

A Study on Work–Life Integration Practices for Staff Nurses in Private Hospitals of Tirunelveli District

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Abstract

The present study examines work–life integration practices among staff nurses working in private hospitals in Tirunelveli District. Nurses play a crucial role in delivering quality healthcare services, but their profession often involves long working hours, shift duties, and high levels of responsibility. In this context, maintaining a balance between personal and professional life becomes essential. The study aims to analyse the challenges faced by nurses, assess their level of awareness, and examine the overall impact of work–life integration practices. Primary data were collected from 120 staff nurses using a structured questionnaire with a five-point scale. The findings indicate that workload, shift schedules, and limited flexibility influence work–life integration, while supportive policies can improve both personal well-being and professional performance. The study concludes that strengthening work–life integration practices in private hospitals can enhance nurse satisfaction and organizational effectiveness.

Keywords: Work–Life Integration, Staff Nurses, Private Hospitals, Workload, Job Satisfaction

I. INTRODUCTION

The healthcare sector is one of the most important service sectors contributing to social and economic development. In Tamil Nadu, private hospitals play a significant role in delivering medical services to the public. These hospitals largely depend on the efficiency and commitment of staff nurses, who form the backbone of patient care. Nurses are responsible for continuous patient monitoring, assisting doctors, maintaining records, and ensuring smooth hospital functioning. Their contribution is essential for maintaining the quality and effectiveness of healthcare services.

Work–life integration refers to the ability of employees to effectively manage both their professional responsibilities and personal life without conflict. It focuses on creating supportive work practices that help employees balance their time, energy, and commitments. In demanding professions like nursing, proper work–life integration is important to reduce stress, improve job satisfaction, and enhance overall performance. It not only benefits employees but also improves the quality of healthcare services provided by hospitals. For this reason, the present paper attempts to examine work–life integration practices among staff nurses in private hospitals.

Statement of the problem

The healthcare sector plays a crucial role in ensuring the wellbeing of society. Among healthcare professionals, staff nurses occupy a key position as they are directly involved in patient care and hospital operations. Their role demands continuous attention, emotional involvement, and professional commitment.

Private hospitals, in particular, have experienced significant growth in recent years and are known for structured management systems, advanced facilities, and performance-oriented work culture. They often provide certain work–life integration practices such as leave benefits, shift systems, and supportive policies. However, despite these provisions, staff nurses may still experience work pressure due to long working hours, shift duties, performance expectations, and patient responsibilities.

At the same time, nurses also manage personal and family responsibilities, which may create additional challenges in balancing their work and personal lives. The extent to which staff nurses are aware of and able to access work–life integration practices in private hospitals remains unclear. Therefore, it becomes necessary to examine the awareness, impact, and challenges related to work–life integration practices among staff nurses in private hospitals of Tirunelveli District.

Scope of the Study

Geographical Scope

The study is geographically confined to Tirunelveli District. Tirunelveli is an important district in Tamil Nadu with a well-developed healthcare infrastructure. It is known as a pilgrimage and commercial center, which increases the demand for healthcare services. The presence of Government Head Hospitals and medical colleges further highlights the district's significance in the healthcare sector. Along with public institutions, the district also has a considerable number of private hospitals employing staff nurses. For the purpose of the study, selected private hospitals from major areas of the district are considered. Therefore, Tirunelveli District provides a suitable setting to examine work–life integration practices among staff nurses in private hospitals.

Subject Scope

The subject scope of the study is confined to work–life integration practices followed in private hospitals and their awareness, impact, and challenges faced by staff nurses in accessing these practices. It also includes suggestions to strengthen work–life integration practices.

Review of Literature

Lakshmi & Priya (2021), “*Work–Life Balance among Staff Nurses in Private Hospitals*” The study examined the work–life balance of staff nurses working in private hospitals. The primary objective was to analyse the level of work–life balance and its impact on job satisfaction. The study adopted a descriptive research design with a sample of 120 staff nurses selected using convenience sampling, and data were collected through a structured questionnaire. The major findings revealed that irregular shifts and heavy workload significantly affected work–life balance, which in turn influenced job satisfaction. The study concluded that supportive organizational policies are essential to improve nurses' work–life balance.¹

Kumar & Devi (2020), “*Work–Life Integration and Occupational Stress among Healthcare Professionals*” This study focused on examining the relationship between work–life integration and occupational stress among healthcare employees. The primary objective was to identify how work–life integration practices reduce stress levels. An analytical research design was adopted with a sample of 150 healthcare professionals, and data were analysed using correlation analysis. The findings indicated a significant negative relationship between work–life integration

practices and stress levels. The study concluded that effective integration practices enhance employee wellbeing and reduce burnout.²

Ramesh & Anitha (2022), “*Organizational Support and Work–Life Balance in Hospitals*” The study analysed the role of organizational support in promoting work–life balance among hospital staff. The primary objective was to assess the effectiveness of institutional practices supporting employees. A descriptive research design was used with 100 respondents selected through simple random sampling, and data were analysed using percentage and chi-square tests. The major findings showed that flexible scheduling and leave policies positively influenced employees’ satisfaction. The study concluded that hospitals must strengthen supportive measures to improve work–life integration outcomes.³

Objectives

- To examine the level of awareness of work–life integration practices among staff nurses in private hospitals of Tirunelveli District.
- To analyses the impact of work–life integration practices among staff nurses.
- To identify the challenges faced by staff nurses in accessing work–life integration practices.
- To suggest appropriate measures to strengthen work–life integration practices in private hospitals.

Research Methodology

The present study adopts a descriptive research design to examine the work–life integration practices among staff nurses in private hospitals of Tirunelveli District. Both primary and secondary data were used for the study. Primary data were collected from 120 staff nurses working in selected private hospitals located in major areas of Tirunelveli District through a structured questionnaire. Six private hospitals were considered for the study, and approximately 20 staff nurses from each hospital were included as respondents. A convenience sampling technique was adopted to select the respondents. Secondary data were gathered from journals, books, reports, and relevant online sources. The collected data were analysed using percentage analysis and mean score to draw meaningful conclusions.

Analysis and interpretation

Challenges faced by staff nurses

Table 1
Challenges faced by staff nurses

Challenges	Total score	Mean score	Rank
Heavy workload and patient responsibilities	449	3.7	I
Limited flexibility in shift scheduling	420	3.5	II
Difficulty in availing leave due to staff shortage	420	3.5	II
Lack of awareness about available policies	414	3.4	IV
Lack of management support in personal emergencies	399	3.3	V
Fear of negative evaluation while requesting leave	391	3.2	VI
Inadequate communication regarding hospital policies	386	3.1	VII

Source: Computed Data

The above table shows the weighted arithmetic mean score analysis of the challenges faced by staff nurses in accessing work–life integration practices. The first rank goes to “Heavy workload and patient responsibilities” (3.74). The second rank is shared by “Limited flexibility in shift scheduling” (3.50) and “Difficulty in availing leave due to staff shortage” (3.50). The fourth rank goes to “Lack of awareness about available policies” (3.45). The fifth rank is secured by “Lack of management support in personal emergencies” (3.32). The sixth rank goes to “Fear of negative evaluation while requesting leave” (3.26). The seventh rank goes to “Inadequate communication regarding hospital policies” (3.22).

Measures to Strengthen Work–Life Integration

Table 2
Measures to Strengthen Work–Life Integration

Suggestions	Total score	Mean score	Rank
Introducing clear and transparent leave policies.	474	3.9	III
Providing flexible shift scheduling options for staff nurses.	504	4.2	I
Establishing counseling and stress management programmes.	432	3.6	VI
Providing management support during personal emergencies.	462	3.8	IV
Ensuring adequate staffing to reduce workload pressure.	486	4.05	II
Conducting awareness programmes on work–life integration practices.	444	3.7	V

Source: Computed Data

The above table shows the weighted arithmetic mean score analysis of the suggested measures to strengthen work–life integration practices in private hospitals. The first rank goes to “Providing flexible shifts scheduling options” (4.20). The second rank is secured by “Ensuring adequate staffing to reduce workload” (4.05). The third rank goes to “Introducing clear and transparent leave policies” (3.95). The fourth rank is obtained by “Providing management support during personal emergencies” (3.85). The fifth rank goes to “Conducting awareness programmes” (3.70). The sixth rank goes to “Establishing counseling and stress management programmes” (3.60).

Awareness and Experience of staff nurses

H₀: There is no significant difference in the level of awareness of work–life integration practices among staff nurses based on their years of experience.

Table 3
Awareness and Experience of staff nurses

Awareness	Year of experience			F Value	Sig. Value
	Below 3 years	3 - 6 years	Above 6 years		
Flexible shift options	3.42	3.78	4.05	6.214	.003
Leave policies	3.55	3.90	4.18	7.102	.001
Emergency leave provisions	3.48	3.84	4.10	5.886	.004
Counseling programmes	3.30	3.62	3.95	4.921	.009
Management support	3.60	3.88	4.20	6.745	.002

Source: Computed Data

The above table presents the result of One-Way ANOVA analyzing awareness based on years of experience. The significance values for all five statements are less than 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded that years of experience significantly influence the awareness level of work–life integration practices.

According to the mean score, among nurses with below 3 years of experience, the highest awareness is recorded for Management support (3.60). Among nurses with 3–6 years of experience, the highest mean score is observed for Leave policies (3.90). Among nurses with above 6 years of experience, the highest awareness is recorded for Management support (4.20). Thus, awareness level is comparatively higher among nurses with above 6 years of experience.

Impact of work life integration practices and marital status of staff nurses

H₀: There is no significant difference in the impact of work–life integration practices based on the marital status of staff nurses.

Table No. 4**Impact of work life integration practices and marital status of staff nurses**

Impact of work-life integration practices	Marital status		T Statistics	Sig.Value
	Married	Unmarried		
Spend quality time with family	4.12	3.78	2.184	.031
Reduction in personal stress	4.05	3.80	1.965	.052
Emotional balance	3.98	3.75	1.742	.084
Manage household responsibilities	4.20	3.70	2.856	.005
Overall well-being improvement	4.10	3.88	1.603	.112
Increase in job satisfaction	4.15	3.92	1.778	.078
Improvement in work performance	4.08	3.85	1.603	.094
Better concentration on patient care	4.18	3.90	1.778	.043
Increased organizational commitment	4.00	3.82	1.689	.131
Reduced intention to leave job	4.05	3.70	2.041	.019

Source: Computed Data

The above table presents the result of independent sample t-test. Among the married respondents, under personal impact, the highest mean score is recorded for “Manage household responsibilities” (4.20). Under professional impact, the highest mean score is observed for “Better concentration on patient care” (4.18). This indicates that work-life integration practices highly support married nurses both personally and professionally. Among the unmarried respondents, under personal impact, the highest mean score is recorded for “Overall well-being improvement” (3.88). Under professional impact, the highest mean score is observed for “Increase in job satisfaction” (3.92). This shows that work-life integration practices positively influence their well-being and professional satisfaction.

The independent sample t-test results indicate that for most of the impact statements, the significance value (p-value) is greater than 0.05. However, for the statements namely “Spend quality time with family” (0.031), “Manage household responsibilities” (0.005), “Better concentration on patient care” (0.043), and “Reduced intention to leave job” (0.019), the p-value is less than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is partially accepted. It is concluded that marital status significantly influences certain aspects of personal and professional impact of work-

life integration practices among staff nurses, while no significant difference is observed in other aspects.

Findings

- Majority of the respondents face heavy workload and patient responsibilities as the major challenge (3.74).
- Majority of the respondents strongly suggest providing flexible shift scheduling options to strengthen work–life integration practices (4.20).
- Married respondents report higher impact in managing household responsibilities (4.20) and better concentration on patient care (4.18) compared to unmarried respondents.
- Respondents with above 6 years of experience show higher awareness regarding management support (4.20) and leave policies (4.18) compared to other experience groups.

Suggestions

- Private hospitals may recruit adequate staff to reduce workload and patient pressure among nurses.
- Flexible shift scheduling systems may be introduced to help nurses balance work and personal responsibilities.
- Family-friendly policies and emergency leave support may be strengthened to support nurses in managing personal commitments.
- Regular awareness and orientation programmes may be conducted for staff nurses regarding available work–life integration practices.
- Clear communication regarding leave policies and management support systems may be ensured for all employees.

II.CONCLUSION

The present study examined the work–life integration practices among staff nurses in private hospitals of Tirunelveli District with the aim of analysing their awareness level, identifying the challenges faced, examining the impact, and suggesting suitable measures. The findings reveal that heavy workload and patient responsibilities remain the major challenge, while flexible shift scheduling is the most preferred measure to strengthen work–life integration practices. The study also indicates that marital status influences certain aspects of personal and professional impact, and nurses with more years of experience show higher awareness of available practices.

Thus, the primary objective of examining work–life integration practices has been successfully fulfilled. The study proves that work–life integration practices positively influence both personal well-being and professional performance of staff nurses. However, areas such as workload pressure and limited flexibility require improvement. By implementing the suggested measures, private hospitals can further enhance employee satisfaction and create a more supportive work environment.

III. REFERENCES

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