

# IMPACT OF LIFE AND JOB DOMAIN CHARACTERISTICS ON WORK LIFE BALANCE OF TEXTILE EMPLOYEES IN PAKISTAN

\*A. Saleem<sup>1</sup>, Abbasi.A.S.Dr<sup>2</sup>

1. Department of Business Administration, Bahauddin Zakairiya University, Sahiwal, Pakistan.

2. Management Sciences, CIIT Lahore.

Contact: ammarachsaleem@gmail.com

**ABSTRACT:** *Now a day's work-life balance has become a common apprehension for both employees and employer due to demographic changes, women participation in work, increasing number of dual career families and change in work settings. Work life balance is the state of equilibrium where any person is able to get satisfies with personal and professional life. In literature, although the combination of some variables from job domain and life domain have been widely considered in determining the employee work life balance, no investigation has indicated the combined influence employee work life balance. This study examines the impact of both job and life domain characteristics on employee work life balance. A total of 300 employees from different 31 textile companies participated in this study. Sample was selected using the probability sampling techniques. The results of this study confirmed that both life and job domain significantly affect the work life balance. Employees who have greater control over work schedule, supervisory, co worker and social support and have low level of work role expectations, family role expectations, numbers of kids, less working hours have positive perception about work life balance. It is recommended that textile companies revamp the negatively affected job characteristics, encourage positively affected job characteristics, offer various work life balance strategies; so employees can enjoy work life balance and show more positive work behaviors'.*

**Key Words:** Work Life Balance, Work Role Expectations, Family Role Expectations, Long Working Hours, Work Schedule Flexibility, No. of Kids, Age of younger child, Social Support, Childcare responsibility, co-worker support, supervisory support. Textile Industry of Pakistan.

## INTRODUCTION:

As the time changes continuously, employees are facing several pressures from family and job. A person's involvement in different relationships influences a lot to maintain a balance between the working life and personal life. Both personal and professional lives are interrelated and difficult to be separated from each other [1]

Job and family life represent two of the most important aspects of an employee life as job and family are closely interconnected domains of human life [2]. Both domains (job and family) contribute uniquely to our understanding of human behavior [3]. Moreover, meeting both the demands from work and family can be very challenging and lead to issues with work-life balance [4].

Work-life balance (WLB) is an important area of human resource management. Work life balance in an organization is essential for the smooth running and success of its employees. Balanced nature of work enables increase in productivity and efficiency of employees. Employees become more creative and they derive more satisfaction from work [5]. According to Robbins and Judge (2011), satisfied employees are more productive and tend to show positive behaviours like organizational commitment, organization citizenship behaviours. [6] said that, "A big stressor for many employees is a lack of balance b/w work and family tasks. Due to high competition in labor market, employees spend most of the time on work and may not be able to participate in family life and other personnel activities.

Several factors from both (life and job) domains contributing in imbalancing the work and life. Work domain characteristics had often been described as the main causes of work family conflict and imbalance [7] but various changes in society such as women participation in labor force, dual earner couples, change in family structure, changing social demographics, altering family-role expectations, social network support and participation of men in performing

household chores etc. also makes the individual life characteristics significant predictor of work life balance.

Historically, work-life balance has been studied across multiple disciplines including counseling, psychology, I/O psychology, business, and human resources. The idea of Work-Life Balance originally appeared in the 1960's in the United Kingdom [8]. Based on the literature, the idea of work-life balance began showing up in the U.S in the late 70's when researchers from Harvard suggested U.S. companies begin adopting a flexible work schedule like those so popular in Europe [9]. The term work-life balance became more widely used in the literature in the U.S. in the late 80's and 90's and is now a focus both of researchers in the business and human service domains.

Work life balance is a universal struggle, experienced by both men and women across different life-stages and in all types of professions [10]. Others [11] described work life balance as the maintenance of a balance between responsibilities at work and at home. Kalliath & Brough defined work life balance as a person satisfaction with his or her level of functioning in all domains of life (i.e., work, family, leisure) and meaningfully involved in each of the various roles [12]. According to Pichler [13], work life balance is experienced when demands from the domain of (paid) work are compatible with demands from other domains, e.g. family or leisure time. A 'balanced' living then occurs when activities and aspirations in one domain do not have a negative effect on activities in the other domains.

A number of studies suggest that family characteristics are likely to have an important impact on perceptions of balance. Child care responsibility is one of the family factors that have been found significant in several studies [14, 15]. Expectations held by family members and friends for an individual to prioritize the family role over the work role, and take on additional family role responsibilities to the detriment of his or her job, have been linked to increased

levels of work-home interference [16], which directly affect work life balance status of an employee. Support for this conjecture is found in research by [17], demonstrating that a family climate encouraging members to sacrifice their work performance for the sake of their family duties is negatively associated with WLB.

Family role expectations → Family role overload → reduce work life balance

There were mixed results in the literature about the significance of the number of children and the age of the youngest child. The literature also showed that very small children do not make a difference everything else being equal [18]. Nomaguchi [19] indicated that having younger children was significant, but the number of children was not. Quadagno [20] found that neither factor was significant in determining the work-life balance of a parent.

According to [21], there are more chances of imbalances when the respondents have more children but Quadagno [22] found insignificant relation of no. of kids to work life balance. Keeton et. al [23] found it significant but week predictor in determining the work life balance.

Childcare is an important issue for working parents. Unavailability of suitable childcare arrangement has been positively linked to reduced work life balance [24], and the degree of choice available regarding the form, quality, and cost of childcare provision has also been positively associated with work life balance [25]. Levy [26], in his study examined that the more childcare support a working woman has, the more positive her perceived work-life balance will be.

Work domain characteristics such as job autonomy, schedule flexibility, hours worked, the amount of social support provided by supervisors and coworkers, and the existence of family-friendly work policies directly influence work-life balance [27].

Expectations held by superiors and co-workers for an employee to prioritize the work role by assuming increased job-related responsibilities and work beyond the normal hours, on evenings or even on the weekends have been linked directly to work-home interference [28] [29], and ultimately this interference negatively influence the work life balance.

Control over the scheduling of one's work hours has been linked to higher perceptions of work life balance [30] [31]. It is safe to assume that autonomy over work hours can contribute directly to higher perceptions of work life balance. The effects of perceived job flexibility on work-family balance were investigated by Hill et. al [32].

The presence of supervisors who are supportive of an employee's work-family issues has been associated with higher levels of work life balance and specific appraisals of work interference with home [33]. Supervisor support can be both emotional, involving the provision of sympathy and reassurance, and instrumental, involving practical assistance such as changing work or leave schedules to accommodate an employee's family demands. According to Lauren [34], supervisory support positively correlated with perceived work life balance.

Besides supervisors support, coworker support also influence the individual status and perception of work life balance. Some authors suggest that coworkers should be viewed as

potential supporters [35]. Coworkers have the ability to define the social environment at work. Co workers can have a large influence on whether or not an employee is able to balance his/her time between work and non-work life [36]. Coworkers have also the ability to temporarily relieve an employee from his or her job duties at work in order to attend to personal needs. For example, if an employee needs to leave work early to take care of a sick child, a coworker can show their supportiveness through staying late for that employee [37].

Nowadays, in the modern dynamic world, long working hours and over work load is a common phenomenon in the organizations specially in textile companies and blur the borders of home and work, thus, resulting in one affecting the other. This competitive environment of working life creates an imbalance between work and family. This imbalance can have an influence in determining the attachment of an individual to his/her work [38]. Furthermore, employees are not only working in office timings but also in their lunch time, home and holiday. Heavy workload, long working hours and high working pressures in textile companies creates an imbalance b/w personnel life and work life [39].

The studies conducted so far in Pakistani organizational environment are unable to highlight the work life balance determinants particularly in textile sector. So, there is a need to understand the influence of various characteristics form both (life and job) domains on work life balance which is the critical concern of both employee and employer [40].

This research will focus on the following objectives:

1. To establish the impact of different life domain characteristics on work life balance.
2. To assess the association of different job domain characteristics on work life balance.
3. To establish the impact of demographics such as gender, marital status, no. of kids and age of younger child on work life balance.

#### **Hypotheses:**

**H1 (a):** Life domain characteristics such as family role expectations can negatively influence perceived work-life balance.

**H1 (b):** Life domain characteristics such as social support for child care and managing domestic responsibilities can positively impact perceived work-life balance.

**H2:** Job domain characteristics such as long working hours, work overload work role expectations are negatively associated with perceived work life balance.

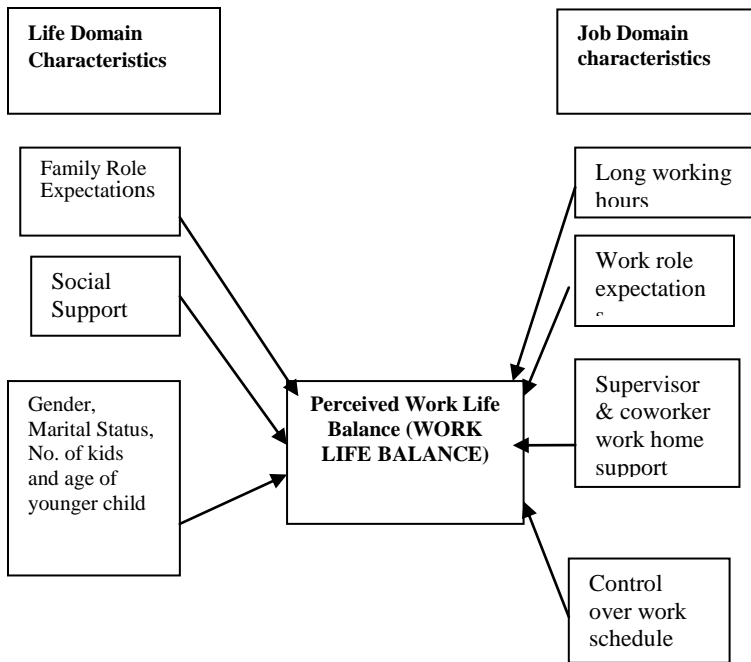
**H3:** Job domain characteristics such as control over work schedules, supervisory and coworker work home related support are positively linked to perceived work life balance.

**H4:** Life domain characteristics such as gender and marital status, no of kids and age of younger child can significantly influence the perceived work-life balance.

#### **METHODOLOGY:**

Sample was selected in two stages. In the first stage companies was selected randomly using the sampling frame and in the second stage a sample of managerial employees was. On first stage we used the Simple random sampling and on the second stage we used stratified random sampling; probability sampling methods were used to collect unbiased responses and the data.

**MATERIAL AND METHODS**



Participant of the survey were the managerial employees (defined as those who held bachelor’s degree or higher and who are currently working on managerial position) of textile companies of Faisalabad and Lahore. 370 questionnaires were distributed and 307 responses were received but 300 respondents completely filled the questionnaire. Response rate was 81%.

This study is a questionnaire based survey using quantitative approach. Quantitative data is collected using Questionnaire on (seven)-point Likert response scale. Questionnaire was consisted of two sections. Section I consists of demographics like Gender, Age, Marital Status, Family Structure ,No. of Kids, Education, Work experience, Average no of hours worked in a day, Suppose work status etc. Section II includes items to measure the perception of work life balance, life and job domain characteristics.

Family and work role expectations was measured using items developed by Cook & Reasue [41], Spouse/ parents & In laws support for childcare and domestic responsibility is measured using the “Control over family” scale, control over work hours both is measured using items developed by Thomas & Ganster [42], Supervisor support is measured using items by Hammer et. al [43] and Coworker support is measured using items developed by Ducharme & Martin [44]. The reliability coefficients for all the key variables ranged from 0.703 to 0.917 were considered good to very good [45].

The data collected for this study was analyzed by using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Science) version 20. In order to learn correlations among the variables, the Pearson's Correlation and the Regression Analysis was conducted to learn the effect of different job and life domain characteristics on work life balance. Alpha was set at .05 for all analyses.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Demographic characteristics of the studied population are summarized in Table 1. Correlations among the variables of interest in our study are presented in Table 2. Regression analysis results are given in Table 3 & 4.

**Table I. Demographic Profile**

Category	Options & %age
<b>Gender</b>	Male 75% & Female 25%
<b>Marital Status</b>	Unmarried 2%, Married 82 % & Divorced 16 %
<b>No. of Kids</b>	None 14%, 1 child 7 %, 2 child 17 %, 3 child 36 %, 4 child 26% & 5 or above 0 %
<b>Family Structure</b>	Ind. Unit 20 % & Joint Family 80 %
<b>Job Designation</b>	A. M 23%, D.M 25 %, Mgr 26 %, Sr.Mgr 11%, G.M 3 % & other 12%
<b>Education</b>	B.A 27%, BBA(Hons)/Bs Engineering or Equivalent 10 %, MBA/ M.A 59 % & M.Com or Equivalent 4 %
<b>Avg. no of hours/ day</b>	8-10 53%, 10-12 34 % & > 12 13%
<b>Total Work Experience</b>	1-4 Years and 11 Months 14%, 5-9 Years and 11 Months 45%, 10-14 Years and 11 Months 25%, 15-19 Years and 11 Months 12 %, 20-24 Years and 11 Months 1 % & 25-29 Years and 11 Months 1%
<b>Age</b>	Below 30 21%, 30-35 43%, 35-40 13%, 40-45 19%, 45-50 4 % & Above 50 1 %
<b>Income</b>	Less than Rs.40,000 28%, 40,000-80,000 44%, 80,000-120,000 15%, 120,000-200,000 10%, 200,000-250,000 2 % & More than 250,000 2%
<b>Department</b>	Personnel/ Administration/ Accounting 21%, Planning 50%, IT/Information Processing, 9% & Sales and Marketing (including client account management) 20%

**Table 2-Correlation Analysis**

PWLB: Perceived Work Life Balance; LWH: Long Working Hours; SWHS: Supervisory Work Home Support; CWHS: Coworker Work Home Support; WRE: Work Role Expectations; COWH: Control over Work Hrs; SS: Social Support; FRE: Family Role Expectations; AOYC: Age of Younger Child; NOK: No. of Kids

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. PWLB									
2. LWH	-.640								
3. SWHS	.383	-.217							
4. CWHS	.374	-0.12	.265						
5. WRE	-.484	.421	-.293	-.203					
6. COWH	.328	-.201	.197	.206	-.164				
7. SS	.219	-.219	.162	0.05	-.224	0.05			
8. FRE	-.276	.221	0.11	-0.04	0.09	-.135	.314		
9. AOYC	-.286	.293	-0.11	-0.11	.223	-0.06	-0.02	0.05	
10. NOK	-.286	.241	-.113	-.179	.198	-.152	0.00	-0.09	.414

**Table 3- Regression Analysis Result for hypothesis 1-3. Dependent variable is Work life Balance.**

Hypothesis	Ind. Variables	B	T	Sig	Result	R <sup>2</sup> /P-value
H1 (a)	Family Role Expectation	-.186	-4.276	.000	Accept	0.47/ .000
H1 (b)	Social Support	.128	2.41	.017	Accept	
H2	long working hours	-.405	-8.65	.000	Accept	.60/ .000
	work role expectations	-.130	-3.205	.002	Accept	
H3	supervisor work home related support	.248	3.73	.000	Accept	.556/ .000
	co-worker work home related support	.272	4.21	.000	Accept	
	control over work hours	.165	2.43	.016	Accept	

As shown in Table 2, perceived work life balance is negatively related to long working hours ( $r=-.640$ ), work role expectations ( $r=-.484$ ), family role expectations ( $-.276$ ), age of younger child ( $r=-.286$ ) and no.of kids ( $r=-.286$ ) but are positively related to Supervisory Work Home Support ( $r=.383$ ), Coworker Work Home Support ( $r=.374$ ) and Suppose/ Parents/In-Laws/Friends support for child Care and Domestic Responsibilities ( $r=.219$ ). Furthermore, job domain characteristics are more strongly related to perceived work life balance than family domain characteristics. The reason may be the majority of respondent (75%) are male and in our society males are considered the breadwinners and it is their primary responsibility than the females whose primary job is to take care of family.

Table 3, represents the constant and all independent variables (Suppose/Parents/ In-laws support for child care and domestic responsibilities ( $\beta= .128$ ,  $p<.017$ ), control over work hours ( $\beta=.165$ ,  $p< .016$ ) co-worker work home related support ( $\beta=.272$ ,  $p< .000$ ), supervisor work home related support ( $\beta=.248$ ,  $p<.000$ ), family role expectations ( $\beta=-.186$ ,  $p<.000$ ), work role expectations ( $\beta=-.130$ ,  $p<.002$ ) and long working hours ( $\beta=-.405$ ,  $p<.000$ ) are contributing significantly to the model.

**Hypothesis 1**, examines the association of social support (suppose/ parents & in-laws) for child care and family role

expectations in relation to work life balance. Results of this regression analysis are given in Table 3 and support the hypothesis 1( $p< .000$ ). The results also found that both family role expectations ( $\beta=-.186$ ,  $p<.000$ ) and social support ( $\beta= .128$ ,  $p<.017$ ) are significantly related to work life balance. Results are consistent with the previous studies [46,47,48,49,51]. A research by [52], demonstrating that a family climate encouraging members to sacrifice their work performance for the sake of their family duties is associated with higher levels of work interference with home and thus effect the employee perception of work life balance.

It is also conceivable that support for childcare may have a direct influence on work life balance. For example, given a situation where an employee is required to work late or travel with little advance notice, the ability to easily procure flexible childcare could make the difference in perception between low and high levels of work life balance. For female employee enjoying a high level of support for childcare arrangements, a quick phone call may be all that is necessary to ensure that her children are cared for in a safe environment while she is away.

**Hypothesis 2** examines the impact the variables such as work role expectations and long working hours and work overload, from job domain which negatively the effect the work life balance. The result of this regression analysis is given in table

3. The results showed a significant ( $p < .000$ ) relation b/w studied variables and support the hypothesis 2. Coefficient results indicate that both variables, work role expectations ( $\beta = -.130$ ,  $p < .002$ ) and long working hours and work over load ( $\beta = -.405$ ,  $p < .000$ ) are significant and negatively influence the work life balance. These results are supported by previous studies related to work overload and long working hours [53,54,55] and work role expectations [56] [57].

**Hypothesis 3** examines the variables from the job domain which positively associated with work life balance such as control over work schedules, supervisory and coworker work home related support. The result of coefficients from table 3, indicate that control over work schedules ( $\beta = .165$ ,  $p < .016$ ), supervisory ( $\beta = .248$ ,  $p < .000$ ) and co-worker ( $\beta = .272$ ,  $p < .000$ ) work home related support are positively related to work life balance and support the hypothesis 3.

Previous studies, including those by Thomas & Ganster [58] and Jang & Jung [59] demonstrated that supportive supervisors had a significant effect on reduced levels of employee work-family conflict but not on perception of work-life balance.

In the literature, high levels of job autonomy, scheduling flexibility, supervisory and co-worker work home related support have been observed to have a positive effect on work-life balance [60,61,62,63,64]. In other words, those who perceive they have a degree of freedom in scheduling how and when they do their work and feel supported by their direct supervisors and co-workers are more likely to report high work-life balance.

**Hypothesis 4** which examines the effect of some of demographic characteristics such as gender and marital status, no of kids and age of younger child on the perceived work-life balance. The variables gender, marital status, the number of children one has, and the age of the youngest child are all nominal variables with dummy classifications. Results of this regression analysis is given in Table 4 and showed that demographic characteristics ( $p < .000$ ) significantly predicts the work life balance. Of the independent variables examined, only gender, employees with 5 or more children and children of age infant and toddlers were insignificant, at the 95% confidence level.

Gender ( $p > .821$ ,  $\beta = .036$ ), on its own, is not a frequent indicator of work-life balance, as some researchers [65,66, 67] thought it might be specially when combined with marital status and being a parent, women reported lower work-life balance than men [68,69].

Marital status has not explicitly been examined in conjunction with work-life balance. But, it was studied in relation with home interfere the work, as marital status add responsibilities and roles in family domain, which indirectly affect the status quo and perception of work life balance. However, marital status has been studied in relation to life satisfaction in general. In a study conducted by [70], the researchers found that it is associated with life satisfaction. Though life satisfaction and work-life balance are not one in the same, the result may be generalizable. The association of marital status either as married ( $p < .000$ ,  $\beta = -3.594$ ) or as divorced or widow ( $p < .000$  and  $\beta = -2.250$ ) both are significant predictors of work life balance.

The number of children and the age of the youngest child both draw mixed conclusions in the literature. Like marital status, there are a number of additional variables that might affect this data: whether both parents were working, whether both parents were married or separated, whether a paid caretaker was present, whether you live independently or in joint family, no of dependents you are responsible for, etc. However, there was evidence that suggests that those with children show significantly lower work-life balance than those without [70, 71]. Age of Youngest Child have a negative relation to work life balance since younger child necessarily are more dependent on their parents specially mothers than older children [72].

This study results support that the effect of the variables “One Child ( $p < .001$ ,  $\beta = -1.61$ )” “Two Children ( $p < .001$ ,  $\beta = -1.51$ ),” “Three Children ( $p < .003$ ,  $\beta = -1.284$ )” and “Four Children ( $p < .001$ ,  $\beta = -1.471$ )” are significant and have negative, since those with children have been observed to have lower work-life balance than those without, and thus it follows that additional children may continue to decrease work-life balance.

**Table 4-Regression Analysis Result for hypothesis 4.**

Variable	$\beta$ -value	Sig
Married	-3.594	.000
Div/widow	-2.250	.005
Infant	-.149	.515
Todler	-.223	.244
Preschool	-.657	.006
above10	-.759	.006
Child1	-1.595	.001
Child2	-1.515	.001
Child3	-1.284	.003
Child4	-1.471	.001
Child5 or more	-1.090	.347
Male	-.036	.821

**CONCLUSION**

The findings of the present study testifies that dynamics of personal life as well as work environment circumstances adversely influence the textile employees’ work life balance perceptions. Organizations’ various expectations and demands such as work for longer hours or in evenings or even on the weekends and sacrifice their family obligations for the sake of job commitments from employees negatively affect the work life balance In manufacturing industry job domain characteristics such as typical work schedule, long working hours and heavy work loads more strongly influence the employee perception of work life balance. Results are evident that marital status and number of kids are significant predictor and negatively influence the work life balance whereas very small children and gender doesn’t make any difference. Study also shows that support either from job or

life domains have provided significant and positive contribution in balancing the work and life.

Those employees who receive support from workplace and/or from the family and friends enjoy higher work life balance which benefits both the employee and organization in achieving their personal and professional goals.

It is clear from the current research that several characteristics from both job and life domain have a powerful role in significantly influence the perception of work-life balance. In conclusion, this explanatory study suggests that textile companies need to pay attention to their employees' perception of work life balance, as it has a harmful effect on work achievements of their employees. The organizations have to add supportive characteristics such as work schedule flexibility, compressed work week, supervisory support etc. and offer other work life balance strategies. The issue of work life balance is no more an individual but it also an organization's obligation. Organization can play a big role in facilitating employees to maintain their work life balance. The employees also need to develop a support network both at workplace and personal life to achieve suitable work life balance.

#### LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this study, there are few limitations. This study sample is taken from the textile companies of Lahore and Faisalabd cities of Pakistan. That's why this study results can't be generalized to employees of other cities as every city employees have some unique characteristics. Another limitation of this study was the target population. This study focused to the only managerial employees; who have at least bachelor degree.

Regarding the limitations and findings of the study, this study suggests some recommendations for the future research. First, there is no clear evidence that either the employees experience better balance for the couple when one of the partners works part-time and the other full-time when compared with a situation in which both partners work full-time or the employees for the couple when only one partner is working full time. Furthermore, additional variables that had not previously received much attention in the academic literature, in particular, the distance of the office from home or main city, marital status, organization industry, type of organization, workforce empowerment, travelling, leadership style, organization work structure, unavailability of family friendly policies are variables that had either been neglected or received very little attention in previous analyses by Pakistani researchers. A future studies could take a further glimpse to see if significant relationships emerged.

Besides, same model can be tested on other different sectors and type of organization.

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