

Role of Human Resource Practices In Improving Work-Life balance of Married Woman In The Hotel Industry

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Abstract:

Particularly for married women workers juggling professional and family duties, the hotel industry's lengthy and irregular working hours, heavy workload, and demanding schedules make it very difficult to achieve work-life balance (WLB). This research focuses on married women in the hotel industry in Mumbai, India, and seeks to understand how HR policies could improve WLB. The research used a mixed-methods strategy with a quantitative focus, gathering primary data from 370 participants via a structured questionnaire (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.913) and supplementing it with secondary sources. As far as demographics, workload, job flexibility, employer assistance, work interference, and family support were concerned, non-parametric statistical methods such as the Kruskal-Wallis H test, Mann-Whitney U test, and Spearman's rho correlation were used to analyse the data. In addition to better wages and more experience, the results show that WLB satisfaction is greatly enhanced by flexible working hours and the availability of childcare and family support services. But working long hours (>10 hours for 72.7% of respondents), working overtime (80% of respondents), and having work interfere with personal time (67.9% of respondents) causes a lot of worry and shame (70% of respondents express regular stress). Unanticipated beneficial correlations between greater control over one's schedule and happiness highlight changes unique to certain industries. The study highlights the importance of HR practices that help married women in this high-pressure sector. These practices include flexible scheduling, supportive leave policies, wellness programs, and empathy for family commitments. By implementing these strategies, organisations can reduce turnover, improve well-being, and increase organisational commitment. Policy changes and organisational interventions are among the suggestions for long-term WLB sustainability.

Keywords: Work-Life Balance, Married Women, Hotel Industry, Human Resource Practices, Job Flexibility, Family Support, Mumbai, Hospitality Sector, Stress Management, Organizational Support.

INTRODUCTION

Businesses that house guests while they are "away from home" and offer meals, drinks, and lodging are known as hotels, and this sector of the economy is a major job creator and contributor to economies worldwide [1]. The hotel sector is highly dependent on human resources, and women make up 55% of the workforce [2]. The industry is renowned for its service-driven, dynamic nature. The hotel sector is at the forefront of discussions about occupational workload, especially regarding its effects on female workers. The hotel sector is notorious for its long, unpredictable hours, which can be especially hard for women who work there and have kids. As a result, they are more likely to experience stress, burnout, and other negative health effects. Working women have higher rates of stress, negative health impacts, and stunted career advancement as a result of juggling personal and professional obligations [3]. Housekeeping and food service are two examples of physically demanding jobs in the hotel business that may be harmful to the health of female workers. Their health and happiness at work may suffer in the long run due to issues such as exhaustion and musculoskeletal ailments [4]. In addition, working in the hospitality sector often involves dealing with difficult clients and stressful situations. Women in the workforce may experience emotional weariness and mental health issues as a result of this [4]. One bright spot is that research has shown that women working in the hospitality industry are strong and flexible [5]. Numerous women have demonstrated remarkable resilience in the face of adversity and have been instrumental in bringing about constructive change in the hospitality sector [6]. Recognising the impact of occupational workload on women's well-being and professional experiences is crucial, as women continue to make substantial and effortless contributions to the hotel industry. In recent decades, debates concerning gender, employment, and health have increasingly centred on the idea of work-life integration. As a result of digitalisation, hybrid work systems, and changing family structures, the boundaries between work and personal life are becoming increasingly blurry, and women professionals around the world continue to confront tough challenges in balancing work demands with family and societal expectations [7–10]. In contrast to the conventional idea of work-life balance, which emphasises separating domains, work-life integration acknowledges the fluid, often overlapping nature of personal and professional obligations [11]. Considering that women typically do the bulk of housework, this is particularly true for them [12]. To create gender-inclusive workplaces and reduce professional burnout and attrition among women, strategies such as social regulations, institutional support, and flexible work arrangements (FWAs) have gained popularity in industrialised nations. Cultural norms and economic participation continue to interact, shaping how women in Africa navigate work-life integration [13]. Academics and lawmakers are paying more attention to women's capacity to juggle work and caregiving duties as more women join the workforce to help offset the rising cost of living. Still, there are long-term roadblocks that make progress difficult, such as rigid organisational structures, little government intervention, and rigid job descriptions. While women already face challenges in balancing their work and family lives due to migration and urbanisation, the lack of official institutional support has made matters worse. This has made work-life integration more of a struggle than a choice. While some African countries have made strides in supporting female professionals through initiatives such as flexible work schedules and child care subsidies, many lag far behind in creating inclusive workplaces. Gender stereotypes, economic inequality, and a lack of policy enforcement all play a role. Institutional support for women's responsibilities is severely lacking, despite their increasing visibility in professions like public administration, healthcare, education, and finance [14]. There is a growing conversation about how spousal support might help professional women achieve greater work-life balance, even though male-dominated homes remain predominant. However, there are still a few empirical studies that comprehensively evaluate the interplay among interpersonal dynamics, institutional support, work patterns, and household demands [15]. Studies show that Nigerian women typically face insensitive corporate cultures, rigid work schedules, and a lack of assistance for maternity and caring [16]. The impact of women's household responsibilities on workplace performance, psychological health, and long-term career advancement is significant regardless of their employment status [17].

LITERATURE REVIEW

The topic of work-life integration has been discussed more recently, particularly in light of the challenges women face when juggling their professional and home responsibilities [18]. This is particularly true as the number of women holding professional positions continues to rise. Workplaces are evolving in response to new trends, including remote work, more internet access, and shifting gender roles, as seen in recent research on work-life integration. In contrast to seeing work and personal life as separate or competing domains, work-life integration advocates a seamless merger of the two [19]. People need to harmonise and coordinate their responsibilities if they want to reduce conflict and increase functioning in the home and the workplace [20]. Flexible scheduling significantly affects workers' job satisfaction and ability to combine professional and home duties, according to research by Hariyani and Mardikaningsih [21]. Professional women's mental health and performance improve when they have the backing of their bosses and peers [22].

A. Organizational support and women's work-life satisfaction

Another area where organisational support has a big role is in women's work-life happiness. Perceived organisational support is defined by Eisenberger et al. [23] as the degree to which employees believe their employer values and cares about them as individuals and their job. Perceived organisational support is correlated with higher job satisfaction and lower work-life conflict among women [24]. In addition, according to Ma et al. [25] and Neneh [26], organisational policies such as maternity leave, childcare centres, and counselling services help families and women professionals manage competing demands. On their own, policies won't cut it. Their effectiveness is often dependent on how these regulations are applied fairly and without stigma. Consequently, research often suggests that supervisory conduct and organisational culture influence the effectiveness of policies.

B. Domestic workload and women's job performance

One of the most significant and often disregarded challenges to women's productivity and advancement in the workplace is the amount of work they have to do at home. Working women often take on the bulk of household chores, even while holding full-time jobs, according to

Mussida and Patimo [27]. Because of the unfair distribution of unpaid work, they are emotionally exhausted and have less access to opportunities that are directly related to their employment. Domestic labour continues to have a disproportionate impact on women, according to more recent studies [28], especially in nations where traditional gender norms are prevalent. Absenteeism, impaired attention, and restricted professional engagement may result from these additional obligations. Because of the direct impact on worker productivity, scholars [29] are calling for a societal shift towards recognising women's unpaid labour.

C. Flexible Work Arrangements and women's integration of work and family responsibilities

If we want more women to be able to juggle career and family life, we need FWAs [30]. Flexible work schedules may help women better manage their time and emotional energy across different areas, reducing time-related disputes and pressure. Also, when given the option to work remotely or choose their own schedule, women professionals report higher levels of satisfaction while juggling several duties (Mazaheri et al., [32]; Bourezg et al., [33]). Flexibility does not always lead to balance, as pointed out by Clar-Novak [34] and Onyeka [35]. This is especially true if FWA users are stigmatised in the workplace. This suggests that policies should be flexible, but their effectiveness depends on managers' mind-sets and the organisation's standards regarding their use.

D. HR Initiatives in the Hotel Industry

There has been a significant uptick in attention to work-life balance initiatives among human resource professionals, academics, and organisations that promote human capacity development [36]. According to Garg and Yajurvedi [37], achieving a work-life balance means fostering an environment that encourages employees to take care of themselves professionally while also making time for their families, hobbies, personal growth, and community involvement. This, in turn, boosts employee loyalty and productivity. But according to Hobson et al. [38], unhappiness with one's employment and life in general may result from an imbalance between work and family responsibilities, which, in turn, affects one's health, happiness, longevity in the workforce, and loyalty to one's employer. Businesses place a premium on work-life balance programs because they know they help attract and retain top talent [39]. In addition, businesses in the hospitality sector have begun to provide their employees with more work-life balance options, including part-time jobs, telecommuting, flexible scheduling, and job-sharing programs [40].

One of the company's efforts to help workers achieve a better work-life balance was allowing them to work remotely, often known as telecommuting or teleworking [41]. One of the numerous hotels that provide remote work opportunities is the Hilton Hotel [42]. Some hotels have instituted work-from-home policies for their employees because, as Chaturvedi [43] argues, promoting work-life balance is crucial. Some Muscat hotels provided their staff the opportunity to work remotely, while others opposed the concept and didn't believe teleworking was a good fit for the hospitality business (Belwal & Belwal, [44]).

Anita claims that almost every company in the restaurant industry offers health insurance to its workers [45]. Health insurance also helps hospitality businesses attract and retain talented workers, which benefits the business overall [46]. To keep employees from leaving for greener pastures and boost productivity, businesses in the hotel sector offer health insurance [47]. Also, some companies provide health insurance to their employees and their families, including policies that cover permanent disability, life, temporary disability, vision, dental, dismemberment, and accidental death (Azeem, 48). In addition, as noted by Kutty [49], firms in Muscat's hotel industry provide health insurance to their workers and, in some cases, their families. Patients may visit private clinics and hospitals if they so want.

The period of time off from work that is connected with the birth or adoption of a child is referred to as parental leave by Earle and Heymann [50]. Furthermore, almost all businesses in the hotel industry provide health insurance to their workers, as Anita [45] explained. In addition, providing health insurance to workers helps businesses attract and retain top talent [51]. As a means to retain employees, reduce absenteeism, and boost productivity, the hotel industry offers health insurance to its employees [52]. According to Earle and Heymann [50], paternity leave has many positive effects, including highlighting the importance of men's support for women, safeguarding the health of both the mother and the child, helping working couples achieve a healthy work-life balance, and promoting gender equality. In addition, many Omani companies provide paid parental leave, as stated by Kutty [49].

METHOD

Given a focus on quantitative approaches and augmented by qualitative insights for a more thorough understanding, the current study used a mixed-methods research strategy. This study used a descriptive research approach to examine the current state of work-life balance and the impact of different HR policies on married women working in the hotel industry in Mumbai.

Married women working in the hotel sector in the Mumbai area were the intended participants. For the qualitative section in particular, 370 participants were selected using nonprobability sampling methods, primarily convenience sampling combined with purposive selection. This sample strategy was selected owing to the practical challenges of obtaining a full sampling frame in this dynamic, shift-based sector.

Online (via web-based Google Forms) and in-person (at different hotels) administrations of a structured questionnaire provided the primary data. Including frequency scales, yes/no questions, demographic profile items, and multiple-point Likert-type scales, the questionnaire ultimately consisted of 33 primary items after refining. Secondary data were acquired from books, research journals, industry papers, government publications, and trusted web sources to give theoretical and contextual support.

With a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.913 (based on 33 questions), the study instrument showed great reliability. It has strong internal consistency and is useful for evaluating many aspects of work-life balance and HR practices. A number of factors were considered while developing this survey, including employees' views on work-life balance, family support, wellness programs, company culture, workload, stress, guilt, interference, and flexible hours.

The most commonly used statistical program for data analysis was SPSS 22.0. The profile and patterns in the data were presented using descriptive statistics, which include frequencies, percentages, and mean rankings. The Kruskal-Wallis H test, which compares three or more groups, the Mann-Whitney U test, which compares two independent groups, and Spearman's Rank Correlation coefficient, which examines monotonic correlations between variables, are all examples of non-parametric tests that are part of inferential statistics. Every hypothesis was examined with a 5% significance threshold ($p < 0.05$).

At every stage, the study adhered to the highest ethical standards in research. Everyone who took part in the study gave their explicit permission before it began, and they were told their answers would remain anonymous and private. They were also told it was completely voluntary and that they may stop at any point.

This study, which focused on 370 married women working in the hotel industry in Mumbai, relied heavily on quantitative survey methods and a reliable instrument. This research used robust nonparametric statistical analysis to examine how different HR strategies affected work-life balance in the service industry, which is known for its high stress levels.

RESULTS

In this study, researchers examined 370 married women working in the hotel industry in Mumbai to determine how different HR procedures affect their work-life balance (WLB). With 33 items showing a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.913, the measuring device was very reliable.

A. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Key Demographic Variables

Variable	Category	Percentage (%)
Designation	Consultant	28.4
	Managerial	27.0
	Supervisory	23.2
	Operational	21.4
Annual Remuneration	< ₹5 lakhs	27.3
	₹5–10 lakhs	23.5
	₹10–15 lakhs	24.6
	> ₹15 lakhs	24.6
Years of Relevant Experience	< 5 years	21.4
	5–10 years	24.6
	10–15 years	26.2
	> 15 years	27.8

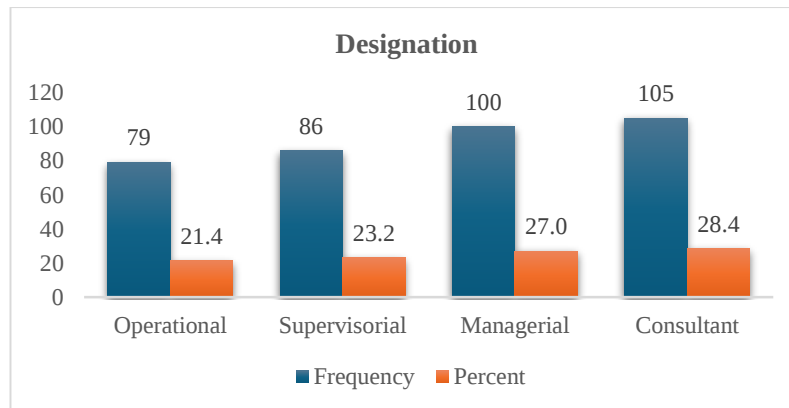


Figure 1: Designation

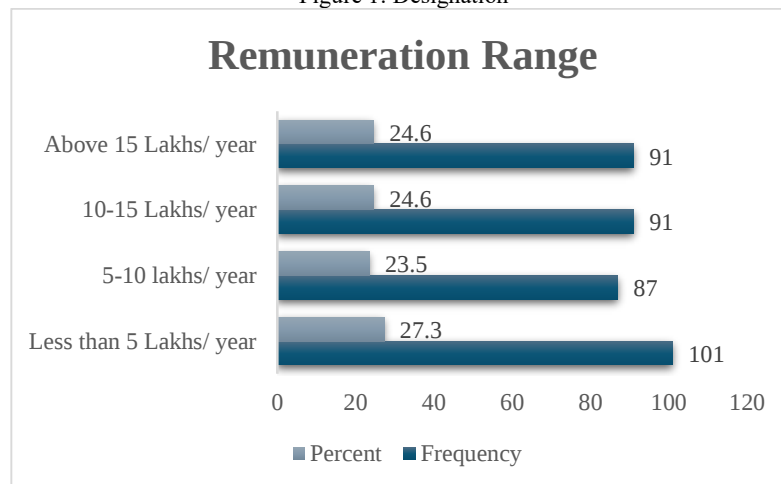


Figure 2: Remuneration Range

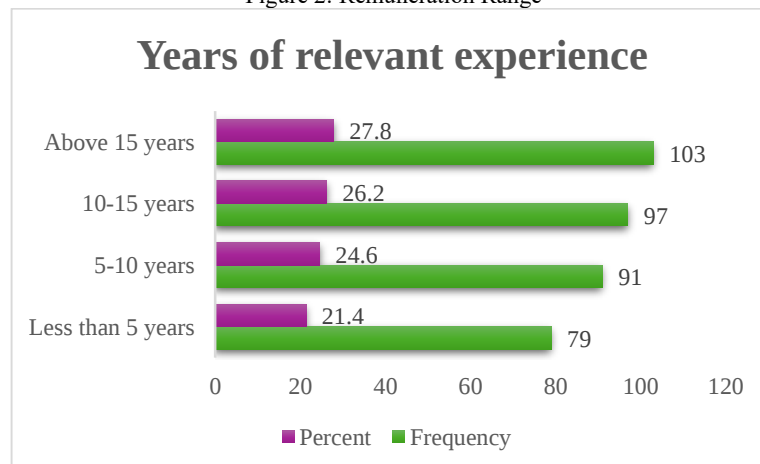


Figure 3: Years of relevant experience

B. Key HR Practices and Their Perceived Impact on Work-Life Balance

The main HR-related practices that were studied and how respondents felt about them are shown in the following tables and pie charts.

Table 2: Access to & Perception of Important HR Practices

HR Practice	Positive Response (%)	Neutral (%)	Negative Response (%)
Flexible working hours	52.2	—	47.8
Access to childcare/family support while working	65.4	—	34.6
Access to wellness programs/initiatives	50.8	—	49.2
Satisfaction with employer's paid family leave policies	47.3 (satisfied + highly satisfied)	20.5	32.2 (dissatisfied + very dissatisfied)
Employer understanding of family commitments	45.6 (satisfied + highly satisfied)	24.1	30.2 (dissatisfied + very dissatisfied)
Workplace culture encouraging work-life balance	54.3 (good + very good + extremely supportive)	—	45.7 (somewhat + insufficient)

The table shows that respondents are now employed and have the option to choose their own work schedule. In a study of 370 people, 52.2% said they had flexible working hours and 47.8% said they didn't. With such a close split, it seems that most people can take advantage of flexible scheduling, which might help them strike a better work-life balance. But the fact that more than 50% of those surveyed don't have this kind of leeway suggests that many workers still face rigid schedules, which might make the already high stress and overtime rates shown in the literature much worse.

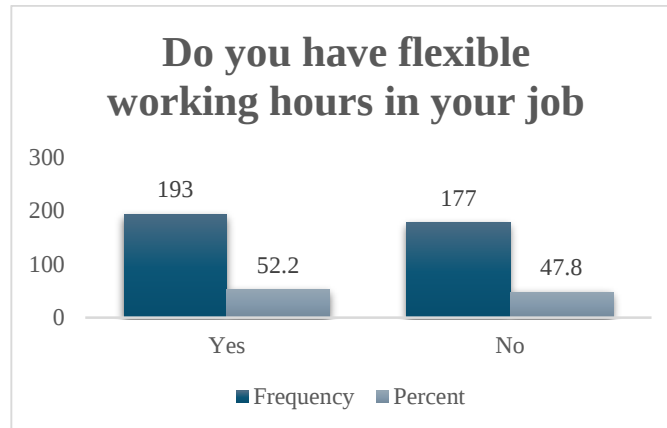


Figure 4: Do you have flexible working hours in your job

From what we can see in the chart below, 65.4% of respondents have access to some kind of family assistance or child care while they are on the job, while 34.6% do not. This suggests that most workers benefit from family-related assistance in some way, which could be crucial for effectively balancing work and personal life. There may be room for improvement in the organisation, as the lack of help for almost a third highlights a shortcoming that might have a negative impact on the health and efficiency of those without access.

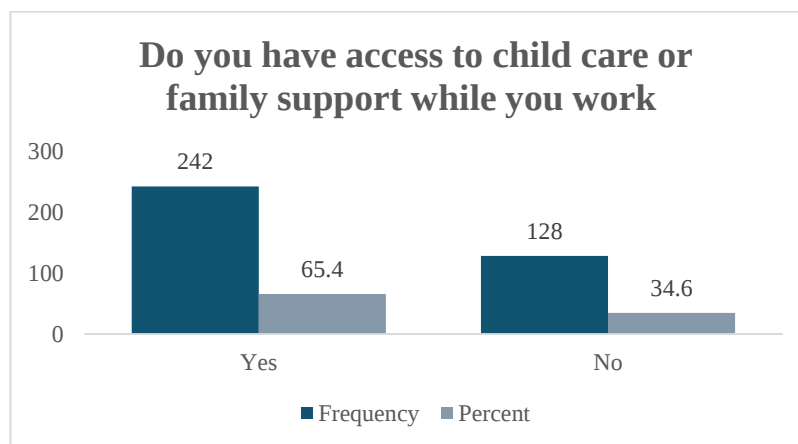


Figure 5: Do you have access to child care or family support while you work

A little over half of respondents (50.8%) have access to wellness programs or initiatives at their workplace, while nearly half (49.2%) do not, according to the research. Despite the availability of wellness tools, a significant number of workers still do not get the assistance they need. This highlights the opportunity for companies to develop wellness programs in order to encourage a healthier and more balanced workforce.

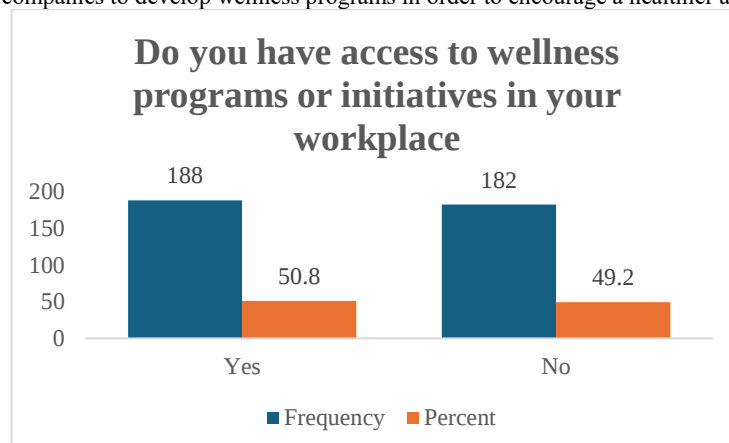


Figure 6: Do you have access to wellness programs or initiatives in your workplace

The table shows how satisfied the respondents are with their employer's policies on paid family leave. About half of the 370 people who took part in the survey were satisfied with these policies; 26.2% were satisfied overall and 21.1% were very satisfied. Some 17.6% were unsatisfied and 14.6% were very dissatisfied, so clearly there was a lot of unhappiness. In addition, twenty-five percent were ambivalent. This distribution shows that paid family leave policies are not universally well-received. While some workers think the guidelines are enough, many think that improvements are needed to better handle family-related leave.

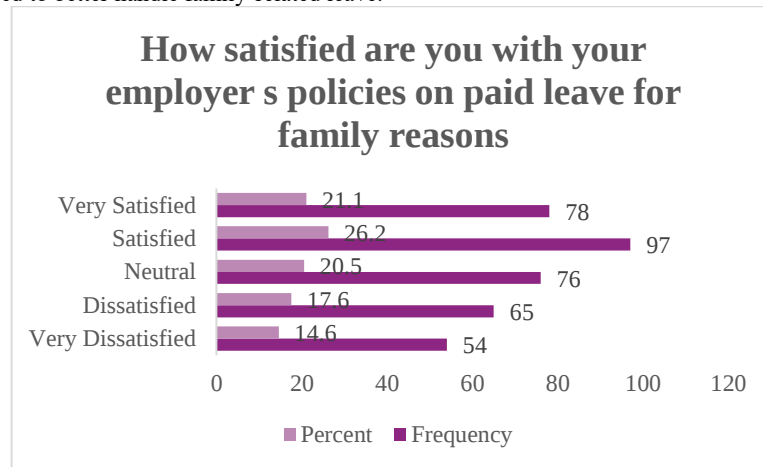


Figure 7: How satisfied are you with your employer's policies on paid leave for family

How well respondents feel their company culture encourages a healthy work-life balance is shown in the table. Among the 370 participants, little over half had a positive impression of their workplace's support for this balance. Specifically, 17.0% think it's very good, 17.3% think it's very excellent, and 20.0% think it's good. However, 24.1% think it's just enough, and 21.6% think it's completely inadequate. It seems that even while many individuals work in supportive workplaces, a large portion still feels that their workplace does not do enough to encourage a good work-life balance. This shows that there is room for improvement in terms of culture.



Figure 8: how much does your workplace culture encourage a balance between work and personal life

The table shows how satisfied the respondents are with their employer's understanding of family responsibilities. Out of the 370 participants, around 46% are satisfied with their employer's degree of knowledge, with 25.9% expressing satisfaction and 19.7% expressing strong satisfaction. However, 17.8% expressed discontent, and 12.4% were very unhappy. In addition, 24.1% do not take a position. There is room for improvement in company empathy and policy, since this distribution shows that while almost half of workers feel their employers help with family duties, a large portion is still unhappy or indifferent.

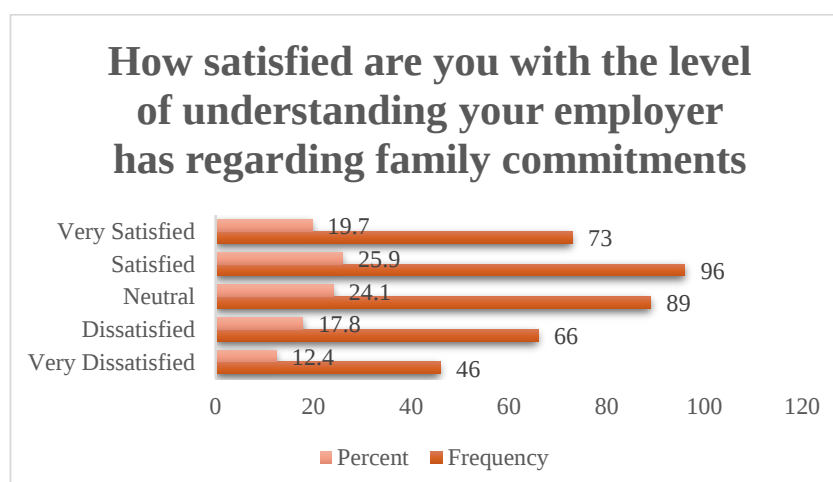


Figure 9: How satisfied are you with the level of understanding your employer has regarding family commitments

C. Overall Perceived Effectiveness of HR Practices in the Hotel Industry

Perception	Percentage (%)
The hotel industry comprehensively supports WLB	27.6
Adequate support	30.3
Moderate support	21.6
Some / Inadequate / No support	20.5

The table shows how respondents feel about the hotel industry's support for work-life balance initiatives. With 30.3% claiming they get sufficient support and 27.6% seeing the industry as having full backing, the majority of the 370 participants are positive. In addition, 21.6% feel a moderate amount of support. On the other side, a small percentage of people think the industry isn't doing enough to assist; 10.8% are in favour and 9.7% are completely against. These results show that although most workers are aware of the hotel industry's attempts to improve work-life balance, some think these efforts are lacking.

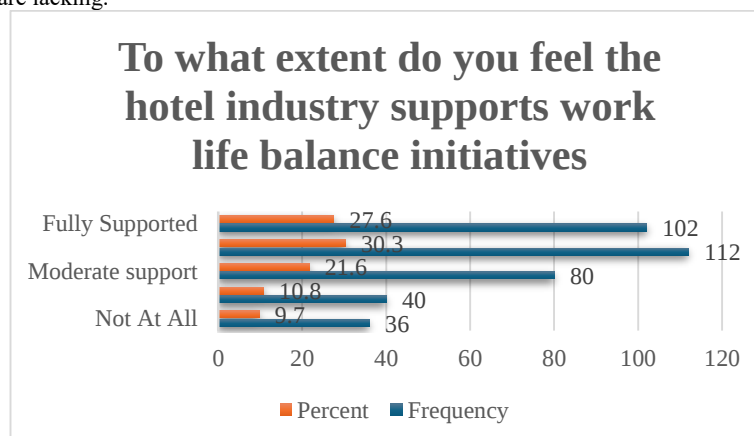


Figure 10: To what extent do you feel the hotel industry supports work life balance initiatives

CONCLUSION

Long hours, frequent overtime, and inconsistent shifts make it difficult for married women in Mumbai's hotel business to strike a work-life balance. This causes a lot of stress (70%), interference between work and family (68%), and guilt (68%). Results show that focused HR policies greatly increase work-life balance satisfaction, according to this survey of 370 participants.

While higher wages and more experience did contribute favourably, the most important factors in facilitating better balance were availability to childcare and family support services and flexible working hours. Still, systemic problems exist; for example, 72% of workers put in more than 10 hours a day, and 80% often put in extra hours or work on weekends. "The findings highlight that thoughtful implementation of women-centric HR policies—genuine scheduling flexibility, supportive leave provisions, family-friendly support systems, wellness programs, and empathetic understanding of family commitments—can effectively mitigate these challenges, reduce emotional strain, enhance well-being, improve job satisfaction, and boost retention."

Ultimately, it is the obligation of organisations, not just individuals, to ensure that married women in the hospitality industry are able to achieve a healthy work-life balance. Hotels that take the initiative to embrace and really execute these HR practices will do the right thing by society and also have an advantage in the market thanks to a female staff that is more dedicated, hard-working, and loyal. For married women to find a truly inclusive and viable career option in the hotel industry there must be industry-wide regulatory changes and collaborative initiatives.

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