

TABLE 6.20**Impact of implementation of Personal Coping Strategies on FWC**

Sl.No.	Coping strategies	<i>Regression co-efficient among employees in</i>		
		<i>Unmarried</i>	<i>Married</i>	<i>Pooled data</i>
1.	Avoidance	-0.1968*	-0.1345*	-0.1549*
2.	Positive thinking	-0.1718*	-0.1908*	-0.1832*
3.	Direct action	-0.0811	-0.0996	-0.0731
4.	Help seeking	-0.2145*	-0.1512*	-0.1734*
	Constant	-0.5345	-0.1546	-0.6139
	R ²	0.7408	0.6133	0.7963
	F-statistics	7.9147*	6.9336*	8.3445*

*Significant at five per cent level.

The significantly influencing coping strategies on FWC among the unmarried employees are avoidance, positive thinking and help seeking whereas among the married employees, these are avoidance and positive thinking. The analysis of pooled data reveals that a unit increase in the implementation of avoidance, positive thinking and help seeking will result in a decline in FWC by 0.1549, 0.1832 and 0.1734 units respectively. The changes in the implementation of coping strategies explain the changes in FWC to the extent of 79.63 per cent. The changes in the implementation of personal coping strategies explain the changes in FWC to a higher extent among the unmarried employees than among the married employees

CHAPTER-VII

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The present study focuses on six important aspects related to work-life balance and work-life imbalance among the employees in the BPO industry. At first, the profiles of the employees and their social support have been examined to provide the background of the employees. Secondly, the study has discussed the work-life balance and work-life imbalances (work-family conflict (WFC) and the Family-Work Conflict (FWC) among the employees. The third part of the study

examinees the factors leading to work life imbalances. The fourth part of the¹⁹² study discusses various outcome of work life imbalance at BPO industry. The fifth part analyses the linkage between the work life imbalance and its outcome. The sixth part of the study evaluates the level of implementation of various coping strategies to maintain the work-life balance among the employees in BPO industry.

The confined objectives of the study are: (i) to exhibit the socio-economic profile and social support of the employees; (ii) to analyse the level of work-life balance and imbalance among the employees; (iii) to discuss the various antecedents of work-life imbalance among the employees; (iv) to examine the various outcome of the work-life imbalances among the employees; v) to evaluate the impact of work-life imbalances on the various outcomes; and vi) to analyse the level of implementation of coping strategies among the employees.

In order to fulfill the objectives of the study, the essential data were collected with the help of pre-structured interview schedule. The interview schedule consists of five important parts. The first part includes the profile of employees and their social support whereas the second part covers the work-life balance and imbalances. The third part of the schedule focuses on the various factors leading to work-life imbalance. The fourth part includes the various outcomes of work-life imbalance. The last part includes the coping strategies to enrich the work-life balance. A pilot study was conducted among 50 employees in the BPO industry at Chennai for the enrichment of the interview schedule. The women employees working in BPO industry are treated as the population of the study. Seven major cities at Tamilnadu namely Chennai, Coimbatore, Madurai, Trichy, Tirunelveli, Salem and Erode were purposively selected for the study. The number of BPO industry and the women employees working at there are 402 and 6672 respectively. The sample size of the study was determined with the help of

the formula $n = \left[\frac{Z\sigma}{D} \right]^2$. In the present study, it came to 598. The purposive

sampling was applied to distribute the sample size among the BPO industry at¹⁹³ seven cities. The appropriate statistical tools have been used to analyse the collected data. The results are discussed in the earlier chapters. This chapter includes the summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

Findings of the Study

The women employees included in the study are classified into unmarried and married employees initially. The important age group among the employees is less than 25 and 25 to 30 years. The most important age group among the unmarried and married employees is less than or equal to 30 years. The dominant levels of education among the employees are under graduation and post-graduation. The most important level of education among the unmarried and married employees is under graduation.

The dominant personal income among the employees is Rs.20,001 to 30,000 and less than Rs.20,000. The most important personal income per month among the unmarried and married employees is Rs.20,000 to 30,000. The important years of experience among the employees are 3 to 6 years and 6 to 9 years. The most important ‘years of experience’ among the unmarried and married employees is 3 to 6 years.

The important type of family among the employees is Nuclear family system. The important family size among the employees is 3 to 4 and 5 to 6. The most important family size among the unmarried and married employees is only 3 to 4 members. The important number of earning members per family among the employees is two and one. The most important number of earning members among the unmarried and married employees in one and two respectively.

The dominant level of education of spouse among the married employees is post graduation and engineering. The most important level of education of spouse among the married employees is post graduation. Most of the spouses of the

employees are also employed. Most of the married employees are having¹⁹⁴ children at their family.

The dominant family income per month among the employees is less than Rs.30,000 and Rs.40,001 to 50,000. The most important family income per month among the unmarried and married employees is less than Rs.30,000 and Rs.40,001 to 50,000. The higher family responsibilities among the unmarried employees are the caring of disabled parents whereas among the married employees, this is family care. Regarding the caring responsibilities, the significant difference among the two group of employees have been noticed in the case of family care, child care, caring of sick child and caring of disabled adult.

The important time devoted to family works per day among the employees is 1 to 2 hours and 2.01 to 3.00 hours. The most important time devoted to family works per day among the unmarried employees is 1 to 2.00 hours whereas among the married employees, it is 2.01 to 3.00 hours.

The dominant working hour at workplace, per day among the employees is 9.01 to 10.00 hours and 8.01 to 9.00 hours. The most important ‘hours worked per day’ among the unmarried employees is 9.01 to 10.00 hours whereas among the married employees, it is also the same. Most of the employees are having partially regular working schedule. The highly irregular working schedules are seen among the unmarried employees than among the married employees.

The highly perceived parent/spouse support among the unmarried employees is interaction and providing financial support whereas among the married employees these are sense of humor and supportive for career development. Regarding the perception on variables in parent/spouse support, the significant difference among the two group of employees have been noticed in the case of supporting on child care activities, household chores, financial support and interaction. The spouse support among the unmarried employees is identified as higher than among the married employees.

The highly perceived variables in domestic support among the¹⁹⁵ unmarried employees are ‘having of care-givers’ and ‘frequent participation with my family members and friends’ whereas among the married employees, these are ‘emotional support is given by my relatives and friends’ and ‘having care-givers’. Regarding the perception on variables in domestic support, the significant differences among the two groups of employees have been noticed in four variables out of six variables. The higher supervisors’ support is noticed among the unmarried employees than among the married employees.

Among the unmarried employees, the highly perceived variables in co-workers support are highly informative and responsibilities sharing co-workers whereas among the married employees, these are highly informative and responsibilities sharing co-workers. Regarding the perception on variables in co-workers support, the significant difference among the two groups of employees has been identified in all seven variables related to co-worker support. The higher co-worker support is identified among the unmarried employees than among the married employees.

The highly viewed social support among the two groups of employees is parent/spouse support. Regarding the social support, the significant difference among the two groups of employees has been identified in all four social supports. The social supports are identified as higher among the unmarried employees than among the married employees. In total, the social support to the unmarried employees is higher than the social support to the married employees.

The work-life balance among the employees has been measured with the help of 15 variables. The highly viewed variable by the unmarried employees is work play and love; and adjustment with work and family whereas among the married employees, these are career orientation and sense of control. The significant difference among the two groups of employees has been noticed in 14 variables out of 15 variables in work-life balance. Twelve variables in work life balance explain it to a reliable extent. The level of work-life balance among the

unmarried employees is higher than among the married employees. The¹⁹⁶ significantly associating profile variables with their level of work life balance are age, educational qualification, personal income, years of experience, marital status, family size, level of education of spouse/parent, employment of spouse, family income, caring responsibility and time devoted to family work per day.

The work-life imbalance have been measured by two important aspects namely work-family conflict and family-work conflict.

The Work Family Conflict (WFC) among the employees has been measured with the help of eight variables. The highly viewed variables among the unmarried employees are work pressure, lack of sharing of views with family members and stress leads to irritation at their home. Among the married employees, these are works affect the time spent on family affairs and work pressures keep away from their family works. Regarding the perception on variables related to WFC, the significant difference among the two groups of employees has been noticed in all eight variables. Six variables in WFC explain it to a reliable extent. The level of WFC is identified as higher among the married employees than among the unmarried employees.

The family work conflict (FWC) has been measured with the help of eight variables. The highly viewed FWC variables among the unmarried employees are the ‘stress caused by time spent on family affairs prevent my time to be spent at work’ and ‘the strained family relationship leads to stress at work place’ whereas among the married employees, these two are strained family relationship and family causes lack of concentration on work. Regarding the perception on the variables related to FWC, the significant difference among the two groups of employees has been noticed in the case of four variables out of eight variables. Six variables in FWC explain it to a reliable extent. The higher FWC is noticed among the married employees than among the unmarried employees.

Regarding the WFC, the significantly associating profile variables are age, educational qualification, personal income and years of experience since their

respective ‘F’ statistics are significant at five per cent level. The significantly¹⁹⁷ associating profile variables with the FWC among the employees are age, educational qualification, personal income and years of experience.

The highly viewed variable in antecedents of work life imbalance among the unmarried employees are no balance between my talents and salary; and poor empowerment in all respects. Among the married employees; these are inconvenient working hours and dumping heavy work. Regarding the view on variables in antecedents of work life imbalance, the significant difference among the unmarried and married employees is seen in the case of 20 out of 30 variables in antecedents of work life imbalance.

The important work related factors identified by the factor analysis is unsupportive colleagues, work pressure, performance inhibitors, lack of empowerment, effort-reward imbalance, working hours and working environment. The highly perceived antecedents of WLIB among the unmarried employees is work pressure and lack of empowerment whereas among the married employees, these are also the same but the degree of attachment to these factors are comparatively higher among the married employees, than among the unmarried employees. Regarding the perception on these factors leading to WLIB, the significant difference among the two groups of employees have been noticed in six factors out of seven factors leading to WLIB.

The significantly associating important profile variables with the perception on factors leading to WLID among the employees are their age, family size, caring responsibilities, time devoted to family work per day, and educational qualification. The important discriminant antecedents of WLID among the two groups of employees are work pressures and working hours which are identified as higher among the married employees than among the unmarried employees.

The significantly influencing antecedents of work life imbalance on work life imbalance among the unmarried employees is unsupportive colleagues, work pressures and working hours whereas among the married employees, these are

unsupportive colleagues, work pressures, lack of empowerment and working¹⁹⁸ hours. The rate of impact is identified as higher among the married employees than among the unmarried employees.

The significantly influencing social support variables on work life imbalance among the unmarried employees is parent/spouse support, supervisor support and co-worker support whereas among the married employees, these are supervisor and co-worker support. The rate of impact is identified as higher among the unmarried employees than among the married employees.

The emotional exhaustion among the employees is measured with the help of eight variables. The highly viewed variable in emotional exhaustion by the unmarried and married employees are ‘feel of used at the end of the day’ and ‘emotionally drained from my work’ respectively. Regarding the view on variables, there is a significant difference among the two groups of employees regarding all eight variables. The level of emotional exhaustion is identified as higher among the married employees than among the unmarried employees.

The significantly influencing conflict on emotional exhaustion among the unmarried employees is work family conflict whereas among the married employees, these are work family conflict and family work conflict. The rate of impact is identified as higher among the married employees than among the unmarried employees.

The significantly influencing factors leading to work-life imbalance on emotional exhaustion among the unmarried employees is unsupportive colleagues, work pressure and working hours whereas among the married employees, these are unsupportive colleagues, work pressure, lack of improvement and working hours. The rate of conflict is higher among the married employees than among the unmarried employees.

The highly viewed work-life balance practices implemented at the organization by the unmarried and married employees are spatial flexibility and flexible work arrangement. The significant difference among the two groups of

employees have been noticed in their views between implementation of spatial¹⁹⁹ flexibility, WLB information, WLB counseling and shared work. The level of implementation of WLB practices is higher as per the view of unmarried employees than the married employees.

The outcome of work-life imbalance is measured by organizational commitment, job satisfaction, job stress, absenteeism, job embeddedness and job performance. The highly perceived organizational commitment variables among the unmarried employees are ‘spending of rest of the career in the organization’ and emotional attachment with the organization. Among the married employees, these two are ‘spending of rest of the career in the organization and proud as the part of the organization’. Regarding the perception on the variables related to organizational commitment, the significant difference among the two groups of employees has been noticed in all seven variables in organizational commitment. The included six variables in organizational commitment explain it to a reliable extent. The higher organizational commitment is identified among the unmarried employees than among the married employees.

The job satisfaction among the employees has been measured with the help of twelve variables related to job satisfaction. Only Nine variables explain it to a reliable extent. The highly perceived variables in job satisfaction among the unmarried employees are fringe benefit and job security whereas among the married employees, these are fringe benefits and Training and development. Regarding the perception on the variables in job satisfaction, the significant difference among the two group of employees have been noticed in the case of nature of work, organizational supervisor, relationship with co-worker, pay, fringe benefits, workload, job security, training and development opportunities, sorts of things they do and ability to meet career goals. The higher level of job satisfaction is noticed among the unmarried employees than the married employees.

The job stress among employees has been measured with the help of eighteen variables. The highly viewed variables in job stress among the unmarried

employees are lesser liberties and complexity of work whereas among the²⁰⁰ married employees, these two are job insecurity and lesser liberties. Regarding the perception on variables in job stress, the significant difference among the two groups of employees has been noticed in the case of 16 variables out of 18 variables. The included 14 variables (As accepted by CFA) explain the job stress to a reliable extent. The higher job stress is identified among the married employees than among unmarried employees.

The absenteeism among the employees has been measured with the help of six variables. These six variables explain the absenteeism to a reliable extent. The highly viewed variables in absenteeism among the unmarried employees are absenteeism due to family related problems and physical fatigue whereas among the married employees, these two are physical fatigue and family-related problems. Regarding the perception on these variables, the significant difference among the two groups of employees has been identified in case of five variables out of 6 variables. The higher rate of absenteeism is seen among the married employees than the unmarried employees.

The level of job embeddedness among the employees is measured with the help of seven variables. The highly viewed variable by the unmarried and married employees are ‘highly connected with organization’ and ‘feel of belongingness with the organization respectively’. Regarding the view on variables in job embeddedness, the significant difference among the two groups of employees has been noticed in all seven variables. The level of job embeddedness among the unmarried employees is higher than among the married employees.

The level of job performance among the employees is measured with the help of five variables. The highly viewed variable in job performance by the unmarried and married employees is ‘knowing customers expectations’. There is a significant difference among the unmarried and married employees regarding their view on all five variables in job performance. The level of job performance is

identified as higher among the unmarried employees than among the married²⁰¹ employees.

The highly perceived outcomes of WLB and WLIB among the unmarried employees are job performance and organizational commitment whereas among the married employees, these are job stress and absenteeism. Regarding the view on outcome, the significant difference among the two groups of employees has been noticed in all six outcomes. The significantly associating important profile variables with the view on outcome are family income, personal income, family size, caring responsibilities and time devoted to family work per day. The important discriminant outcome among the unmarried and married employees is job embeddedness and job performance which are higher among the unmarried employees than among the married employees.

The significantly affecting factors leading to work-life imbalance on job satisfaction among the unmarried employees are unsupportive colleagues and lack of empowerment whereas among the married employees, these are unsupportive colleagues, work pressure, effort reward imbalance and working hours. The rate of impact of factors on job satisfaction is higher among the married employees than among the unmarried employees.

The significantly influencing factors leading to work-life imbalance on job stress among the unmarried employees are work pressure and performance inhibitors whereas among the married employees, these are unsupportive colleagues, work pressure and performance inhibitors. The higher rate of impact is noticed among the married employees than among the unmarried employees.

Among the unmarried employees, the significantly influencing factors leading to work-life imbalance on absenteeism are work pressure and working hours whereas among the married employees, these are unsupportive colleagues, work pressure, performance inhibitors and working hours. In total, the highly influencing factors are work pressure and working hours. The rate of impact is higher among the married employees than among the unmarried employees.

Among the unmarried employees, the significantly influencing factors²⁰² on the job embeddedness among them are unsupportive colleagues, lack of empowerment and effort reward imbalance whereas among the married employees, these are unsupportive colleagues, work pressure, performance inhibitors and effort-reward imbalance. The degree of impact of the factors on job embeddedness is noticed as higher among the married employees than among the unmarried employees.

The significantly affecting factors on job performance among the unmarried employees is performance inhibitors whereas among the married employees, these are unsupportive colleagues, work pressures, performance inhibitors, effort reward imbalance and working hours. The rate of impact of factors on the job performance is noticed as higher among the married employees than among the unmarried employees.

The significantly and negatively influencing work-life imbalance factors on organizational commitment among the married employees are Work-Family Conflict (WFC) and Family-Work Conflict (FWC) whereas among the unmarried employees, it is only WFC. The changes in WFC and FWC explain the changes in organizational commitment to a higher extent among the married employees than among the unmarried employees. Among the unmarried employees, the significantly affecting WFC and FWC on job satisfaction is WFC. Among the married employees, it is both WFC and FWC. The changes in WFC and FWC explain the changes in job satisfaction to a higher extent among the married employees than among the unmarried employees.

The significant positive influence of WFC and FWC on the job stress among married employees has been noticed. Among the unmarried employees it is noticed in the case of WFC. The analysis of pooled data reveals the relative importance of WFC and FWC on the job stress among the employees. The changes in WFC and FWC explain the changes in the job stress among the married employees to a higher extent than among the unmarried employees.

Among the married employees, the significantly and positively²⁰³ influencing conflict factors are both WFC and FWC conflict whereas among the unmarried employees, it is FWC alone. The degree of impact of conflict factors on the absenteeism is noticed as higher among the married employees than among the unmarried employees.

Regarding the job embeddedness the significantly and negatively influencing conflict factors are both WFC and FWC among the married employees whereas among the unmarried employees, it is only FWC. The analysis of pooled data reveals that there is a significant negative impact of both WFC and FWC on job embeddedness among the employees.

Regarding the job performance, the significantly influencing conflict factors are both WFC and FWC among married employees whereas among the unmarried employees, it is only WFC. The degree of negative impact of WFC and FWC on job performance is higher among the married employees than among the unmarried employees. The analysis of pooled data reveals that both WFC and FWC have a significant negative impact on life performance among the employees.

The significantly influencing conflict factors on the emotional exhaustion among the unmarried employees in WFC whereas among the married employees, it is WFC and FWC. The degree of impact of WFC and FWC on emotional exhaustion is identified as higher among the married employees than among the unmarried employees.

The highly implemented personal coping variables among the unmarried employees are consultation with others to solve the problems and tackle the problem by themselves. Among the married employees, these variables are also the same. Regarding the rate of implementation of coping variables, the significant difference among the two groups of employees has been noticed in eight variables out of 11 variables.

The important coping strategies identified by the factor analysis are²⁰⁴ avoidance, positive thinking, direct action and help seeking. The variables in each important-coping strategy explain it to a reliable extent. The highly implemented coping strategies among the unmarried employees are avoidance and direct action whereas among the married employees, these two are help seeking and direct action. Regarding the level of implementation of coping strategies, the significant difference among the two groups of employees has been noticed in all four coping strategies. The level of implementation of coping strategies among the unmarried employees is higher than among the married employees.

The significantly and negatively influencing personal coping strategies on the WFC among the unmarried employees are avoidance, positive thinking and help seeking whereas among the married employees, these are avoidance, positive thinking and help seeking. The analysis of pooled data also reveals that the avoidance, positive thinking and help seeking are reducing the work-family conflict to a significant level. Among the unmarried employees, the significantly and negatively influencing personal coping strategies on the FWC are avoidance, positive thinking and help seeking whereas among the married employees, these are coping strategies are avoidance and positive thinking. The analysis of pooled data also reveals the relative importance of avoidance and positive thinking in reduction of FWC among the employees.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The present study concludes that the work-life balance among the employees is lesser whereas the work-life imbalances are higher especially among the married employees in BPO industry. The important causes for their work-life imbalance are lack of social support and their work related factors. The work-life imbalances are affecting the organizational commitment and the job performance of the employees. The level of implementation of personal coping strategies to maintain their work-life balance is higher among the unmarried employees than

among the married employees. Even though the level of implementation of²⁰⁵ coping strategies by the employees is significantly reducing their work-life imbalance it is very poor among the married employees. The productivity and profitability of the industry may be increased only through the cost reduction and effective utilization of human resources since there is a cut throat competition in the industry. The authorities of the BPO industry should realize the fact and take appropriate Human Resource Management policies to enrich the work-life balance among their employees especially more on married employees in order to improve their productivity.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following policy implications are drawn:

1. An innovative HR Management:

The provision of work-life initiatives in a time of global economic slowdown needs a vibrant HR team that will innovate on existing practice and make them more user-friendly and cost-effective. Organisations can provide practical interventions rather than merely money-based strategies. Organizations could facilitate swapping of shift routines that will help facilitate work-life concerns of the employees.

2. Work-life Balance Policies and Strategies

Every BPO industry will have specific reasons why work-life balance is important for them now. These may include issues raised in employment-agreement negotiation, union consultations, the ongoing loss of, or failure to attack, a particular group of employees, or the desire to be perceived as an employer of choice. Developing a work-life balance policy and practices is a strategic change process. There are five suggested stages of intervention: (i)

undertake work-life balance assessment and needs analysis; (ii) develop a²⁰⁶ strategic approach to work-life balance; (iii) plan and implement a work-life balance plan; iv) evaluate the effectiveness of work-life balance initiatives; and v) review work-life balance needs and a strategic approach.

3. Flexi Work

The flexi-time arrangements may be permitted by the management for the women employees in order to meet their family work requirements. Employees may be permitted to work a choice of additional working hours either before or after the regular working hours.

4. Work-life Integration

Organization might help their employees to maintain an acceptable level of work-life balance by offering guidance on strategies to help them maintain greater separation between the two domains. Schedule flexibility is a key for balancing the work-life among the women employees. This implies that the ability to adapt working hours to meet personal and / or family needs may help employees cope with the competing demands of the work and non-work domains.

5. Family-Support Work Environment

Top management of banks should be committed to establish and maintain the family-support work environments. This is important since research indicates that family-friendly programmes have been designed and introduced to meet business needs in lieu of meeting employee needs. The family-friendly programs include the flexible work schedules, on-site child care, and family leave. The properly trained managers can create the culture that helps employees to balance their work requirements and also make the work itself less stressful.

6. Counselling for Married Women

The married women are highly suffered by the work-life imbalance than the unmarried women. The BPO industrialists are advised to counsell their married

employees with the help of separate programmers. These type of programmes²⁰⁷ may be organized by specialists especially working married women.

7. Stress Management Training:

Most of the problems related to work –life balancing is caused by stress. The employees can be trained to manage stress by the practices of Yoga and Meditation. A fitness centre may be attached to the concern for making the employees relaxed. Periodical Entertainment programme can be arranged. The strained relationship with supervisor/colleague can be overcome by informal outing and family –employees get togethers.

By stress management training, improvement of concentration and emotional management and time management can also be taught. A special training related to performance management and time management may lead the employees to offer best out of them in both the roles.

8. Organisational Climate:

A well trained employee with proper reward system is easy for retention. Their carrier goals can be integrated with the organisatioanl goals. A conducive climate where they enrich themselves together achieving the organisational objectives is essential for better work-life balance. Non monetary motivatioanal factors like liberty, recognition, participation in decision making may make the employees feel committed towards the organisation.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The present study provides the scope for future research in the following directions:

The future research may examine the work-life balance among the employees at various sectors as a comparative analysis. The causes and types of

work-life balance may be extended. The linkage between work-life imbalance²⁰⁸ and emotional exhaustion among the employees may be extended to find out the impact of these imbalances on job performance, job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment through emotional exhaustion. There may be a possibility of separate in-depth analysis on the impact of intrinsic motivation among the employees and their work-life imbalances. The organizational culture and leadership in the BPO industry and its role in work-life balance among the employees may be analysed in near future. The gender variation on work-life imbalances might be examined in future studies. The various techniques to maintain the work life balance among the employees may be studied alone as a research topic in near future.

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