

# Work-Life Balance among Urban Nurses: A Cross-Sectional Study

T. Little Flower Kalaimani

*Phd Scholar, Madras School of Social Work, University of Madras*  
[kalaithomas@gmail.com](mailto:kalaithomas@gmail.com)

Dr.P.Amutahalakshmi,

*Assistant Professor*

*Madras School of Social Work, Affiliated by University of Madras, Chennai*

**Abstract**— Work–life balance is the balance that an individual needs between time allocated for work and other aspects of life. This study was done to study the selected demographic profile of the nurses to measure their work-life balance. From October 2018 to May 2019, a cross-sectional study was done among 300 nurses of a metropolitan city in South India. Work Life Balance was measured using Work Life Balance Scale. The data collected were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22. Frequency and percentage analysis of the Sociodemographic variables were done. Mean age is 28.79 years (S.D=5.94). The mean overall work-life balance score is 76.14 and mean work-life balance index is 317.5. This study has a smaller sample size, study from a single metropolitan city and other logistic and financial limitations. Presence of confounding factors has not been accounted for in this study. The work-life balance is less among urban women as against the global standards. An efficient work-life balance is essential for women to develop and maintain an optimal role efficacy though there are other factors that might decide the work-life balance.

**Keywords:** Work-life Balance, Urban Nurses, Cross-Sectional Study, Chennai

## I. INTRODUCTION

Work refers to any activity involving mental or physical effort done in order to achieve a purpose or result or be engaged in physical or mental activity in order to achieve a result; do work or a task or tasks to be undertaken for living. Life refers to the existence of an individual human being or animal or the period between the birth and death of a living thing, especially a human being.

Work–life balance is the term used to describe the balance that an individual needs between time allocated for work and other aspects of life. Areas of life other than work–life can be, but not limited to personal interests, family and social or leisure activities. A comfortable state of equilibrium achieved between an employee's primary priorities of their employment position and their private lifestyle. Most psychologists would agree that the demands of an employee's career should not overwhelm the individual's ability to enjoy a satisfying personal life outside of the business environment.

In this study, an understanding of the work life balance among nurses is being sought and how this affects the other factors under study is the overarching framework that is being explored.

### *Dimensions of work-life balance [1]*

There are three dimensions of work-life balance namely;

- a) work interference with personal life
- b) personal life interference with work
- c) work/personal life enhancement

#### *a) Work interference with personal life:*

Work interference with personal life refers how the vocation of being a nurse affects the personal life of the individual.

#### *b) Personal life interference with work:*

This dimension refers how any event or day to day activities at home affect the functioning of the nurse at the workplace

c) *Work/personal life enhancement:*

How personal life enhances performance at work and how professional life enhances the functioning at home is the focus of this dimension

*Work-life balance in present state of affairs*

The famous theoretical physicist Stephen Hawking once quoted the above phrase. He enlightened us with the idea that work forms an important part of our lives without which the purpose of our existence remains a query. The global economy depends on the exchange of goods and services which in turn relies on work being done at the micro and macro level. This work is the lifeline of the human race. With increased globalization, the world is shrinking economically on one hand and on the other, the roles performed by an average person has evolved to accommodate the versatility.

*Rationale/Need of the study*

Work Life Balance is a concept that includes proper prioritizing between “Work” and “Life Style”. Today’s fast changing business environment and changing life style, creates lot of stress and pressure on the employees. People in general are finding it difficult to manage and cope up with the demands of both personal and official work. This leads to job dissatisfaction and is also affecting their personal life. That leads to burnouts, depression and financial issues.

Job dissatisfaction leads to lower performance at the work place. To avoid these issues of unbalanced work-life, organization and individuals have to take necessary initiatives and process to manage proper work – life balance. Both employees and the employers will benefit if they adopt it.

Today, an employee is not looking at their employer just for a job, also to care for their work life balance and their well-being. If a company addresses these needs, In addition to providing better career opportunities, they can be very successful in providing job satisfaction of the employees. And the company also can be benefitted like decreased employee turnover rates, less absenteeism due to employee satisfaction, enhanced organizational performance. This formed the necessary foundation for the study.

And since it is not possible to study the entire working population of women, a subset and most representative of the working class of women was chosen. Nurses were chosen as they are universal and all over the world, they have similar work conditions and face the same type of issues at work and home. Furthermore, they report that married, working women in Government hospitals have more problem in handling the work balance and personal obligation and unmarried nurses working in government hospitals have less stress on this regard. In government hospitals, excessive household work is the major affecting factor in balancing their work life and family life, whereas, on private hospitals, lack of leisure time and financial problem are the major factor in balancing their work and family life.

*Significance of the study*

The present millennial generation is witnessing the rise of a class of women nurses. Majority of this increase has been in the middle class of the country. The number of women who once preferred to stay at home is gradually coming down with a subsequent increase in the number of women who prefer working especially after marriage. This is due to various reasons. The most important being that nurses find an identity when they go to work, making money gives them financial freedom and in the long run, working gives them a positive self-image. Also, the rising life style costs can be met only if both the couples become bread winners.

The society that we are living in today is fast-paced, technologically robust, and highly competitive so much that it gives people boundless opportunities. Whether it is at school, universities, or work place, we face so many challenges that we are forced to raise high to face and handle the situation effectively. Employees, in particular are burdened due to competition, market demands, economic instability, job pressures and organizational expectations that make it very difficult for them to cope or lead a normal life. Particularly, employees compromise on their personal and family time in order to cope with workplace demands.

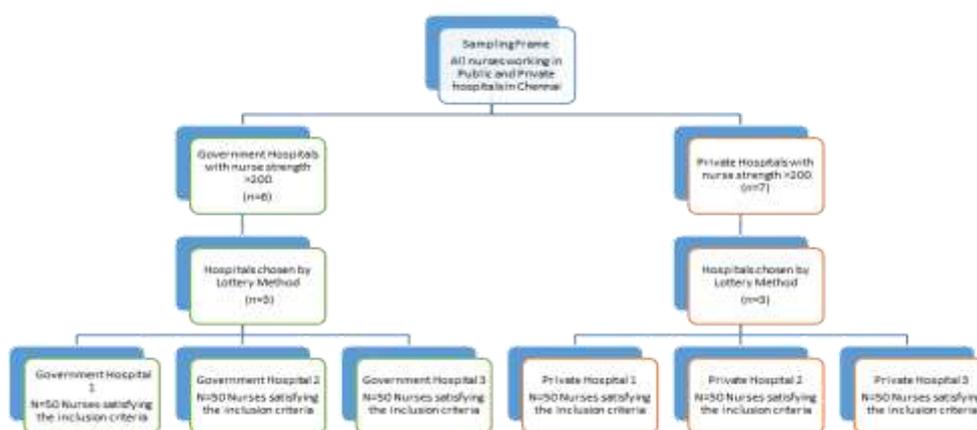
Work-like balance is becoming more and more a matter of concern, particularly now, with the demands placed on the employees. Technological innovations, increased working hours, diversified work culture, influence of globalization, presence of multinational companies and changing work styles place tremendous pressure on employees affecting their familial, social, and psychological welfare. Furthermore, this is also causing great difficulty in retaining employees at workplace.

But this does not come without any challenges. Challenges are enormous ranging from relationship issues, work place harassment to parenting. One such unique issue that plagues nurses is the work-life balance. Women nurses face unique challenges pertaining to work-life balance. This is especially profound for nurses that demand long working hours and that have night shifts. Nurses are a unique group of working professionals whose history can be traced back to almost hundred years. They have had a working style and practices that have been consistent throughout the history of the profession and work life balance has been a challenge yesterday as it is today. Keeping this in perspective, it is proposed to understand the work life balance of the nurses.

In such a situation, work-life balance has become a factor of concern for both the employees and the employers. Everyone believes that the key for both employees' and organizations' success lies in a balance between work and personal life.

## II.METHODS

From October 2018 to May 2019, a cross-sectional study was done among the nurses of a metropolitan city in South India. During the first phase an attempt was made to find out the number of Hospitals (both Public and Private) which has more than 200 Nurses as permanent staff. Then by using Lottery method three hospitals governed by Government and three hospitals managed by Private were selected randomly. Cochran in 1963 [2] developed a formula to calculate sample size assuming maximum variability among the samples ( $p=0.5$ ), desired confidence level=95% and a precision of  $\pm 5\%$ . Based on this formula, a sample size of 297 was necessary to meet the objectives of the study. Fifty nurses from each hospital were selected randomly for the study. Figure 1 shows the sampling process of the study.



(N stands for the number of nurses)

Fig. 1 Sampling Methodology

The following inclusion and exclusion conditions are formulated to have homogenous samples.

*Inclusion:*

- ❖ Female Nurses.
- ❖ Nurses who are serving more than 3 Years in the Hospital.
- ❖ A Hospital which has more than 200 permanently employed Nurses in Both Public and Private Hospitals.

*Exclusion:*

- ❖ Those who have not responded to all the Questions of the Questionnaire tools
- ❖ Those who do not cooperate with the researcher at the time of conducting the study.

Primary data were collected from the nurses of the government and private hospitals. The questionnaire method was used to collect the data for the research because it ensured quantifiable responses for the same items from the respondents. Informed consent was obtained from all subjects following receipt of information on the purpose of the study, assurances of anonymity and confidentiality. Work Life Balance was measured using Work Life Balance Scale, developed by Udai Pareek & Surabhi Purohit (2010) was used [3]. This scale has 36 statements with Five Point ratings in six different sub dimensions. The scale has high Reliability and Validity. The Cronbach Alpha was calculated in order to check the reliability of each scale. A reliable scale should have the value of Cronbach Alpha as 0.70 or more, otherwise the lower value of the Cronbach Alpha would indicate that the scale is less reliable (Almehrizi, 2013) [4]. The data collected were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22. Frequency and percentage analysis of the Sociodemographic variables were done.

## III. RESULTS

Table 1 shows the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants. Mean age is 28.79 years (S.D=5.94). Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics of Work-Life Balance.

TABLE I: DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS OF THE NURSES

<b>Sociodemographic Characteristics</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency (percentage)</b>
<b>Designation</b>	Trainee	40 (13.3%)
	Junior Nurse	56 (18.7%)
	Staff Nurse	149 (49.7%)
	Senior Staff Nurse	26 (8.7%)
	Supervisor	29 (9.7%)
<b>Education</b>	Diploma in Nursing	96 (32%)
	BSc Nursing	178 (59.3%)
	MSc Nursing	26 (8.7%)
<b>Sector</b>	Public	150 (50%)
	Private	150 (50%)
<b>Department</b>	General Practice	26 (8.7%)
	Out Patient	39 (13%)
	Children's ward	51 (17%)
	Operation Theatre	73 (24.3%)
	Maternity Ward	55 (18.3%)
	Emergency Ward	36 (12%)
	Others	20 (6.7%)
<b>Employment Status</b>	Permanent	146 (48.7%)
	Temporary	154 (57.3%)
<b>Monthly Income</b>	<10,000	57 (19%)
	10,000-20,000	70 (23.3%)
	20,001-30000	114 (38%)
	30,000-40,000	59 (19.7%)
<b>Family Status</b>	Joint	24 (8%)
	Nuclear	276 (92%)
<b>Parent's Education</b>	Schooling	169 (56.3%)
	Graduate	73 (24.3%)
	Post Graduate	58 (19.3%)
<b>Marital Status</b>	Married	171 (57%)
	Unmarried	122 (40.7%)
	Divorced	3 (1%)
	Separated	2 (0.7%)
	Widow	2(0.7%)
<b>Husband's education [N=171]</b>	Schooling	40 (23.39%) [N=171]
	Graduate	111 (64.91%) [N=171]
	Post Graduate	20 (11.69%) [N=171]
<b>Husband</b>	Permanent	12 (7.02%) [N=171]

<b>Employment Status [N=171]</b>	Temporary	45 (26.31%) [N=171]
	Not Answered/Not Available	114 (66.67%) [N=171]
<b>If married, Children N=171</b>	Yes	167 (97.66%) [N=171]
	No	4 (2.34%) [N=171]

TABLE II: WORK-LIFE BALANCE-DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

<b>Work Life Balance</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Mode</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>
<b>Overall Work Life Balance Score</b>	76.14	73	44	28.34	38	118
<b>Social Needs</b>	12.94	12	19	5.38	5	21
<b>Personnel Needs</b>	12.33	11	17	5.63	5	21
<b>Time Management</b>	12.63	13	6 <sup>a</sup>	5.43	4	24
<b>Team Work</b>	12.33	12	12	4.66	5	22
<b>Compensation &amp; Benefits</b>	13.12	14	15	4.68	4	20
<b>Work</b>	12.79	12	12	4.59	6	21
<b>Work Life Balance Index</b>	317.5	304.41	183.48	118.18	158.46	492.06

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The present millennial generation is witnessing the rise of a class of women nurses. Majority of this increase has been in the middle class of the country. The number of women who once preferred to stay at home is gradually coming down with a subsequent increase in the number of women who prefer working especially after marriage. This is due to various reasons. The most important being that nurses find an identity when they go to work, making money gives them financial freedom and in the long run, working gives them a positive self-image. Also, the rising life style costs can be met only if both the couples become bread winners.

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This study has its own limitations in terms of smaller sample size, study from a single metropolitan city and other logistic and financial limitations. Presence of confounding factors has not been accounted for in this study. Nevertheless, the generalisability of the results still can be done with due consideration.

## V. CONCLUSION

An efficient work-life balance is essential for women to develop and maintain an optimal role efficacy though there are other factors that might decide the work-life balance. Any organisation that aims to optimise human resources should keep work-life balance of the employees as part of their policy.

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