

Study of Work Life Balance of Working Parents

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Abstract: *The changing dynamics of the workplace has forced the organizations to frame policies which are employee-centric. The workforce today is more dynamic and young in nature and wants to exude greater control over their work and life. The social structure of family is disintegrating more into nuclear families where both the parents are working. Pressures at work, competition, and target based management styles have resulted in increased pressure and also long working hours. The parents who overstay at work are continuously stressed out thinking of their child/children and associated responsibilities. The kids on the other hand feel neglected or may sometimes go astray, celebrate misadventures or bond in unfocussed companionships. The study explores the issues faced by such working parents and the surviving strategies adopted by them. The answers to a questionnaire administered on working parents has been analyzed to understand the underlying demographic as well as other variables to find out work-life imbalances. The findings of the study will benefit organizations as they will be able to design practices which focus on employee work/life issues and thus reap dividends. This will result in a more satisfied and productive workforce which is less stressed. Also such practices will result in the creation of employers' brand and the reputation of being an employer of choice. Work life balance is the most emerging issue now days. Increasing work pressures, globalization and technological advancement have created lot of imbalances in the life of both the gender, for all professionals working across all levels. Owing to this work pressure, maintaining a harmonious work-family life is becoming very difficult. This study analyzed the work life balance of working parents of educational sector and its impact on personal and professional lives of working parents. It further discussed that management should frame certain strategies which will help strike a balance in the personal and professional lives of the professionals.*

Keywords: Work life balance, Work family balance, Personal Life, Professional Life, Work pressures, Globalization, working parents, work performance and Technological Advancement

I. INTRODUCTION

Work-life balance signifies the act of maintaining a positive and healthy balance between a person's personal and professional life. Nowadays it is very difficult to find a balance between the personal and professional lives because of increasing work pressures, demands, challenging and competitive environment. Even when the work and personal life of people is suffering still they have to make tough choices. Traditionally it is the only responsibility of women to manage a balance between the work and life. But current scenario has made it an issue with both the gender and with all professionals working across all levels and all industries.

It is a widespread trend that couple households now rely on both parents. Both have to be in the work to fulfill their needs. And people are spending more time in office. The ever changing demands of clients and the job directly affect the personal life of employees making it difficult for them to complete the household responsibilities. The specific expression "Work-Family Balance" was first used in UK in late 1970 to define an individual's stability between work life and personal life. Over the past years there was a change in terminology from work-family balance to present worklife balance, which acknowledges that - besides family; people are occupied with multiple roles in their personal and professional life to fulfill varied goals.

Work and life is depending upon each other. Work is most important in our life. Work-life balance is the maintenance of a balance between responsibilities at work and at home. Work-life balance does not mean equal balance between professional and personal life. It is careful synchronization of an individual's varied pursuits that may include family, work, leisure, social obligations, health, career and spirituality. Work-life balance gained importance in the recent past, especially in the developing countries. Work-life balance affects both the genders. In case of females married

women are the most affected by the issue of work-life balance since they have to play multiple roles and it becomes difficult for them to strike a perfect balance between work and family.

Work – life Balance of women employees has become an important subject since the time has changed, where both men and women equally share the responsibility of earning for the betterment of their family life.

Work-life balance has been describe in many different ways, including being judged by one prominent commentator as a complete misnomer on the grounds that work is, for most of us, actually a very important part of life. Through a broad lens, we simply define work life balance as the healthy blend of an employee's professional and personal responsibilities. Today work still is a necessity but it should be a source of personal satisfaction as well. Work-life balance describes the relationship between yours work and the commitments in the rest of your life, and how they impact on one another employees, employee and government want to maximize participation in the workforce.

Traditionally the role of women used to be of cooking, cleaning, raising children etc. They were looked upon as care giver or as home keeper and were denied access outside home. Today women have made their mark in every field. Be it literature, arts, politics, sport, corporate or any other sphere women are ready to take up challenges. Times are changing from traditional where the husband earned and the wife stayed at home to the modern when the husband earns and the wife earns too. But the wife still cooks, washes and runs the house. So today's women are striving continuously for work life balance.

On the other hand, personal life can also be demanding if you have a kid or aging parents. Working couple families often have at least one parent who usually works extra hours or works in the evenings. Parents in the workforce are now a significant and ongoing pressure group calling for flexibility at work. Work life imbalance can lead to absenteeism from work, creating stress and lack of concentration at work. The issue of work-life balance is increasingly becoming important as families are increasingly becoming nuclear and dual earners. Stress and other conflicts are increasing because of increasing and changing demands of organization as well as increasing responsibilities of families.

Work-life balance for teaching professionals has become one of the greatest challenges. Teachers work load demand their time in the institution and also extend to their home in order to get prepared for the following day's lecture, apart from maintaining student records and attending to various institution related functional requirements. Teachers have to spend extra hours daily to be effective and productive in their profession so as to satisfy the students and update themselves. For Self growth also they have to give time to their research and other activities. Thus it is the demanding need that Management function should plan and execute such policies which enable the employees to balance their personal and professional lives so as to enhance the productivity and reduce the stress and absenteeism

OBJECTIVE

The main objectives are:

- To determine the factors affecting work life balance among working women.
- To study the effect of work-life balance on the personal life and impact on their Health.
- To examine the effect of work life balance on work performance and work attitude.
- To know the source of support to promote the work life balance of working women's.
- To study the prevalence of work-life balance problem among the married working women.
- To study the effect of work-life balance on the quality of life of married working women.
- To study about hindrances faced by working women in their career development.
- To study about how working women balance their work and family.
- To know about their organizational satisfaction.

It is a big part of a healthy work environment. Working parents have to be great at everything: flying high at work, raising great kids, living a healthy nutritious life, going on holidays, and all the while having a sorted life. They've to be all things to all people and doing all this in a balance is a work-life balance.

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SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study is undertaken in various private and public sector includes banks, educational institutions and companies with the purpose to gather more details about work and family balances by working women. This research helps the organization to formulate the future plans and policies for working women.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to fulfill the set objective of the study, it is pertinent to review the available literature on the related aspects of the present study the basic purpose of the review is to make an attempt to refer possibly all the available literature to take the stock of the available information, data etc. published In the form contents of the websites book, journals, thesis, paper presentations, articles news items, newsletters etc. Work life balance studied the effects of family life on women's job performance and work attitudes. The result revealed that women with children were significantly lower in occupational commitment relative to women without children; contrary to expectation, women with younger children outperformed women with older children. In order to fulfill the set objective of the study, it is pertinent to review the available literature on the related aspect of the present study.

Most previous research on the ability to balance work and family indicates that because women typically maintain major responsibility for the home and the family, they have greater difficulty in balancing work and family than men (Duxbury and Higgins 1991). Spill over theory asserts that there is similarity between what occurs in a family environment (Staines 1980), such that happiness at work leads to happiness at home. In addition a person's work experiences are assumed to influence what he/she does away from work (Champoux 1978). It is also assumed that attitudes at work become ingrained and is carried over into home life (Kando and Summers 1971) or that work attitudes affect a basic orientation towards the self, others and children (Mortimer et al 1986). Spill over is generally discussed in terms of positive relationships, but it is also possible to have negative spill over (Piotrkowski 1978). The spillover in which the work is boring or monotonous can result in an energy deficit making the person lazy which in turn leads to his/her not doing certain things at home. Compensation theory states that events at home provide "shock absorbers" for disappointments at work and vice versa (Crosby 1984). This theory postulates that there is an inverse relationship between work and family, such that work and non-work experiences tend to be antithetical (Staines 1980). Segmentation theory postulates that work and family environments are distinct and that an individual can function successfully in one without any influence on the other (Evans and Bartolome 1984, Payton-Miyazaki and Brayfield 1974, Piotrkowski 1978). The family is seen as the realm of affectivity, intimacy and significant ascribed relations, whereas, the work world is viewed as impersonal, competitive and instrumental rather than expressive (Piotrkowski 1978). Instrumental theory suggests that one environment is a means by which things are obtained in the other environment. For example, work outcomes lead to good family life and are a means to get some pleasures of life (Evans and Batolome 1984, Payton-Miyazaki and Brayfield 1976). Conflict theory states that satisfaction or success in one environment entails sacrifices in the other; the two environments are incompatible because they have distinct norms and requirements (Evans and Bartolome 1984; Greenhaus and Beutelo 1985; Payton-Miyazaki and Brayfield 1976). A study titled "Balancing work and family after childbirth: A Longitudinal Analysis" by Grice, M.M.; McGovern, P.M.; Alexander, B.H.; Ukestad, L.; Hellerstedt, W. revealed that by 11 weeks after childbirth, 53% of the women returned to work; by six months, almost all the women were back at work. Women experienced job spill over into the home more frequently than home spill over into work.... There was "a positive relationship" between health and total hours worked, with each additional hour of work being associated with a slight impact on both mental and physical health." A positive association was found between women's mental health scores and both social support from co-workers and positive feedback from family members, about the way a woman balanced both work and family. There was an inverse relationship between work flexibility and job spill over, with more flexible work arrangements, not increasing the amount of time a woman is able to spend with her child.

Global Competition, renewed interest in personal lives and agile workforce has led to serious considerations of the concept of work-life balance. The genesis of work life balance can be traced as early as 1930's where W.K. Kellogg Company created four daily six-hour shifts instead of customary three eight-hour shifts and the change reportedly resulted in increased morale and efficiency of workers. Rosabeth Moss Kanter's book, *Work and Family in the United States: A Critical Review and Agenda for Research and Policy*, published in 1977, brought the issue of organizational

research on focus. In 1986 the term “work life balance” was coined and 80’s and 90’s saw companies offering work-life balance programs which were primarily targeted to support working women with children. Twenty first century ushered in an era where organizations saw more people friendly practices skewed towards employee welfare.

III. CONCLUSION

The importance given to personal life in addition to work is not new to the working Indian. This concern and importance may at times lead to stress at work place or work related stress may interfere with a person’s personal agenda, in case there is an imbalance between the time and task prioritization causing neglect of one at the expense of the other.

Working parents seek more time for their personal life for which they expect organization’s help in the form of flexible work schedules and work from home options. Organizations on their part have begun to realize the significance of work-life balance for a happy work force. But the expanse and pace of this realization is slow. Work-life balance in the coming time would be part of company policy of the organizations and be seen as a critical strategy to target better employee satisfaction and lower the cost of employee turnover.

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