



Factors Affecting Work-Life Balance among Female Police Officers in Jharkhand

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Abstract: Working women from state based police services presents a distinct set of internal and external challenges towards attainment of work-life balance in daily lives. The influences that seem to shape working women's efforts to achieve balance across work and life based responsibilities; are not only self-driven but also job driven, contextual, collegial as well as organizational. The classification of influences constitutes an interesting research exercise as women police personals are being reported to be under intense stress and strain on account of contrastive pressures form work and home.

Key Words: Working Women, Police Personals, Internal, External, Individual personal resources, Job resources and demands, Contextual aspects, Jharkhand, Work life balance behavior, India.

1.1 Introduction

The phenomenon of theorizing the women police officer's work life balance behavior would borrow extensively from the existing theoretical frameworks, paradigms, conceptual frameworks and earlier research as accomplished. A large section of studies report the incidence of impact of organizational environment, work culture, access to job resources, lateral job based demands as shaping women's perceptions with regard to achievement of balance.

1.2 Jharkhand women police personal's work-life

The 'police services' as a demanding career calls for knowledge (Petrigileri, 2012) as well its application as and when it is required. The women based successful application of knowledge and skills vis a vis job requirements and compelling demands from family needs to tread a balance that is often hard to define and understand. The ideology of 'work life balance' nests in the pursuit of career or vocation across contrasting challenges from across home and place of work (Sullivan, 2008) in social perspectives. The women employees (Dassanayake, 2019) particularly have been observed to be at fore front of work-life balance crises as she shares the responsibility for disproportionate domestic duties and family bound responsibilities along with career based mobility and attainment of professional excellence in life. The challenges hence identify as individualistic, contextual, job related as well as gender related.

The work and non-work related domains of life seem to clash and lays the basis for the obvious need for attainment of fragile balance. The work life balance across police services has been observed as a major challenge in practice perspective. The women employees in permanent charge across multiple ranks and positions in the base command units, woman police stations and across department; classify as pivotal unit of analysis as they constitutes the crucial agent in deciding upon the manner of response to PO fit, extent of achievement of balance across in domain job resources and in domain job demands.

1.3 Influences as contributing to work life balance behavior

The work-life balance (Guest, 2001) constitutes a vital phase in work life of individuals. The amount of research and scholarly work with regard to women’s ‘work-life balance behavior’ is on the rise and has been observed to overtake the general human resource management emphasis on other key areas. The work life balance (WLB) is widely regarded as an evolving and multidimensional construct and the body of knowledge on the subject continues to develop in developed and developing economies alike. The rising concern with regard to WLB is being reflected across broader human resource management literature and studies across strategic human management in organizational perspective.

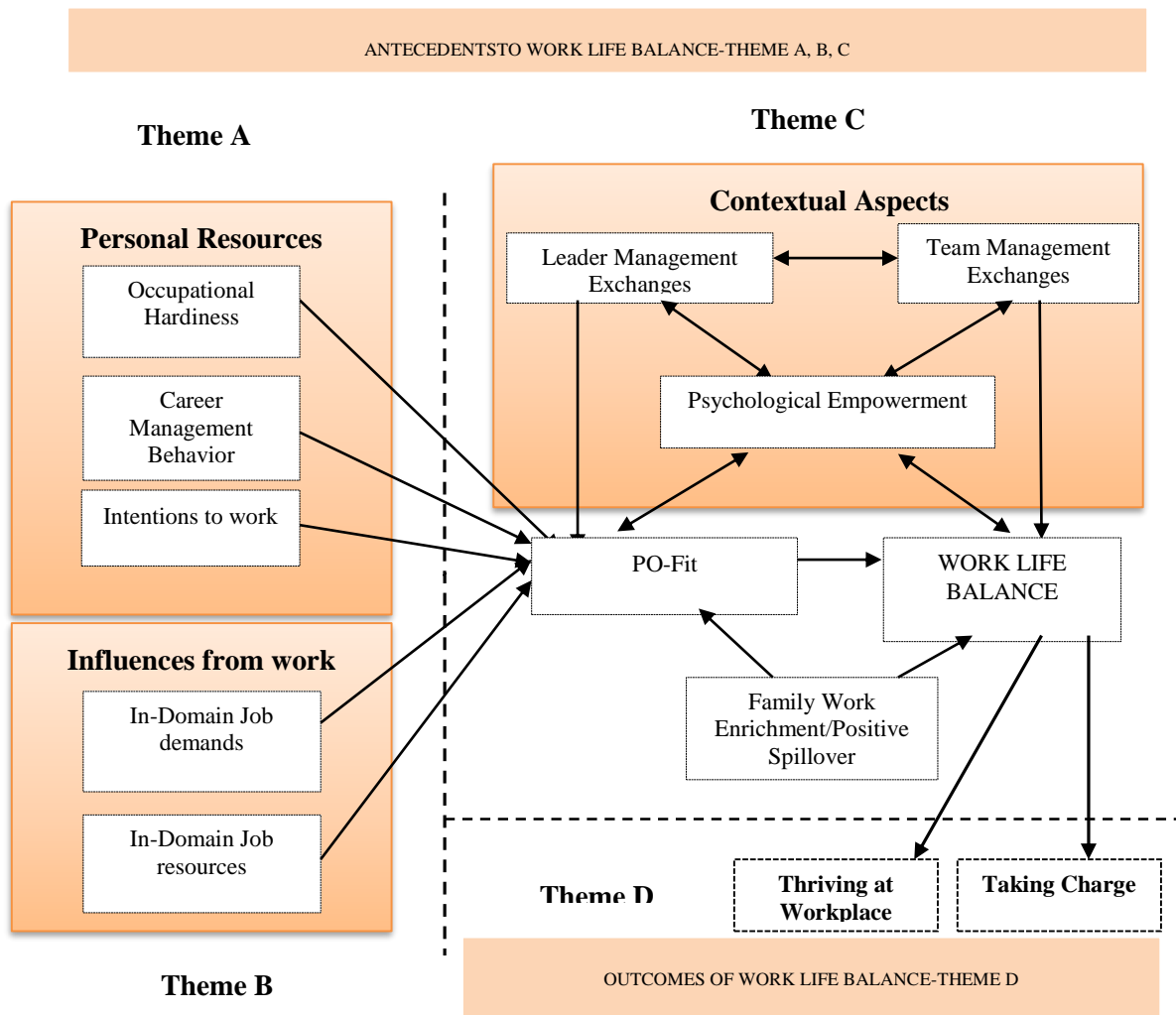


Figure: Proposed conceptual modeling of influences

The profound interest across global perspective has been observed even outside the review of subject and more and more studies cross management, public administration, economics, sociology and organizational studies have been observed as understanding the consequences of work life balance across employees. WLB is widely recognized as essential part of

employee's work life and non-work life. As the term suggests, this involves the employee-employer interface and sense of hairline balance that differentiates a state of balance from state of non-balance. The considered individual factors (mindsets, attitudes, cognitions, perceptions) across evolving organizational dynamics essentially involves aspects that impact women police officer's attainment of work life balance amidst strategic usage (Yoo, 2020) of competition and cooperation. "Individual choices" across police officers are being observed as constrained by the prevailing work structuring and organizational culture could be a simpler explanation for the phenomenon across organizational domains. The work and non-work related domains of life seem to clash and lays the basis for the obvious need for attainment of fragile balance. The influences and their consideration is essential to figure out the antecedents to 'work-life balance' operationalization in organizational domain as mentioned here:

The first and most prominent influence (Theme A: Individual preparedness and possession of personal resources) is hypothesized from women police officer's own personal career competencies and resources. The personal competencies, dynamic capabilities, occupational hardiness, ability to withstand stress and strain, acquisition of career resources, ability to deliver under demanding work conditions; seems to matter in police based occupation.

The second influence on person-organization fit in policing services (Theme B: Job resources and demands) is from individual's perceptions of in-domain job based demands and in-domain job based resources and extent of access to departmental resources.

The next influence (Theme C: Behavioral impact of contextual actors) is hypothesized from women police officer's perceptions of work place based contexts, power dynamics, organizational politics and organizational actors especially the assistance from colleagues, mentoring from the boss, management exchange relationships with supervisor, family based support and enrichment and perceived employee based empowerment for achieving the fit and balance.

The fourth set of influence (Theme D: Person-Organization fit and Work Life Balance) is hypothesized from women police officer's perceptions of extent of person-organization fit being achievable and respective implications for overall work-life balance in organizational propositions.

Table: Themes as identified and supporting dimensions

Themes as identified	Dimensions as identified across literature
(Influences on Work Life Balance Behavior)	
<p>Influence A:</p> <p>Individual based perception factors (dependent on personal resources)</p> <p>This theme seeks to capture the influences from across personal preparedness in terms of skill acquisition, skill based dexterity, hardiness to cope up with occupation related pressures, inclination for self-indulgence in career management and harnessing of intentions to work with dedication</p>	<p>Personal competencies (Ahmad, 2008), (Barney, 1995), Dynamic capabilities (Backman, 2004), (Basinska, 2020), (Blokker, 2019), (Demerouti, 2003), (Fotiadis, 2019), (Eilam, 2014), (Dick, 2007), (Eroz, 2018), (Coetzee, 2019), Personal development (Fletcher, 2019), Occupational hardiness and ability to resist (Maddiii, 2007), Individual's career management attributes (Airila, 2014), (Harvey, 2009), Signaling perspective (Crooker, 2002), Intentions to work (Greenhaus, 1985) and co-work (Patricia, 1997) with team</p>
<p>Influence B:</p> <p>Job /Work place related factors</p> <p>This theme stresses the influences from across job environments especially in terms of job based demands and access to job based resources at place of work</p>	<p>In-Domain Job demands (Bakker, 2004), In-Domain Job resources (Akgunduz, 2018), (Mayeri, 2017), Access to resources (Airila, 2014), Access to departmental resources</p>

<p>Influence C:</p> <p>Contextual Influences</p> <p>This theme stresses the influences from across work place based contexts and actors especially the colleagues, the boss, relationships with supervisor, family based support and enrichment and perceived employee based empowerment for achieving the fit and balance</p>	<p>Leader Management Exchanges (Cheeng, 2019), Team Management Exchanges (Albertson, 2008), Psychological Empowerment (Clements, 2018), Family Work Enrichment/Positive Spillover (Demerouti, 2003), (Direnzo, 2015), Family support (Albertson, 2008)</p>
<p>Theme D-Outcome: Work life balance and Thriving at workplace</p> <p>The theme captures the outcomes in terms of thriving at workplace and taking charge vis vis career aspirations in occupational stream.</p>	<p>PO-Fit (Dassanayake, 2019), (Kanten, 2019), Thriving ability (Spreitzer, 2005), Taking charge of responsibilities (Abbott, 2020), Psychological well-being and mental health, Occupational affinity (Hobfoll, 1989), Work place affection (Engelbrecht, 2019)</p>

Source: Compiled by author with aid of literature on subject

The studies (Guest, 2001) across women work force further attribute the phenomenon as a tight rope balance (Nissen, 2018) between the work based compulsions and life based aspirations. The research (Guest, 2001) on subject matter holds the organizational and individual factors as well as level of contextual embeddedness of the individual as influencing the work-life balance behavior. The section of literature (Crompton, 2009) emphasizes the interfaces between work and life as predominantly responsible for the prevalence of need for work-life balance across women employees and employers. The theme bound discussion involves the exploration of the aspects of the individual cognitions, psychological states and mindsets about self and organizational embeddedness as well as job based resourcefulness as shaping the balance based propositions.

The theme bound focus essentially covers the context of women in public services and their coping with work and non-work related pressures on self-identity, professionalisms, career mobility as well as psychological well-being. The themes seem to map the influences on the shaping of the work life behavior across the women police officers in Jharkhand. The constructs and precursors of 'work life balance' as such vary tremendously. The gender bound differences (Anand, 2016), occupation bound variations (Hoobfoll, 1989) and sector wide differences (Haar, 2018) are evident. In context of developing economy like India, with marginal women participation (Weserat, 2014) across formal economic systems (Anitha, 2016), the construct operationalization would be a bit challenging on account of non-availability of qualitative literature. For the purpose of this research exercise, the 'women police officers' have been defined as those employees in permanent commission those who have completed two-three years of formal employment in Jharkhand state police services.

1.4 Conclusions

The challenges classify as 'person driven', 'job driven' and 'contextual' in nature and scope. The research classified the personal challenges as ones that are individual derived and relies on personal capabilities and capacities to exhibit occupational hardiness, inclinations for self-indulgence in career management and exhibiting intentions for working.

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