

Exploring the Challenges for Work-Life Balance among Married Female Nurses

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Abstract: The topic of Work-Life Balance (WLB) is highly significant in today's fiercely competitive world, and it is a challenge that is critical to be balanced. The principal aim of this research endeavor is to discern and delineate the multifaceted challenges intrinsic to the delicate equilibrium of work and personal life that confront married female nurses employed in government hospitals across Sri Lanka. Accordingly, the problem statement guiding this scholarly investigation is oriented toward the identification and comprehensive analysis of the obstacles and impediments intertwined with harmonizing the demands of their professional nursing responsibilities with their personal lives, emphasizing the distinctive context of the Sri Lankan government hospital setting. To achieve this, the researchers conducted a mixed study design that involved the collection of primary data through questionnaires and interviews. Convenience sampling was used to gather quantitative data and the Purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample for qualitative data. The sample size was 384 for the quantitative data and the sample for the qualitative study was determined by the saturation level of 12 married female employees. The findings of the study revealed that the major challenges of WLB faced by married female nurses are time management, work stress, multitasking, and personal issues. Key recommendations of this study are implementing supportive legislation and initiatives to aid nurses in work-life balance, providing support systems, flexibility, and family-friendly policies, promoting balance strategies, continuing research for tailored solutions, and acknowledging the societal importance of work-life balance for married female nurses.

Keywords: *Government Hospitals, Married Females, Nursing Staff, Personal Issues, Time Management*

Introduction

Work-life balance (WLB) is a vital issue for individuals in today's fast-paced and competitive world (Brough, O'Driscoll, & Kalliath, 2017). The importance of work-life balance has been recognized in various industries, including healthcare. Nurses face various challenges in balancing their work and personal lives due to the nature of their jobs (Mokhtari & Asgari, 2019). The importance of WLB for nurses is reflected in the literature, which highlights the adverse effects of an imbalance between work and life on nurses' health, well-being, and job satisfaction (Chan et al., 2017; Ibrahim & Abalkhail, 2019). In Sri Lanka, the healthcare industry is predominantly government-based, with government hospitals providing healthcare services to the majority of the population (De Silva, Ranasinghe, & Ratnayake, 2020). Female nurses play a significant role in the healthcare industry, and their contributions are essential in providing quality healthcare services to people. Despite their contributions, married female nurses in Sri Lanka face various challenges in balancing their work and personal lives. Therefore, understanding the factors that affect the work-life balance of married female nurses in Sri Lanka is crucial.

The World Health Organization (WHO) reports a global healthcare workforce of 59.8 million

professionals, with nurses and midwives constituting over half of healthcare staff in numerous countries (World Health Organization, 2022). Effective human resource management is a primary responsibility of healthcare administrators, and the WHO (2022) notes that nurses play a predominant role in the healthcare workforce, both globally and in Sri Lanka. Extensive global research has examined the work-life balance of female nurses, with a focus on factors such as stress, burnout, and organizational commitment (Jameel & Alheety, 2023; Fukuzaki et al., 2021; Alheety, 2023; Eensirani & Muthumani, n.d.; Reddy et al., 2010). A survey by the Sri Lanka Nurses Association reveals that nearly 42% of nurses in Sri Lanka experience some level of burnout, which can be attributed, in part, to an unsatisfactory work-life balance. This underscores the urgency of addressing this issue to safeguard the well-being of nursing professionals. The dedication and work-life balance of hospital staff significantly influence the overall efficiency and effectiveness of healthcare facilities (Azeem and Akhtar, 2014). As such, the research aims to identify the factors contributing to work-life balance challenges among nurses in Sri Lankan government hospitals, considering all the elements mentioned above. To tackle this concern, the present study seeks to delve into the obstacles encountered by nurses in balancing their professional responsibilities and family commitments. The research utilizes a mixed-

method approach, combining questionnaires and interviews to gather primary data. The outcomes of this study will enhance the body of knowledge regarding nurses' work-life balance, potentially paving the way for future research aimed at identifying solutions to the challenges unveiled through this investigation.

The objective of the research

- To identify the challenges of balancing work and personal life among married female nurses in government hospitals in Sri Lanka.

Research Question

- What are the challenges of balancing work and personal life among married female nurses working at government hospitals in Sri Lanka?

Literature Review

Work-life balance has become a critical issue in today's workforce as employees struggle to balance their work and personal life (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011). Many factors influence work-life balance, including work demands, personal resources, family demands, and work-life balance policies (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011; Kossek et al., 2011). Existing research, as highlighted by Shahbaz et al. (2021), has somewhat overlooked the specific challenges faced by married female nurses in balancing their work and personal lives. However, studies indicate that female nurses, when compared to their male counterparts, tend to encounter more work-family conflicts (Kengatharan & Kunatilakam, 2020). This gender-specific work-life imbalance may be attributed to female nurses' caregiving responsibilities and irregular shift work (Kousar et al., 2016). In the context of Sri Lanka, there has been a noticeable rise in the number of married female nurses in recent years, underscoring the need to comprehend the factors influencing their work-life equilibrium (Department of Census and Statistics, 2020). Furthermore, research within Sri Lanka, conducted by Gamage (2016), has identified that female nurses often grapple with elevated job stress levels, which can adversely affect their ability to maintain work-life balance. In light of these circumstances, this study is geared toward investigating the challenges that married female nurses working in government hospitals in Sri Lanka face in achieving a harmonious work-life balance. Understanding these challenges is pivotal for promoting the well-being of this demographic.

Work Demands

Work demands, including workload, working hours, and work stress, can affect an individual's work-life balance (Kossek et al., 2011). A high workload and long working hours can lead to less time for personal life, which may cause work-family conflict (Allen, 2013). Moreover, work stress can also affect an individual's personal life, resulting in emotional exhaustion and reduced work-life balance (Kossek et al., 2011).

Family Demands

Family demands, including childcare responsibilities and eldercare responsibilities, can affect work-life balance (Kossek et al., 2011). For example, married women with young children may have to balance their work with childcare responsibilities, which can lead to work-family conflict (Brett & Stroh, 2003). Similarly, married women may also have to manage eldercare responsibilities, which can lead to role overload and affect their work-life balance (Kossek et al., 2011).

Work-Life Balance Policies

Work-life balance policies, including flexible work arrangements and paid parental leave, can also influence work-life balance (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011). Flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting and flexible work hours, can help employees balance their work and personal lives (Kossek et al., 2011). Paid parental leave can also help new parents balance their work and family obligations (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011).

Existing Theories

The present study mainly focuses on and is based on Conflict Theory. In studies on job-home interaction, the work-family conflict concept has played a major role (Colombo, 2013). The work-family conflict is based on Maeran's (2013) role theory and Goode's (1960) role strain hypothesis. Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) defined work-family conflict as a type of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respects, that is, participation in the work (family) role is made more difficult under participation in the family (work) role in their now-classic paper. The authors referred to the role conflict theories developed by Kahn and colleagues in the 1960s (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964; Katz & Khan, 1966). When the demands of work and home duties are conflicting in some way, satisfying the

obligations of one domain (work or home life) makes meeting the expectations of the other domain problematic. According to the conflict model, there is a lot of demand in all areas of life.

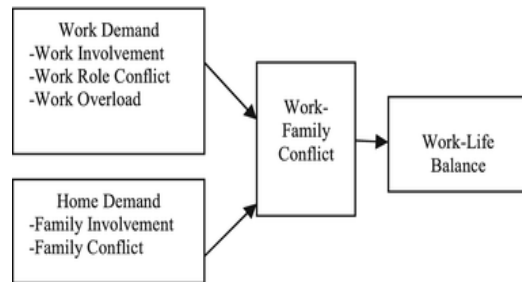


Figure 1: Model of Conflict Theory

Source: Rashid W.E.W., Omar A.S., Shah M.M. (2016)

Time Management and Work-Life Balance

Numerous studies, such as Blazovich et al. (2018), have shown that effective time management practices positively impact work-life balance, leading to reduced stress and improved overall well-being (Blazovich et al., 2018; Chansaengsee, 2017; Gröpel & Kuhl, 2006; Hsu et al., 2019).

Work Stress and Work-Life Balance

Research by Rajendran & Theiler (2012) indicates a strong negative relationship between work stress and work-life balance, emphasizing the adverse effects of high stress levels on an individual's ability to balance work and personal life (Attar et al., 2021; Rajendran & Theiler, 2012; Khalil et al., 2020; Khalil et al., n.d.; Holden & Sunindijo, 2018).

Personal Issues and Work-Life Balance

The study by Jones et al (2013) reveals that personal issues, such as family concerns or health problems, significantly affect work-life balance, underscoring the need for organizations to address these factors to support employees' balance (Jones et al., 2013; Babin Dhas & Karthikeyan, 2015; Lewis et al., 2007).

Multitasking and Work-Life Balance

The findings of a study demonstrated a positive link between achieving a balance between work and personal identities and engaging in high-interactive multitasking, both through technology-mediated means and in-person interactions during work hours. However, this relationship was not observed in the context of low-interactive multitasking (Xu et al., 2021).

H11 - Time Management has an influence on Work-Life Balance

H21 - Work Stress has an influence on Work-Life Balance

H31 - Personal Issues have an influence on Work-Life Balance

H41 - Multitasking has an influence on Work-Life Balance

Methodology

This study utilized a mixed-methods approach to collect data from married female nurses working at government hospitals in Sri Lanka. The study used a questionnaire and interviews to collect primary data.

Research Philosophy

In this study, a positivism-based research philosophy was employed. Consequently, the research findings primarily relied on logical reasoning, with the rationale grounded in the information and results derived from the investigative process.

Research Approach

The deductive method was chosen for this study, as it allows for the extension of existing theoretical frameworks, hypothesis testing, and the generation of results applicable to a broader population. This approach provides a structured and systematic means to investigate the intricate relationship between the work environment and work-life balance in the field of nursing and healthcare management (Hinkel, 2005).

Research Strategy

Structured surveys and structured interviews were both utilized as research strategies in this study. These choices were justified due to their capacity for comprehensive data collection, integration of quantitative and qualitative data, cross-validation of findings, exploration of diverse perspectives, examination of complex relationships, and in-depth exploration of nuanced aspects of the work-life balance (Newman & Benz, 1998). This approach effectively addresses the multifaceted nature of the work-life balance among married female nurses in government hospitals in Sri Lanka.

Choice

A multi-method approach was adopted in this study, as it allows for a more thorough, balanced, and reliable investigation into the challenges of the work-life balance of married female nurses. By incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data, this method enhances the depth and breadth of research results, enabling the exploration of complex linkages, consideration of diverse viewpoints, and the generation of valuable insights.

Time Horizon

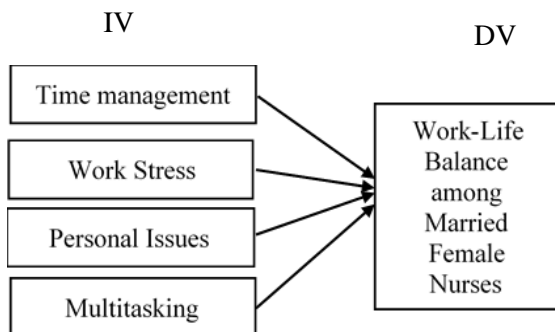
The study employed a cross-sectional time horizon, which is justifiable because it offers an efficient means to examine the challenges of the ability of married female nurses to balance their personal and professional lives in Sri Lankan government hospitals. This approach provides timely and relevant information for current decision-making and serves as a foundational point for future research endeavors.

Population and Sample

The population of this study is all the married female nurses working at government hospitals in Sri Lanka. The study sample comprised 384 married female nurses working at government hospitals and the sample was selected using a convenience sampling method. Given the challenge of determining the sample size, the authors opted to employ the rule of thumb recommended by Sekaran and Bougie (2016), which involves multiplying the number of scale items in the questionnaire by ten. This approach has been consistently employed by researchers in previous studies, including those conducted by Dilhani and Priyashantha (2021), Koralege and Priyashantha (2019), Taherdoost (2016), and Vidyaratne and Priyashantha (2021). Consequently, a sample size of 384 participants was deemed appropriate for this study. The inclusion criteria for the study were as follows (1) the participant must be a female nurse (2) the participant must be married, and (3) the participant must be currently working at a government hospital in Sri Lanka. To support the statistical findings of this study, 12 interviews were also conducted.

Conceptualization

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework



Operationalization

Table 2: Operationalization

| Variables | Dimensions | Sources from which the dimensions were obtained |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| Independent Variables | | |
| Time Management | -Time Wasters -Personal Productivity -Self-Audit | Opatha HNDP (2017), Young, L. & Kleiner (1992), S Chansaengsee (2017), Goudarzi A. (2012) |
| Work Stress | *Workplace Demand | Opatha HNDP (2017), Kerdpitak |

| | | |
|--------------------|---|---|
| | -Family Demand -Workplace Initiatives -Workplace Support | C., Thilagavathy S. (2021), Hsu YY (2019), Wickramasinghe V. (2010) |
| Personal Issues | -Lack of Organizing -Lack of selfcontrol -Negative affect | Jones et al., (2013), Babin Dhas & Karthikeyan, (2015), Lewis et al., (2007) |
| Multitasking | -Expertise -Environment -Attention | The study, 2022 (This variable is a result of the preliminary study and unique to the current study, Lin Lin (2015) |
| Dependent Variable | | |
| Work-Life Balance | -Time Balance -Involvement balance -Satisfaction balance | Haar et al. (2014) |

Source: Literature survey

Data Collection

The study used a self-administered questionnaire and semi-structured interviews to collect data. The questionnaire consisted of both open-ended and close-ended questions. The questionnaire was distributed among the participants through their respective hospitals. The participants were given one week to complete the questionnaire and were assured of the confidentiality of their responses. The semi-structured interviews were conducted with a subset of the participants to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences with work-life balance. The interviews were conducted in person or via phone, based on the preference of the participant. The interviews were audio-recorded with the consent of the participants, and notes were also taken during the interview. Structured interviews were conducted with twelve participants from the original sample, facilitating the collection of qualitative data. These interviews offered a comprehensive exploration of participants' viewpoints and experiences regarding the challenges associated with work-life balance and their subsequent effects.

Data Analysis

The quantitative data collected through the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency and percentage distributions via SPSS statistical software. The qualitative data collected through the interviews were transcribed verbatim and analyzed following content analysis. The analysis involved identifying key themes and patterns in the data.

By employing content analysis, the data gathered from structured interviews were meticulously analyzed. This process revealed prevailing themes and patterns within the narratives provided by the participants, offering a deeper understanding of their experiences and viewpoints. This study employs a mixed-method approach to gain a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the challenges encountered by married female nurses in Sri Lankan government hospitals.

Validity and Reliability

To ensure the validity and reliability of the research, a pilot study was conducted with 50 married female nurses who worked in government hospitals in Sri Lanka. In the pilot study, the researchers assessed the feasibility and effectiveness of the research instruments by gathering feedback from the participants on the clarity and relevance of the questions.

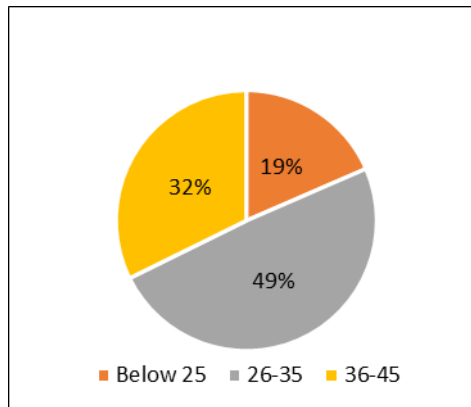
The researchers also examined the participants' responses to the questions and analyzed the data to assess the reliability and validity of the research instruments. In the process of developing or adapting a questionnaire, it is imperative to evaluate its reliability, validity, and the data quality it will yield, as emphasized by Kwon et al. (2014). In this study, the researchers designed the measurement scale for each variable in the questionnaire. To validate its suitability for the research, an exploratory analysis was undertaken. This analysis involved Item Analysis, which scrutinized the performance of individual questionnaire items, assessed response distributions for each item, and identified items with notably skewed or limited responses. Subsequently, Reliability Analysis was carried out by calculating Cronbach's alpha, a reliability coefficient that

gauges the internal consistency of the questionnaire. High internal consistency indicates that the questionnaire items measure the same underlying construct, aligning with the evaluation of experts regarding the questionnaire's coverage of the intended construct (Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2008). In completing the exploratory analysis, qualitative feedback was solicited from participants regarding their experience with the questionnaire and the structured interview checklist. This feedback offered valuable insights into the questionnaire's clarity and relevance, ensuring its appropriateness for the research. The qualitative results were cross validated by speaking with several parties. The credibility of the research was increased by the employment of several methods by the researchers. Rechecking the produced codes is a technique the researcher will use to boost the accuracy of the study.

Data Analysis and Discussion

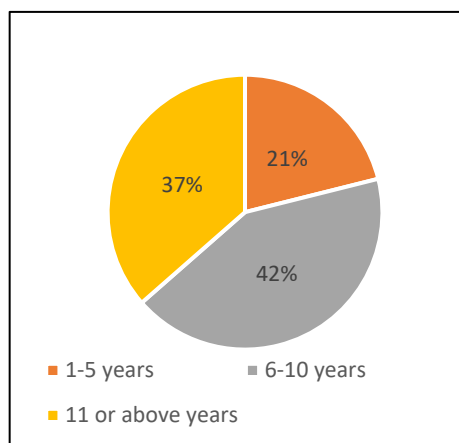
Demographic Data Analysis

Figure 3: Age Distribution



The information presented depicts the breakdown of age groups among a sample of people. The table lists the total number of individuals in each age group as well as the proportion of the entire sample that each group makes up. The age range of 26 to 35 is the largest age group in the sample,

accounting for 189 people, or 49.2% of the entire population. With 124 people or 32.3% of the sample, the next largest age group is those between 36 and 45. The age group below 25 has the fewest participants (71), accounting for 19% of the total.

Figure 4: Experience of the respondents

Source: Derived through SPSS

Lower-level employees' years of experience were divided into three categories, as indicated in Figure 4. As a result, 42.4% (163 people) of lower-level employees in the sample had 6-10 years of experience in the manufacturing organization where they work. 36.5% (140 individuals) of the lower-level employees in the sample had 11 years or more of experience, while 81 employees had 1-5 years of experience, accounting for 21.1% of the total. Determining the Challenges that Influence Work-Life Balance

Time Management

As per another respondent, she rarely contacts her spouse or children due to the list of work responsibilities. Several respondents stated that poor time management results in issues with both work- and family life. Overall, the results of the interviews indicate that married female nurses in Sri Lankan government hospitals suffer major difficulties in successfully managing their time. Many nurses utilize self-restraint and scheduling as two techniques to deal with these difficulties and enhance their work-life balance. This empirical conclusion supports the claim made by Nelson and Lyubomirsky (2015) that imbalance happens when professional life and home life directly clash with one another, as a result of working long hours and being unable to fulfill obligations at home. One participant stated,

"I feel my time spent on non-essential tasks, like social media or personal phone calls, and it deviates focus on my work responsibilities." (Source: Respondent 03, Personal Communication, 2022)

One other respondent stressed that:

"I make a to-do list every day and try to complete the most important tasks first, however, due to the additional tasks, I was unable to manage the scheduled tasks". (Source: Respondent 09, Personal Communication, 2022)

Extensive empirical research has repeatedly established those nurses, regardless of gender, usually work long and irregular hours. Trinkoff et al. (2006) conducted a study in the United States that substantiates this claim, revealing that nurses frequently work 12-hour shifts or even longer, putting the delicate balance between their professional and personal lives at risk.

Personal Issues

One married female nurse said,

"I am not very good at completing tasks on time" (Source: Respondent 08, Interview data).

Another participant stated,

"Anger and rage are the major issues I have, and due to that I lose concentration on my tasks, some

behaviors of the patients cause it” (Source: Respondent 04, Personal Communication, 2022)

When it came to the personal traits that the nurses believed they needed to develop to achieve a better work-life balance, the most common response was the need for stronger mental health. One nurse mentioned,

"I think I need to work on my emotional resilience so that I can have energy for my personal life." (Source: Respondent 11, Personal Communication, 2022)

Participants also identified some of the causes for personal issues affecting their work-life balance. Burnout was a recurring theme, with many nurses expressing the need for better support systems at work to prevent burnout. Additionally, the lack of organizing skills was mentioned as a contributing factor. One nurse shared,

"I struggle with organizing my work and personal life, which can lead to a lot of stress. I need to develop better organizational skills to manage things effectively." (Source: Respondent 12, Personal Communication, 2022)

Academic research has revealed that nurses frequently have restricted control over their work schedules and circumstances, limiting their capacity to properly manage their personal life (Khamisa et al., 2017). A strong support structure, both at work and at home, is critical to creating a happy work-life balance. Existing research suggests that nurses who get support from a variety of sources, such as spouses, colleagues, and supervisors, are significantly better at balancing their professional and personal lives (Khamisa et al., 2017). The interviews provided valuable insights into the types of common personal issues affecting the work-life balance of married female nurses in Sri Lanka. The research emphasizes that personal issues encompassing relational difficulties involving both partners and peers within the hospital context, a deficiency in mental well-being, inadequate organizational proficiencies, and undisclosed family-related issues that participants declined to explicitly mention collectively present obstacles in attaining an enhanced equilibrium between professional commitments and personal life.

Work Stress

From the analysis of 12 interviews, it emerges that work stress profoundly influences the capacity of married female nurses in Sri Lankan government hospitals to harmonize their professional and personal spheres. A respondent mentioned:

"Occasionally, when I can't accomplish my tasks within the designated timeframe, I experience a sense of being overwhelmed. The substantial workload also encroaches upon my personal life." (Source: Respondent 01, Interview data)

Another participant revealed that,

"Juggling extended working hours with personal responsibilities prove to be demanding. I am apprehensive about missing out on my children's engagements." (Source: Respondent 03, Interview data)

An interviewee commented on organizational protocols, stating,

"The inflexibility of the work schedule and the lack of managerial support contribute to our stress." (Source: Respondent 09, Personal Communication, 2022)

A respondent noted,

"The work usually adheres to a routine, but it can be strenuous during staff shortages." (Source: Respondent 05, Personal Communication, 2022)

In aggregate, the interviews underscore that the professional milieu significantly impacts the ability of married female nurses to cultivate a harmonious work-life equilibrium. Factors such as workload, organizational procedures, physical surroundings, job conditions, and peer camaraderie collectively contribute to this equilibrium. A participant reflected,

"I recognize the necessity of enhancing my coping mechanisms to effectively manage the stress inherent to my profession. Occasional overloads impinge upon my personal life." (Source: Respondent 02, Personal Communication, 2022)

The emotional needs of patient care in healthcare settings have been widely recognized. Recent

research done in 2023 named "Burnout in Healthcare: Risk Factors and Solutions" discovered that female nurses routinely report higher levels of emotional tiredness. This emotional exhaustion quickly pervades their personal lives, negatively impacting their interpersonal connections and general quality of life. Shift work is widespread in the nursing profession, and it systematically upsets nurses' traditional diurnal habits. In 2017, Jehan et al. discovered a significant link between shift work and interrupted sleep patterns among nurses, which had a negative impact on their personal life and general well-being.

Multitasking

After speaking with married female nurses employed by government hospitals in Sri Lanka, it was discovered that they perform a range of activities in both their personal and professional lives. As one nurse mentioned it,

"I plan my domestic tasks during my downtime at the office. Even my weekly dinners are planned in order to save time after work." (Source: Respondent 08, Interview data)

Another nurse brought up talking to your spouse and planning your household chores, adding,

"I communicate with my husband and plan our domestic work together so we can complete the work without hassle." (Source: Respondent 05, Personal Communication, 2022)

Nurses also noted managing children and seniors, which calls for multitasking abilities to make sure they get the right attention and care. Respondents

listed their capabilities to perform several things at once under the ability category.

"I am highly attentive and structured; this makes it easier for me to finish chores." (Source: Respondent 05, Personal Communication, 2022)

An additional nurse remarked,

"I am a fast learner, which helps me to adapt to any situation and multitask." (Source: Respondent 05, Personal Communication, 2022)

Some nurses emphasized the importance of their family's support. I am blessed to have a supportive family that assists me with my household job, as one nurse said. This significantly lessens my load. The usage of technology, including tablets and cell phones, was also noted by the nurses as a way to successfully manage their personal and professional lives. In order to attain work-life balance, some respondents underlined the significance of workplace independence.

"I am thankful for my supervisor who understands the importance of work-life balance," (Source: Respondent 05, Personal Communication, 2022)

The above information confirmed that multitasking is a crucial aspect for married female nurses in Sri Lankan government hospitals to achieve work-life balance as proved by both quantitative and qualitative data. Other than these factors, Cultural gender norms, and societal expectations can also have a significant impact as evidenced by literature. Traditional gender norms might impose additional household obligations on married female nurses in particular cultural situations, hindering their quest for work-life balance (Shah et al., 2021).

Reliability Analysis

A total of 50 participants took part in the pilot survey. It was unnecessary to change the questionnaire given to potential respondents because the numbers were within the acceptable range. The Cronbach's alpha values of the actual test employed in this study are in Table 3.3.

Table 3: Real Test Cronbach's alpha statistics of scale

| Scale | Variable type | Cronbach's alpha |
|-----------------|---------------|------------------|
| Time management | Independent | 0.726 |
| Work Stress | Independent | 0.787 |
| Personal Issues | Independent | 0.826 |
| Multitasking | Independent | 0.724 |
| WLB | Dependent | 0.946 |

Source: Study Data 2022– Created through SPSS

Table 3 presents Cronbach's alpha coefficients pertaining to the primary variables of interest within the main study. Notably, the variable of time management exhibited a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.726 during the administration of the real exam. This value surpasses the conventional threshold of 0.7, signifying a satisfactory level of internal consistency for the time management construct (Sekaran, 2010). Similarly, the variable representing work stress yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.787, while the corresponding coefficient for Personal Issues was 0.826. Importantly, both coefficients reside within the established acceptable range, affirming the commendable internal consistency of these variables.

Furthermore, Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.724, observed for the construct of Multitasking, solidifies its valid representation within the study. It is noteworthy that the dependent variable demonstrated the highest Cronbach's alpha coefficient, quantified at 0.946. This underscores its robust position with respect to internal consistency and construct validity. The responses generated from the administered test align with the designated acceptable criteria, as all recorded Cronbach's alpha coefficients exceed the threshold of 0.7. Consequently, these findings corroborate the dependable internal consistency of the variables under scrutiny.

Analysis for Descriptive Statistics

Table 4: Results of descriptive statistics All variables

| Measure | TM | WS | PI | M |
|-----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| N | 384 | 384 | 384 | 384 |
| Mean | 3.16 | 3.224 | 3.152 | 3.141 |
| Std. Dev. | 0.53 | 0.647 | 0.622 | 0.752 |
| Skewness | 0.81 | 0.623 | 0.716 | 0.675 |
| Kurtosis | -0.28 | -0.22 | -0.24 | -1.13 |

Source: Study Data 2022–SPSS

Examining the relationship between independent variables and work-life balance

The provided details describe the descriptive statistics of four independent variables; Time Management (TM), Work Stress (WS), Personal Issues (PI), Multitasking (M), and the dependent variable; Work-Life Balance (WLB). The analysis includes 384 valid cases and no missing data. The mean values of all five variables (independent variables and dependent variable) fall between 3.14 and 3.34, indicating that respondents, on average, have moderately positive attitudes toward the independent variables. The standard deviations range from 0.54 to 0.75, indicating a relatively low variability in the responses. The skewness values range from 0.62 to 0.81, indicating that the data is approximately normally distributed for all variables, as the absolute value of the skewness is less than 1. The kurtosis values range from -1.14 to -0.28, indicating that the distributions are generally flatter than a normal distribution, but not extremely so. The analysis suggests that the respondents' attitudes towards the measured variables are moderately positive and the data is normally distributed with relatively low variability.

With a rating of 0.75, multitasking has the highest standard deviation. This shows that answers for the other factors have changed less than the reliance on Multitasking. The standard deviation for time management is the lowest, coming in at 0.538. The skewness values of all the variables are between -1 and +1. Generally speaking, if the skewness values fall within the range given, the data are approximately regularly distributed. The data are also regarded as being regularly distributed if the objective value of skewness is less than 3 times that of the exact amount of the skewness standard error. The highest possible value of skewness is 3 X the skewness standard error. The absolute value of skewness = 3 X 0.33 As a result, the distribution of the data in this study is consistent with both criteria. Therefore, parametric methods were used for the collected data set.

Bivariant analysis of variables of the study (Pearson Correlation Coefficient)

The study makes use of the Pearson Correlation approach to provide a bivariate examination of the relationship between exogenous factors and the dependent variable. Based on the Pearson sum displacement correlation matrix, the correlate coefficient displays the strength of the relationship between two variables. Pearson Correlations statistics of the current study are as follows.

Table 5: Pearson Correlations of Variables

| Independent Variable | Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) | WLB |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Time management | Pea. Corr. | .732** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| Work Stress | Pea. Corr. | .614** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| Personal Issues | Pea. Corr. | .675** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| Multitasking | Pea. Corr. | .714** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |

Source: Study Data 2022– Created through SPSS

Table 5 shows how the work-life balance (WLB) and independent variables are correlated with each variable. The findings show that each independent variable and work-life balance have a substantial positive connection. Time management ($r = 0.732$), work stress ($r = 0.614$), personal issues ($r = 0.675$), and multitasking ($r = 0.714$) are all positively correlated with work-life balance, as per the Pearson correlation coefficient values. The relationship is significant at the 0.05 level since all of the p-values are zero. The results indicate that Time management, work stress, personal issues, and multitasking challenge the work-life balance of married female employees working at government hospitals in Sri Lanka.

Multivariate analysis of the variables in the study (Linear Regression)

By applying an equation to the observation, linear regression seeks to predict the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. This makes it clear whether each component of the model is present or absent as well as how each dependent variable and each uncontrolled characteristic are related. Due to the kind of respondents, every predictor exhibits a degree of multicollinearity.

Table 6: Model summary

| Model | R | R ² | Adjusted R ² | Std. error | D-W |
|--|-------|----------------|-------------------------|------------|-------|
| 1 | .813a | 0.661 | 0.64 | 0.3 | 1.681 |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), Time management, Work Stress, Personal Issues, Multitasking | | | | | |
| b. Dependent Variable: Work-Life Balance | | | | | |

Source: Study Data 2022– Created through SPSS

According to the model summary in Table 6, the coefficient of multiple correlations (R), is equal to 0.813. Since the result exceeds 0.7, there is a significant relationship between the independent variables (time management, work stress, personal

issues, and multitasking) and the dependent variable (work-life balance). R² is 0.661, indicating that the model covered 66.1% of the entire regression model. The regression is well-fitted as the score is higher than 60%. Additionally, the

coefficient of determination of the regression model (adjusted R²) accounts for 64% of the data. The statistical value for the Durbin-Watson test,

which has a range of 1.5 to 2.5, is 1.681. The residuals are independent; hence the model is accurate.

Table 7: Regression ANOVA table

| Model | Sum of Squares | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|------------|----------------|-------------|------|-------|
| Regression | 13.0 | 4.33 | 30.6 | .000b |
| Residual | 6.6 | 0.14 | | |
| Total | 19.6 | | | |

Source: Study Data 2022– Created through SPSS

The p-value for the T-statistics in the Bar counter n (Regression ANOVA) is 0.000. Thus, the model is significant. As a result, work-life balance is challenged by a variety of factors. To examine the specific impacts of the independent variables on WLB, the study used individual coefficient values.

Identification of Challenges on Work-Life Balance (Individual Coefficients)

To identify the challenges that influence the work-life balance of married female employees, an independent coefficient table was constructed. Table 10 displays the values of each individual coefficient.

Table 8: Individual coefficient table

| Unstandardized Coefficients | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|------|------------|------|------|-------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | Sig. | VIF |
| TM | .525 | .127 | .450 | .000 | 1.648 |
| WS | .216 | .091 | .263 | .012 | 1.511 |
| PI | .356 | .033 | .442 | .001 | 1.463 |
| M | .414 | .072 | .261 | .001 | 1.512 |

Source: Study Data 2022– Created through SPSS

This analysis demonstrates that the main variables challenging Work-Life Balance which have been identified. The results of the various coefficients of beta values have been used to test the hypothesis mentioned in the methodology section. As per Sekaran (2010), data is considered statistically insignificant when a strong correlation exists between the data, and the p-value associated with this correlation is less than 0.05. In other words, when the p-value falls below this threshold, it indicates that the observed relationship in the data is likely not a result of random chance and is thus statistically significant. This statistical significance is an important criterion for drawing meaningful conclusions from research findings. Table 3.8 demonstrates that all four independent variables have probabilities that are extremely significant, with p-values less than 0.05. These too have positive beta values in the unstandardized beta column. Unstandardized coefficient values reflect the positive or negative effect of the independent variables on the dependent variables.

The results show that time management has the strongest positive relationship with work-life balance (Beta = 0.450, $p < 0.000$), followed by work stress (Beta = 0.263, $p = 0.012$), personal issues (Beta = 0.442, $p < 0.001$) and multitasking (Beta = 0.261, $p = 0.001$). The T-values and p-values show that every independent variable has a statistically significant link with work-life balance. Given that there is no indication of collinearity between the independent variables all tolerance values are over 0.5 and all VIF values are below 2, the collinearity statistics (tolerance and VIF) imply that multicollinearity is not a serious problem for the model. Accordingly, the findings imply that time management, work stress, personal issues, and multitasking are significant challenges to work-life balance for married female nurses in government hospitals, in Sri Lanka.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to identify the challenges of balancing work and personal life among married female nurses in government hospitals in Sri Lanka. As per the quantitative data analysis, it is observed that for all independent variables possessing p-values below the threshold of 0.05, the correlations among these independent variables attain statistical significance at the 0.05 level of significance. Concurrently, the qualitative data analysis corroborates these identical findings. As per the study findings, time management, job stress, multitasking, and personal issues were recognized as the major common challenges encountered by married female nurses in government hospitals in Sri Lanka. These findings provide a critical understanding of the difficulties experienced by married female nurses and can direct future studies and policy actions focused on assisting the work-life balance of married female nurses. The research findings emphasize the various challenges on work-life balance of married female nurses in government hospitals in Sri Lanka. Time management emerges as the most influential factor, supported by its high standardized beta value of 0.45. Interviews with participants corroborate this, with many acknowledging challenges in efficiently balancing their time, often citing calls, meetings, and networking as major time-consuming activities. Personal issues, with a beta value of 0.442, rank as the second most impactful challenge on work-life balance, supported by statistical significance. Participants also identified personal issues as a common challenge. Work stress exhibits a moderately positive association with work-life balance, indicated by a beta value of 0.263. A t-test further confirms the statistical significance of this relationship, suggesting that job stress significantly predicts work-life balance, with minimal concerns of multicollinearity. Multitasking, as a singular independent variable, shows a moderately favorable relationship with the outcome variable (work-life balance) with a beta value of 0.261. The t-test indicates statistical significance, reinforcing the predictive role of multitasking. Collinearity statistics reveal little concern for multicollinearity within the model.

The study underscores the critical influence of time management and personal issues on the work-life balance of married female nurses in government hospitals in Sri Lanka. Work stress and

multitasking also play significant roles. The combination of quantitative and qualitative data, along with statistical analysis, provides a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted challenges these nurses face in balancing their professional and personal lives. The findings hold relevance for addressing these challenges and improving the well-being of this demographic. The establishment of supportive legislative measures and initiatives aimed at aiding nurses in the management of their dual personal and professional responsibilities assumes paramount significance. Furthermore, this study furnishes invaluable insights into the lived experiences of married female nurses in Sri Lanka, thereby serving as a foundational resource to inform subsequent inquiries and interventions directed towards ameliorating the work-life equilibrium within the nursing cohort of Sri Lanka. The conclusions drawn from this current study bear profound implications not only for the nursing profession but also for society at large. They underscore the imperative nature of affording enhanced support systems and increased flexibility to individuals who grapple with the intricate interplay between their occupational commitments and familial obligations. The current research is out of the scope of a number of tactics to encourage work-life balance, including time management measures, good family and marital communication, and stress-reduction approaches. Therefore, the strategies to overcome or reduce the challenges for a healthy work-life balance need to be further examined. Further, it is important to note that work-life balance is a complex issue that can be influenced by many different factors, and the specific factors that affect an individual's work-life balance can vary depending on their unique circumstances and experiences. In addition to the previously indicated advice, it is critical to go deeper into ways for overcoming and minimizing the obstacles to a healthy work-life balance. Exploring strategies such as efficient time management, establishing open and constructive family and marital communication, and employing stress-reduction techniques can all help to address these issues. Furthermore, it is critical to recognize the complexities of the work-life balance issue, as it can be impacted by a variety of elements that are unique to everyone. To adapt to the different conditions and experiences of married female nurses in Sri Lanka, individualized and flexible solutions are required, assuring their well-being and total job satisfaction.

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