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Are Women more work well being sufferer than men? Calculating work well being index of working women as compare to men in Pakistan

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Abstract: The outcomes of stress (poor performance, anxiety, absentees, intention to quit and chronological heart disease) enforce high economical cost on industries and societies by negatively affecting workforce. By improving the feelings of work well being of employees we can overcome this pertinent issues. This paper is presented to explore the significance and relationship of some key factors which perceived to affect work well being index. This study is also made to find the work well being index of working women as compare to men using Asian Sample (Pakistan). Data was gathered through male and female public sector employees working in different cities of Pakistan. A well reliable interval scale questionnaire was self-administered. Results show no significant difference in work well being index between women and men. It was also found that there is insignificant relationship of work interference with family and job support with work well being index.

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1. Introduction

From the introduction of employee as an inimitable asset of an organization, researchers start focusing on employee aspect of organization to add value in the perception of employees about their work and work place. they tried to find basic factors that cause improvement in their work performance and job satisfaction that ultimately increase employee retention rate and cause better feelings of work well being. Work stress in the form of strain, distress or hardship create hurdles in the way of efficient employee performance, destroying physical and mental health and cause frequent absentees that overall have negative impact on the smooth working of an organization (Bourbonnais & Mondor, 2001; Hammer, et al., 2004; Shiha, et al., 2010). In the view of researchers, feelings of wellbeing (improving personal situation) is even more important than rewards (Bokemeir, et al., 1987). Due to this importance many researchers on exploration of unhealthy stress (Kuchinke, et al., 2010), its association and impact on different issues like impact of work stress on driving outcomes (Rowden et al., 2011), poor performance and frequency of sick leaves (Bourbonnais & Mondor, 2001; Shiha, et al., 2010). Previous research supported that occupational stress causes unsafe driving and injury by reducing individual's alertness (Strahan et al., 2008). Significant relationship of work stress was found with the characteristics

of job (Bond, & David, 2001; Scheiman, et al., 2006) and psychosocial system (Kanji & Chopra, 2009).

Previous studies incorporated social support variable, job satisfaction and work family conflict (Scheiman, et al., 2003) in relation to work stress and work wellbeing, but impact of Work interference with family in combination of Job Support, job Demand, Job Control and Job Environment on work wellbeing was not found. Before and with the change of workforce composition, researchers diverted their intention to study each work related phenomenon with gender base differences. Globally in general and specifically in Asia and in Pakistan workplaces are still not friendly or attractive for women. So, this study tries to measure the differences between feelings work well being of among working women and men in Pakistan and in both cases find the most relevant factor affecting work well being index.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Work Well Being Index

Work well being is a perceive feelings related to work and workplace. Mental, physical and economic wellbeing of an individual highly depend on individual's work well being that is the basic reason why many scholars from different disciplines use their time and intention to study relationship between stress and fatal mental or physical diseases like cardiovascular or coronary heart disease (Karasek, 1979; Marmot et al., 1997) and sleep sickness (Kerstedta et al., 2002).

Work well being Index of individuals would be high in a situation when individuals have low work related stress and vice versa. So, we can say that work well being index is used to measure the degree of stress at workplace. Stress basically has two forms which are best described by A. Greiner (2008) as Eustress and distress which he inferred from previous psychological literature.

Eustress is the positive form of stress that is beneficial to an individual. This kind of stress or pressure is stimulating and enhances performance. However, when stress or pressure becomes too large such that the individual perceives himself unable to cope successfully with a situation, he is subject to distress, the negative form of work-related stress. (Greiner, 2008, p-336)

For the purpose of present paper I am considering stress only in the form of distress which is negatively associated work well being index. While studying previous work on stress the name of Karasek is prominent due to contributions he made individually as well as in coordination with other researchers. In order to measure the work stress variety of variables are being used but frequently used variables are job control (JC) and job demand (JD) which are present in every Karasek's paper presented on the topic of work stress.

Karasek and Theorell work stress model (1990) also included job support (JS) along with job control and job demand to measure work stress.Quite a reasonable number of studies found significant effect of job environment (JE) or working conditions on workplace stress (Kersledt et al., 2002; Knezenvic et al., 2011; Einarsen et al., 1994; Zapf, 1999). Kanji and Chopra model (2009) also used combination of above mentioned variables (Job Support, job Demand, Job Control and Job Environment) to study work well being index.

During the study of previous work on stress one must encounter with a number of papers that found strong relationship of work family interference or conflict with the presence of stress and considering it serious problem for wellbeing. (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Allen et al., 2000; Scheiman & Young, 2010; Shih et al., 2010)

As motivation of study is to find comparative work well being index (inversely degree of stress) in men and women and in such social setup like in Pakistan it is perceived that women have to face work related stress due to high degree of work family interference (WFI). Results of previous studies are mixed some found that no gender base difference exist in experiencing work family interference other reported that women experienced high level of interference than that of men. (Frone et al., 1990; Welter, 2004; Powel & Greenhaus, 2010). Due to vital importance of this variable (work family interference)

I have a justified reason to consider and measure it in addition to four (Job Support, job Demand, Job Control, Job Environment) used by Kanji and Chopra (2009) to calculate Work Wellbeing index.

2.2 Work Interference with Family (WIF)

For an individual Work family conflict is a source of perceived stress. Research paper presented by Greenhaus and Beutell(1985) is considered as landmark or guiding work in the studies of Work and Family Conflict according to which " Work Family Conflict (WFC) is a form of inter role conflict in which the role pressure from work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect"(Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p-77).

Greenhaus & Beutell paper (1985) further categorizes WFC into three forms i.e. Time base conflicts, Behavior base conflict and Strain base conflict. Time base conflict arises when individual can't manage his finite time appropriately among job and family. Behavior base conflict becomes evident when individual due to difference in required behavior (at work and home) become unable to exert relevant behavior. Strain base conflict becomes noticeable when stress or pressure received from one domain (either family or work) becomes hurdle for the smooth performance of other domain (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Natemeyer et al, 1996; Xu, 2008).

Addition to these three forms Work Family Conflict also reported to have two other dimensions or facets and above mentioned each form of Work Family Conflict can be described in following two dimensions. Work To Family Conflict: a situation in which work domain become the cause of interference in family domain and is said to be Work Interference with Family (WIF). Family to Work Conflict: a situation where family domain cause disturbance or interference in work domain and is widely known as Family Interference with Work (FIW). Similar explanation of WIF and FIW is given in previous studies (Frone, Russel & Cooper, 1992; Xu, 2008).

Wu, Cheng & Zhuang paper (2010) reported WIF (Work Interference with Family) as more dominant factor than FIW (Family Interference with Work) and also because, area of interest for this paper is to find the work well being index by considering different work related characteristics. This study taking only one dimension of Work Family, which is Work Interference with Family (WIF).

It is widely accepted that individuals have limited mental, physical and time resources. So, when long working hours and high physical mental job demand uses most of the finite resources then work starts interference with family life beyond individuals' level of tolerance and cause distress (Xu, 2008). Similarly from the definitions reported in previous work (Kopelmaun et al., 1983) Scheiman and Young (2010) infer that; "Work to Family Conflict involves the extend that individuals perceive work interfering with responsibilities and expectations of family competing for individuals finite time and energy" (Scheiman & Young, 2010,p-248)

Many researchers did valuable study in exploring the impact of Work Interference with Family (WIF) on different workplace issues and reported positive relationship between WIF with intention to turnover, burnout or distress etc. (major et al., 2002; Folley & Yue, 2005). While negative relationship with job performance, business success and work wellbeing (Allen et al., 2000; Shih et al., 2010; Wu, Chang & Zhuang, 2010). So from literature it can be inferred that:

H1: Work Interference with Family (WIF) is negatively related to Work Well Being Index.

2.3 Job Support

"Job Support includes encouragement by the organization and the peer group" (Kanji $ Chopra, 2009, p-567). Work or job would be considered supportive when it provides all types of support necessary to perform efficient work which can include adequate information and resources, opportunities and securities, encouragement and constructive feedback. Karasek and Theorell (1990) also added job support in Karasek's Job Control and Demand model (1979) to measure stress and found that low job support create work strain. Astrand (1989) is also reported that job support is negatively related with persistent

and perceived work strain. Kanji and Chopra (2009) in his model measure a positive relationship between job support and work well being index of an employee. So, it is easily inferred that:

H2: Job Support is directly related with Work Well Being Index.

2.4 Job Demand:

Job demand variable represents workload, physical or mental burden due to work and other requirements of work task etc. high job demand with low job control create serious detrimental effects on health (Karasek, 1979). Greiner(2008) also considered demand of work and control over work as determinants of work stress finding job demand has negative relationship with wellbeing and productivity. Similarly Pelfrene et al. (2001) reported that high job demand causes high stress. Results of studies also strengthen the negative relationship of job demand with work wellbeing (Karasek, 1979; Karasek & Theorell, 1990; Rijk et al., 1998; kanji & Choopra, 2009). Consistent with previous work it is hypothesized that:

H3: Job demand is inversely related with Work Well Being Index.

2.5 Job Control

"Job control is the extent to which people has discretion and choice in their work" (Bound & Bounce, 2001, p-292) job control variable. In this study used to measure the degree of autonomy in structuring and handling work related tasks, freedom to take initiatives or encouragement in developing and using new skills to face challenges and degree of consultation taken from individuals over their work (as in kanji-Choopra model, 2009). Individuals that have less control over their work are more prone to face work related problem and stress (Parker, Chmiel & wall, 1997) and work well being can be improved by increasing job control.

In past various studies has found a significant negative relationship between job control (decision latitude) and physical or psychological diseases. These studies concluded that low job control contributed towards coronary heart disease (Karasek, 1979; marmot et al., 1997) and low job control with low job support reported persistent work strain and highest mortality in Swidish pulp and paper industry (Astrand, 1989). Pelfrene et al. (2001) and parker et al. (1997) considered job control an important factor for job satisfaction and feeling of wellbeing. Previous papers found inverse relationship of job control with work stress (Karasek, 1979; Schaubroeck & Merrit, 1997) and direct relation with work wellbeing (Rijik et al., 1998; Kanji & Choopra, 2009). So, It is infered that:

H4: job control is positively related with Work Well Being Index.

2.6 Job Environment

A job environment is considered employee friendly when it provides freedom of expression, promote positive work behavior, avoid work related conflicts and contribute towards felling of work pleasure. Workplace bullying which is a major factor that has negative impact on work well being is also promoted due to unfavorable work environment (Agervold, 2004). Jeffery and Ellen (1988) also found positive relationship between stressful working conditions and cardiovascular heart disease. Consistently other studies also mention that bad psychosocial conditions at work create conflicts and work strain that ultimately resulting in poor work wellbeing (Einarsen et al., 1994; Zapf, 1999; Kanji Choopra, 2009). From previous studies it is suggested that:

H5: Job Environment is directly related with Work Well Being Index.

3. Methodology

Consistent with the topic of the study (Work well being index of working women as compare to men) focusing population is working women and men in different public sectors of Pakistan. Convenient sampling technique was used to draw sample which comprising of male and female respondents from banking, health, educational, telecom, manufacturing, marketing, research and technological sectors of Pakistan. Data was gathered through self- administered questionnaires along with this opinion of individuals were

taken by interview where possible. Total 115 questionnaires were distributed for each male and female. From male 105 were received and 102 were usable and from female 91 were received and 83 were usable. Hence response rate for men were 89% while for women it was 72%.

In order to measure demographic characteristics nominal and ratio scale were used. Work Interference with Family (WIF) is measured by using five item scale taken from Xu (2008) and he reported to adopt it from Netemeyer et al. (1996). It is a seven point scale from 1 (strongly Disagree) to 7 (strongly Agree). Highest score represent higher level of Work Interference with Family. Scale for remaining five variables were accessed from Kanji and Chopra work stress model (2009) and then adjusted for each variable for highest level of reliability. All five variables are measured on ten point scale from 1 (not at all) to 10 (very much). Statistics were separately applied on male and female data. Demographical differences were analyzed by using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were applied to observe relationship of dependent and independent variables (Table 1, 2, 3, 4) (Appendix A).

3.1 Results and Discussions

Table 1: *Demographics*

DEMOGRAPHICS					
Characteristic	**Groups**	**Male**	**%age**	**Female**	**%age**
Age	Below 30	81	79.4	71	85.5
	Above 30	21	20.6	12	14.5
Marital Status	Single	70	68.6	50	60.2
	Married	31	30.4	31	37.3
	Divorce /Sep	1	1	2	2.4
Qualification	Intermediate	12	11.8	18	21.7
	Graduation	52	51	27	32.5
	Master	38	37.3	38	45.8
Pro. Deg.	No	19	18.6	40	48.2
	Yes	83	81.4	43	51.8
Job Type	Managerial	46	45.1	26	31.3
	Non Managerial	56	54.9	57	68.7
Experience	Below 5 years	73	71.6	55	66.3
	5 to 10 years	22	21.6	21	25.3
	Above 10 years	7	6.9	7	8.4
Job Tenure	lessThan3Months	6	5.9	13	15.7
	3 To 6 Months	11	10.8	12	14.5
	6 Months And More	85	83.3	58	69.9
Working Hours	Below 36	11	10.8	6	7.2
	36 to 50	68	66.7	62	74.7
	Above 50	23	22.5	15	18.1

Table 2: *Correlation Analysis Female Respondents*

Correlations Analysis (female)								
	Mean	**Std. Deviation**	**WIF**	**JS**	**JD**	**JC**	**JE**	**WWB**
WIF	4.8892	1.41119	(0.833)					
JS	6.1277	2.47082	-.249*	(0.875)				
JD	5.2988	2.25353	.255*	0.117	(0.784)			
JC	6.1084	2.08766	-0.213	.636**	-0.021	(0.76)		
JE	6.5084	2.32847	-0.171	.561**	0.03	.655**	(0.851)	
WWB	5.5972	2.34055	-.317**	.394**	-.302**	.653**	.689**	0.846

* significant at the 0.05

** Significant at the 0.01.

N= 83, (Alpha)

Table 3: *Correlation Analysis Male Respondents*

Correlations Analysis (male)								
	Mean	Std. Deviation	WIF	JS	JD	JC	JE	WWB
WIF	4.5049	1.62894	0.906					
JS	5.8118	2.21852	0.034	0.865				
JD	5.5059	2.2723	.394**	0.102	0.847			
JC	5.5637	1.91845	-0.108	.643**	0.083	0.857	.572**	
JE	6.0314	1.92282	-0.144	.683**	0.025	.572**	0.817	
WWB	5.1127	1.94806	-.231*	.501**	-0.156	.647**	.718**	0.849

* significant at the 0.05

** Significant at the 0.01.

N= 102, Alpha in parenthesis

Table 4: *Regression analysis of male and females*

Regression Table (Female)*[1]			
	Beta	t	Sig.
WIF	-0.114	-1.575	0.119
JS	-0.121	-1.316	0.192
JD	-0.267	-3.77	0
JC	0.37	3.764	0
JE	0.503	5.526	0
Regression Table (Male)*[2]			
	Beta	t	Sig.
WIF	-0.027	-0.394	0.695
JS	-0.146	-1.562	0.122
JD	-0.18	-2.708	0.008
JC	0.424	5.155	0
JE	0.576	6.633	0

*1 Dependent Variable: WWB, R2 : 0.658, adjusted R2 : 0.635, F: 29.582, Sig: 000

*2 Dependent Variable: WWB, R2 : 0.649, adjusted R2 : 0.631, F:35.565,Sig:000

H1 and H2 are not significantly proved. Its mean that in underlying sample (both male and female), work interference with family and job support is not much relevant for the work well being index.

H3, H4 and H5 are accepted at 99.9% confidence value. This shows that Job Demand has inverse relationship with work well being index (Karasek, 1979; Karasek & Theorell, 1990; Rijk et al., 1998; kanji & Choopra, 2009) and job control (Rijik et al., 1998; Kanji & Choopra, 2009) and job environment (Einarsen et al., 1994; Zapf, 1999; Kanji Choopra, 2009) proved to have direct and positive relationship with work well being index.

4. Conclusions

The results of underlying study variables differ from the previous researches. As during study of Asian sample result differ from Western studies on the basis of some cultural differences. Similarly combine family system mitigate negative impact of work interference with family on work well being. Demographic composition of sample also contributes towards this result, as more than 60% respondents are single as material status concerns analysis of work interference with family (WIF) suggests that WIF is significantly related to material status.

In literature, job support is predicted to have a positive relation with work wellbeing but in this study analysis, find this relation insignificant as contrary to previous studies. The main reason behind this abnormality is that more than 75% respondents having professional degrees which made Job support variable slightly irrelevant.

This study has few limitations.It fails to reveal any significant difference of work well being index between working women and men. This research also has some limitations as convenient sampling technique is used and most backward provinces of Pakistan being not captured here also a large cluster of female sample comprises of educational sector employee which supposed to enjoy good working condition for female.

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Appendix A

Characteristic	Professional Degree		Marital Status		Working Hours		
Groups	No	Yes	Single	Married	Below 36	36 to 50	Above 50
Male	19	83	70	31	11	68	23
%age	18.6	81.4	68.6	30	10.8	66.7	22.5
Female	40	43	50	31	6	62	15
%age	48.2	51.8	60.2	37	7.2	74.7	18.1