

"Development and Validation of a Model for the Work-Life Balance (WLB) Among Women Employees in the Indian Education Sector: An Exploratory Study"

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Abstract: Balanced work-life relationships are becoming more and more significant in the modern professional environment, especially among women who usually have to overcome complicated roles at the workplace and at home (McLellan and Uys, 2022). Work-life balance (WLB) contributes to the general well-being and professional satisfaction, which makes employees able to fulfill individual and professional obligations (Carlson et al., 2021). In the case of women, WLB is unattainable and extremely difficult because they have extra societal demands and family issues that may contribute to increased work-family tensions (Li et al., 2021). Policies and practices that deal with these issues are, thus, becoming the target of interest to organizations and WLB is a fundamental point of study. This paper focuses on different issues that affect WLB in women employees and compares both the positive and negative effects in order to see what leads to a balanced life.

Keyword: *Work Life balance, Women Employee, Exploratory study, Review of Literature*

1. Introduction

One of the biggest influences on WLB is job satisfaction because it predetermines the mental health of employees, their motivation, and commitment to the organization (Amin and Malik, 2021). By being satisfied and content with their work, women derive less stress and this could enable them to handle work and family obligations better. Tightly connected with job satisfaction, productivity also serves as a factor of WLB as it brings a sense of achievement and allows women to achieve a high degree of efficiency in their work and fulfill work and personal duties. In turn, the hypothesis H1 and H2 indicate that the job satisfaction and productivity are positively correlated with WLB, and this assumption is justified by the recent results in that field (Ali et al., 2025; Smith, 2020).

On the other hand, job stress is one of the major obstacles to WLB as in most cases, it leads to mental and physical burden thus obstructing performance at personal as well as the professional life. A high level of stress can result in burnout, which affects the effective performance of a person in managing both work and family matters (Johnson et al., 2021). Job stress may be especially harmful to women employees, who will be much more affected by the necessity to balance between a number of roles and live up to a number of expectations (Marthalina et al., 2025; Yang et al., 2023). This relationship is emphasized in Hypothesis H3 that suggests job stress is negatively correlated with WLB. The management of job stress is, thus, a critical issue that any organization wishing to advocate WLB and create the environment that would encourage productivity and well-being should address.

Work flexibility has been noted to become a key issue to ensure WLB, particularly when women have to combine their careers with family life (Harrington and Ladge, 2021). Additional work schedules,

as the possibility of working at home and working hours that can be modified, enable women to better organize their work, and devoting time to other aspects of life becomes easier. The Hypothesis H4 states that a flexible culture of work has a positive impact on WLB as the woman has more power to control her time. As a reaction, most companies have adopted flexible working policies to address the various needs of their employees and this especially helps women who are trying to balance work and family (Marthalina et al., 2025; Taylor, 2022).

In addition to flexibility, the workplace support and the impact of information and communication technology (ICT) are also becoming considered as influential in WLB. The workplace support, such as mentorship, family-friendly policies, and supportive management, will create an atmosphere in which women are likely to feel valuable and supported (Ali et al., 2025; Brown and Stevens, 2020). Hypothesis H5: The presence of strong support systems in the workplace has a positive impact on WLB by establishing a workplace culture that puts employee interests first. Nonetheless, the ICT is a two-sided sword, as it enables working remotely and flexibility, yet may lead to the confusion of the personal and professional life (Chen, 2021). Hypothesis H7 aims to deal with this multifaceted role of ICT, as it may positively impact WLB, but as well as cause an always-on culture. This research will offer information to organizations that would like to come up with policies that can help them address WLB effectively when employed by women.

2. Rationales of the study

I. Growing Demand of Work-Life Balance in workplaces.

The work-life balance is becoming an important factor in the mental health, productivity, and job satisfaction of employees and women usually encounter more demands in terms of balancing between work and family. Recent research points to the fact that WLB of women is the key to their long-term well-being and overall job satisfaction, which provides more positive workplaces (Carlson et al., 2021). The research is therefore timely in that it seeks to identify essential variables that influence WLB in women specifically so that organizations can be able to comprehend and address their different needs to promote a perfect balance of personal and professional life.

II. Employee Retention and Organization Impact.

Companies that accommodate WLB have been found to experience an increase in employee engagement, productivity, and retention particularly among women who often have to juggle between work and caregiving. Women with problems in WLB experience burnout and have a higher probability of quitting their jobs, which is costly to the organization in terms of turnover (Johnson et al., 2021). Therefore, awareness of the WLB motivation variables among female workers is a prerequisite to the companies that strive to maintain a stable, committed and satisfied workforce.

III. WLB Effect of Flexible Work Arrangements.

Flexibility in work arrangements, such as altered working hours and telecommuting have become a conclusive one regarding WLB, especially, after the COVID-19 pandemic. Flexibility helps women to juggle their different roles more effectively, but the success requires organizational support and policies to maintain flexible work without overwhelming employees (Harrington and Ladge, 2021). This work undertakes an investigation on the role that flexibility plays in WLB, as well as provides an insight on how the organizations can be successful to better their work culture in order to meet the varied needs of women.

IV. Work-Family Conflict Problems to Women Workers.

The work-family conflict remains a significant challenge in the achievement of WLB particularly among those women who have to contend with that of care giving. The level of work-family conflict

has been linked to the poor level of job satisfaction and high stress among women that negatively impacted their personal and professional performance (Li et al., 2021). By analyzing the reasons behind the work-family conflict, this paper will give remedies which can help the women employees minimize the conflict and lead a more balanced work-life life.

V. Dual role of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in WLB.

Despite the opportunity to work in a remote environment and have flexibility, ICT can also lead to the blurring of work and home life, thereby creating the culture of everyone being always-on and, therefore, disruption of WLB (Chen, 2021). The paper will concentrate on this complex issue about ICT in WLB particularly in the female gender, with the view of examining how technology can be used to make or break WLB basing on how the technology is applied. Findings of this study can be used to formulate policies which can be used to reduce the negative impacts of ICT on WLB, and provide a more balanced work environment to the female employees.

3. Proposed Research Methodology

The current research work will be organized into three phases in order to effectively cover the work-life balance (WLB) factors in women employees working in the education sector. The initial stage will entail a thorough literature review to determine and evaluate the most important findings regarding the work-life balance, namely, among the female employees. In this literature review, a conceptual framework of the WLB among women employees (WLBWE) is developed as demonstrated in Figure 1. The conceptual framework involves constructs that are applicable in WLBWE and they will be discussed in detail to appreciate how they interact with each other. All the constructs and sub-constructs will be assessed and reviewed with scholarly professionals to determine content validity. According to the feedback of experts, some new variables were added to the conceptual framework to explain the peculiarities created by the COVID-19 pandemic on the education sector. Figure 2 describes the methodology that will be used in this study, such as sample design, data collection strategies, and statistical tools.

3.1 Sample Design:

This research is based on the Pune district where the sample of women employees employed in different sectors of education sector will be targeted. The respondents will consist of women teachers who work in various levels of teaching (primaries, secondary, and junior state college). The sampling design specifically rules out the respondents of undergraduate and postgraduate levels since the previous studies have focused mostly on these groups. The choice also enables the study to focus on largely neglected population groups of the education workforce to offer a new view on the problems of WLB. Women teachers of governmental and non-governmental schools were taken into the account, therefore, offering a broad spectrum of work-life balance in various types of organizations. The multi-stage random sampling technique was used to guarantee a reliable and reachable research enabling getting of primary data that is reflective of the population.

3.2 Sampling Method:

Convenience sampling is also the other method of sample selection used in this study. The technique enables the incorporation of individuals within the company that are easily available, which is especially advantageous in the case when time and resources are scarce. Although it can add certain bias in contrast with random sampling, the convenience sampling can be offered as a viable alternative that will allow gathering data and obtain preliminary information on the problem of work-life balance (WLB) among female educators rather quickly. This strategy can be a convenient method in an exploratory study, by assisting to determine trends and additional areas to be further examined and researched without the intensive logistical demands of more complicated sampling methods.

Since the overall number of women who are the employees in the education sector in Pune district is about 28,000, the research will sample a size of about 280 to 300 women which is approximately 1 percent of the population. This is a workable sample size because it will render data collection manageable, but will yield results which will give general trends in WLB across education levels. The methodology, comprising both of the convenience and multi-stage random sampling, will prove efficient, in addition to providing a more balanced view of WLB problems that impact women educators in different institutions.

3.3 Data Collection:

The study employs both primary and secondary data to obtain an effective information on issues that affect WLB among the female employees in the education sector. The primary data will be received in form of a properly designed questionnaire which will deal with the specifics of WLB. The scale was chosen as a seven-point Likert scale, which would indicate the extent of agreement of the respondents to various statements and, thus, would be able to present a more detailed data analysis. The secondary data presented by the literature available supplements primary data since it is pertinent to a contextual background of the research. The literature will help to define constructs and sub-constructs involved in the conceptual framework to make sure that the study agrees with the knowledge that is presently available besides venturing new dimensions created by the current challenges confronting the education industry.

3.4 Statistical Tool Used:

The data that will be acquired following the survey is under a firm statistical examination to demonstrate the research structure and assumptions. Constructs validity and correlation with one another will be initially tested through the assistance of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). This will then be followed by the structural equation modeling (SEM) to aid in deciding the model fit and it will provide a holistic picture of WLB framework effectiveness and reliability. The given method of analysis, SEM, is particularly relevant to the present study since it does not simply allow examining multiple variables simultaneously and their interdependence, but also because the complex structures like WLBWE need to be understood. Such advanced statistical tools enable a precise and advanced analysis, which will enable the findings to be more precise and useful.

3.5 Phase Two - Reliability and validity testing:

The second stage of the study focuses on the reliability and validity of measures applied in the study. The pilot study will be conducted on more than one hundred women in the education sector as employees in order to ascertain the soundness of the survey instrument. Cronbach alpha will be used to test reliability and it is a statistical measure that will be used to assess the internal consistency of the survey items. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) will be performed to determine the structure of the data that is flowing behind the scenes in order to narrow the constructs. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), will then be implemented to narrow down on the list of measures that will be included in the final list depending on their statistical validity. This is a combination of a reliability test and a validity test that will guarantee the constructs are theoretically sound and statistically rigorous that will enhance credibility of the study.

The research will be involved in three phases and they will lead to the comprehensive understanding of the work-life balance of female employees in the educational field, with more reference to the challenges in the post-COVID-19. The results will be valid and applicable to data collection techniques that are strong and statistical instruments that are high with an involved structured sampling technique. The reliability and validity emphasis of the research in Phase Two means that this research is committed to the achievement of meaningful output which can be used to empower

the organizational policies and practices within the education industry and consequently help the women employees achieve a better work-life balance.

3.6 Respondent profile

In recent years, the role of women in the education sector has become increasingly significant. Women have made notable contributions as educators across all levels, from kindergarten to postgraduate teaching, and many now serve as PhD advisors as well. This research examines the work-life balance of women teachers, specifically focusing on those employed in primary and secondary schools.

The study will concentrate on these educators because there has been extensive research on job satisfaction, stress, and work-life balance among college-level faculty, particularly in non-aided institutions. However, there is a noticeable gap in studies addressing these factors at the primary and secondary school levels. To provide a fresh perspective, this research will target women teachers working in government and private primary and secondary schools within the Pune district.

The qualifications of the respondents will vary, including those with Higher Secondary Certificates and Diplomas in Education (D.Ed.) for Primary, as well as graduates holding Bachelor's degrees in Education (B.Ed.) for Secondary. Participants will have a wide range of experience, from newcomers to those with up to 36 years of teaching experience.

Due to time and budget constraints, the study's data collection will be limited to Pune district. By focusing on this specific group, the research aims to contribute a unique insight into the challenges and dynamics of work-life balance among women educators at the foundational levels of education.

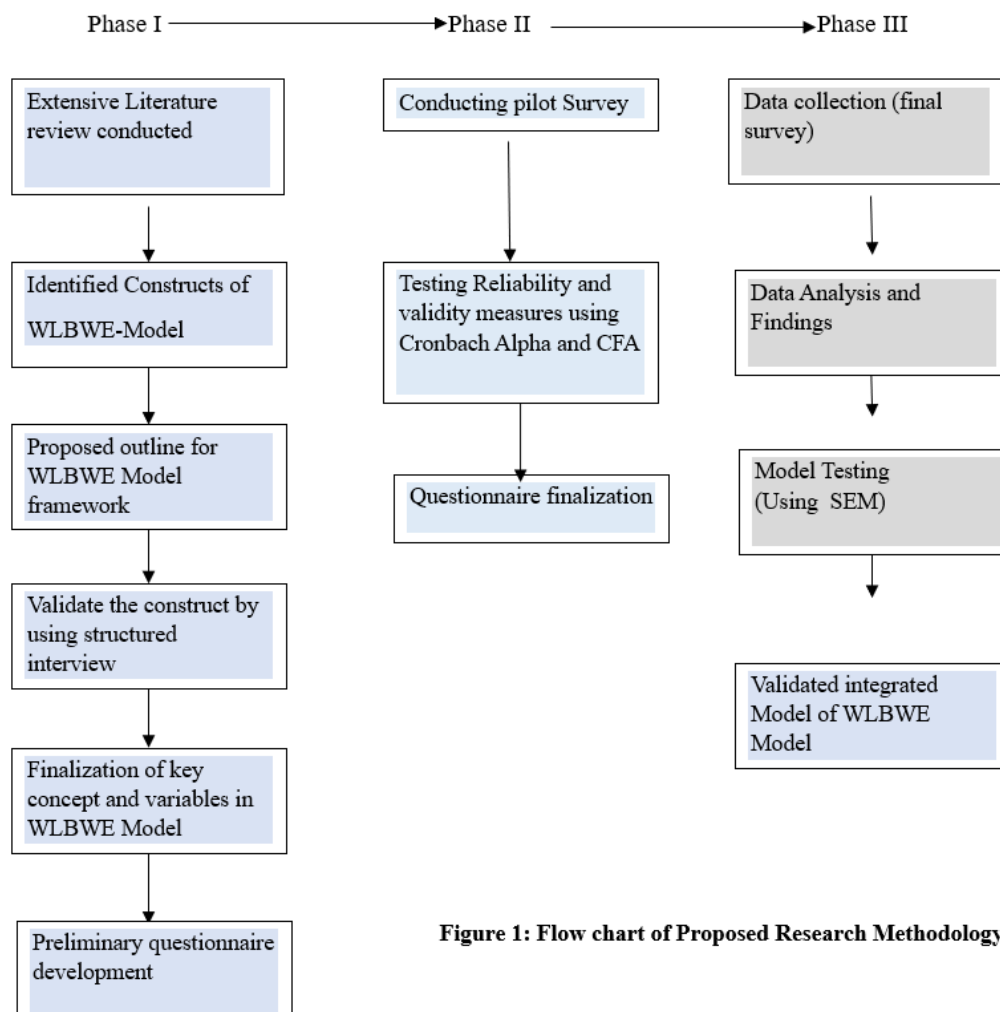


Figure 1: Flow chart of Proposed Research Methodology

4 Exploratory Study

The identified measurement items for all the constructs selected for the study were discussed with the experts (10 male and 10 female teaching staff with 20-plus years of experience) in Pune. Their views about the relevance of these items for the work-life balance of women employees were also asked to list any relevant items they found from the list. A consolidated list of the selected measurement items based on exploratory analysis is presented in Table on the next page;

Table 1: Respondent Profile (Questions marked with an asterisk (*) are mandatory)		
No.	Items	Result of exploratory study
1	Name of the respondent*	Retained
2	email of the respondent*	Retained
3	Qualification of the respondent*	Retained
4	Working Experience*	Retained
5	Occupation of the respondent*	Retained
6	Name of the organization*	Retained
7	Type of ownership (Govt./ Private) *	Retained

Table:2 Section- I: Job Satisfaction		
No.	Items	Result of exploratory study
1	How satisfied are you with your current job responsibilities?	Retained
2	Does your work make you feel accomplished?	Retained
3	How well do you feel recognized for your contributions?	Retained
4	Are you satisfied with balancing your work and personal life?	Retained
5	Does your job align with your career goals?	Retained
6	How often do you feel motivated to perform your tasks?	Retained
7	Do you receive constructive feedback from your supervisor?	Retained
8	Are there sufficient growth opportunities within your organization?	Deleted
9	How satisfied are you with your working conditions?	Retained
10	Do you feel that your organization values employee satisfaction?	Retained

Table 3: Section- II: Productivity		
No.	Items	Source
1	How effectively do you manage your time at work?	Retained
2	Does your work environment encourage high productivity?	Retained
3	Do you have the necessary resources to complete tasks efficiently?	Retained
4	How often do you meet your performance targets?	Retained
5	Does your work-life balance influence your productivity?	Retained
6	Do you feel productive when working from home?	Retained
7	How focused are you on tasks during work hours?	Retained
8	Do flexible work arrangements impact your productivity?	Deleted
9	Are there any workplace factors that negatively impact your productivity?	Retained
10	How does ICT use impact your work productivity?	Deleted

Table:4 Section- III: Job Stress		
No.	Items	Source
1	How often do you feel stressed about work?	Retained
2	Does your workload feel overwhelming?	Retained
3	Are you able to manage job stress effectively?	Retained
4	Do job demands interfere with your personal life?	Deleted
5	How often do you experience burnout?	Retained
6	Do you feel pressured to be constantly available due to ICT?	Deleted
7	How well do you cope with challenging tasks?	Retained
8	Are your stress levels affected by job insecurity?	Deleted
9	Do you receive adequate support from your supervisor during stressful times?	Retained
10	How much does work-related stress affect your health	Retained

Table 5: Section- IV: Flexibility		
<i>No.</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>Source</i>
1	Do you have flexible working hours?	<i>Deleted</i>
2	How often do you work remotely?	<i>Deleted</i>
3	Is your employer supportive of work-from-home options?	<i>Deleted</i>
4	How easily can you adjust your schedule for personal matters?	<i>Retained</i>
5	Does flexible scheduling reduce your job stress?	<i>Deleted</i>
6	How important is flexibility to your work satisfaction?	<i>Retained</i>
7	Do flexible work policies improve your productivity?	<i>Retained</i>
8	Are flexible hours equally accessible to all employees?	<i>Retained</i>
9	How often do you adjust your working hours based on your family's needs?	<i>Retained</i>
10	Does the use of ICT enable flexible work arrangements?	<i>Deleted</i>

Table 6: Section- V: Workplace Support		
<i>No.</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>Source</i>
1	Do you feel supported by your coworkers?	<i>Retained</i>
2	How accessible is your supervisor for assistance?	<i>Retained</i>
3	Does your organization provide mental health support?	<i>Deleted</i>
4	How well does your workplace handle conflict resolution?	<i>Retained</i>
5	Is there a mentorship program for career development?	<i>Retained</i>
6	Do you feel valued in your team?	<i>Retained</i>
7	How effective are communication channels in your workplace?	<i>Retained</i>
8	Does your organization have family-friendly policies?	<i>Deleted</i>
9	Are you provided with opportunities to learn and grow?	<i>Retained</i>
10	Is there sufficient support for women employees?	<i>Retained</i>

Table 7: Section- VI: Work-Family Conflict		
<i>No.</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>Source</i>
1	How often do work responsibilities interfere with family time?	<i>Retained</i>
2	Do family commitments disrupt your work schedule?	<i>Retained</i>
3	Does your workplace support work-family balance?	<i>Retained</i>
4	How well can you disconnect from work during family time?	<i>Retained</i>
5	Are you able to balance family and work responsibilities?	<i>Deleted</i>
6	Does work-related travel affect your family life?	<i>Retained</i>
7	How often do you feel conflicted between family and work roles?	<i>Retained</i>
8	Do childcare responsibilities impact your work performance?	<i>Retained</i>
9	How flexible is your schedule to accommodate family emergencies?	<i>Retained</i>
10	Does job stress affect your family relationships?	<i>Deleted</i>

Table 8: Section- VII: Impact of ICT		
<i>No.</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>Source</i>
1	Do ICT tools enhance your work productivity?	<i>Retained</i>
2	How often do you use ICT to work remotely?	<i>Deleted</i>
3	Does ICT affect your work-life balance?	<i>Retained</i>
4	Are you able to disconnect from work-related ICT after hours?	<i>Retained</i>
5	Does ICT increase your work efficiency?	<i>Retained</i>
6	How often does ICT enable flexible working hours?	<i>Deleted</i>
7	Do you feel pressure to respond to emails outside of work hours?	<i>Deleted</i>
8	How has ICT improved communication with your team?	<i>Retained</i>
9	Does ICT allow you to manage work and personal responsibilities better?	<i>Deleted</i>
10	How much does ICT contribute to job stress?	<i>Retained</i>

Table 9: Section- VIII: Work-Life Balance among Women Employees		
<i>No.</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>Source</i>
1	Do you feel that your employer supports work-life balance?	<i>Retained</i>
2	How does your work schedule impact family time?	<i>Retained</i>
3	Does your organization offer flexibility for family commitments?	<i>Retained</i>
4	How often do you feel pressure to choose between work and family?	<i>Retained</i>
5	Is your family supportive of your work commitments?	<i>Retained</i>
6	How often do family responsibilities interfere with work productivity?	<i>Retained</i>
7	Are you able to separate work and personal time?	<i>Retained</i>
8	Does job flexibility reduce work-life conflict?	<i>Deleted</i>
9	How often do work demands exceed personal time?	<i>Retained</i>
10	Do you feel satisfied with your work-life balance?	<i>Retained</i>

4.6 Result of the Exploratory Study

Table 10: Result of exploratory study

Scale	No. of Items Identified from the literature	No. of Items remained after the exploratory study
Job Satisfaction	10	9
Productivity	10	8
Job Stress	10	7
Flexibility	10	6
Workplace Support	10	8
Work-Family Conflict	10	8
Impact of ICT	10	6
Work-Life Balance among Women Employees	10	9
Total Items	80	61

4.1 Cronbach Alpha coefficients

In our study, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated to assess the internal consistency reliability of the constructs associated with Work-Life Balance among Women in the education sector. These constructs include Job Satisfaction, Productivity, Job Stress, Flexibility, Workplace Support, Work-Family Conflict, and the Impact of ICT. All constructs demonstrated high reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values well above the recommended threshold of 0.60 (Hair et al., 1998). Specifically, the alpha values ranged from 0.784 to 0.984, indicating strong internal consistency across all measures.

The table below presents these constructs' descriptive statistics and reliability test results. While this research phase focuses on establishing construct validity through these reliability measures, further testing will be conducted in the next phase. In that phase, we plan to test the reliability of each questionnaire item with a sample size of 100, allowing us to refine and validate the questionnaire items further for consistent measurement across the study.

Table 11 Results of the Reliability Test					
Scale	No. of Items	Mean Value (N=30)	S.D.	Cronbach's Alpha (α) Score	% of Variance
Job Satisfaction	9	5.28	.986	0.891	38.214
Productivity	8	4.82	1.219	0.784	34.930
Job Stress	7	4.96	1.177	0.894	31.620
Flexibility	6	5.28	1.052	0.884	32.645
Workplace Support	8	4.99	1.041	0.797	33.731
Work-Family Conflict	8	4.82	1.219	0.784	34.930

Impact of ICT	6	4.96	1.177	0.894	31.620
Work-Life Balance among Women Employees	9	5.28	1.052	0.884	32.645
Total Items	81				
**Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed). *Correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed).					

5 Research Contribution

The research paper adds to the existing research on work-life balance (WLB) by concentrating on a little discussed segment of the population; in this case, women teachers at the primary, secondary and junior college level in the education sector in Pune. The study does not involve respondents at undergraduate and post-graduate levels, where most of the past studies focus their attention, which is insightful to the research of the issue of WLB among women teachers in lower levels of learning. The multi-stage random sampling will offer a representative view of their experiences to close a research gap regarding the special issues of WLB that these educators experience. Other constructs explored in the study are Job Satisfaction, Productivity, Job Stress, Flexibility, Workplace Support, Work-Family Conflict and Impact of ICT and gives an all-inclusive perspective of what motivates WLB in this population group.

Moreover, this study lays emphasis on the methodological rigour since every construct is highly reliable. The study demonstrated a good internal consistency as all the constructs adopted were found to possess Cronbach alpha between 0.784 and 0.984, thus improving the validity of the study. The reliability of the questionnaire and the outcomes obtained would be reliable as well since the pre-test reliability of single items was done using a sample of 100. The insights that the research offers concerning the WLB problems facing female educators in both government and privately-owned institutions in Pune can serve as useful information to guide policy makers, institutional leadership, and educators to intervene in specific areas to enhance WLB in educational institutions.

6. Conclusion

The proposed experience in this work sheds light on the issue of the work-life balance (WLB) peculiar to female teachers in the primary, secondary, and junior college of the education sector in the city of Pune. The study effectively provides a representative view of the WLB experiences of women teachers in government and non-government schools due to the random and the convenience sampling techniques utilized and the need to target a relatively neglected group of the workforce. Some important variables that proved useful in influencing the outcomes of WLB among women in this sector are Job Satisfaction, Productivity, Job Stress, Flexibility, Workplace Support, Work-Family Conflict and the Impact of ICT.

The results of the study have higher levels of internal consistency as demonstrated by the Cronbachs alpha values of more than 0.784 to 0.984 which is an indicator of reliability and validity. The results of the paper are relevant in the sense that they determine the key dimensions in which the institutional support enhances the WLB of women educators. The reliability will also undergo another test in a sample of 100 people after more because the research process is carried out, and thus it would improve the accuracy of the individual questionnaire items. Lastly, the study may contribute to the scientific literature of WLB in the education sector and offer practical suggestions to the policy-makers and the academic institutions to improve the work-life balance and wellbeing of women in the teaching fraternity of these institutions.

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