

### **A Study on Quality of Work Life Balance among Female Employees in the Garment Industry, Tirupur.**

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#### **Abstract**

The quest for work-life balance has emerged as a significant issue for female employees, who frequently encounter distinct obstacles in reconciling their professional and personal obligations. This research investigates the intricacies of work-life balance among women in the workforce, focusing on the influence of societal norms, workplace culture, and individual circumstances on their capacity to attain equilibrium between their careers and personal lives. A thorough analysis of existing literature and empirical studies underscores the importance of flexible work options, supportive organizational policies, and personal coping strategies in promoting work-life balance. The results of this research emphasize the necessity for organizations and policymakers to prioritize the creation of inclusive and supportive work environments that recognize the varied needs and experiences of female employees. By fostering work-life balance, we can harness the full potential of the female workforce, enhance productivity and job satisfaction, and contribute to a more equitable and sustainable future for everyone.

**Keywords:** Female Employees, Flexible work options, work life balance, employee well-being, and workforce

## **Introduction**

The garment sector in Tirupur, commonly known as the "Knitwear Capital of India," plays a pivotal role in the nation's textile export economy and employs a substantial number of individuals, particularly women. These female workers are integral to the sector's development; however, they encounter various obstacles in achieving a satisfactory work-life balance. Prolonged working hours, inadequate remuneration, workplace pressures, and familial obligations hinder their ability to reconcile professional and personal commitments. This research seeks to investigate the elements that affect the work-life balance of female employees in Tirupur's garment industry, focusing on their job satisfaction, overall well-being, and the efficacy of workplace policies designed to assist them. Gaining insight into these factors is crucial for enhancing working conditions and promoting a more equitable and sustainable workforce.

## **Industry profile**

Tirupur serves as a significant center for textile and garment production in Tamil Nadu. The city is distinguished for its vast output of knitted apparel, which serves both local and global markets. Key products manufactured in this region include T-shirts, innerwear, children's clothing, sportswear, leggings, and casual attire. Major consumers of Tirupur's garment industry include the United States, Europe, Canada, Japan, Australia, and various Middle Eastern nations. The garment sector in Tirupur provides substantial employment opportunities, with approximately 600,000 individuals engaged directly and an additional 400,000 indirectly, of which around 65% are semi-literate women from rural areas. Consequently, nearly 1 million people rely on this industry for their livelihoods. The presence of numerous small, medium, and large textile enterprises in Tirupur promotes swift innovation and enhances cost efficiency.

## **Reviews of Literature**

**Dr. K. Siva Nageswara Rao and Ms. Shaik Maseeha (2019)** conducted a study that emphasized the significance of work-life balance and the advantages of implementing strategies to achieve it, as well as the role organizations can play in this process. This conceptual paper on Work-Life Balance outlines its definition and importance. The researchers provided several recommendations in their findings. Firstly, individuals should allocate time for personal interests, as this is essential for alleviating both physical and mental stress. Secondly, those who work from home for extended periods should engage in morning walks and longer walks to enhance their health and rejuvenate their energy levels. For individuals who prefer not to remain in an office setting for long durations, pursuing hobbies, whether indoor or outdoor, can serve as a refreshing outlet for both mind and body. It is also crucial to dedicate time to spouses, children, elders, relatives, friends, and even household workers, as per one's availability. Neglecting these relationships can lead to a spiritual void, which may adversely affect health, wealth, happiness, and the ability to appreciate significant achievements.

**Dr. Chandrani Sen and Dr. Himangini Rathore Hooja (2018)** conducted a study that provided an overview of work-life balance. This concept pertains to the degree of control an individual perceives regarding the allocation of hours dedicated to work in relation to the time available for personal activities outside of work. O'Driscoll (1996) delineated five fundamental models of work-life balance: the segmentation model, spillover model, compensation model, instrumental model, and conflict model. Achieving a favorable work-life balance enables individuals to feel more confident in their capacity to juggle work and personal responsibilities,

thereby reducing the likelihood of experiencing thoughts that could drain their physical and mental resources.

**Dr. Indu Gautam and Dr. Sameeksha Jain (2018)** conducted a study aimed at evaluating the effects of work-life balance, specifically through the lenses of work-family conflict and family-work conflict, on the wellbeing of individuals employed in India's private sector. The researchers assessed wellbeing through indicators such as family satisfaction, work satisfaction, and levels of psychological distress. Employing quantitative research methodologies, the study utilized a convenience sampling approach to select participants, which included both single and partnered individuals, as well as males and females, with and without children. The questionnaire administered incorporated established scales, achieving Cronbach's alpha coefficients exceeding the acceptable threshold of 0.7. Out of 190 questionnaires distributed, 114 were completed and returned, resulting in a response rate of 60%. The findings indicated that the primary contributors to work-family conflicts were long working hours and rigid work schedules. The study concluded that employers could enhance work-life balance by adopting family-friendly policies, such as flexible working hours, compensatory time off, compressed workweeks, and support for childcare and eldercare.

**Muhammad Shadab and Kashif Arif (2015)** conducted a study aimed at exploring the effects of work-life balance and job satisfaction on individuals' social and personal lives. The research utilized a substantial and representative dataset from the service sector, specifically focusing on hospitals in Karachi. The findings revealed that nearly 50% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with their jobs, which adversely affected their ability to achieve a satisfactory work-life balance. A significant number of individuals indicated a desire to reduce their working hours to enhance this balance, seeking to manage their time more effectively to improve their overall quality of life.

### **Scope of the Study**

This study aims to explore the quality of Work-Life Balance among female employees in the Garment Industry located in Tirupur. Additionally, it seeks to identify particular aspects of Work-Life Balance that can enhance employee performance, ultimately leading to greater productivity and elevated morale within the work environment.

### **Objectives of the study**

1. To analyze the factors influencing the quality of work-life balance among female employees in the garment industry in Tirupur.
2. To assess the impact of work-life balance on job satisfaction and overall well-being.
3. To examine the challenges faced by female workers in balancing professional and personal responsibilities.
4. To explore the role of organizational policies and support systems in improving work-life balance.
5. To suggest measures for enhancing the quality of work-life balance among female employees in the garment sector.

### **Research Methodology**

Research methodology encompasses the organized and rational framework utilized to explore a research issue and derive conclusions.

### Research Design

The researcher adopted a descriptive research design, which is defined by specific objectives that facilitate clear conclusions. The focus of this study is to examine the quality of work-life balance among female employees in the Garment Industry in Tirupur.

### Source of Data

#### Primary Data

Primary data refers to information gathered directly by researchers for a particular investigation, and it is considered original.

#### Secondary Data

Secondary data includes information that has been previously collected by others for various purposes. This type of data can be sourced from a range of materials, including academic journals, magazines, and online platforms.

### Sampling Design

This study utilized a convenience sampling method, a non-probability sampling technique. In this method, participants are chosen based on their accessibility and proximity to the researcher. To collect data from employees, the researcher employed a structured questionnaire that incorporated a five-point Likert scale, enabling respondents to express their level of agreement or disagreement with specific statements.

### Sampling Size

The researcher gathered data from three hundred employees within the Garment Industry in Tirupur for this survey.

### Limitation of the Study

The study acknowledges that the reliability of the data may be affected by biases associated with self-reported information, and the focus on a single industry may limit the broader applicability of the findings.

### Data Analysis Techniques:

Once the data has been compiled, it is essential to utilize appropriate tools and methodologies for data analysis. The research encompasses percentage analysis and Mean score value

### Analysis and Interpretation

#### Demographic Factors of the Employees

Table No.1

Demographic Factors		No. of Respondents	Percentage
Age	Below 25 years	24	8
	26-30 years	66	22
	31- 35 years	144	48
	Above 35 years	66	22
Marital Status	Married	174	130
	Unmarried	26	20
Monthly Income	Below Rs 10,000	18	6

	Rs 10,001-20,000	242	81
	Above Rs 20,000	40	13
Education Level	School level	168	56
	Graduate	30	10
	Diploma	14	5
	Illiterate	88	29
Working experience	1 years and below	8	3
	2-4 years	152	50
	Above 4 years	140	47
	Total	300	100

Source: Primary Data

### Interpretation:

Table No.1 presents the demographic profile of the workforce. Among the respondents, 48% fall within the age range of 31 to 35 years, while 22% are aged between 26 and 30 years, and another 22% are over 35 years. Additionally, 8% of the respondents are under 25 years old. In terms of marital status, 87% are married, whereas 13% are unmarried. Regarding income, 81% of the respondents earn between Rs 10,001 and 20,000 per month, 13% earn above Rs 20,000, and 6% earn below Rs 10,000. Educationally, 56% have completed only school-level education, 29% are illiterate, 10% hold a graduate degree, and 5% possess a diploma. In terms of work experience, 50% of the respondents have 2 to 4 years of experience, 47% have more than 4 years, and 3% have less than 1 year of experience.

### Respondents Current Work Schedule

**Table No.2**

Work schedule	No. of respondents	% of the respondents
Regular hours (9-5)	34	11
Shift work	204	68
Overtime often	62	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Data

### Interpretation:

Table No. 2 illustrates the current work schedules of the respondents. A significant 68% of the participants are engaged in shift work, while 17% frequently undertake overtime to fulfill orders. Additionally, 11% of the respondents adhere to a standard work schedule, operating from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

### Respondents Opinion About Of Current Work-Life Balance

**Table No.3**

Current work-life balance	No of the respondents	% of the respondents
Great, I'm managing well	172	57
Okay, but could be better	54	18
Struggling to find balance	84	25
Total	300	100

Source: Primary data

**Interpretation:**

Table No. 3 illustrates the current work-life balance of the respondents. Among them, 57% reported a positive experience, indicating that they are managing well. In contrast, 18% described their situation as acceptable but in need of improvement, while 25% expressed difficulties in achieving a satisfactory balance.

**Respondents Opinion about Present Working Hours in a Week****Table No. 4**

Working hours in a week	No of the respondents	% of the respondents
Lees than 40 hours	34	11
40-50 hours	124	41
50-60 hours	128	43
More than 60 hours	14	5
Total	300	100

Source: primary data

**Interpretation:**

Table No. 4 illustrates the weekly working hours of the respondents. It indicates that 43% of the participants are engaged in work for 50 to 60 hours per week. Additionally, 41% report working between 40 and 50 hours weekly. A smaller segment, comprising 11%, works fewer than 40 hours per week, while 5% exceed 60 hours of work each week.

**Respondents opinion about Time spent for Personal Activities Or Family****Table No. 5**

Personal activation or family	No of the respondents	% of the respondents
Yes, definitely	146	48
Sometimes	84	28
Not really	52	18
Not at all	18	6
Total	300	100

Source: primary data

**Interpretation:**

Table No. 5 exhibits the amount of time respondents dedicate to personal or family activities. Among the participants, 48% indicated a strong affirmative response, stating "Yes, definitely." Additionally, 28% reported that they engage in such activities "Sometimes," while 18% expressed a sentiment of "Not really." Finally, 6% of respondents indicated that they do not engage in these activities "Not at all."

**Challenges face in balance the work and personal life****Table No. 6**

Challenges	Total Score	Mean Score	Rank
Childcare responsibilities	124		3
Lack of flexible scheduling	332		2
Long working hours	934	3.11	1
Stress from work (Job	6		4

insecurity, loss of pay etc)			
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Source: primary data

**Interpretation:**

Table No. 6 illustrates the various challenges encountered by respondents in their efforts to balance professional and personal life. The foremost challenge, ranked first, is attributed to extended working hours. Following this, the second rank is assigned to the lack of flexibility in work schedules. The third rank highlights difficulties related to childcare responsibilities, while the fourth rank pertains to managing work-related stress, including concerns about potential loss of income and job insecurity.

**Respondents' opinion about organisation support in case of family responsibilities**

**Table No 7**

Family members support	No of the respondents	% of the respondents
Very supportive	122	41
Somewhat supportive	112	37
Not very supportive	56	19
Not at all supportive	10	3
Total	300	100

Source: primary data

**Interpretation:**

Table No. 7 highlights the level of support provided by organization to complete family responsibilities. Among the respondents, 41% indicated that they are very supportive, while 37% reported being somewhat supportive. Additionally, 19% of the respondents expressed that they are not very supportive, and 3% stated that they are not at all supportive.

**Respondents Opinion About Development Programs organized by the organization**

**Table No.8**

Details	No of the respondents	% of the respondents
Yes, plenty!	74	25
A few	108	36
Not really	70	23
None at all	48	16
Total	300	100

Source: primary data

**Interpretation:** Table No. 8 outlines the development programs implemented by the organization aimed at promoting the work-life balance of the respondents. Among the participants, 36% indicated a strong affirmative response, categorizing their experience as "Yes, plenty!" Meanwhile, 25% reported having "A few" programs available to them. Additionally, 23% expressed a sentiment of "Not really," and 16% stated that there were "None at all."

### Participants' Views on Taking Breaks During the Workday

Table No. 9

Take breaks on workday	No of respondents	% of the respondents
Regularly	94	31
Occasionally	68	23
Rarely	100	33
Never	38	13
Total	300	100

Source: primary data

#### Interpretation:

Table No 9 illustrates the opinions of respondents regarding taking breaks during the workday. 33% of the respondents indicated that they rarely take breaks during the workday. 31% of them reported that they regularly take breaks while working. 23% stated that they seldom take breaks on the workday. 13% claimed that they never take breaks during their working hours.

#### Results of the Study

A notable segment of the workforce, specifically 48%, falls within the age range of 31 to 35 years, suggesting a predominantly young demographic. Additionally, 87% of the employees are married, and income distribution reveals that 81% of respondents earn between Rs 10,001 and 20,000 monthly. In terms of education, 56% have attained only school-level qualifications, while 29% are classified as illiterate. Regarding work experience, half of the respondents possess between 2 to 4 years of experience. A considerable 68% of participants are involved in shift work, and 17% frequently engage in overtime to meet order demands. Furthermore, 18% of respondents described their circumstances as acceptable but requiring improvement, and 25% reported challenges in achieving a satisfactory work-life balance. Only 31% indicated that they consistently take breaks during work hours.

Moreover, 41% expressed strong support for fulfilling family responsibilities. The primary challenge identified is extended working hours, followed by the lack of flexibility in work schedules as the second most significant issue. The third challenge pertains to difficulties associated with childcare responsibilities, while the fourth involves managing work-related stress, including concerns about potential income loss and job insecurity. Notably, 48% of respondents affirmed their commitment to dedicating time for personal activities.

#### Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of the research, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the work-life balance of employees:

1. Implement training initiatives for leadership within garment factories to foster a deeper understanding of the significance of work-life balance and to cultivate a supportive organizational culture.
2. Propose measures to mitigate excessive working hours, establish rotational shift patterns, and limit overtime for female employees to promote their well-being.



3. Enhance both the physical and emotional work environment in the garment sector by addressing aspects such as workplace safety, stress management, and the quality of interpersonal relationships.
4. Introduce new management policies, including flexible working hours and childcare assistance, to improve employees' work-life balance and overall job satisfaction.
5. Investigate opportunities to adopt family-friendly policies within the garment industry, such as providing on-site childcare services or offering paid parental leave.
6. Promote workshops or programs that focus on teaching coping strategies, relaxation techniques, and effective time management skills to alleviate stress among workers.

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