Remote Work Acceptance and Work-Life Balance Challenges for Female Faculty in Bhopal during the Pandemic

Bhawna Sahjwani
Assistant Professor, SHIM, Bhopal

ABSTRACT

Amid the unprecedented challenges posed by the pandemic, the issue of balancing work and family life has gained heightened significance. With widespread adoption of stay-at-home measures and remote work setups, individuals are grappling with the intricate task of harmonizing professional responsibilities with personal commitments. This research endeavors to delve into the myriad factors influencing the work-life equilibrium of women amidst the pandemic-induced lockdown. Through a survey conducted among 100 women employed in the education sector, this study seeks to illuminate the nuanced dynamics at play. By scrutinizing professional and personal challenges encountered during the lockdown period, as well as identifying supportive factors conducive to work-life balance, the research endeavors to provide a complete understanding of the current landscape. Organizations should review their policies and structures to support remote work better, prioritizing employee well-being. This study provides crucial insights into factors affecting women's work-life balance during the lockdown, guiding organizations to adjust and improve their practices for their female employees.

Keywords: WLB, Working Professionals, Personal Life, Professional life, Technological development, Remote work, Work From home, family support, WFH.

INTRODUCTION

In 2020, the world encountered an unprecedented public health crisis due to the rapid transmission of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), which originated in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. By the end of February 2020, the virus had reached over 100 countries, prompting the World Health Organization (WHO) to declare it a "controllable pandemic" on March 12, 2020. India detected its first case of COVID-19 in Kerala (South India) on Jan 30, 2020. With cases escalating

nationwide, the Indian government took the tough decision to enforce a national lockdown in March to mitigate the spread of the virus.

Achieving a proper Work-Life Balance yields numerous positive effects, including heightened motivation for work, increased job satisfaction, boosted employee morale and productivity, sufficient time for personal and family life, and enhanced overall health and well-being. (Singh, H., & Sharma, R., 2020)

Reaction of the Pandemic and Implementation of Remote work:

In the absence of any specific medicine or vaccine, experts emphasized the critical importance of "social distancing" as a key preventive measure against the spread of COVID-19. Following this advice, in India it was announced a nationwide lockdown on March 2020, which was subsequently extended to contain the outbreak. To prioritize the health and safety of employees while ensuring the continuity of essential business operations, numerous companies across various sectors swiftly implemented remote work practices, commonly known as "Work from Home" (WFH). For instance, employees in IT firms seamlessly transitioned to remote work, leveraging digital platforms to conduct meetings, collaborate on projects, and complete tasks from the comfort of their homes. This shift to remote work helped mitigate the risk of virus transmission in the workplace while enabling employees to maintain productivity and efficiency in their roles.

Evolution of Remote Work:

The term " Remote Work " has become commonplace, symbolizing the widespread adoption of telecommuting or telework. Technology has been instrumental in revolutionizing our lifestyles, offering the freedom for employees to work from home. Homeworking lets people do their usual work hours from places like home, client locations, or while traveling, using technology to communicate.

Technological Advancements and Work-Life Balance:

Although technology has undeniably increased convenience by enabling remote work, it has also brought forth the challenge of constant accessibility. The expectation of being available 24/7 highlights the importance of setting clear boundaries and applying work-life balance strategies. These measures stay essential to ensure that the advantages of remote work are not outweighed by the potential drawbacks of always being available for work-related matters.

Debate Surrounding Remote Work:

The rise of remote work has ignited a debate. While some employees appreciate the flexibility it provides, which can contribute to achieving work-life balance (WLB), employers may harbor concerns about the possibility of employees neglecting their responsibilities, as discussed by Bloom et al. in 2015. This ongoing conversation emphasizes the importance of examining both the benefits and potential challenges linked with remote work arrangements.

Bhopal, not being a metro city, initially faced challenges in adapting to the work-from-home culture, particularly for professionals such as faculty members. This sudden transition posed significant hurdles for them, as they were accustomed to traditional classroom settings. However, driven by the necessity to sustain their careers, they quickly embraced the technology required for online classes and commenced their remote work activities. Despite the initial difficulties in accepting this change overnight, their resilience and adaptability enabled them to successfully navigate the shift and continue their professional roles effectively.
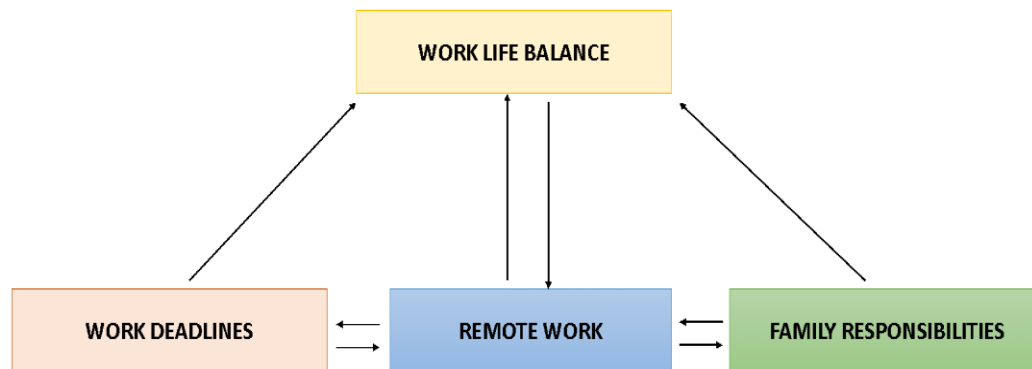
Work Life Balance

Getting a balance between Professional and private life has become increasingly crucial in today's competitive and demanding world. When employees face problem in managing their work duties alongside family commitments, it not only impacts their efficiency but also the quality of their work output. For example, an employee who is overwhelmed with family responsibilities may find it difficult to concentrate on work tasks, leading to decreased productivity and performance. Therefore, maintaining a harmonious equilibrium between these two spheres is essential for both individual well-being and professional effectiveness. Striking the right balance allows employees to thrive both personally and professionally, leading to overall satisfaction and success in all aspects of life.

Work Life Balance with Remote Work:

Balancing Professional and private life have been a big challenge for many employees, especially women, amidst the implementation of work-from-home policies. Despite their family structure, whether nuclear or joint, women have found themselves juggling various household responsibilities. Given these circumstances, this study aims to explore the factors impacting the work-life balance of women employees working from home in Bhopal during the lockdown. With women facing expectations from both family and employers while working remotely, striking a satisfactory balance becomes particularly

challenging. The insights gained from this study are anticipated to provide valuable guidance to stakeholders seeking to address these challenges, especially considering the likelihood of the lockdown continuing for an extended period.

Source: Created by Researcher

LITERATURE REVIEW

(Bella*, 2023). A Study of the Art of Work-Life Balance: Key Principles and Practices. The study by J. Bella investigated the importance of work-life balance. The KMO test was employed to assess sampling adequacy, and structural equation modeling was used to validate the model. The findings underscored that work-life balance is crucial in today's competitive world, as individuals strive to maintain harmony between personal and professional commitments. The study also highlighted that achieving balance can be facilitated by setting priorities at home and practicing effective time management in the workplace. This research provides valuable insights into coping strategies and support systems that help individuals overcome challenges.

(Vani Haridasan*, 2021) A research study looked into how women managed their work-life balance while working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic. They used both new and existing data for this study. They surveyed 100 women to gather new information. The results showed that these women found it tough to balance their work and personal life. Trying to handle both work and family responsibilities caused them a lot of stress, especially during the lockdown. The study highlighted the importance of support from family members, especially with family-related tasks. Having this support could help these women deal better with the challenges of balancing work and home life during the pandemic.

(Anderson, 2020) In a recent study, the focus was on the transition to mandatory working from home, which became a global necessity amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The study aimed to discern how this enforced work-from-home situation differs from the voluntary practice of working from home. The study's conclusion underscored that when both employees and employers have the freedom to choose their working arrangements, they often reap the benefits of this flexibility. However, this positive dynamic may not be as prevalent when working from home is mandated or imposed on individuals. The disparity between voluntary and compulsory work-from-home setups can result in variations in experiences and outcomes for both employees and employers.

(Fisher J, 2020) The study conducted by Fisher in 2020 reached a significant conclusion. It highlighted that the challenges associated with maintaining work-life balance while working remotely can potentially exacerbate inequalities, particularly because an expectation exists that a significant portion of household work may fall on women in such a scenario. This finding underscores the importance of addressing and mitigating the gender-related disparities that can arise as a result of remote work arrangements.

(Bhumika, 2020) In this study, the goal was to investigate the relationship between work-life balance and emotional exhaustion among 180 professionals who were working from home in India during the pandemic. The study revealed a notable gender difference, with women reporting higher levels of emotional exhaustion compared to men. This heightened emotional strain was linked to increased interference between work and personal life within the remote work setup. These results emphasize the importance of addressing gender-specific challenges and promoting a more supportive work-life balance environment for women in remote work settings.

Madeira Aires (2016) conducted a case study focusing on the influence of internal communication on employee commitment within an organization. Through the analysis of respondents' feedback regarding motivation, satisfaction, and the organizational environment, the study aimed to discern patterns and correlations.

The findings revealed significant relationships between professional satisfaction, internal communication, and levels of commitment within the organization. Specifically, it was observed that both professional satisfaction and effective internal communication exerted substantial impact on employee commitment and the overall organizational environment. These results underscore the importance

of fostering a positive internal communication culture and prioritizing employee satisfaction to enhance organizational commitment and create a conducive work environment.

Joanna Hughes and Nikos Bozionelos (2015) aimed to delve into the perspectives of male workers within a predominantly male-dominated profession regarding issues relating to work-life balance. Their study revealed that work-life imbalance was not just a matter of concern but emerged as the primary source of dissatisfaction among the participants. Additionally, the participants articulated a direct correlation between challenges with work-life balance and various withdrawal behaviors, such as turnover and instances of non-genuine sick leave. These findings underscore the profound impact that imbalanced work-life dynamics can have on employee satisfaction and organizational commitment within male-dominated occupational settings.

Jain (2013) conducted a comparative analysis exploring work-life balance among three professional domains: Chartered Accountants (CAs), Doctors, and Teachers. The study identified several key determinants influencing work-life balance, notably including working conditions, effective time management, family support, and role expectations. These factors significantly contribute to fostering a harmonious equilibrium between professional responsibilities and personal life commitments. Furthermore, the research highlighted the substantial impact of work-life imbalances on the overall job satisfaction levels of professionals within these fields. The findings underscored notable disparities in work-life balance among CAs, Doctors, and Teachers, with variations evident across both familial and occupational statuses.

K. Santhana et al. (2013) In their 2013 study, K. Santhana et al. delve into the complex dynamics of work-life balance, highlighting four key factors: marital status, working hours, the need for flexibility, and extra work commitments like overtime. These factors notably disrupt work-life balance, especially for married women. The study reveals how extended work hours mandated by companies can greatly interfere with time needed for family duties, particularly caring for children and dependents. These factors alone contribute to over 38% of the differences in work-life balance. Additionally, the research emphasizes that the number of dependents, childcare duties, and reasons for working overtime significantly impact the work-life balance of married women. Having more dependents at home worsens the challenge of maintaining balance, especially when caring for young children. Essentially, a greater number of dependents is

linked to poorer work-life balance. The study suggests that supportive leadership within organizations can play a crucial role in easing the negative effects on work-life balance. Effective support from leaders can help address the difficulties faced by employees, especially married women, in balancing their work and personal lives.

Kumari Lalita (2012) remarked on the multitude of factors influencing Work-Life Balance (WLB), including psychological distress, organizational changes, working hours, managerial style, job responsibilities, work overload, work-life conflict, and personal financial issues. These factors have been proven through research to greatly affect or forecast job satisfaction. Additionally, Lalita's analysis uncovered a strong and positive connection between the overall policies promoting work-life balance (WLB) and the levels of job satisfaction. This implies that as work-life balance improves, job satisfaction tends to rise as well. The results highlight a significant change in how work-life balance is perceived and its impact on job satisfaction. In the past, employees often struggled to balance work and personal life due to conflicting demands. However, with the development of more effective work-life balance policies and practices, there appears to be a positive influence on employee satisfaction and well-being.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

In this study, the goal is to investigate how demographic factors influence the ability to maintain work-life balance during the pandemic. By analyzing variables like age, gender, marital status, and household structure, I aim to uncover how these factors interact with individuals' capacity to effectively balance their work and personal lives, especially in the context of remote work and other challenges brought about by the pandemic. Furthermore, I plan to assess the particular effects of different challenges experienced by women on their work-life balance.

HYPOTHESES:

H1: There is a significant influence of demographic factors (age, marital status, family, and monthly income) on the work-life balance of women during the pandemic.

H1a: There is influence of age on the work work-life balance of women during the pandemic.

H1b: There is significant influence of marital status on the work-life balance of women during the pandemic.

H1c: There is significant influence of family on the work-life balance of women during the pandemic.

H1d: There is significant influence of monthly income on the work-life balance of women during the pandemic.

H2: Challenges faced by women have a significant impact on work-life balance during the pandemic.

H2a: Long working hours have a significant impact on work-life balance during the pandemic.

H2c: Lack of training programs has a significant impact on work-life balance during the pandemic.

H2d: Domestic responsibilities have a significant impact on work-life balance during the pandemic.

H2e: High stress level has a significant impact on work life balance during the pandemic.

H2f: Role conflicts and role ambiguity have a significant impact on work life balance during the pandemic.

H2g: Job insecurity has a significant impact on work-life balance during the pandemic.

H2h: Technology know-how has a significant impact on work life balance during the pandemic.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The primary objective of this study was to investigate the difficulties faced by employed women in maintaining a work-life balance while working from home during the pandemic. We collected data for this research by distributing questionnaires to employed women aged 18 and above, employed across different institutions in Bhopal. These women had transitioned to remote work from home due to the pandemic-induced lockdown, particularly during the months of March and April 2023. The study aimed to understand the intricate challenges of work-life balance encountered by this group under these unprecedented circumstances. We utilized convenience sampling to ensure diversity among respondents, selecting a sample size of 100 working women from various sectors and geographic locations.

Research Design:

The data for this study was gathered from 100 female professionals who were engaged in remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic. We collected this information by administering a structured questionnaire.

Sampling Design:

Convenience sampling was employed as the sampling design type for this study, with the sampling unit being the Bhopal region. The sampling frame consisted of working women within this region. A sample size of 100 was chosen for data collection.

Data Collection:

1. Primary Data

a. A structured questionnaire was developed, encompassing various parameters pertinent to work-life balance and the experience of working from home.

b. In addition to the questionnaire, in-depth interviews were conducted to further explore and delve into the nuances of the work-life balance challenges faced by working women during the period of remote work.

2. Secondary Data

The study draws upon research papers published in reputable journals and presented at conferences. Additionally, reports from various agencies were consulted to gather comprehensive insights into the subject matter. For specific references, please refer to the citations provided in the study.

Statistical Techniques Used:

In this research paper, regression analysis has been employed as a method of inferential statistics to examine relationships between variables and make predictions. Additionally, demographic analysis has been conducted using percentage analysis to gain insights into the distribution of characteristics within the sample population.

DATA ANALYSIS & FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:

Table: 1 Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.927	30

Source: SPSS output

The reliability and consistency of data in Table 1 were measured using Cronbach's Alpha, with a value of 0.927 indicating that the data is 92% reliable for research purposes.

Descriptive statistics

Table: 2 Age

Age	Frequency	Percent
20-30 years	63	63.0
31-40 years	24	24.0
41-50 years	7	7.0
51-60 years	6	6.0
Total	100	100.0

Source: SPSS output

The data presented in Table 2 reveals that in this research, 63% of working women surveyed fell into the age category of 20-30 years, while 24% were in the age group of 31-40 years.

Table: 3 Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percent
Single	25	25.0
Married	73	73.0
Divorced	2	2.0
Total	100	100.0

Source: SPSS output

Table 3 illustrates that in this research, 73% of the participating women were married, whereas 25% of female professionals were unmarried.

Table: 4 Family

Family	Frequency	Percent
Nuclear family	63	63.0
Joint family	37	37.0
Total	100	100.0

Source: SPSS output

Table 4 demonstrates that during the pandemic, 63% of the female participants were part of a nuclear family, while only 37% were part of a joint family.

Table: 5 Monthly Income (during pandemic)

Monthly Income (During Pandemic approx.)	Frequency	Percent
20K-30K	41	41.0
30K-50K	31	31.0
50K-70K	13	13.0
Above 70K	15	15.0
Total	100	100.0

Source: SPSS output

In Table 5, it is shown that during the pandemic, 41% of female professionals were earning a monthly income in the range of 20-30K, while 31% of females were receiving a monthly income between 30-50K.

Hypothesis Testing

H1: There is significant influence of demographic factors (age, marital status and occupation) on work life balance of women during Pandemic.

H1a: There is significant influence of age on work life balance of women during Pandemic.

Table: 6 ANOVA- Influence of Age on WLB

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	10.775	4	2.694	4.720	.002
Within Groups	54.215	95	.571		
Total	64.990	99			

Source: SPSS output

The analysis presented in Table 6 reveals that the F-value is 4.720 and the p-value is 0.002 at a significance level of 5%. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, indicating statistical significance, the results are considered significant. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This suggests that higher-age female professionals demonstrate greater maturity in effectively managing both personal and professional life during the pandemic.

H1b: There is significant influence of marital status on work life balance of women during Pandemic.

Table: 7 ANOVA influence of marital status on WLB

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.325	4	.081	.453	.770
Within Groups	17.065	95	.180		
Total	17.390	99			

Source: SPSS output

Based on the findings presented in Table 7, the F-value is 0.453 and the p-value is 0.770 at a significance level of 5%. Since the p-value is greater than 0.05, the results are deemed not significant. Consequently, the null hypothesis is accepted, and the alternate hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, we can conclude that the responsibilities of married and unmarried women at the office level are similar. Professionally, they are expected to perform similar tasks regardless of their marital status.

H1c: There is significant influence of family on work life balance of women during Pandemic.

Table: 8 ANOVA influence of family on WLB

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.102	4	.525	2.279	.066
Within Groups	21.898	95	.231		
Total	24.000	99			

Source: SPSS output

Based on the information provided in Table 8, the F-value is 2.279 and the p-value is 0.066 at a significance level of 5%. Since the p-value is greater than 0.05, the results are considered not significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted, and the alternate hypothesis is rejected. Consequently, we can conclude that there is no significant involvement of family in managing the work-life balance of female employees according to this analysis.

H1d: There is significant influence of monthly income on work life balance of women during Pandemic.

Table: 9 ANOVA influence of monthly income (during pandemic) on WLB

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	8.439	4	2.110	1.917	.114
Within Groups	104.551	95	1.101		
Total	112.990	99			

Source: SPSS output

Based on the information provided in Table 9, the F-value is 1.917 and the p-value is 0.114 at a significance level of 5%. With the p-value being greater than 0.05, the results are deemed not significant. As a result, we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis. Therefore, based on this analysis, we can conclude that income does not have a significant impact on the ability of female employees to manage their work-life balance.

H2a: Challenges faced by women faculties have a significant impact on work life balance during Pandemic.

H2a: Long working hours have a significant impact on work life balance during Pandemic.

H2b: Lack of training programs has a significant impact on work life balance during Pandemic.

H2c: Domestic responsibilities have a significant impact on work life balance during Pandemic.

H2d: High stress level has a significant impact on work life balance during Pandemic.

H2e: Role conflicts & Role ambiguity have a significant impact on work life balance during Pandemic.

H2f: Job insecurity has a significant impact on work life balance during Pandemic.

H2g: Technology know-how has a significant impact on work life balance during Pandemic.

Table: 10 Descriptive statistics

Challenges faced by women	Mean	Std. Deviation
Long work hours and culture	3.6900	1.32341
Lack of training programs	3.2100	1.31268
Domestic responsibilities	3.8300	1.11966
High stress level	3.4800	1.38884
Role conflicts and Role ambiguity	3.4300	1.32768
Job insecurity/ fear of losing job	3.3400	1.38695
Technology know how/lack of technical knowledge	3.3000	1.31426

Source: SPSS output

The above table shows that long work hours and culture have the highest mean value of 3.6900 and a standard deviation of 1.32341, signifying that it significantly contributes to enhancing the work-life balance of employees during Pandemic. Continuing, Lack of training programs has a mean value of 3.2100 and a standard deviation of 1.31268, with significantly impacted the work life balance in lives of women employees during covid-19. Following this, Domestic responsibilities, with a mean value of 3.8300 and a standard deviation of 1.11966, are crucial factor impacting work-life balance of female employees during pandemic. Next in line is, High stress level, with a mean value of 3.4800 and a standard deviation of 1.38884, are vital factor affecting work-life balance of woman employees during epidemic. Further, Role conflicts and Role ambiguity, with a mean value of 3.4300 and a standard deviation of 1.38695, is another factor impacting work-life balance of woman employees while WFH. Followed by Job insecurity/ fear of losing job, with a mean value of 3.3400 and a standard deviation of 1.38695, is one of the factors that personal and professional lives of woman employees. Last is Technology know how/lack of technical knowledge with a mean value of 3.3000 and a standard deviation of 1.31426, is one of the factors that personal and professional lives of woman employees during pandemic while WFH.

Table: 11 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.280[a]	.078	.026	1.071

Table: 11 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.280[a]	.078	.026	1.071

a. Predictors: (Constant), Technology know how/lack of technical knowledge, Domestic responsibilities, long work hours and culture, Lack of training programs, High stress level, Role conflicts and Role ambiguity, Job insecurity/ fear of losing job

Source: SPSS output

From the information provided in Table 11, the Model Summary indicates that the R-squared (R2) value is 0.078, which suggests that approximately 7.8% of the variance in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variables included in the model. This value is considered appropriate for the analysis. Additionally, the significance level was analyzed using the ANOVA technique, which assesses whether the overall regression model is statistically significant in explaining the variance in the dependent variable.

Table: 12 ANOVA[b]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	26.806	8	3.351	2.529	.016[a]
1	Residual	120.584	91	1.325		
	Total	147.390	99			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Technology know how/lack of technical knowledge, long work hours and culture, Domestic responsibilities, Job insecurity/ fear of losing job, Lack of training programs, High stress level, Role conflicts and Role ambiguity

b. Dependent Variable: Work-life balance during pandemic

Source: SPSS output

Based on the information presented in Table 12, the ANOVA analysis reveals that the F-value is 2.529, which is significant at the 5% level (p = 0.016). As the p-value is less than 0.05, the regression model constructed is deemed statistically significant. This indicates that the independent variables incorporated in the model jointly exert a significant influence on the dependent variable.

Table: 13 Regression analysis

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.991	.445		8.970	.000
Long work hours and culture	.061	.111	.067	.558	.578
Lack of training programs	.098	.126	.107	.790	.432
Domestic responsibilities	-.163	.146	-.154	-1.153	.252
High stress level	-.293	.146	-.332	-1.997	.049
Role conflicts and Role ambiguity	.257	.153	.281	1.687	.095
Job insecurity/ fear of losing job	.060	.143	.069	.425	.672
Technology know how/lack of technical knowledge	.130	.141	.145	.949	.345

Source: SPSS output

The regression analysis table reveals several correlations between different factors and their impact on managing work-life balance (WLB) among female professionals during pandemic.

- Long work hours and cultural factors demonstrate a low degree of positive correlation (0.061) with managing WLB during Pandemic.

- Lack of training programs exhibits a higher degree of correlation (0.098) with managing Remote work.

- Domestic responsibilities (-0.163) and high stress levels (-0.293) display a lower degree of negative correlation with managing WLB during pandemic.

- Role conflicts and role ambiguity (0.257), job insecurity/fear of losing a job (0.060), and technology know-how/lack of technical knowledge (0.130) indicate a low degree of positive correlation with achieving work-life balance among female employees during pandemic.

Hence, the **regression equation** will be:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \beta_6 X_{6+} \beta_7 X_{7+} \varepsilon$$

Challenges of Work Life Balance =β0 + β1 (Long work hours and culture) + β2 (Lack of training programs) + β3 (domestic responsibilities) + β4 (High stress level) + β5 (Role conflicts and Role ambiguity) + β6(Job insecurity/ fear of losing job) + β7 (Technology know how/lack of technical knowledge) +ε

Challenges of Work Life Balance= 3.991+ 0.061 (Long work hours and culture) + 0.098 (Lack of training programs) – 0.163 (domestic responsibilities) – 0.293 (High stress level) + 0.257 (Role conflicts and Role ambiguity) + 0.060 (Job insecurity/ fear of losing job) + 0.130 (Technology know how/lack of technical knowledge) + 1.071

Based on the analysis presented, it can be determined that work-life balance among women professionals during the Corona period was indeed significantly impacted by various challenges, including long working hours, lack of training programs, role conflicts, role ambiguity, job insecurity/fear of losing a job, and technology know-how/lack of technical knowledge. Therefore, the hypothesis stating that challenges faced by women have a significant impact on work-life balance during pandemic is accepted. These challenges posed substantial obstacles for women in effectively managing their work and personal lives during this period.

CONCLUSION

One of the primary challenges confronting female employees striving for work-life balance during pandemic was the pervasive issue of extended working hours. With the boundaries between work and personal life becoming vague, many found themselves dedicating significant amounts of time to work tasks, leaving little room for fulfilling family responsibilities and attending to household chores. Moreover, faculty members encountered substantial hurdles in adapting to the abrupt technological shift necessitated by remote teaching. The lack of adequate training programs and technical know-how posed significant obstacles, particularly for educators accustomed to traditional, face-to-face teaching methods. In addition to technological challenges, role conflicts and ambiguity emerged as prevalent issues among employees. With tasks assigned through online channels like WhatsApp groups or emails, individuals grappled with increased role ambiguity and the repetition of tasks, leading to confusion and inefficiencies in work processes. Furthermore, a persistent fear of job loss loomed over many professionals, driven by organizations implementing salary cuts and layoffs due to financial constraints. Female employees, often the primary breadwinners for their families, felt particularly vulnerable to this threat, intensifying concerns about job security and economic stability.

REFRENCES

- Anderson, D., & Kelliher, C. (2020). Enforced remote working and the work-life interface during lockdown. Gender in Management: An International Journal, 35(7/8), 677-683.

- Bella, K.Majini. (2023). A Study on the Art of Work-Life Balance: Key Principles and Practices. International Journal of Social Sciences & Economic Environment. 8. 25-34.

- Bhumika (2020); 'Challenges for work–life balance during COVID-19 induced nationwide lockdown: exploring gender difference in emotional exhaustion in the Indian setting', Journal of Critical Reviews, Vol 7.

- Clark, S. (2000) Work-Family Border Theory: A New Theory of Work-Life Balance. Human Relations, 53, 747-770.

- Fisher, J., Languilaire, J. C., Lawthom, R., Nieuwenhuis, R., Petts, R. J., Runswick-Cole, K., & Yerkes, M. A. (2020). Community, work, and family in times of COVID-19. Community, Work & Family, 23(3), 247-252.

- Haridasan, V., Muthukumaran, K., & Yohita, D., (2021). Work-Life Balance of Women Working from Home During Lockdown – An Empirical Study. International Journal of Management (IJM), 2 (1), 475-487.

- Jain, P. (2013). A Comparative Study of Work Life Balance among CA, Doctors and Teachers. IRC'S International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research in Social & Management Sciences, Volume: 1, Issue: 4, pp 58-65.

- Kumari, L. (2012). Employees' Perception On Work Life Balance And It's Relation With Job Satisfaction In Indian Public Sector Banks. IJEMR, Vol: 2, Issue: 2, pp. 1-13.

- Madeira Aires, A. R. (2016). The role of Management in Organizational Climate and in the relationship between Job Satisfaction, Internal Communication and Employee Commitment - Case Study: Liberty Seguros (Doctoral dissertation).

- Santhana, L. K., Gopinath S. S. (2013). Work Life Balance of Women Employees with reference to Teaching faculties. International Monthly Refereed Journal of Research in Management and Technology-II.

- Singh, H., Sharma, R. (2020). Work Life Balance of Married and Unmarried University Teachers of Punjab State. International Journal of Management, 11 (06), 1112-1123.

- WHO (2020), "Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19): situation report – 52", available at: www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/situation-reports/20200312-sitrep-52-covid19.pdf?sfvrsn=e2bfc9c0_4