Chapter 1

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The interface between work and life domain is an area receiving lot of attention from academicians, professionals, government, management and popular media (Nord et al., 2002). The recent heightened attention to the issue around the globe and the subsequent increase in research and practice is a reflection of a period of comprehensive change. Economies the world over are in a state of flux wherein all aspects of work and life economic and technological; social and cultural are experiencing change in varying intensity. The changes seen in the work domain can be largely attributed to globalisation and technological advancement. The trend towards a unified world economy has promoted transnational promotion of goods, services and people. In a bid to compete in this new world order, organizations have restructured and become flatter and leaner. Fewer employees of the reorganised structures carry the additional workloads and undertake multitasking. Efficiency drives are seen as means to survive and grow and hence, promotion and compensation are increasingly being linked to performance. The result of efficiency driven restructuring of organisations, work, and performance is that workforce experience intensified work practices (Roberts, 2007; Lewis, 2003).

Technological advancements have further fuelled work domain changes. Sophisticated technology provides greater flexibility to organize work in terms of time and place. On the flip side advanced technology has resulted in 24\7 accessibility thereby blurring the boundaries between work and life (Valcour & Hunter, 2005). The new environment has thus, given way to newer complexities in the work domain that necessitates working across cultures and countries with different time zones and languages. Along with the profound changes seen in the work domain, the social domain has also witnessed sea changes. Increased participation of women in the workforce has given rise to dual-earner households. The structure, size and composition of the families have also altered. Improved health and nourishment has increased life span. In developed countries, this has given rise to aging workforce thereby further changing workforce demographics (Meurs et al., 2008).

In the Indian context, the stage and model of its economic development has far reaching consequences for individual, organization and society as a whole. Post liberalisation and globalisation, similar work and social changes are also witnessed in India. The permeable environment has changed the demographic profile of the workforce. Improved education and employment opportunities have led to an increase in the number of women in the work force. According to the Census data (2001), the participation rate of Indian women was 25.68 per cent in 2001. The participation rate has seen a steady increase from 19.67 per cent in 1981 to 22.73 per cent in 1991. Necessity and desire to meet materialistic aspirations of the family has led to dual earner couples changing the fabric of Indian family structure. The above discussion signals that work and social changes have significantly altered the personal and professional life issues of men and women in India and consequently work-life interface is an area of concern today.

1.1. Theoretical Framework of Work and Life Interface

Historically, societies were agrarian wherein domestic and economic systems were intertwined. Men and women along with children participated in domestic and economic activities collectively. Industrial revolution of the nineteenth century changed this. The new factory system required people in industrial countries to go outside their homes and work in factories (Wren, 2005). Industrial revolution thus led to separation of the economic and domestic spheres (Lewis et al., 2007). In the initial phase of industrial revolution, both men and women were employed in factories but then women gradually withdrew from employment and stayed at home to look after their families. The result of this was that domestic and economic labour was divided on the basis of gender. The primary role of men became to perform paid economic activities carried outside the house while women executed unpaid family and care responsibilities (Beauregard et al., 2009). The separation of previously intertwined economic and domestic spheres was subsequently carried to colonies and unindustrialised countries, which were at times in line with the local traditional beliefs.

The subsequent outbreak of World Wars resulted in men being called to war and women asked to fill-in the shoes of men. At the end of war when service men returned home, women were persuaded to return to their traditional roles at home and vacant the workplace for the returning service men (MacDermid, 2005). Though most women complied, the number of women in the workforce rose compared to before the war. Since then participation rate of women has continued to mount without abating (Roberts, 2007).

The work and life interface discourse originated in USA and UK; from there it spread to other English speaking countries and later to parts of Europe (Lewis et al., 2007). In the last couple of decades the concern for work and life interface has become very popular. The concern however, is not novel and has been researched for a long time. Undeniably the manner in which this concept is constructed has altered and evolved over a period of time. Formal use of terminology to describe the relationship between personal and professional life can be traced to 1960s when the concern was labeled as 'Work-Family Conflict'. Later there was a positive linguistic shift to 'Work-Family Enrichment'. In 1990s a holistic and encompassing term of 'Work-Life Balance' got evolved.

1.1.1. Work-Family Conflict

Kahn et al. (1964) classically studied the work-family interface from the perspective of role stress theory. The role stress theory is grounded on the premise that managing multiple roles imposes incompatible role expectations and pressures on individuals which creates strain and conflict. Accordingly, work-family conflict can be defined as a form of interrole conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. The role stress theory is based on the scarcity hypothesis that resources with an individual are finite and fulfillment of multiple roles results in depletion of finite resources resulting in felt difficulty in fulfilling role obligations (Goode, 1960). Work-family conflict is measured in terms of

the dimensions and direction of the conflict. Dimensionality measures the nature and causes of conflict.

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) identified three dimensions of conflict namely time-based, strain-based and behavior-based conflict. Time-based conflict is caused when two different domains compete for an individual's time. Strain-based conflict occurs when stress experienced in one role interferes with effective performance in another role. While behavior-based conflict arises when specific behavior required in one role is incompatible with behavior expected in another role. Directionality of conflict refers to the flow of conflict between the two domains. Work and family conflict was found to be bi-directional in nature i.e., work was found to interfere with family termed as work-to-family interference and similarly, family was also found to interfere with work known as family-to-work interference. The bi-directional mechanism of conflict is also referred as negative spillover. Similar to conflict, negative spillover is the extent to which participation in one domain negatively impacts participation in another domain (Edward & Rothbard, 2000).

Early research in this area was largely focused on measuring role conflict and not the direction of the conflict (MacDermid, 2005). Subsequent research studied the bi-directional nature of conflict and found experience of work-to-family interference more than family-to-work interference. Since the theory of work-family is based on the assumption of role scarcity and negative spillover, a large part of research in this area denotes a negative, win-lose relationship between work and family (Fried et al., 2005).

1.1.2. Work-Family Positive Interface

Work-family construct was questioned by a growing body of researchers for overlooking the positive side of the work-family interface. Though advantages of multiple roles were recognized as early as the 1970s (Marks, 1977; Sieber, 1974), it was only recently that this area of interface gained importance. As attempts in this area are

recent, in comparison to work-family conflict, positive work-family interface is still conceptually and empirically an underdeveloped research area (Frone, 2003). So far there is no consensus on terminology and so these constructs are framed under various labels like enrichment, facilitation and positive spillover.

Notwithstanding the differences, all these constructs are grounded in the role accumulation theory which is in direct contrast with the role stress theory underlying work-family conflict (Marks, 1977; Sieber, 1974). According to the role accumulation theory, multiple roles are enriching rather than stressful (Sieber, 1974). The expansion hypothesis that forms the basis of the theory proposes that individual has expandable and abundant supply of energy. Participation in multiple roles offers an individual additional privileges and resources like skills and social support that enhance growth and role performance. It also provides status and security as individual is not dependent on a single role.

1.1.2.1. Enrichment

Greenhaus and Powell (2006) have proposed the theoretical framework of work-family enrichment. They have defined enrichment as the extent to which experiences in one role improves the quality of life in the other role. Enrichment occurs either through instrumental or affective pathways. Through instrumental pathway resources like skills and perspectives, material resources, socio-capital resources, psychological and physiological resources gained in one role directly improves performance in the other role. Whereas, through affective pathways positive moods and emotions generated in one role indirectly affect the actions and behavior in the other role.

1.1.2.2. Facilitation

Wayne et al. (2007) who proposed the term of facilitation have defined it as the extent to which an individual's engagement in one domain such as work or family provides gains which enhances performance in the other domain. The definition identifies three core components of facilitation namely engagement, gains and enhancement. Engagement is defined as the level of intensity applied to a role. Active engagement in a particular domain leads to acquisition of gains like developmental, affective, capital or efficiency in that domain. These gains received in one domain can be transmitted to the other domain which in turn fosters basic skills like problem solving or communication.

1.1.2.3. Positive Spillover

Grzywacz and Marks (2000) distinguished between negative and positive spillover and proposed that participation in one domain can lead to better health, well-being and functioning in the other domain. Positive spillover includes bidirectional transfer of behavior, skills, positive moods and sense of achievement and support from one domain to the other.

1.1.3. Work-Family Balance

Work-family conflict and work-family enrichment were seen as non-parallel concepts and hence research chiefly looked at either the negative or positive aspects of the interface. To overcome the uni-dimensional conceptualization of work-family interface, the term balance evolved. The phrase work-family balance gained a lot of attention and popular usage in everyday life by diverse stakeholders. The popularity and oversimplification of the phrase had led to multiple, ambiguous and at times contradictory definitions of work-family balance (Greenhaus et al., 2003).

Presently definitions of work-family can be classified according to the extent to which they view the construct as a social or an individual construct. Social construct implies idealist and universal rules of balance which gives best possible outcomes to all. Contrary to this, individual construct view 'balance' as a relative concept which varies with the prevailing situation. Marks and MacDermid (1996) proposed idealist definition and described balance as the tendency to become fully engaged in performance of every role in one's total role system. Greenhaus et al. (2003) defined balance as the extent to which an individual is equally engaged in and equally satisfied with his or her work family role. Unlike social construct, individual construct argues that balance is not the 'zero-sum game' but a state which generates satisfaction which is of value to the individuals and their family (Fletcher, 1966). According to Clark (2000), term balance is satisfaction and good functioning at work and home, with minimum conflict.

Scales measuring balance lack consistency in construct since there is inconsistency in the definition of balance. Previous studies of balance measurement are based on individual's assessment of satisfaction with balance rather than the level of balance. Recently with a view to measure the level of balance, researchers have incorporated the dimensions of conflict and enrichment in the definition. Frone (2003) integrating the negative and the positive aspects to the interface proposed that work-family balance is low level of interrole conflict and high level of interrole facilitation. This has not yet been translated into a measurement scale.

1.1.4. Work-Life Balance

Although widely accepted and researched, the discourse on the interface between work and family was criticized for being very narrow as the focus was largely on men and women with caring responsibilities especially women with young children. This restricted scope appeared to imply that men and women who did not have obvious caring commitment had no need to balance their work and life. With a view to give a

holistic and encompassing concept, the term family was replaced with life and the phrase work-life balance took form in the 1990s (Lewis et al., 2007).

The definitions of work-life balance are varied and have been considered from different perspectives. Society/organization or individual perspectives are central to the different definitions. According to Employers for Work Life Balance (2008), run by the U.K. based Work Foundation, work-life balance is about people having a measure of control over when, where and how they work. It is achieved when an individual's right to a fulfilled life inside and outside paid work is accepted and respected as the norm, to the mutual benefit of the individual, business and society. The Department of Labor New Zealand (2011) described work-life balance as creating a productive work culture where the potential for tensions between work and other parts of people's lives is minimized. Both definitions based on social construct believed that by following the prescribed universal rule best possible result can be achieved.

Work-life balance from an Individual's perspective is defined by Human Resources and Skill Development Canada, department of Government of Canada (2005) as a self-defined, self-determined state of well being which allows one to manage effectively multiple responsibilities at work, home and in community. In similar vein, Reiter (2007) has described work-life balance as achieving satisfying experiences in all the domains of life in tune with the individual's salience with each role.

Scales measuring work-life interface are limited to family roles, measure either conflict or enrichment and not bi-directional. The few instances of inclusive and validated measures of work-life balance are developed to measure diverse target groups in different contexts. The studies listed in **Table1.1** gives a brief insight into the scales measuring the interface of work and life.

Table 1.1. Studies Measuring Work-Life Interface

Name of the Interface	Measure	Direction	Dimension	Study
Work-Family Conflict	Conflict	Uni-directional	Not Multi-dimensional	Frone, Russell & Cooper, (1993)
Work-Family Conflict	Conflict	Uni-directional	Multi-dimensional	Stephens & Sommer, (1996)
Work-Family Conflict	Conflict	Bi-directional	Not Multi-dimensional	Netemeyer, Boles & McMurrian, (1996)
Work-Family Conflict	Conflict	Bi-directional	Multi-dimensional	Carlson, Kacmar, & Williams, (2000)
Nonwork-Work Positive Spillover	Positive Spillover	Uni-directional	Multi-dimensional	Kirchmeyer, (1992)
Resource Enrichment	Enrichment	Uni-directional	Not Multi-dimensional	Cohen & Kirchmeyer, (1995)
Work-Family Enrichment	Enrichment	Bi-directional	Multi-dimensional	Carlson, Kacmar, Wayne, & Grzywacz, (2006)
Work-Family Positive Spillover	Positive Spillover	Bi-directional	Multi-dimensional	Hanson, Hammer & Colton, (2006)
Work-Family Balance	Satisfaction with balance	Non-directional	Multi-dimensional	Milkie & Peltola (1999); White, (1999); Hill, Hawkins, Ferris & Weitzman, (2001)
Work-Family Balance	Satisfaction with balance	Bi-directional	Multi-dimensional	Greenhaus, Collins & Shaw, (2003)
Work/Nonwork Conflict & Enrichment	Conflict & Enrichment	Bi-directional	Multi-dimensional	Fisher-McAuley, Stanton, Jolton & Gavin (2003); Hayman, (2005) – based on Fisher-McAuley (2003)

In the next section, we will define work-life balance in detail.

1.2. Work-life Balance: Definition

The literature is replete with definitions that elucidate the interface between work and life. The most appropriate definition is one that fits with the particular application. In the present study, the focus is to explore work-life balance dimensions of professional men and women. The definition is framed with the perspective of an individual relative to his/her personal context. Balance is treated as a verb and not as a noun and categorized on the basis of nature of interaction (interference or enhancement) and the direction of interaction (work to life and life to work). Thus, work-life balance can be defined as a state of being wherein there is reconciliation between all priorities of an individual's life. It is an attempt to integrate intruding and enhancing aspects of paid work, unpaid work and personal time that leads to a state of personal gratification.

The concept of work-life balance is fluid with a degree of subjectivity attached to it. On account of age, family life cycle, career stage and prospects, work and family responsibilities, gender, location and economic condition the work-life balance of an individual changes. The work-life balance issues that an individual faces when one is young or when one is in the middle or old age will be different. When an individual is young, one is at the onset of the career path, at middle age the career opportunities increases and then they decline as one enters the old age. These career stages and prospects have varied work-life balance issues. Similarly, at various stages of family life cycle also the work-life balance pressure will be different. When an individual is unattached one can attain equilibrium by spending more time at work, but when the same individual is married the work-life balance would change and still further when the individual is on the family way aspects of life gain more importance. Thus, at various stages of career and family cycle the total responsibility of an individual fluctuates causing variation in the work-life balance. In terms of gender, the work-life balance issues of a man will be different from that of a woman. Location also has an impact on a person's work-life balance. An individual working in a metropolitan city suffers from time constraint while another individual in a small city or town may not bear the same strain resulting in a different state of reconciliation. The work-life balance

of an individual who is cash rich but time poor will also be different from the work-life balance of an individual who is cash poor and time rich or time poor.

1.3. Rationale

In the dynamic environment where change is the only constant factor the concept of work-life balance has become pertinent universally and India is no exception. Varieties of instruments measure the interface between work and life. Despite this, the instruments either measure the negative synergies between work and family/life or positive synergies between them. The few instruments that measure both the positive and negative synergies are largely measuring the work-life situations in the western society. Since work-life balance has strong cultural connotation, using instruments developed in culturally diverse societies like West may not truly reflect the work-life situation in India.

In line with the global trend, India is also experiencing metamorphosis in its economic and social conditions. In India though work and family systems and structures have changed, the active remnants of the patriarchic society are still evident. While acknowledging that both men and women are experiencing novel complexities and dimensions in their work and life domains, the nature and dimensions of this experience are likely to be different. It would therefore be pertinent to study which factors women and men perceive are important to maintain work-life balance. Additionally, the economic and social changes have primarily affected the work-life balance of urban professionals. The present study attempts to measure work-life balance in Indian context to find the perceptual difference between professional men and women on the factors of work -life balance.

1.4. Research Objectives

1. Identify the work-life balance factors of professional men and women.
2. Identify the work specific factors/antecedents that influence work-life balance of professional men and women.
3. Identify the life specific factors/antecedents that influence work-life balance of professional men and women.
4. Identify the gender stereotypes of professional men and women.
5. Study the impact of work specific factors/antecedents on work-life balance.
6. Study the impact of life specific factors/antecedents on work-life balance.
7. Explore whether professional men and women differ on the factors of work life balance.

1.5. Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is organised into seven chapters. Chapter One describes the background, theoretical framework, rationale and objectives. Chapter Two presents the review of existing literature on work-life balance and the research problems and hypotheses framed on basis of the review. Chapter Three focuses on the methodology. It includes research design, sampling design, data collection and analysis. Chapter Four illustrates analysis of data and the interpretations of the results under the theme of initial and final analysis. Chapter Five is the discussion of the findings emerging from data analysis. Chapter Six is about implications for research and management practices. The concluding Chapter Seven presents the summary, conclusion and suggestions of the present study.