

Factors Affecting Work-Life Balance Among Working Women in Royal University of Bhutan (RUB) Colleges

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Abstract: Work-life balance (WLB) is increasingly recognized as a critical issue for working women, who often juggle professional responsibilities alongside family and societal expectations. This study investigates the factors influencing WLB among female employees of the Royal University of Bhutan (RUB). Using a descriptive research design, data were collected through structured questionnaires from 97 academic and administrative staff across eight RUB colleges. The study focused on three dimensions—personality, family support, and organizational support—adapted from Poulouse and Sudarsan's (2014) framework. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, reliability tests, and multiple regression analysis. Findings revealed that family support ($\beta = 0.299$, $p < 0.05$) and personality traits ($\beta = 0.216$, $p < 0.05$) significantly influenced WLB, while organizational support ($\beta = 0.046$, $p > 0.05$) had little effect. Additionally, income levels were found to significantly shape WLB, whereas marital status, qualification, and childbearing status did not. The study concludes that while personal resilience and family support remain crucial in balancing work and life, institutional support structures within RUB remain inadequate. It recommends the introduction of formal WLB policies, flexible working arrangements, and recreational programs to enhance female staff welfare and overall productivity.

Keywords: Work-Life Balance, Women in Higher Education, Family Support, Organizational Support, Royal University of Bhutan.

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I. INTRODUCTION

➤ Background

Today work life balance has become an increasingly pervasive concern for employers as well as employees. Increased work pressure has made work-life balance impossible. WLB is a way of developing and sustaining a safe work environment that can help employees to balance work and private life (Mani, Geetha & Khaled, 2020). According to Rathee & Renu (2018) a good balance in life and work can play a vital role for attaining personal and organizational goals.

So, the study focused more on factors influencing the work life balance of educational organizations and it tries to find whether there is a difference between the influence of these factors on males and females. On the one hand, the new period has seen many achievements and technological

developments; while on the other hand, it has seen many concerns linked to the environment, as well as people's physical and mental health.

➤ Problem Statement

It is now evident that more women are receiving degrees today than ever before. The change in this trend has allowed more women to achieve higher level positions (Zamin, 2013). In fact, increase in the level of female education has brought general advantages such as increased productivity, skills and innovation and other special gains which affects growth of human capital and consequently economic growth especially in developing countries (Jalilian, n.d). Similarly, Pradhan (2016) also found that there has been a growing concern over the WLB issue due to the increasing number of women entering the world of paid employment. "Work family issues differ across various countries as they are influenced by factors at the micro and macro level which

vary across the different countries.” According to Lewis and Ayudhya, 2006 as cited in Pradhan (2016), in both western and non-western countries work life conflicts tend to be similar but responses differ in nature as it is governed by their culture. Likewise, in Bhutan, there is a drastic increase in the literacy rate of women as compared to the past. As per Bhutan Living Standards Survey Report (NSB, 2017), the youth female literacy rate and adult female literacy rate is 91.6% and 51.3% respectively. From the report it is evident that females are also receiving more education which will increase their workforce participation.

The Royal University of Bhutan (RUB) is one of the tertiary education providers in Bhutan. There are 10 constituent colleges and 2 affiliated colleges. As of 18th March 2021, the RUB employs 399 female and 813 male staff. In general, 32.93 % of the staff consists of female workers. In addition, the employment rate of male and females in Bhutan has increased to 97.8 % and 96.7 % respectively. (NSB, 2019). Hence, it is apparent that more women are entering the workforce, thus making a meaningful impact in the previously male dominated corporate world (Zamin, 2013).

Working women face challenges in balancing their professional and domestic role as compared to men and consequently women fail to achieve the desired level of WLB due to various factors. Work-life imbalance causes increased levels of stress complaints, depression, ill health, work family conflicts, low marital satisfaction etc (Gaffoor, 2016). Though there are studies conducted on WLB, only few studies are conducted on working women in Bhutan. Moreover, compared to other occupation, teaching is reported to have either positive or negative experiences about work-life (Nayeen & Tripathy, 2012)

Thus, this research will help in determining the most influential factors that affect WLB of a working woman in the context of RUB female workers. This would help better comprehension of WLB of female staff which would assist colleges to strategize female staff welfare and will benefit RUB for planning and decision making. It may help other agents set up women-friendly workplaces and aid formulate policy for women welfare discourses at national level.

➤ *Research Objective*

- To analyse the prominent factors among identified factors affecting the work-life balance of working women.
- Difference in WLB according to DF

➤ *Research Question*

- What are the most influential factors that affect the Work-Life Balance of working women in tertiary education?

➤ *Significance of the Study*

The study will contribute to the literature on Work-Life Balance of working women and ascertain how the work-life imbalance affects them in terms of personal and professional growth. The Royal University of Bhutan as an autonomous

agency and pioneer university has a greater role in creating knowledge-based society and acts as a think tank to contribute towards socio-economic development of a country. Nearly 32.93 % of the workforce in the RUB consists of female workers. Therefore, this study will enable RUB and its colleges to strategize female staff welfare in the workplace. Moreover, the recommendations and suggestions of the study would give a clear direction for RUB and its colleges to plan and execute policies enabling female workers to balance their personal and professional lives which will enable them to perform well leading to higher productivity in the workplace.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The study adapted three dimensions of Poulouse and Sudarsan (2014) namely Personality, Family support and Organisational support to determine the factors affecting WLB of a working woman in RUB.

Working women are not able to balance their career and personal lives as they are confronted with a variety of issues not only at work but also at home. They are expected to manage both ends with utmost efficiency and precision (Thakur & Geete, 2014). Work-Life Balance (WLB) does not mean equal balance between professional and personal life but a careful synchronization of an individual's varied pursuits that may consist of family, work, leisure, social obligation, health, career, and spirituality (Sundaresan, 2014). Some pursuits need greater attention while some require lesser focus. Similarly, Kiran & Devi (2014) stated WLB should not be treated as scheduling equal time for one's work and personal time. Therefore, striking a good balance amongst the pursuits will result in a fine WLB. Also, WLB is defined as a different manner where an employee justifies his/her important priorities according to his/her grades, position, social life and family obligations (Kundani and Mehta, 2015). Moreover, WLB is also about adjusting work patterns to achieve overall fulfillment.

The role of teaching professionals has changed due to transformation in the educational process pressuring teachers to carry out various additional obligations increasing the stress which has led to affect the mental wellbeing. (Radha, 2015). One of the studies found that extended working hours, travel time between home and workplaces and participation in additional jobs and assignments were the main challenges in professional life (Bharathi et al., 2015). Due to lengthy working hours, women are exhausted and are stressed leading to inability to carry out family responsibilities. They are not able to take proper rest because of short break time (Pahuja, 2016). Moreover, women were found to be stressed as they did not get self-time and were guilty of not being able to take care of elders.

One's personality is defined as a sum of traits such as emotional stability, extraversion, agreeableness, openness to experience and conscientiousness (Shaikh, Shah, Katpar & Shah, 2019). Aryee, Srinivas, and Tan as cited in Poulouse and Sudarsan (2014) found that a person with proactive personalities may obtain support and engage in reformation

of roles to minimize work-life conflicts. Similarly, a person with an open personality seems to maintain WLB owing to their abilities to communicate and maintain a balance between family and work (Devadoss & Minnie, 2013). Contrarily, a study by Katpar et.al (2020) concluded personality has a lesser effect on the WLB of a female worker. Women effectively manage home and office when support is given in terms of shared responsibilities through teamwork (Saravanan & Dharani 2014). Lack of flexibility in work schedule increases physical distress such as insomnia, loss of appetite, pain, and aches in female workers while flexible work schedules reduce absenteeism and late coming (Katpar et.al 2020). Similarly, Rangarajan (2018) findings revealed women get tired and have worries about jobs. In addition, women are not able to find quality time for personal and family. With higher responsibilities and overload of work there is a decrease in the level of work purpose autonomy, development opportunities, moral rectitude, relation with core workers and superiors, recognition, and safety at work (Boas & Morin, 2019).

Women struggle to maintain WLB due to societal perception on the desired roles to be played. Moreover, Women confront various factors like “long working hours, job rigidity, work overload, responsibilities related to childcare, discrimination and biasness at workplace, lack of supervisory support, dominant managerial style and scarce family support” causing imbalanced work-life (Tasnim, Hossain & Enam 2017; Gaffoor, 2016). Furthermore, Women with high positions and income have less work-life imbalance as compared to women who earn less and have young children to look after (Kiran & Devi, 2014). It is very difficult for women to work throughout the day by managing the work schedules as well as the family when they have children. The organization demands more efficient performance and women employees often struggle to manage work life (Davalva et al., 2019). A study conducted by Gaffoor (2016) indicates factors such as childcare, working hours and support system affected the WLB of women and proposed “to establish child and elder care facilities, provide some

flexibility in strict deadlines and heavy workload and, conduct training programs on stress reduction and time management” which will contribute to achieving WLB of female employees.

Working women must fulfil family duties and organization expectations so they struggle to maintain a balance between family and work causing implications on individuals’ quality of life (Ojo et al., 2014). Female school teachers were not able to balance work-life as they took home the school work and no separate policy was set in the school (Devi and Pandian, 2011). Social attitude and support systems play a vital part in bringing harmony and happiness to female employee’s lives. According to Hunter and Valcour (2005), family issues and concerns should be identified and added to the agenda of organizations, trade unions, and governmental policies to provide maximum support to female employees in terms of work- life balance. The effectiveness of work-life balance practices and policies must integrate the effects of workplace culture and supervisor support of employee's efforts to balance family and work responsibilities (Baral and Bhargava, 2010). In this competitive era, The WLB policies are set by the organization to assist increase autonomy of working women to blend professional and personal aspects. Flexible work options, Specialized leave policies and Dependent-care benefits were the three strategies made to aid workers to balance personal and professional lives (Mishra & Singh, 2018).

Organizations have increasingly been developing formal policies that attempt to facilitate the work/life nexus. Work/life balance strategies enhance the autonomy of workers in coordinating and integrating the work and non-work aspects of their lives. Three broad types of work/life strategies have been created to help employees balance their work and non-work lives : 1) Flexible work options, 2) Specialized leave policies and 3) Dependent-care benefits.

➤ Conceptual Framework

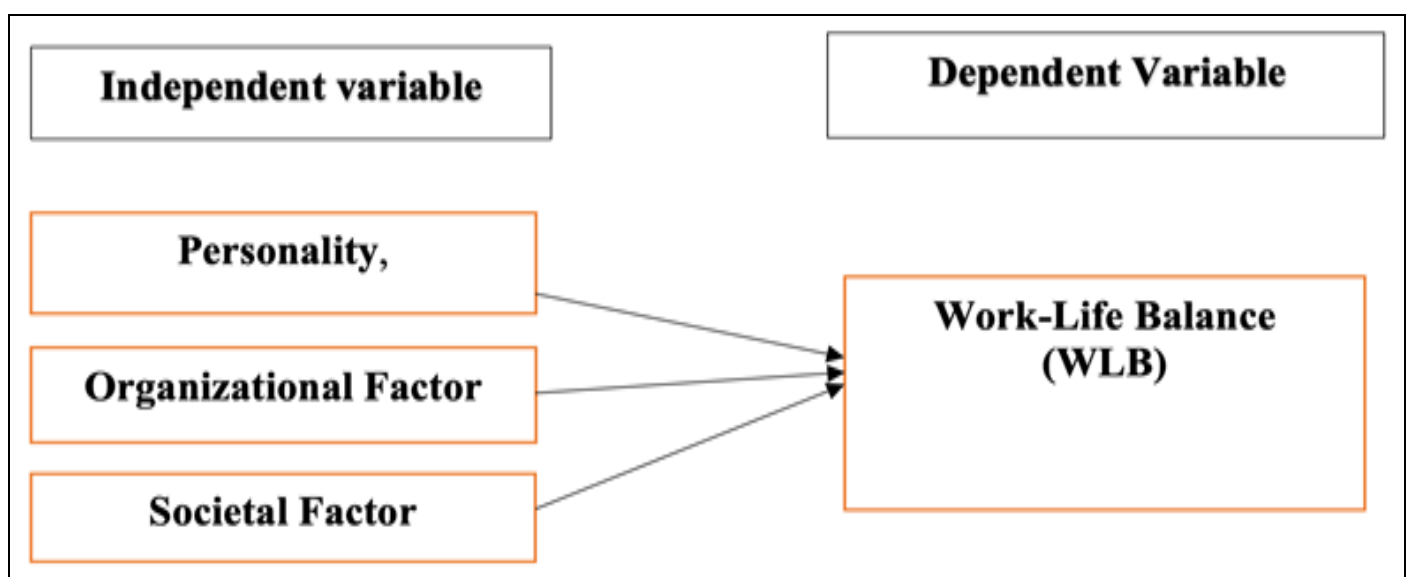


Fig 1 Conceptual Framework

➤ *Adapted from Poulose & Sudarsan (2014)*

Independent variables consist of Individual, organizational and family factors and the dependent variable as WLB. The study explored how the independent variables influence the dependent variable (WLB) by deploying the mentioned statistical analysis tools.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

➤ *Research Design*

Research design is the plan to connect the conceptual research problems with empirical research (Boru, 2018). Descriptive research design was applied for this study. The purpose of descriptive research was to find the most influential factors (personality, family, and organisation) on work-life balance of working women of RUB colleges and the relationship of demographic factors on WLB.

• *Respondent*

The respondents for this research were female employees including academic staff and administrative staff of 8 colleges (GCBS, CLCS, CNR, Sherubtse college, CST, JNEC, PCE and SCE) of Royal University of Bhutan.

➤ *Sampling Design*

To make the research relevant, it is important to have a reasonable portion of the population to be sampled. This will ensure reliable generalization of the findings (Gupta and Rao, 2018). Yamane's formula was used to calculate sample size.

$$n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$$

Where,

n= corrected sample size, N=Population size, e= margin of error (MoE), e= 0.05 based on research condition

Total female staff: 399

$$= 399 / (1 + 399 * 0.05^2)$$

$$= 199$$

However, the actual respondent for the study was only 97 respondents.

➤ *Data Collection Method*

The qualitative study used questionnaires through Likert scale to get responses. Likert scale ratings ranged from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. The questionnaire designed had 28 questions to measure the personality, family and organisation factors affecting WLB. The questionnaire reliability was tested using Cronbach's alpha. The Cronbach

alpha value for the questionnaire scale was 0.787 which is considered good.

➤ *Data Analysis*

Data analysis is the method of evaluating data using analytical and empirical reasoning to examine each section of the data collected or provided (Perez, 2019). In this research, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for analysis. SPSS is a software that helps researchers to analyse big and large data to produce a simple compiled data set for the researcher to understand the data better. The data were analysed using descriptive analysis, analysis of reliability and analysis of multiple regression as it helps in achieving the set objective of the study.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

The total number of respondents collected were 97 females working staff of RUB colleges. 29.9 % of the respondents were from GCBS, 17.5% each from CNR and JNEC, 10.3% each from Sherubtse College and CLCS, 8.2% from CST and the least with 3.1% each from PCE and SCE. 50.5 % (n=49) of the respondents were academic staff and 49.5 % (n=48) were administrative staff. Therefore, it showed a proportionate number of academic and administrative staff. The researcher collected 8.2 % of the data from respondents aged less than 25, 17% of the data from respondents aged 25-30 and majorly from respondents aged 31-40 with 59.8 %. The least respondents were women aged above 51 which comprised only 6 respondents. 65 of the respondents are married whereas 32 of the respondents are single. Thus, most of the respondents are married working women. Out of 65 married respondents, 56 of them have at least one child. 49 of the respondents have only 1-2 children, while 7 of the respondents have 3 children and the rest three respondents with 4, 5 and 7 children. There were 29 respondents with master's qualification, 25 respondents with degree and only 7 of them with Doctorate qualification. However, there were also women who studied up to class 12 and with other qualifications, both with 8 respondents. The highest contributor to the data were women with income ranging from nu.40001 and above (n=35) followed by income ranging from nu.20001 to 30000 (n=24). Majority of the respondents were with work experience of 6-10 years (29%), followed by 1-5 years (27.8%). It was observed that not many women were with over 16 years of work experience (n=17). 2 out of 98 women mentioned that women need to be compensated even during maternity leave as this would help further motivate them to work harder. In line with this, few women mentioned about working time flexibility for nursing mothers while few stated about the importance of colleges being open to women related issues.

➤ *Descriptive Statistics*

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics on Family Support

	N	min	max	Mean	Std. Deviation
I can devote time for guiding my children	97	1	5	3.21	0.841
My family members listen to my job-related problems	97	1	5	3.67	0.921
I get enough family support to maintain professional life	97	1	5	3.78	0.915

My family problems/worries do not distract me from work	97	1	5	3.34	1.04
Family activities does not stop me for getting enough time to do my job	97	1	5	3.47	1.062
Family obligations do not reduce the time I need to relax or be myself	97	1	5	3.39	1.085
I look after, provide any regular help, care for any sick, elderly or disabled adults	97	1	5	3.45	1
Valid N (listwise)	97				

Table 1 examines how working women receive support from family to maintain WLB. Item 3 (I get enough family support to maintain professional life) has the highest mean (M=3.78, SD=0.915). This shows that the women receive enough support from their family to maintain professional

work. On the other hand, item 1 (I can devote time for guiding my children) received the lowest mean (M=3.21, SD=0.841) which indicates that the working women are facing difficulties managing time to guide their children.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics on Personality

	N	min	max	Mean	Std. Deviation
I suffer from stress related diseases	97	1	5	3.228	1.025
I am preoccupied with home related thoughts during work hours	97	1	5	3.433	0.988
My mood gets affected by the nature of my job	97	1	5	3	1.060
Problems at work do not make me irritable at work	97	1	5	3.2	1.057
Valid N (listwise)	97				

Table 2 illustrates how personality effects work life balance of a working woman. Item 3 (my moods get affected by the nature of my job) has the least mean (M=3, SD=1.060) which shows that women mood gets affected by the

nature of job. However, the study reveals that women do not remain preoccupied with home related thoughts during work hours.

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics on Organizational Support

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
My organization take initiatives to manage work-life of its female employees	97	1	5	2.58	0.966
My organization provides flexible working timing	97	1	5	3.03	1.005
My organization provides leaves to manage work life	97	1	5	2.99	1.026
My organization provide recreational facilities	97	1	5	3.05	1.004
Valid N (listwise)	97				

Table 3 examines the effect of organizational support on WLB. Item 1 (My organization takes initiatives to manage work-life of its female employees) scored the least mean (M=2.58) which indicates that organisations do not take

initiatives to manage work life of its female employees. It was also found that organisations do not provide leaves to manage work life of its female employees (M=2.99).

Table 4 Descriptive Statistics

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Personality	97	1.5	4.5	3.213	0.653
Organization	97	1	4.5	2.912	0.738
Family	97	1	4.86	3.474	0.723
WLB	97	1.5	4.75	3.082	0.611
Valid N (listwise)	97				

Table 4 shows the effect of independent variables (Personality, organization, and family) on WLB. The result shows that family and personality support WLB of women

with a mean of 3.4 and 3.2 respectively. Organization factor scored the least mean of 2.9 which indicates lack of support from organization in managing WLB.

Table 5 Mean of Job and WLB

Job	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	sig
Teaching	3.1582	49	0.58339	0.219
Administrative	3.0052	48	0.63474	
Total	3.0825	97	0.61101	

Table 5 shows the relationship between the nature of the job and WLB. There is a difference in WLB between teaching staff and administrative staff, but it is not

statistically significant with P value <0.05. Therefore, researchers conclude that the nature of the job does not influence WLB.

Table 6 Mean of Marital Status and WLB

Marital Status	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Sig
married	3.0115	65	0.61146	0.103
Unmarried	3.2266	32	0.59351	
Total	3.0825	97	0.61101	

Table 6 examines the WLB of women based on marital status. The findings show as compared to married women (mean 3.01) the unmarried women (mean 3.2) can somewhat

maintain WLB. However, it is not statistically significant. Therefore, researchers conclude that marital status does not influence WLB.

Table 7 Mean of Income and WLB

Income	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Sig
10000-20000	3.239	23	0.47361	0.003
20001-30000	3.354	24	0.57064	
30001-40000	3.050	15	0.46483	
40001 and above	2.807	35	0.6727	
Total	3.083	97	0.61101	

Table 7 shows the relationship between income level and WLB. There is a difference in WLB of women according to income level. The P value is 0.003 which is lesser than

0.05, hence it is statistically significant. Therefore, researchers confirm that income level influences WLB of a woman in RUB colleges.

Table 8 Mean of Qualification and WLB

Qualification	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Sig
class 12	3.3472	18	0.53646	0.064
Degree	3.13	25	0.58683	
Masters	2.8966	29	0.6798	
Doctorate	2.75	7	0.54006	
Others	3.1806	18	0.52724	
Total	3.0825	97	0.61101	

Table 8 shows the relationship between qualification and WLB. The result depicts that there is a difference in WLB of women, but it is not statistically significant with P

value greater than 0.05. Hence, researchers conclude that qualification does not influence WLB of a woman.

Table 9 Mean of Childbearing Status and WLB

Child	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	sig.
YES	3	56	0.62523	0.121
NO	3.1951	41	0.57963	
Total	3.0825	97	0.61101	

Table 9 shows the relationship between child status and WLB. There is no significant difference in WLB of women with children and women without children. However, it is not statistically significant with P value 0.121. Hence,

researchers conclude that childbearing status does not influence WLB.

➤ Regression Analysis

Table 10 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.437a	0.191	0.165	0.55837
a Predictors: (Constant), Organization, Personality, Family				
b Dependent variable: WLB				

In table 10, the computed R square is 0.191. Taken as a set, the result shows the predators Organisation, personality, and family accounts for 19.1 % of the variance in WLB.

Therefore, the researcher concludes that there are still other factors that can affect the WLB of a working woman which are yet to be discovered by another researcher.

Table 11 Anova

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.845	3	2.282	7.32	.000b
	Residual	28.996	93	0.312		
	Total	35.84	96			
a Dependent Variable: WLB						
b Predictors: (Constant), Organization, Personality, Family						

In table 11, the significance value was shown. Since the P value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05, the model is

deemed fit for the analysis. Therefore, the results in the table are statistically significant.

Table 12 Coefficient

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.445	0.388		3.724	0
	Personality	0.202	0.094	0.216	2.146	0.034
	Family	0.253	0.087	0.299	2.917	0.004
	Organization	0.038	0.079	0.046	0.484	0.63
a Dependent Variable: WLB						

Table 12 shows the standardized coefficient beta that represents the coefficient of regression which analyses a unit change in the predictor variables when the predictor changes independently. Higher the Beta value, higher is the influence of independent variables on dependent variables and vice versa. The result shows that family support ($\beta=0.299$) has the highest influence on WLB of a woman followed by personality factor ($\beta=0.216$). The lowest β value was organisation ($\beta=0.046$). The result of multiple regression analysis shows that personality and family have a positive influence on WLB as these variables have p value less than 0.05 which is statistically significant.

V. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study were summarized according to the research questions. The most influential factor that affected WLB of working women in tertiary education was personality and family support. It was found that women receive enough family support to maintain work life balance and the family members listen to job related problems. In addition, it was found that working women do not suffer from any stress related diseases as family related problems do not distract women from doing office work. Nevertheless, it was found that most of the women with children are not able to dedicate time to guiding children. In addition, women's mood gets affected by the nature of their job. The study found that organizational support does not contribute to managing WLB of working women. It revealed that the organization does not take initiatives to manage WLB and does not provide leaves to manage WLB.

VI. CONCLUSION

Over the years, WLB emerges as a key issue in all types of employment as dual career families are becoming more common and the high work demand with long duration of working is becoming a norm. It is increasingly becoming difficult to find time for self. Hence, WLB is one area where it is significantly being researched. A poor WLB can lead to serious consequences such as fatigue, mental illness such as depression, stress, tension, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts

(Balu, 2022). Therefore, one should be able to maintain a proper balance between work and life to have a healthy mental and physical health (Mani, Geetha, Khaled, 2020). Working women in RUB colleges in general can maintain WLB as they have a strong family support as well as strong personality factor which helps them to overcome the issues related to WLB. However, it was found that women do not receive adequate support from organisations to maintain WLB. Thus, the organizations need to adapt positive practices and policies to support WLB of its employees.

VII. LIMITATION

The target group for this study comprised only 97 working women of 8 colleges of Royal University of Bhutan. To have higher reliability of result, larger target groups should be considered (Gupta & Rao, 2018). Hence, the number of respondents for the study was a limitation. Secondly, there was no measure to explore if the responses provided by the respondent were correct or not. Furthermore, WLB is not the only issue with female workers. An unmanaged and poor WLB in general is the reason for employees (male and female) leaving jobs (Balu & Panda, 2022).

RECOMMENDATION

➤ *Based on the Finding of the Study, Following are the Recommendations:*

- *Organization Should Create and Implement Work-Life Balance Policy.*

The descriptive analysis and regression analysis concluded that organization support does not influence WLB of a working woman. Item 1 on the organizational support (My organization takes initiatives to manage work-life of its female employees) had the least mean ($M=2.5$) which indicates that the organization lacks initiatives to manage WLB of its employees. Hence, it is recommended to have a policy on WLB to ensure mental and physical wellbeing of all the staff irrespective of gender. This will also ensure that

women get adequate time to be with their children and guide them which is not happening now.

- *More Recreational Activities*

Women have slightly agreed that organizations provide recreational facilities with a mean score of 3.05. However, organizations should create more recreational activities such as hiking, gym, yoga, meditation which could reduce mood swings of a woman. Women agreed that moods are getting affected by the nature of the job. Hence, this will ensure women are physically and mentally healthy.

- *Continued Family Support*

It was found that women receive strong support from their family to manage WLB. As a result, women are free from stress related diseases, not preoccupied with home related work thoughts during work and not irritable at work. Hence, it is recommended that family members should provide continued support to working women.

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