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# Quality Of Work Life Among Women

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**Abstract:**

**AIM:** The research paper is exploratory in natureand revisiting the fundamentals of quality of work- life balance from various literature reviews, definitions and models of QWL. Also the study attempts to assess the importance of work life balance for women and

**METHODOLOGY:**The study is descriptive and qualitative in nature in clarifying the definitions and conceptual foundations of QWL. Secondary data on QWL and trends are gathered, analysed and summarized to identify the thematic areas of QWL in current day context. To assess the QWL, the study reviews the various empirical studies pertaining to India, drills down the QWL especially for women from various reports, Bulletins, Official websites and related journals.

**OUTCOME:** The Research study is highlyinformative will give an insight into the different working conditions, construct an ideal workplace and how best can the workplace make a difference in QWL (Quality of work life), suggest various interventions and solutions to manage this balance between work and personal life, best practices being followed by various organisations, and focused more primarily towards women employees, QWL is an ever-growing HR practice and there could be challenges and issues in proposing vital changes which we are attempting to capture here.

**Keywords:** HR, Quality of Work life, QWL, HR process, Strategy

## INTRODUCTION

In today's corporate world, one of the most challenging aspects of our life, is to be able to dedicate time and manage them both for personal and office use, with the demand sin modern economy, it has become sometime impossible to dedicate to our personalwellbeing or for that matter even time for oneself to relax and have a bit of fun, where do we draw the line?, are companies really interested in our mental and physical wellbeing, these are some of the very pertinent and relevant questions which we need to ask , and just like any marriage, there has to be two likemindedpeople to know what they are getting into. Organisations need to be more flexible and hence adopt a progressive and dynamic structure to accommodate today lifestyle especially with women;there are a complex amount of dimensions within this process which would require both the employee and the employer to understand each other's requirements and space .This process if done right can lead to better productivity, a more satisfied and contended employee , who is not just happy to be working but also is able to be creative and be able to deliver the best of hi/her abilities. It's a collaborative effort of human and process, perfectly being in sync with challenging and dynamic times ahead.

## OBJECTIVES
 ➢ To understand the fundamentals ofQuality of work life[QWL] and its objectives

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  ➢ To know and understand its role and impact on women and possible interventions

**METHODOLOGY**

The research is conducted using descriptive methodology and comprise mainly on qualitative

Data. The research is used to know the fundamental theories and aspects of human resources and with regard to quality of work life and understand the conceptual foundations, secondary data on quality of work life and to strike a perfect balance with different trends and other details are summarised keeping in the current workplace conditions in mind, the study review contains empirical studies pertaining to various organisations globally

**Definition of Quality of Work life**

Nadler and Lawler says "QWL is a way of thinking about work, people and organisations, its distinctive elements are

1. A concern about the impact of work on people as well as on organisational effectiveness
2. The idea of participation in organisational problem-solving and decision making

The American society of training and development has the following to say about quality of work life "quality of work life is a process of work organisations which enable its members at all levels to participate actively in forming the organisations, policies, procedures and outcomes, this process is value based and is specifically focused towards the enhancement of the organisational effectiveness and the overall quality of work for employees."

(Chand, Quality of Work Life: it's Meaning and Definition | Employee Management)

It can be concluded with the above definitions that QWL is concerned with how we treat our employees in all fairness and take care of all their needs and the overall climate and structure of the workspace should be in such a manner that it can be humane and be more flexible and all employees feel safe and secure, there is a sense of satisfaction and not only do the employees love working  here, but they are able to fully extend their support and work wholeheartedly which directly improves the organisation and the employees productivity.

**Concept of QWL**

  The concept of QWL originated in the  early 1950s , it was the time when all the management theories of which we know now originated and  made an impact to this day with the knowledge and foundations laid during those times, the concept of QWL can be summarised as under :

  1. It's a style of management and caring for your employees
  2. It allows you to take your own decisions and  freedom to make your own choices
  3. There is a sense of satisfaction within the working conditions
  4. Tasks given should be value based and lead to some meaning.
     (Dr.A.Jayakumar & K.Kalaiselvi, 2015)

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**Role of Human resources**

With more number of people entering into the workforce and with the changing environment, it become a challenges to hire, train and motivate employees to stay within the same firm an make sure that they are productive and protected from poaching from others, the amount of time and effort goes into training and making them production ready is phenomenal, Human Resource as a process has come a long way from being of less or no value to what we know now as. There are have been umpteen examples o f how HR interventions has saved many companies and made a hallmark in the productivity and change of the employees, there has been so many studies been conducted over the years and with the advancement in technology, the process of HR has been extended to HRIS and many other systems. There has been a change in the way how originally HR was just treated for hiring processes and now it's a center of excellence in term of knowledge and practices, there has been many advancements in making sure that people are able to contribute their best to the companies, yet more number of times, it's the employees changing desire and lifestyle which dictates how they are placed within the company, hence there is an evolution of management though wrt., Human resources, now they are not only hiring the employees, but as al to use the best possible resources to hire the best and most suitable candidates for the job, there is constant monitoring and performance evaluations are done with the use of computers and analytics are deployed to make sure there is adequate transparency and efficiency in making the right employee feel rewards, there is constant tracking of timeline and promotional opportunities are standardised , employees are made to feel like kings with some many emoluments being given to them , so that they are not just occupied with work but they are able to feel that there are appreciated and they have contributed for their company's success.

Satisfaction of the employees and his  attitudes towards the work are critical factors towards a successful balance between work and personal life, there has to be sea change in the attitudes and work atmosphere in the private and the government sectors relating to the development and creation of workspace(Dubey, 2015) , Motivation to work and career prospects are the other important governing factors towards an employee giving his all, most number of the times, with the cut-throat competition, the onus is on the beginner and the mid-level managers to perform and bear the  weight of the work, and more oftenthan not, they also mostly affected by this , hence HR has to make sure that adequate time and relaxation has been planned in advance and schemes relating to the same are being employed keeping the age, gender and experience on the employee in mind, if the employee trusts the organisation at the highest level he will perform accordingly, and performance should enhance and affect his career progression, HR should be able to create a long and personal commitment towards fulfilling the employees wishes.

**Factors Affecting QWL:**

There are several methods which were developed to understand and quantify the quality of work life on productivity here are the scope given by Richard E.Walton:

1. **Sufficient and fair compensation:** the Salary structure of the employee should be given in a manner which reflects his/her age, qualification and experiences, hence there should be devised in a manner which enables the employees to have a reasonable wage , it should be a mix and match of what's required during the times, giving away hefty compensation doesn't always means the best way to pay an employee.

2. **Safe Working conditions**: it's obvious that when we go to work, we expect the workplaces to be safe not jut physically but also helps us stay mentally relaxed and the environment should be where there is adequate lighting, space and anything necessary to make my job easier and stress/pain free. Women workers in the office space are ever increasing and hence its mandatory that factories and other corporate organisation create specific rest rooms and other extended facilities are offered to them , Factories Act 1948 is in effect in India for any rules and policies regarding the working conditions in hazardous places etc.

3. **Betterment of self and others**: One of the other qualities which are important in QWL is the opportunity for the employee to use his capacities to the best of his abilities and enhance not just his own productivity  but also the companies, this is only possible if there is skill development and encouragement for new additions, abilities are well trained and there is sufficient thought and planning done to make sure the employees are engaged and if there is a lack sufficient control measures should be deployed.

4. **Continuous growth and Secure life**: Not only should the employee feel wanted and recognised,organisations should invest in them and in the resources which make them better, this is possible by creating opportunities for the employee to have a long term goal and there should be sufficient investment in him by the HR and company, Career progression should be necessity and in case of dead ends, should be clearly communicated to the employee.

5. **Feeling of oneness:**  In India , we are divided on so many basis of caste, creed, sex etc, but if this distinction is carried forward to our workplaces then organisation and companies will cease to exist with no, every employee should be made to believe that he is respected and wanted and policies should be in place to restrict regionalism, or forming of groups with this focus in mind, every employee should be inducted with the company primary goal in mind and should be allowed to feel proud and a sense of belonging will improve the quality of work life and increase social integration

6. **Rights and privileges:** every employee should be entitled to rights and privileges and these should be default and not something of which they should have to adjust or demand, there should be companies policies which should make sure that these are adhered to and enforced strictly, right to speak, personal privacy and express etc.

7. **Life span:**Most of the employees end up working through their life's , without realisinghow much time would have passed and then regret doing things which they couldn't do , most number of the employees sometime to impress their bosses , end up doing late hours are travel an additional mile to stretch beyond their limits and these all can invariably affect the performance and credibility .

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8. **Societal value**: It's important that organisations also act responsibly and care for their environment, in their respective countries or region, a company which is singularly focused on profit making irrespective of its local regions feeling or sentiments will also treat its employees in the same manner, which will drastically affect the sentiments of the people in the organisation and leads to imbalance an confusion on their stand with the company.(Chand, 8 Important Scopes of the Quality of Work Life: by Walton)
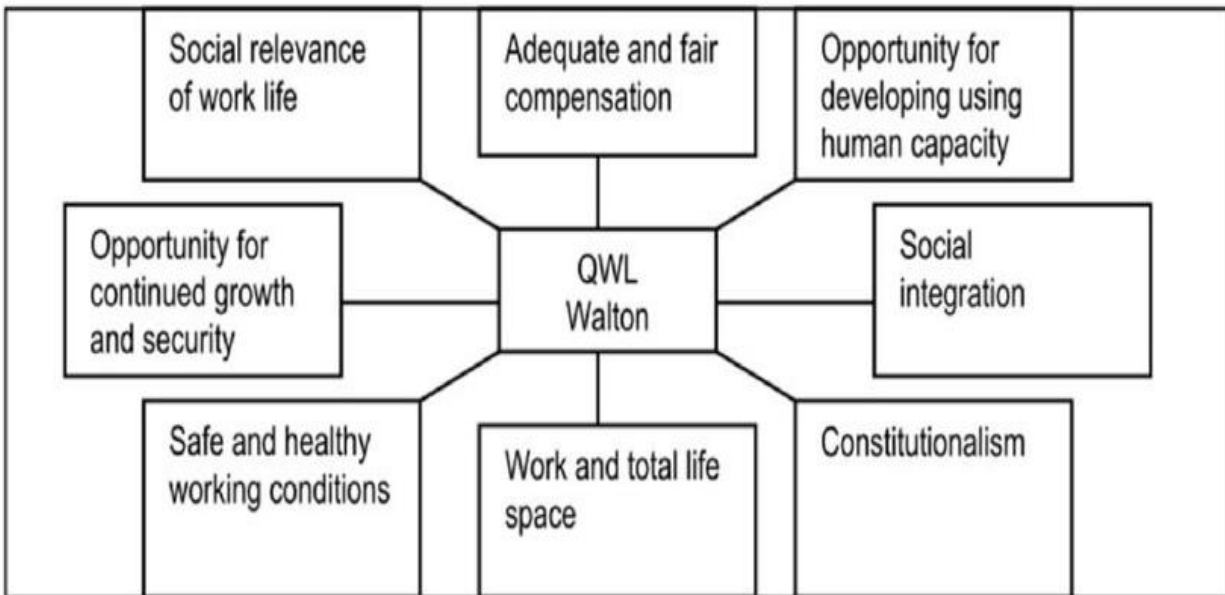


**Source:** (Diogo José Horsta, 2014)

**Ways to achieve a better quality of work life**

Often when it comes to work life balance, we are often caught in a dilemma as to whether do I spend more time at work or other activities and most often than not, we end up spending more time at office than at home, relaxation and de-stressing are important in today's context in reducing the number of people having anxiety and panic attacks, with deadlines and compensating for home time with work. There is still a doubt between what is the ideal time off from work and if not how much should be the time, with the pandemic, our lives which were separated with office and home, have now intertwined to such a level that sometimes, employees have no idea, what they are doing and seems like flood where you are going with the flow not realising where it is headed. Here are some strategies which as an employee you need to make sure you follow to manage the time:

• **Plan ahead:** there is nothing like planning ahead and working towards achieving that goal, whether being a gym class or a social meeting, it's important that we schedule them and make sure we honour them as well. Advance notices to your 'ME' time shoud be the priority and you should cultivate a habit to meet work expectations along wit it and not over it

- **Prioritise your thoughts:** To err is human, as we all know sometime we make mistakes, but that is what defines us too, so there could be phases where we might slack off and not concentrate on work, it should be ok to de-stress and at that point to have fun and use this distraction to boost your energies.
- Time based tasks: sometimes following a clichéd time table might make us feel and sound elementary but they are also simple and easy to follow, so it's alright to book times slots to accomplish certain tasks and allocate other time for personal work
- **Completing on a fixed time**: this should be the first order of any working day that you finish on time that you have set along with the company time and not go beyond, it's a cardinal rule to make sure that both world don't collide and makes a mess for your personal as well as professional life.
- **Use Tech:** Technology can be a tool which can makes your life so much easier and make it easier to achieve all the tasks and use time for yourself. Mobile devices , computers and AI have all revolutionised the way we do our jobs and it's the way how are headed into the future
- **Group Lunch's**: going out with your peers and co-workers can drastically lighten not just the mood but also make your more fresh and energised rather than have a quiet and lonely meal
- **Take the time for self /me time:**it's vital in today's competitive world, that we stay freshand  relevant and not be confused about our job expectation and roles, this is only possible if we are mentally aligned and have our priorities sorted out, we must make sure that we spend adequate time on yourself , take a leave or vacation or time for self-improvement
- **Love what you do:** It's a no brainer that you should be in job/career for life and which does not only pay well , but also keep your interests and personal goals in mind, choose a job which you love doing and you will notice a remarkable change in your personal wellbeing .
- **Being mindful and considerate:** sometime we need to make sure we are in the moment and mindful of what we say and do, paying attention to all that's happening around us can make us a better human being and give time and efforts to those who really need it from us.
- **Communication:** one of the most overlooked yet important aspect of work life balance , is how we communicate to one another, most often we bury our self so deep in work , that we are almost cut off from the world and we don't make an attempt to reach out in case of emergencies or any eventualities not favourable to us . Communication is key to let your peers/bosses and other knowshow you feel and what expectations and outputs you are comfortable with.(Allaya Cooks-Campbell, 2021)
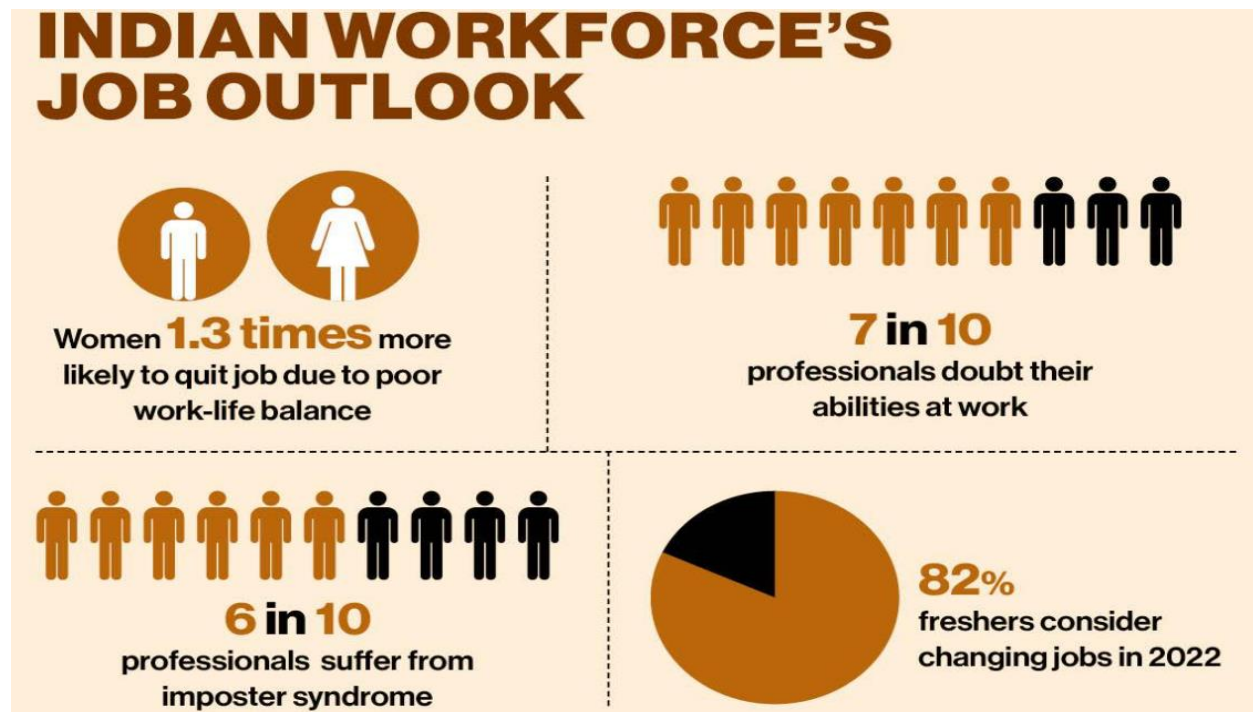
Source:(Jay Snyder)

## Women and quality of work life

From time immemorial across the world men have been the only workers and over the course of human evolution, he has been the provider of food and now money onto the table, but times have drastically changed and women have slowly but surely also have moved into workplace and are making a mark for themselves in the organisations, even though there are still certain areas of workspace where women are not eligible or considered an ill fit for the said jobs, even with the advancement in technology and modern ideologies , In India there is still discrimination and bias towards women and their employment can be affected due to pay disparity and the number of roles and responsibilities may not be the same as those of men.(kumar, 2018). One the most important aspect of a women's life is unlike a man, she dons many hats of a wife, mother and other house responsibilities, and more number of women are now taking care of the house and are equally contributing financially, but then they also have to sometime take on the entire burden of upkeeping of her home, many women work after marriage and sometime with having children , a women bears an additional role of a mother and our society can sometime be harsh on her and this has to change, many women employees have gone through hardships and due to sheer commitment and perseverance have been able to create impression on management and proved to the world that they can not only multi task at work but also handle work and their personal life alike, some of the issues which might impact women at work are as under:

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1. ***Conflict with relationship at work and home***: there are many times an incompatibility between what women employees want and their families, especially when she has married and mostly depends on the husband for choice in her life, this might create trust and ego issues and most cases ends up being a difficult phase for women employees
2. ***Workplace expectation***: women nowadays are expected to go head to head with men and hence have to work more than harder to be at the same level, though they are not physically made to handle hard labour, there have been instances of job disparity on work and payments, even if they have a high designation or job role, they are still expected to come home and handle kitchen and manage the homes.
3. ***Lack of balance and stress***: it's understood that women and men both have stress and this stress is the direct result of expectations of house work /chores, which eat into the work place and end up creating a tense and anxiety filled mind. Women often in this kind of situations face more mental health issues than men.
4. ***Care of kids***: As often, women have to take care of kids, especially in India, where the patriarchy is so heavily skewed that, only women are expected to take care of them and manage their growth and satisfy their needs. (Bhat, 2021)

According to a study done by LinkedIn, its alarming to note that more women are quitting due to extreme poor work life imbalance and there seem to be a huge disparity and this only proves how things have not changed as we would have wanted it to be, with the pandemic, more women had to share the burden of taking their entire family wellbeing and other needs, which otherwise would have been equally shared by the other members of the family. There is a clear lack of support from work, peers and the organisation to the changing times and it's the same at home too.

**INDIAN WORKFORCE'S JOB OUTLOOK**

Women **1.3 times** more likely to quit job due to poor work-life balance

**7 in 10** professionals doubt their abilities at work

**6 in 10** professionals suffer from imposter syndrome

**82%** freshers consider changing jobs in 2022

**Source:**(Ali, 2022)

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**Effects of work life imbalance**

An Imbalance in managing time at work and personal life can be catastrophic and can lead to serious mental and even physical effects on your well being, this imbalance only occurs where there is no proper prioritising or boundaries between both the world, previous generation never had to deal with this since there were ample work and time available unless of course during economic recession or world wards, but in today's times of rapid technological changes and dynamic management, every employee needs to be on his toes to adapt and imbibe will he/she learns quickly, and this is not possible for all at the same time, some learn it better and faster, other learn is slower or never do, the important lesson is to pace your own way through the process, imbalance can impede your growth and also lead to confusion and sometime self doubt , there has to be sufficient emphasis on these , while any organisation may expect you to complete assignments on time, yet they have to show empathy and create channels of communication to check on their employee well being.

| Physical | Psychological | Behavioural |
|---|---|---|
| • Fatigue<br>• Insomnia<br>• Dizzyness<br>• Breathlessness<br>• Hypertension<br>• Headaches<br>• Feeling of weakness<br>• Obesity | • Depression<br>• Boredom<br>• Anxiety<br>• Negativity<br>• Lethargy<br>• Suspicion<br>• Indifference | • Overeating<br>• Smoking , Alcoholism and other forms of substance dependence /abuse<br>• Irritability, Anger<br>• Impulsive Behaviour<br>• Inabilty to manage self and interpersonal relations |

**Source:** (Kirti Shivakumar, 2016)

**Future of women and its affect on QWL:**

With more number of women being in workforce and making substantial contributions to the organisations worldwide, there has to be sufficient interventions and policies for them to be able to work progressively, from holidays and day of period and maternity leaves and also for depression and stress, there are many more things which have to be done from an organisations view point, especially in India, there is a huge disparity in not jut pay but also in fewer number of women being actively seen in office spaces. More number of women are leaving jobs and hence, there is huge gap in gender and this can be seen in educational

institutes and colleges,working mothers and married women are bearing the brunt post pandemic with additional work at home and there is no sufficient coverage or policies in place from the company perspective, this constant work of at office and home has taken a huge toll on their health and mental aspect of it. There has to be newer polices and regulations for women, following are some of the important developments which we need to know:

- Work life balance is paramount and hence there is bound to be more stress and work at home rather than at workplace, companies should factor into this requirement and enable jobs in such a manner that are flexible and bring in achievable tasks
- Remote work is almost become a standard practice with more than 50% of the global workforce moving to WFH [work from home] option, and no one other than women employees have been happier with this setup, there has to be more opportunities for women in this set up and HRs around the world have to encourage more women to join and present to them, this as an default option.
- Flexibility is the name of the game, more organisations should be women friendly and come out with various job roles with flexi-pay and times for them to choose and provide these roles to all women around the world, more number of women are ready to adjust as per the careers for the family.(Caroline Castrillon, 2021)

**CONCLUSION**

Inspite of the so many evidences being presented on the ill effects of managing work life,we are still old fashioned sometime and end up eating away at personal time and it's become an ingrained habit to work round the clock, as employees are travelling abroad and experience different work cultures across the world, there is bound to be comparisons and differences , hence the corporate organisations should make sure they create a benchmark for work conditions and create a workplace which fosters positivity and helps employees to put their best foot ahead, workplaces for women means a healthy environment devoid of harassment and additional cultural and emotional training should be given to men and most number of times, even though we are in the 21$^{st}$ century, in India  more number of men have ego  issues and end up creating a negative workspace. Women are now managing households and work at the same time and in most cases there are teams dependent on each other for many tasks completion, hence there has to be additional leverage for any absence or extension of flexibility for women employees to complete their tasks. Human resources should create jobs roles and responsibilities with all the above factors in mind and create a more sustainable and positive model for human capital management

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