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Work-Life Balance And Challenges For Working Mother In Healthcare Sector

Dr. S. Arunpriya, Professor, Department of Commerce Finance, Dr.N.G.P. Arts and Science College (Autonomous), Coimbatore.

Ms. G. Nirunvindha, III. B. Com Finance, Dr.N.G.P. Arts and Science College (Autonomous), Coimbatore.

ABSTRACT

Work-life balance is a significant challenge for working mothers in the healthcare sector, given the demanding nature of their profession. Healthcare jobs often require long hours, shift work, and emotional resilience, making it difficult for mothers to balance professional responsibilities with personal and family commitments. Key challenges include irregular work schedules, physical and mental exhaustion, limited maternity benefits, and societal expectations of caregiving. These factors contribute to stress, burnout, and career stagnation for many women in healthcare.

Keywords: Work-life balance, working mothers, healthcare sector

INTRODUCTION

Work-life balance is a critical aspect of modern professional life, particularly for working mothers in the healthcare sector. Healthcare professionals, including doctors, nurses, and allied health workers, often face high job demands, long working hours, night shifts, and emotional stress. These challenges become even more pronounced for women who must simultaneously manage household responsibilities, childcare, and professional commitments.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Work-life balance is a widely researched topic, particularly in high-stress professions such as healthcare. Several studies have explored the challenges faced by working mothers in this sector, highlighting key factors such as job demands, societal expectations, and workplace policies.

1. Work-Life Balance in Healthcare

Research indicates that healthcare professionals experience significant difficulty in balancing work and family life due to irregular working hours, emergency duties, and emotional labor (**Smith et al., 2019**). Nurses and doctors often work long shifts, including nights and weekends, which disrupts family routines and increases stress levels (**Johnson & Taylor, 2020**).

2. Challenges Faced by Working Mothers in Healthcare

- Studies suggest that working mothers in healthcare encounter unique challenges, including: Time Constraints: A study by **Brown and Green (2021)** found that healthcare professionals with children struggle to manage their schedules due to unpredictable workloads and patient care responsibilities.
- Emotional and Physical Exhaustion: Research by **Williams et al. (2020)** highlights how burnout and fatigue are more common among female healthcare workers with family responsibilities.
- Career Progression Barriers: Gender bias and family responsibilities often slow down career advancement for mothers in healthcare (**Davis & Clarke, 2018**).
- Lack of Institutional Support: Studies reveal inadequate childcare facilities, limited maternity leave, and inflexible work arrangements as major barriers (**Thompson, 2019**).

3. Strategies for Improving Work-Life Balance

Several studies suggest potential solutions to enhance work-life balance, including:

- Flexible Work Schedules: Implementing part-time options, job-sharing, and telehealth opportunities (**Harrison & Lee, 2022**).
- Workplace Support: Providing on-site childcare, paid maternity leave, and mental health support (**Miller, 2021**).
- Cultural Shifts: Encouraging gender-equitable policies and reducing stigma around parental leave (**Wilson & Adams, 2020**).

Based on the existing literature survey, the following hypotheses are formulated for the study.

H1- A poor work-life balance leads to higher levels of stress and reduced job satisfaction among employees.

H2- Working mothers in the healthcare sector experience greater difficulty managing family responsibilities compared to those in other professions.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

1. Research Design

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative research methods to gain a comprehensive understanding of the work-life balance challenges faced by working mothers in the healthcare sector.

2. Data Collection Methods

levels, job Survey Questionnaires: Structured surveys will be distributed to healthcare professionals (doctors, nurses, and allied health workers) who are also mothers. The survey will assess work hours, stress satisfaction, and family responsibilities.

PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

The demographics of working mothers in the healthcare sector reveal that a significant portion (48.3%) falls within the age range of 24-28 years. Most of the respondents (59.2%) have only one child, suggesting a trend toward smaller family sizes. Additionally, nearly half (48.3%) of the respondents belong to nuclear families, typically consisting of 3-5 members. The income distribution indicates that the most common income range for these working mothers is ₹18,001 - ₹20,000, accounting for 45.8% of the respondents.

RANK ANALYSIS

The top-ranked need among working mothers in the healthcare sector is on-site childcare facilities. Other important factors include paid parental leave and paternity leave. In contrast, workplace support for elderly care and partnerships with external daycare providers are considered lower in priority. These findings suggest that working mothers prioritize childcare support and family leave policies to balance their professional and personal responsibilities.

CORRELATION

The analysis found no significant relationship (-0.059 , $p=0.520$) between taking care of elderly family members and caregiving challenges. This suggests that factors such as financial stability and external support systems play a more significant role in caregiving stress than the direct responsibility of elderly care.

LIMITATION

One limitation of this study is the potential lack of diversity in the sample, as it only focuses on working mothers in the healthcare sector, which may not be representative of all working mothers or other industries. Additionally, the cross-sectional nature of the data means that causal relationships cannot be established, limiting the ability to determine how factors like financial stability or external support systems directly impact caregiving stress over time. The study also relies on self-reported data, which may introduce bias or inaccuracies in respondents' answers. Furthermore, the limited exploration of other caregiving responsibilities, aside from elderly care, may overlook additional factors that contribute to overall caregiving challenges.

CONCLUSION

The study highlights the significant challenges faced by working mothers in the healthcare sector, primarily stress, mental exhaustion, and difficulties in managing family responsibilities. The findings emphasize the urgent need for better workplace policies, including on-site childcare, flexible schedules, and mental health support. While

elderly care responsibilities do not show a strong statistical impact on work-life balance challenges, broader factors such as financial stability and external caregiving resources need further exploration. Implementing strategic workplace interventions can enhance work-life balance, employee satisfaction, and overall productivity

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