



A study of relationship between religiosity and work-life balance

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ABSTRACT

Religiosity is important to frame of reference which gives directions to an individual how to face certain situations. Accordingly, issues at work and home, which take shape in the form of demands and resources provide challenge and opportunity for individuals. Religiosity gives shape to one's belief system, is a code of ethics and provides a mode of conduct regarding behaving with fellow humans. It is important to study the influence of religiosity on Work-Life Balance (WLB), ever so now as a more diversified workforce are joining the workplace. With this idea in mind, the paper seek to relate religiosity with work-life interface. 294 sample of women employees in health industry formed part of empirical study. The findings suggest that religiosity is not fully related to work-life interface, however, it does provide as means for reducing the experience of conflict. Obviously, how women approach situation in the workplace will be shaped by how religiosity plays a role in that individual's life. Very few studies have focused on this dimension while seeking to understand WLB. The paper suggests for a more intensive qualitative research studies on religiosity and WLB.

INTRODUCTION

WLB, the expression which came in limelight during 1970's has got the researchers' attention all over the globe. WLB is considered as a private issue (Emslie and Hunt, 2009). Work-life balance is a broad concept including proper prioritizing between career and ambition on one hand, compared with pleasure, leisure, family and spiritual development on the other. Work in context of work-life balance means paid work. Life means activities

outside paid work like family, religion, society, hobbies, entertainment etc. Balance means when both the domains (work and life) are going well to render satisfying living. So, work-life balance as a concept implies satisfying roles in both paid work and non- paid work. The concept of Work-life balance is backed with various theories such as: Segmentation theory, Spill over theory, Compensation theory, Conflict theory.

Segmentation theory sees the domains of work and life as separate, where each domain requires time and

involvement. Blood and Wolfe (1960) who were pioneers of this perspective, applied this concept to blue collar workers. However, this view of segmentation was challenged by researchers who demonstrated that work and family are closely related domains of human life. Spill over theory suggests that the two roles can affect in a positive or negative way. It sees the two domains as interrelated where one domain influences the other. Many Researchers suggested that workers carry emotions, skills, attitudes and behaviour from work into family. As per Spill over theory, the experience from job (spill-over) can be positive or negative. Positive spill-over is one where satisfaction and achievement in one domain is carried to other domain. Negative spill-over leads to unsatisfying and non- achievement (difficulties and depression) in one domain intrude into other domain. The Compensation theory sees the life and work domains in a different way where lacking in one domain can be made up in another domain. For example, the work domain is routine but life domain gives one opportunity to participate in community programmes.

The above aspect of work-life balance touches positive side of work-life interaction. But, there exists negative side of work-life balance which takes shape in work-life conflict-Conflict theory. Balance of work and life as a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures of the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985). The two sides (positive and negative) of work-life interaction are best understood as two continuums where work- life balance is one continuum and other is work-life conflict. Work-life conflict (WLC) is ever growing concern and challenge for employees all over the globe. Researchers have come up with evidences where employees regardless of gender experience incompatibility between life roles and work roles. The researchers are growingly studying the two directions of work-life conflict namely work-life conflict (WLC) and life-work conflict (LWC). Not only can work demands be a cause of worry for employee but life demands (especially family responsibilities) too cause worry.

WLB as a concept has evolved a lot over the recent 50 years' time. Traditionally, WLB was an issue more or less related to women and her effort to balance job responsibilities and work obligations. Throughout the 60s and 70s, the business houses felt balancing issues of work-life limited to women only where they struggled

between family expectations and professional obligations (Satpathy *et al.*, 2014). In the era of 1990s, the attention was on the development of work-family research to formerly less studied population in the United States of America— ethnic groups, single-parent families, and poor working families (Pruitt and Rapoport, 2002). At the turn of millennium, WLB has absorbed groups like working couples, singles, males, students, skilled/unskilled workers, and same sex couples. The issue is not restricted to individuals of a particular age (between 20-50 years) as WLB of teens and the elderly are also being studied.

Organizations too have responded with initiatives which help employees manage WLB, spotting the stress they have to face in the work environment. Prior studies confirm that favourable working environments which encourage WLB arrangements have potential benefits for both employers and employees (Hill *et al.*, 2001). In the present era, these outcomes are more relevant, as competition is heading from survival to sustainability. Companies in order to sustain and reach newer heights of progress, its human resource potential play a corner stone. For achieving that, employees' with proper WLB can produce better commitment towards work for increasing productivity and growth of an organization. Further, at the individual level, a healthy and less stressed employee can maximize its potential to realize personal goals. Beauregard and Henery (2009) pointing towards the business case of WLB practices influencing organization performance measures- social exchange processes, increased cost savings, improved productivity, and reduced turnover.

Religion and work-life interface :

At the global level, religion plays a central role in the majority of people lives. Religion for many people around the world is looked as peace giver and provider of right direction in lives. Religion plays an important role to the lives of millions of people (McCullough and Willoughby, 2009). For many people, religion and spirituality mean same thing; acquiring peace through connecting to supernatural power. However, these two in true sense are different, as religion is source of providing direction to lead a life, whereas spirituality is part of the religion, which provides peace of mind for a moment or so. Commonly, religion is perceived as a social affair, whereas spirituality is viewed as a personal journey (Duffy and Blustein, 2005). But, of late only little has

been studied in the realm of WLB. Özbilgin *et al.* (2011) reasons, 'religion does not include as the main inspiration in the way work-life interface is organized in contemporary societies'.

Religious support consist of three major aspects: spiritual sustenance, congregational sustenance and faith-based resources in reducing the work-family stresses (Boyce, 2006). Ammons and Edgell (2007) observed the influence of religion in managing work and family commitments; religion influences time or attention devoted to either work or family roles. There has been divergent ways to measure religiosity- based on belief, practices and rituals. Bjarnason (2007) exploration of the articulation between patient and provider; religiosity reveals that there are many instruments for assessing and measuring religiosity and they are used in different ways. Patel and Cunningham (2012) found the role of religiosity to be associated with a person's level of resources, which permitted them to manage with work-family conflict and achieve work-family balance. Religiosity can be negatively associated with work-life conflict, suggesting the possibility of religious roles to be rewarding and enriching rather than conflicting (Sav *et al.*, 2012). Religiosity moderates the relationship between the work interference life as religiosity committed individual see time spend in work as way to provide for the needs of family. Australian Muslim men experience low levels of interference and the pattern is similar to that found among workers from societies known to uphold collectivistic cultural values, as a result job demands are a stronger predictor of interference than work hours (Sav *et al.*, 2011).

Women specify the role of religion is highly significant in their lives experiencing less conflict between the behaviours executed at home and those executed at work (Elliyoon, 2010). However, Achour *et al.* (2011) reveals, for Muslim women, religion not moderating the relationship between work/family demands and employees' well-being. Religious participation acts as a forecaster of resource gain and loss, affect coping strategies and perceptions of bi-directional WFC and facilitation, indicators of work-family balance (Patel and Cunningham, 2012). Religiosity can be valuable for work-life balance, rather than competing with work and other non-work roles of time and energy. Also, religiosity can moderate the relationships between job demands and work-to-life

conflict, and work hours and work-to-life conflict (Sav, 2016).

Demands/Resources and religion :

Major religions of the world do instruct its followers to undergo certain rituals and practices to follow the religion. As a point in case, 3 Abrahamic based religion- Islam, Christianity and Judaism, command and expect its followers to perform certain practices- Salah (five prayers) for Muslims, three daily prayers for followers of Judaism with observing Sabbath as weekly rest day, Sunday as church gathering for Christians. Religious participation is a fixed resource (Voydanoff, 2004), however, at the same time, the fulfilment of these religious practices may place additional demands on the person, leading to work-life conflict. Although for a Muslim, five daily prayers provide a way to form social relations, but requires time to be managed out of personal commitments. Religious participation (*i.e.* church attendance) can promote beneficial social networks, social relations may also be a source of stress (Williams and Sternthal, 2007). Social networks and relationships can demand a person's time and effort, which may clash with other life commitments.

On the flip side, religiosity has potential to heal people spiritually so as to cope with work-life conflict and accomplish work-life facilitation. There are considerable research evidences wherein religion, as a personal resource, can inspire people to cope with negative stressors and heal from negative life events (Patel and Cunningham, 2012; Williams and Sternthal, 2007). Research has shown with regard to religious adherence produce positive relationships to physical and spiritual health outcomes -illness recovery, coping with pressure, psychological health, self-esteem and overall life satisfaction (McCullough and Willoughby, 2009). Religious participation may facilitate social support and revitalize emotional resources as result of social ties with fellow people who share a common worldview (Byrne *et al.*, 2011). The Conservation of resources (COR) model proposes that individual recovery helps people gain new resources to help restore threatened or lost resources. Therefore, consistent with the COR theory, religiosity may help to replenish depleted resources that are lost in the performance of balancing work and life roles, thereby protecting workers against work-life conflict. In view of above discussion, the following objectives were set:

- To assess relationship of work-life balance and religiosity of women employees
- To examine influence of prayers on work-life balance of committed women employees
- To examine influence of religious practices on work-life balance of women employees.

2018 within the districts of Srinagar. Major public tertiary care hospitals that exist here are mentioned below;

- Sheri Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS)
- Shri Maharaja Hari Singh Hospital (SMHS)
- Lal Ded Hospital (LDH)
- Government Hospital for Children (GHC)

MATERIAL AND METHODS

RM provides a description of overall approach followed by the researcher to fulfill the objectives of the study. As in social sciences, the researcher has limited flexibility to control other variables which may impact the results, accordingly the design of the present study is ex-post facto. Further, information stood collected at one time, lending the study time frame which is cross-sectional one. A survey was conducted from Jan to Feb

Accordingly, the present study included a population-female doctors and nurses working in the public sector of Kashmir, as there is a good presence of women employees in the health sector. Accordingly, the present study has taken a sample as “female working doctors and nurses” from both clinical and nonclinical fields in the public sector. Sample was selected based on snowball sampling technique within the various public hospitals of Srinagar. The present study used

Sr. No.	Particulars	Total no. of statements	Statement numbers
1.	Work-life balance (WLB)	21	1 to 21
	Work interference personal life (WIPL)	9	1 to 9
	Personal life interference work (PLIW)	7	10 to 16
	Work personal life enhancement (WPLE)	5	17 to 21
2.	Religiosity	9	22 to 30
	Prayers	3	22 to 25
	Other religious practices	6	26 to 30

Total questionnaires distributed	Response received	Suspicious pattern detected		Final sample size (n)
460	355 (77 %)	77		278
Designation	Doctors	Nurses		Academics
	95 (34 %)	137 (49%)		46 (17%)
Age groups	Below 25	25 -<35	35 - <45	45 and above
	39 (14 %)	150 (54 %)	54 (19 %)	37 (13 %)
Experience	< 1 year	1 - 5 years	5 - 10 years	10 + years
	42 (15%)	111 (40%)	58 (21%)	67 (24%)
Marital status	Married		Unmarried	
	170 (61%)		108 (39%)	
Line of work	Clinical		Nonclinical	
	213 (77%)		65 (23%)	
Employment type	Permanent		Contractual	
	154 (55%)		124 (45%)	
Family size	< 5	5-8	9-12	12+
	111 (40%)	148 (53%)	11 (4%)	08 (3%)
No. of children	0	1	2	3 and above
	142 (51%)	36 (13%)	66 (24%)	34 (12%)
Home and workplace distance (in kms)	Less than 5	5-15	15-25	25 and above
	46 (17%)	137 (49%)	48 (17%)	47 (17%)

ITEMS	N	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	ITEMS	N	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
WIPL1	278	3.88	1.11	-1.23	0.85	PLIW6	278	2.56	1.14	0.48	-0.73
WIPL2	278	3.56	1.15	-0.62	-0.51	PLIW7	278	2.37	1.05	0.64	-0.36
WIPL3	278	3.67	1.10	-0.66	-0.41	PRYR1	278	3.90	0.99	-0.94	0.38
WIPL4	278	3.58	1.23	-0.59	-0.82	PRYR2	278	4.35	0.80	-1.84	0.82
WIPL5	278	3.34	1.26	-0.34	-1.14	PRYR3	278	4.42	0.83	-2.12	1.79
WIPL6	278	3.54	1.20	-0.69	-0.50	REPR1	278	3.13	1.19	-0.13	-0.96
WIPL7	278	3.34	1.14	-0.32	-1.01	REPR2	278	4.01	0.86	-1.46	2.98
WIPL8	278	4.01	1.00	-1.30	1.37	REPR3	278	2.96	1.24	-0.06	-1.12
WIPL9	170	2.88	1.26	0.03	-1.14	REPR4	278	3.05	1.19	-0.12	-0.98
PLIW1	278	2.72	1.15	0.29	-0.96	REPR5	278	2.98	1.15	-0.07	-0.96
PLIW2	278	2.58	1.15	0.36	-0.85	REPR6	278	2.51	1.10	0.50	-0.56
PLIW3	278	2.31	1.17	0.71	-0.47	PLIW4	278	2.48	1.30	0.48	-1.03
PLIW5	278	2.72	1.24	0.33	-1.06						

questionnaire as a research instrument for collecting data on work-life balance. The items for the latent constructs of work-life balance, were taken from developed scales. However, latent constructs items for religiosity were self-developed. The scale used for measurement of individuals WLB was adapted from two studies done in different contexts. The uniqueness of the scale emanate from the fact that it covers three dimensions within work-life balance –WIPL, PLIW and WPLE. For giving a contextual edge of the study, the researcher used Indian context based work-life balance scale items – WIPL, PLIW from (Banu and Duraipandian, 2014) study on IT professionals. Further, to measure WLPE dimension of respondents (Hayman, 2005) scale items were used.

Demographics characteristics of respondents :

The following Table B presents a description, including a number of questionnaires distributed in various hospitals:

The psychometric properties of the instruments employed in this study included-Confirmatory Factor Analysis, (CFA), has been performed on the scales, besides convergent validity, composite reliability, commonalities, AVE and discriminant validity. The structural models are analysed using the Partial Least Square (PLS) approach to Multiple Linear Regression. Cases with missing data above a specified threshold were dealt with Median Replacement Method (MRM). Data cases with missing data more than 10% were eliminated, and for cases lesser than 10%, median replacement method (Gaskin and Lynch, 2003) was employed. In order to check the normality of data, which is one of the

fundamental assumptions of regression, techniques like univariate analysis has been made in the study.

From the Table C, it can be observed that skewness and kurtosis values are within the range of ± 3 of manifest variables. Moreover, the present study employed partial least squares approach to structural equation modeling where bootstrapping technique is considered appropriate whether the data follows normality or not.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The results obtained from the present investigation as well as relevant discussion have been summarized under following heads :

Validity and reliability :

Measures of reliability reported are Factor Loadings, Block Communalities, Dillion-Goldsteins rho, while as measures of validity reported include Convergent validity. Factor loadings need to be examined before observing reliability estimates. Accordingly, Items having to load below 0.70 were identified and the reason for their deletion or non-deletion was justified in the light of scientific research.

The items that hold the loading above 0.66 were included in the relevant construct only if an additional psychometric (*i.e.*, D-G's rho, Convergent validity and Discriminant validity) attain the minimum threshold level as recommended by researchers (Bradley *et al.*, 2006 and Hair *et al.*, 1998).

For convergent validity, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values were examined. Constructs having AVE value greater than 0.5 indicate convergent validity

(Anderson and Gerbing, 1988).

Structural equation modeling :

As can be seen from the Table 3, there is a statistically insignificant relationship between religiosity

LV	Indicators	Loadings	Commonality
Prayers	PRYR1	0.87	0.76
	PRYR2	0.88	0.77
	PRYR3	0.85	0.72
Other religious practices	REPR1	0.71	0.50
	REPR2	0.38	0.14
	REPR3	0.76	0.58
	REPR4	0.81	0.66
	REPR5	0.82	0.67
	REPR6	0.65	0.42
Work interference personal life	WIPL1	0.39	0.15
	WIPL2	0.62	0.38
	WIPL3	0.48	0.23
	WIPL4	0.72	0.52
	WIPL5	0.73	0.53
	WIPL6	0.65	0.42
	WIPL7	0.71	0.50
	WIPL8	0.56	0.31
	WIPL9	-0.16	0.03
Personal life interference work	PLIW 1	0.71	0.48
	PLIW 2	0.79	0.62
	PLIW 3	0.62	0.38
	PLIW 4	0.64	0.44
	PLIW 5	0.64	0.41
	PLIW 6	0.73	0.53
	PLIW 7	0.67	0.42
Work personal life enhancement	WPLE1	0.76	0.58
	WPLE2	0.68	0.46
	WPLE3	0.74	0.55
	WPLE4	0.63	0.40
	WPLE5	0.75	0.56

Note: LV = Latent variable

and work-life balance as the t-value is less than 1.96 threshold level. In addition, the predictive capacity of religiosity as explaining variance in work-life balance is weak as R² assumes 0.120 value. Therefore, the relationship between religiosity and work-life balance is backed by insignificant statistical data rendering rejection of hypothesis for the present study. However, a deeper analysis revealed results which give a closer understanding of the effect of religiosity on work-life balance and its dimensions. Accordingly, the following further analysis is done:

As can be seen from Table 4, the t-value for sub-variables of religiosity is below 1.96 level indicating that the hypothesis predicted does not carry enough statistical significance, hence it is rejected. However, work-life balance defined in the present study leaves analysis incomplete without observing a relationship with work-life dimensions separately to reveal more insights.

Prayers :

As can be seen from Table 5, prayers (PRYR) have statistical significance with work-life enhancement (WPLE) since the t-value is above 1.96 level. It can be seen that offering prayers do provide that spiritual high which enhances life and work. Sav *et al.* (2010) in his research findings revealed that daily prayers help to infuse positive resources serving as a cherished halt from work obligations. Sav (2016) predicted that religiosity to be negatively associated with work-to-life conflict, life-to-work conflict and positively associated with the work/life facilitation.

Other religious commitments :

Further, as can be observed from the Table 5, there is statistical significance in the relationship between religious commitments (REPR) and work-interfering personal life (WIPL) as t-value is above the threshold level of 1.96. There is seen to be a negative relationship

LV's	MV's	D-G's rho	Average variance extracted
		Composite reliability	Convergent validity
Prayers	3	0.87	0.70
Other religious practices	5	0.88	0.58
Work interference personal life	4	0.84	0.52
Personal life interference work	4	0.84	0.51
Work personal life enhancement	4	0.83	0.55

Note:*LV's = Latent Variables; MV's = Manifest variables; D-G rho = Dhillion-Goldesteins rho

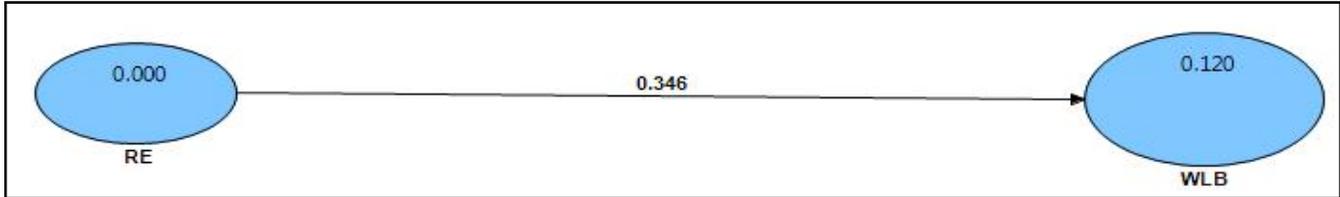


Fig. 1 : Path graph of independent and dependent variable relationship (step-1)

Table 3 : Structural model assessment (PLS Path Model between IV –DV) (Step-1)

Exogenous Variables -> Endogenous Variables	P. Estimate	Std. Error	t-value
RE -> WLB	0.3458	0.3679	0.9397

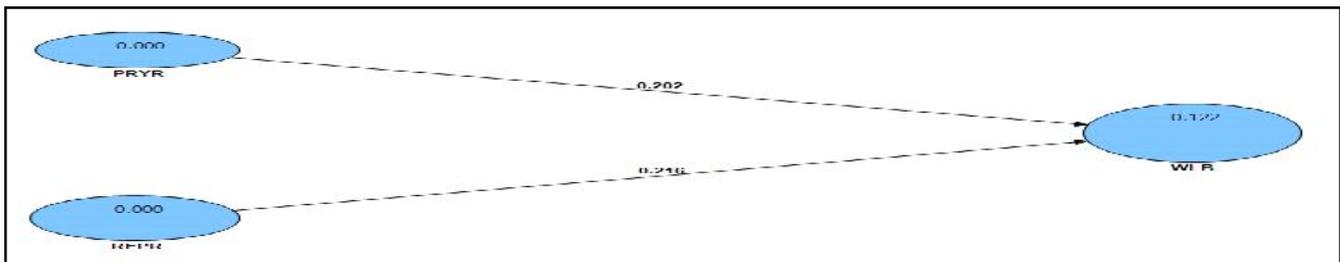


Fig. 2 : Path graph of independent and dependent variable relationship (step-2)

Table 4 : Structural model assessment (PLS Path Model between IV –DV) (Step-2)

Exogenous Variables -> Endogenous Variables	P. Estimate	Std. Error	t-value
PRYR -> WLB	0.202	0.21	0.96
REPR -> WLB	0.216	0.24	0.91

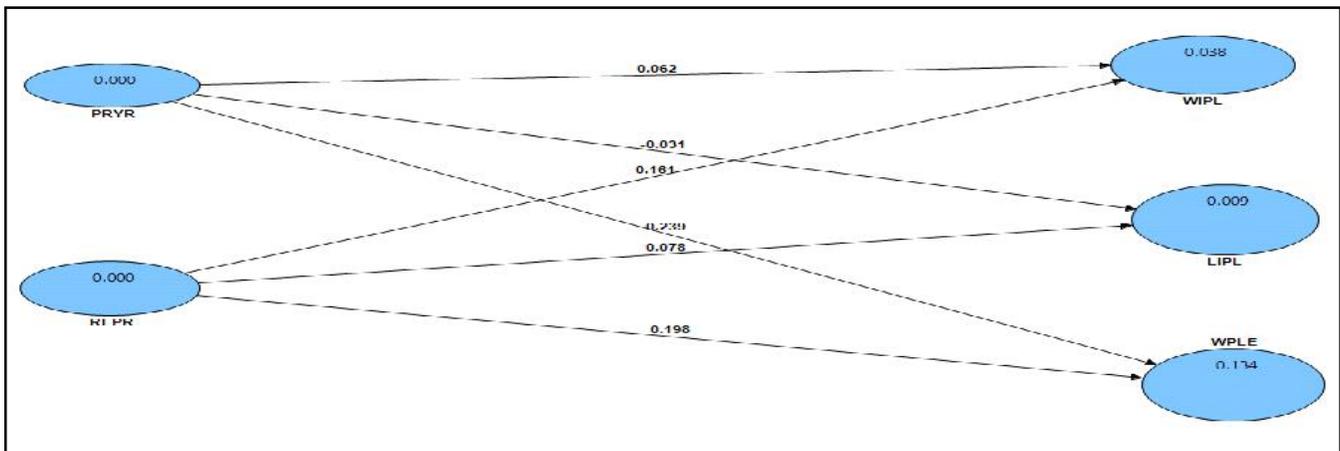


Fig. 3 : Path graph of independent and dependent variable relationship (Step- 3)

between religious commitments and work interfering personal life as indicated by a P-estimate value which is negative. To Muslim employees, religiosity could be

negatively related to work-life conflict hinting that religious practices to be inspiring than conflicting (Sav and Harris, 2013). However, as can be seen from Table

Table 5 : Structural model assessment (HYP-3-PLS path model between IV –DV) (Step- 3)			
Exogenous variables -> Endogenous variables	P. Estimate	Std. Error	t-value
PRYR ->LIPL	-0.031	0.10	0.31
PRYR -> WIPL	-0.062	0.09	0.70
PRYR -> WPLE	0.239	0.06	4.35
REPR -> LIPL	-0.078	0.09	0.86
REPR -> WIPL	-0.161	0.07	2.40
REPR -> WPLE	0.198	0.06	3.50

5, there is statistical significance in the relationship between religious practices (REPR) and work-life enhancement (WPLE) since the t-value is more than 1.96 level. The positive relationship as indicated by the P-estimate value suggests that as other religious practices are taken, this has potential to enhance the work and life of employees. The religious practices like visiting shrines, giving charity watching religious programmes and reading religious scripture can be invigorating to cause both domains enriched.

The present study found an insignificant statistical relationship between religiosity and work-life balance (Table 3). The results are partially consistent with the findings of other research studies, where relationships between religiosity and other work-life dimensions were not fully related (Sav, 2016). Further, religiosity has been seen to partially influence dimensions of WLB (Boyce, 2006; Sav *et al.*, 2015). Other researchers have seen the moderating role of religiosity (Achour *et al.*, 2011). From the religiosity perspective, prayers were not seen statistically significant to reduce bi-directional work-life conflict. On one side, it was seen that prayers do provide spiritual high as indicated by statistical significance for WLE (Table 5) which are consistent with findings of (Sav *et al.*, 2013). However, on the flip side, religious practices like charity, religious scriptures, religious programmes and visiting shrines was seen to cause interference in work as indicated with a high relationship with work interference in personal life (Table 5). Religious practices like visiting shrines, religious programs and reading religious scripture do take time, which makes less time available for work.

Conclusion and future scope :

The study involved religiosity into its model, as religiosity is important frame of reference providing inspiration to an individual on how to face certain situations. Accordingly, issues at work and home, which

take shape in the form of demands and resources provide challenge and opportunity situations for individuals. Further, religiosity gives shape to one's belief system, is a code of ethics and provides a mode of conduct regarding behaving with fellow humans. As increased number of diversified workforce are joining the workplace, it is important to study the influence of religiosity on WLB, ever so now. Obviously, how they approach the situation in the workplace will be shaped how religiosity plays a role in that individual's life. Very few studies have focused on this dimension while seeking to understand WLB. A more intensive qualitative research can be taken by studying the influence of religiosity on WLB.

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