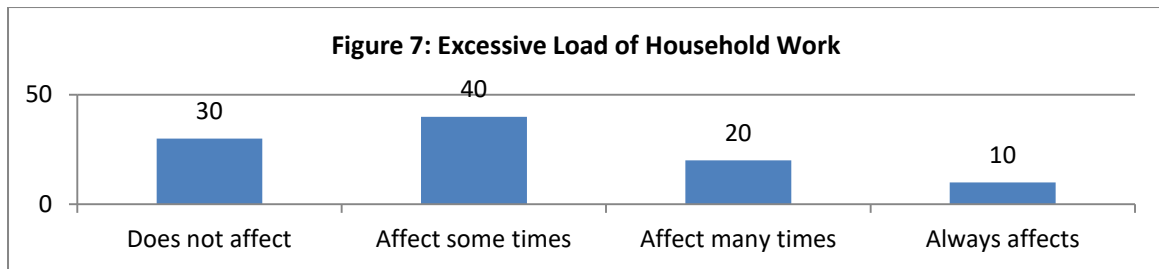


Figure 7 reveals that 30% women respondents do not affect by excessive load of house hold work, 40% affect some times, 20% affect many times and 10% always affect.

Category III Impact of Work on Home:

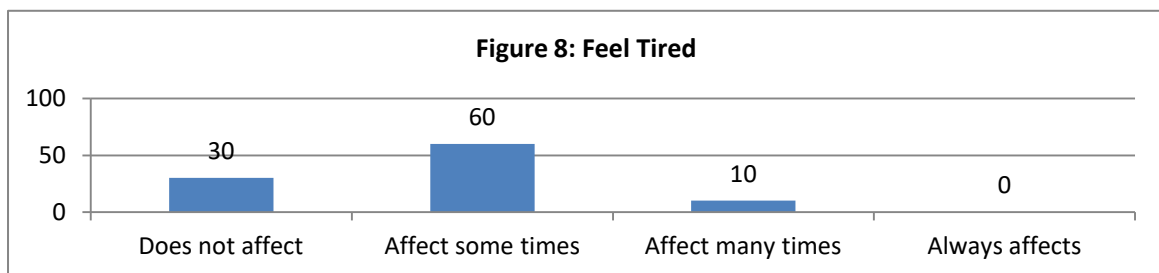


Figure 8 reveals that 30% women respondents do not affect, 60% affect some times, 10% affect many times and 0% always affect by the impact of work on home making them feel tired.

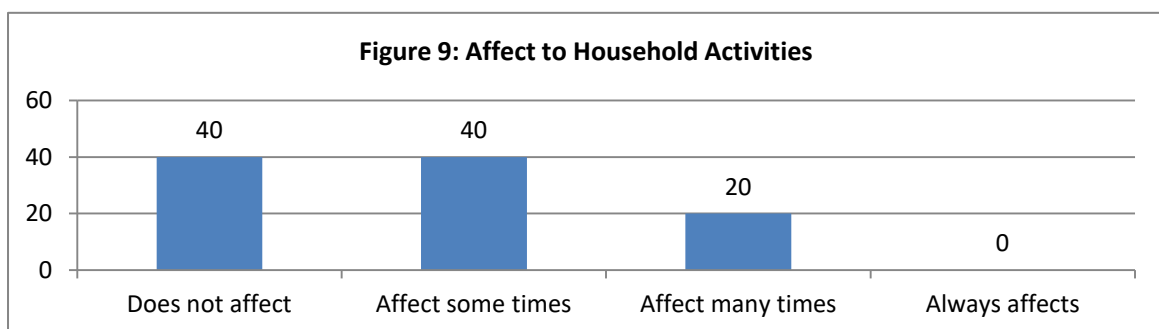


Figure 9 reveals that 40% women respondents do not affect, 40% affect some times, 20% affect many times and 0% always affect to household activities.

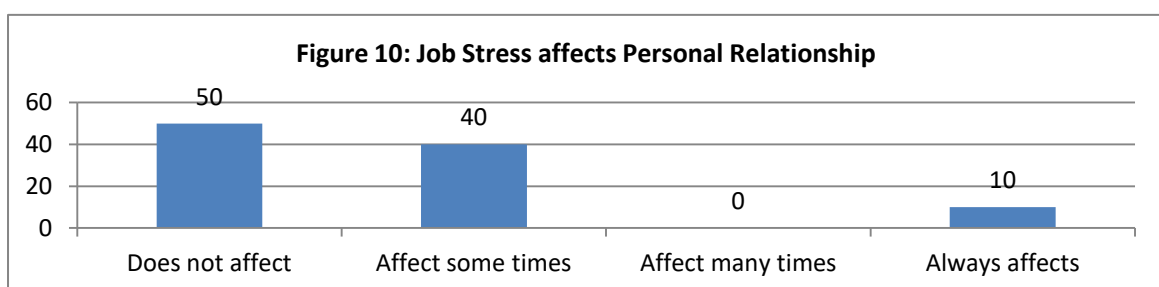


Figure 10 reveals that 50% women respondents do not affect, 40% affect some times, 0% affect some times and 10% always affect job stress affecting personal relationship.

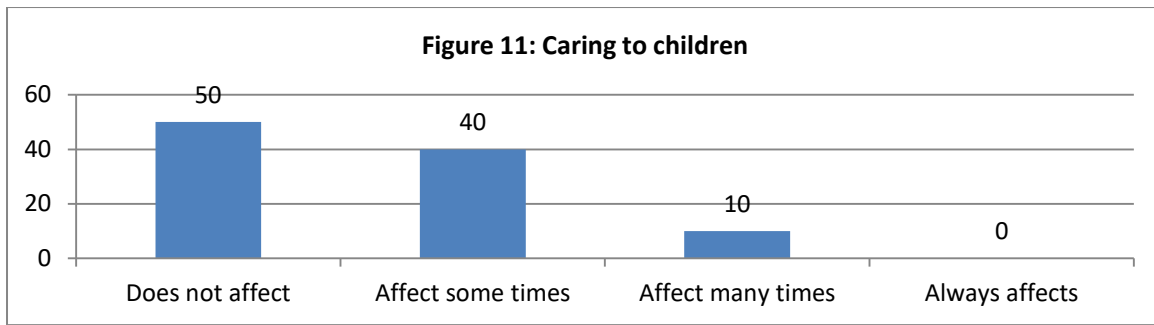


Figure 11 reveals that 50% women respondents do not affect, 40% affect some times, 10% affect many times and 0% always affect on children caring.

Category IV Impact of Home on Work:

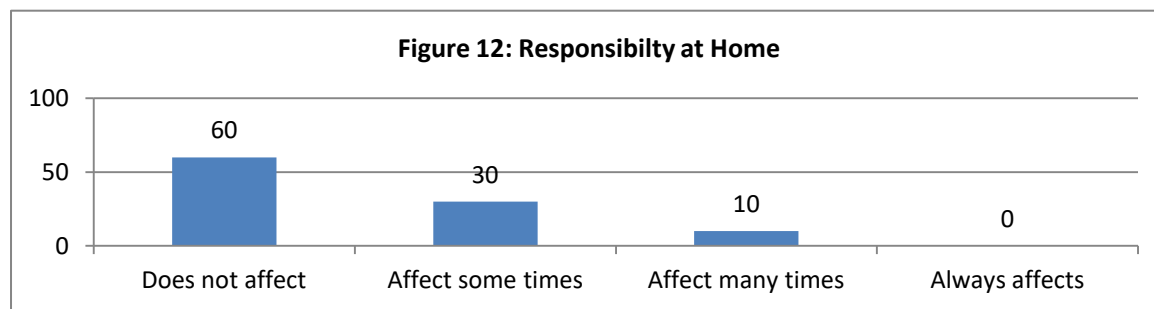


Figure 12 reveals that 60% women respondents do not affect, 30% affect some times, 10% affect many times and 0% always affect by the responsibility at home.

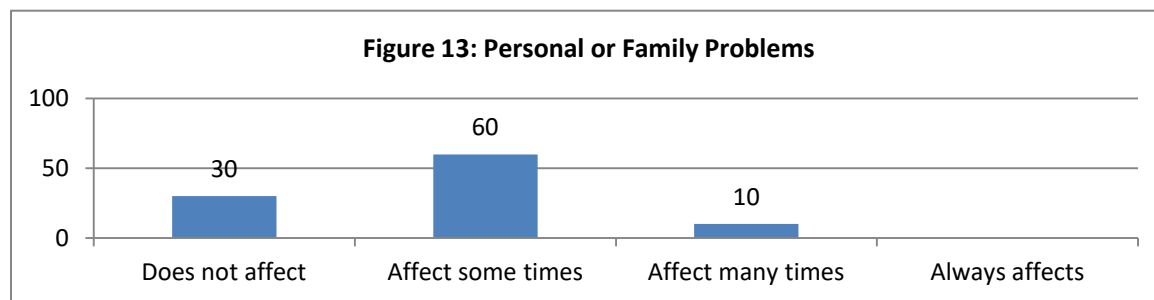


Figure 13 reveals that 30% women respondents do not affect, 60% affect some times, 10% affect many times and 0% always affect by personal or family problems.

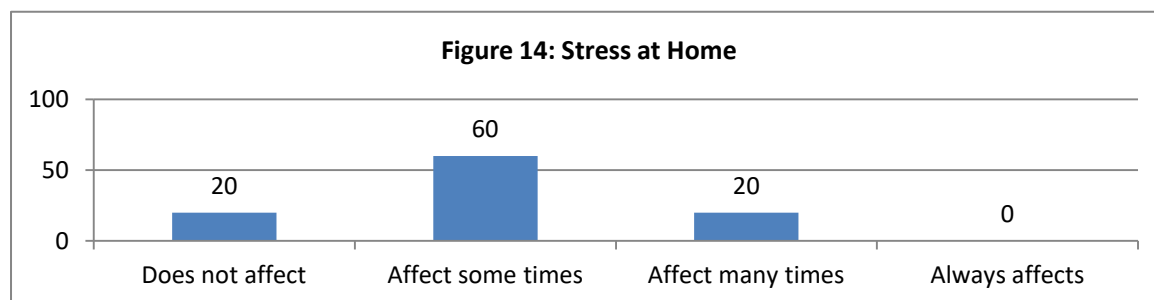


Figure 14 reveals that 20% women respondents do not affect, 60% affect some times, 20% affect many times and 0% always affect by stress at home.

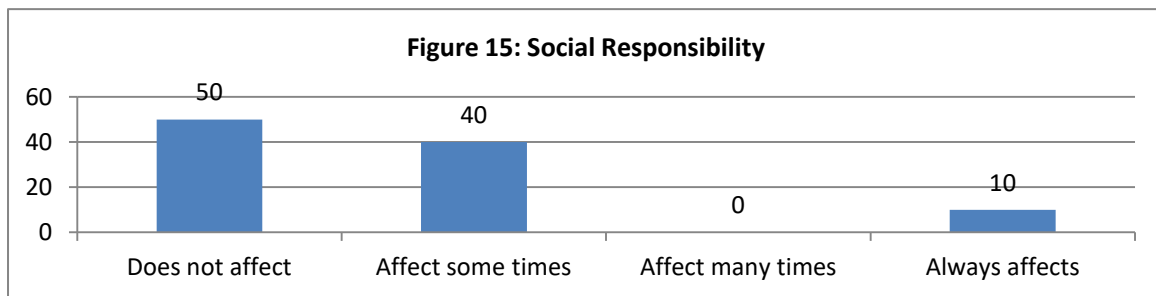


Figure 15 reveals that 50% women respondents do not affect, 40% affect some times, 0% affect many times and 10% always affect by social responsibility.

Category V Work Arrangements:

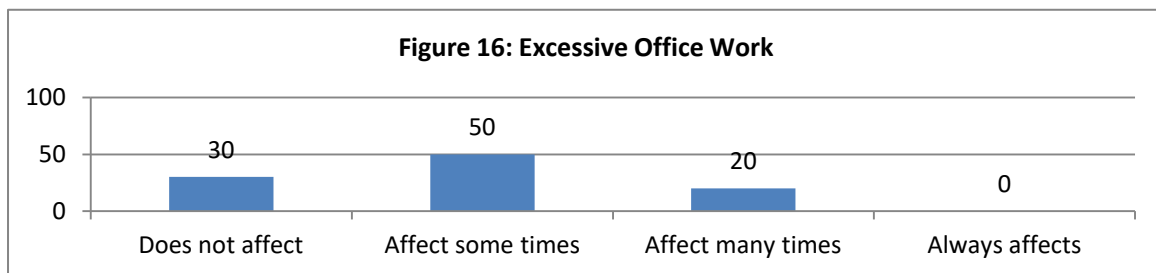


Figure 16 reveals that 30% women respondents do not affect, 50% affect some times, 20% affect many times and 0% always affect excessive office work.

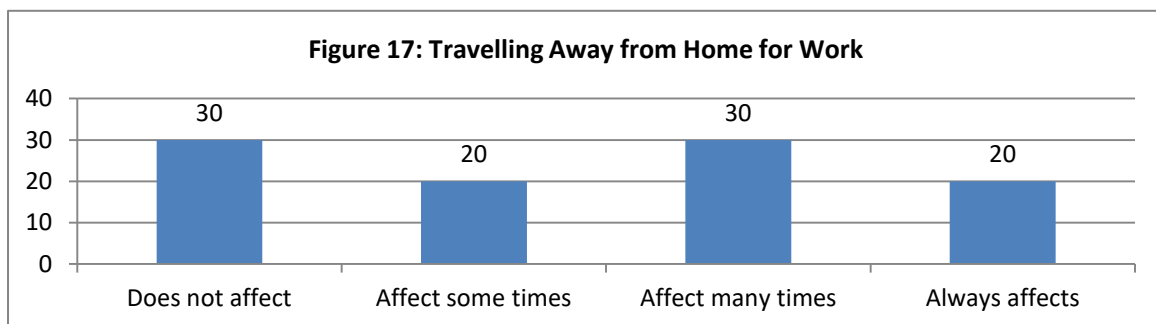


Figure 17 reveals that 30% women respondents do not affect, 20% affect some times, 30% affect many times and 20% always affect impact work on household activities.

7. OVERALL FINDINGS

In most cases it was found that the working hours was suitable the reason could be the choice they made in selecting the job. However, it was found that the little change in work timings interrupts the entire work life balance. 60% respondents were affected by overtime and working on holidays however this was less frequent.

The negative attitude of supervisors (Dean, Course coordinators, Director) did affect 50% women respondents. And negative attitude of colleagues did affect 70% women respondents. The negative impact on women on account of attitude of spouse was 50%. The excessive load of household work had impact on 70% respondents.

Due to work pressure 70% women respondents did feel tired at home fronts. Respondents were of the opinion that work pressures impacts their house hold affairs. It was found that job stress did affect personal relationships among 50% women respondents. Further it also affects the child care.

It was surprising to note that the impact of home on work did not affect 60% respondents may be again on account of choice of job they made. However it did affect 70% personal and family problems. Further it increased the stress level among 80% women respondents. And 50% impact on social responsibilities.

Excessive college work definitely had a lot of impact on the work life balance. It was more common during accreditation and examinations. Travelling away from home for work did create a lot of work and family imbalance among these women. Few respondents reported that their lives were a juggling act that included multiple responsibilities at work, research activities, students mentoring, extension activities, different committee's duties, remedial, on top of managing the daily routine responsibilities of life and home.

8. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

The research findings reveal that women in teaching are also prone to work life balance. It is an ongoing challenge. Support from the management and higher authorities along with the individuals' proper planning and personal efforts right work-life balance can be established. As one respondent summarized, "Plan, prioritize and schedule as efficiently as possible... and don't be afraid of hard work!" Work-life balance is a person's control over the conditions in their workplace. It is accomplished when an individual feels dually satisfied about their personal life and their paid occupation. Employees are important assets of the every entity. Students as well teachers are the backbones of any institutions. For any institutional growth, the mental peace of both students as well teachers are equally responsible. For this fast growing expensive world, the women going for work becomes a necessity thereby resulting in personal growth of women which intern leads to the growth of the institution as well as the well-being of the family. They are the life blood. It is very important that women working in the institution must be happy, which otherwise will lead to negative impact on each and every family members, especially their kids, 'the future generation'. Even though the educational institutions were meant to be stress free, women employees are affected due to the work life imbalance. Thus, it is required to be given little more consideration for them, in order to build up the institution. The study will help the employers to rethink on flexible work schedules and providing

more part time opportunities for the women employees, so as to improve their mental happiness together with their work performance. However there is no perfect, one size fits all balance. The best balance is different for each one because all have different priorities and different roles to play. So how does a woman balance work with family? There's no easy answer to this question that impacts countless women, but here are some suggestions.

9. SUGGESTIONS

- Think good about what you do, as a career woman, you're serving as a breadwinner for your family, and that's an essential role.
- Review of work processes, as far as possible the work schedules especially over time and work during holidays should be discussed and communicated well in advance, so women employees can make alternate arrangements, this will prevent discomfort at work and home.
- Interventions from management are required to sort out the negativity among the supervisors and colleagues.

Finally, a sentence that brings the idea of work life balance to the point is: "*Work to live. Don't live to work.*"

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