

An Approach in Enhancing the Work Life Balance in HRD for TCS in Bangalore

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Abstract- Work life balance is a term used to describe the balance between an individual's Personal life and professional life. It is an omnipresent issue concerning all sections of the organizations and society including research scholars and business leaders for obvious reasons. Information Technology (IT) sector plays a significant role in the growth of Indian economy and is also one of the largest employers. However, IT sector faces many challenges such as tough competition, economic uncertainty and dynamic business environment. Though many researchers are studied various work-life balance practices that different companies have adopted for their employees. Thus, there is an increasing need for organizations to address these demands of working mothers by implementing innovative HR policies. Work-life balance is one such HR practice that enables the employees to give proper prioritization between work and life roles. Hence, work-life balance has become a growing concern in both Public and Private sectors. The present paper based on empirical work, provides a deep insight of work-life balance in Public and Private sector. An experimental survey of equal number of Public and Private sector employees were carried out.

Index Terms- Work-Life Balance, Public Sector, Private Sector.

INTRODUCTION

A "good" work-life balance is defined as a situation in which workers feel that they are capable of balancing their work and non-work commitments, and, for the most part, do so. The degree to which employees of a work organization are able to satisfy important personnel needs is defined by the favorableness of the job environment. Work-life balance encompasses many components, dimensions and concepts. The most important asset for the organization is undoubtedly high quality manpower, which is earned through an optimum work-life balance. A high quality of work life is essential for

organizations to sustain competition in market through attracting and retaining employees. In today's world, where every individual has to balance conflicting responsibilities and commitments, work-life balance has emerged as a predominant issue in the workplace. But increasing work pressure, globalization, and technological advancement have made it an issue with both the genders, all professionals working across all levels and all industries throughout the world. Achieving "work-life balance" is not as simple as it sounds. Due to the tremendous progress in the fields of information technology and communication system employees have to face strict deadlines, tighter schedules and ever escalating corporate targets, thus creating a need for work-life balance. During the period 1995-2000 India saw the information technology enabled services (ITES) sector boom.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Jang (2008) studied "the relationship between work-life balance resources and the well-being of working parents" which aimed to study was to study how working parents cope with work-life demands. The study used 27 working parents with either ill or disabled children in New Jersey. It was a mixed research with both qualitative and quantitative results. The result talks about the effect of formal and informal workplace support in enhancing the wellbeing of employees with children in general and those with a chronically ill or disabled child in particular.

Roberts Emma (2008) throws light on time being a measurable and valuable unit. The study "Time and

Work-Life-Balance: the roles of temporal customization and life temporality" investigates

home Work-Life Balance is affected by time by analyzing the data in 2 themes: customized work schedule and divided time for personal needs. The results and findings suggested that Work-Life-Balance is more about the mind-set which is not dominated by work. It is a mental state that is determined to create 'me- time' rather than choosing part time jobs and work schedule.

Ajith et al (2013) on work-life balance for role prioritization of IT employees showed that the employees were able to fulfill their professional and personal commitments at the same time, because of better work-life balance policies. The relationship between work-life balance policies and role prioritization was significant. The study was conducted on variables like travelling time, depression, temper, work etc., to know the relation between work-life balance and stress management. Reddy N K et al (2010) in their paper titled "Work-Life Balance among Married Women Employees" have studied the various factors which could lead to work-family conflict WFC and Family-work conflict (FWC) among married women employees. Their findings emphasized the need to formulate guidelines for the management of WFCs at organizational level as it is related to job satisfaction and performance of the employees. Their research has the limitation in respect of sample size. The sample size (being 90 married working women) in their study was quite small and hence the generalization of the findings is limited. Additional research is needed in different employment settings to explore the relationship between WFC and quality of life among married women employees.

Baral and Bhargava (2010) in their paper titled "Work-family enrichment as a mediator between organizational interventions for work-life balance and job outcomes" have examined the role of work-family enrichment in the relationships between organizational interventions for work-life balance (job characteristics, work-life benefits and policies, supervisor support and work-family culture) and job outcomes (job satisfaction, affective commitment and organizational citizenship behavior). They found that job characteristics were positively related to all the measures of job outcomes. Supervisor support and work-family culture were positively related to job satisfaction and affective commitment. No significant

association was found between work-life benefits and policies (WLBPs) and any of the job outcome measures. Job characteristics and supervisor support were positively related to work-to-family enrichment. Work-to-family enrichment mediated the relationships between job characteristics and all job outcomes and between supervisor support and affective commitment. Their research had the limitations that the correlational design prevented them from making conclusions about causality

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the understanding of the employee on the factors affecting the work-life balance
2. To study the Consequences of poor work-life balance
3. To study the Perceived improvement in work life Balance
4. To analyze the effect of work-life balance on career life, personal life and management and jobs associated with employees

What is Work Life Balance?

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. While some of the pursuits need greater attention, others may require lesser focus. Striking a fine balance by prioritizing these human quests will result in work-life balance. It is individual specific and keeps changing over time. It is "a one size fits all; mentality in human resources management often perpetuates frustration among employees. It is not an uncommon problem in many HR areas, where, for the sake of equality, there's a standard policy implemented in a way that is universally acceptable, even though everyone's life is different and everyone needs different things in terms of how to integrate the different pieces. It's got to be customized". Friedman's research indicates that the solution lies in approaching the components of work, family, community and self as a comprehensive system.

Need and Benefits of Work Life Balance:

To understand the need of work life balance, one first needs to understand about work life imbalance, as

with the understanding of the origin, causes and effects of this imbalance, the balancing act becomes easier. The corporate world of today is exceedingly demanding. The work culture varies from organization to organization.

Nature of Work Place at Public and Private Sectors:

Public sector organizations operate with fewer profit margins and work environment is relaxed. There are enough resources available to perform the job as one of the goals of Public sector companies is to provide more employment to public. Whereas, Private companies operate at higher profit margin and work environment is not as relaxed as Public sector companies because of cut throat competition among Private companies.

Nature of work for Public sector employees are more of routine type and not dynamic. Nature of work for Private sector employees is more of dynamic and they are expected to perform different types of jobs depending on the need of the organization. As jobs in the Private sector are leaner, necessitating higher work load and permitting less flexibility. But jobs in Public sector are flatter, necessitating lesser work load and thus, allowing more flexibility.

Role of HR in Achieving Work – Life Balance:

HR Managers therefore, need to take a strategic approach to the whole issue of work/life balance. They need to understand and quantify how work/life issues impact the bottom line measures of the business. They need to talk about work/life issues not as a 'soft option' but as an essential business tool that will deliver.

- A reduction in absenteeism
- An increased ability to attract and retain talented employees
- Increased 'employee engagement', motivation and use of discretionary effort
- Enhanced levels of customer service

HRD-Work Life Balance:

Organizations are indeed helping their workforce achieve balance between work and the rest of their life. Work–life balance programs are pervasive in organizations today i.e., on-site day care, elder-care assistance, flexible scheduling, job sharing, adoption

benefits, on-site summer camps, pet care and even lawn care for employees who travel.

HRD professionals, the developers of people, are in a unique position to facilitate the transformation from providing employees with helpful programs to recognizing and rewarding employees who are able to work hard and effectively but still maintain a satisfying life outside work. Specific actions are articulated that human resource development professionals can demonstrate to drive the change. Human resource developers, who are charged with developing the workforce, must get involved in the transformation campaign. Work–life integration is not strictly a human resource management issue; it is an organizational effectiveness issue and HRD has the opportunity to play a key role. HRD is able to take on this challenge because it has demonstrated a track record of delivering results. For years, HRD has been paramount in developing either program intended to meet the personal development needs of individuals or programs that were required by everyone to build a critical capability within the organization.

Consequences of poor work-life balance: The responses concerning consequences of poor work-life balance are analyzed.

High levels of stress and anxiety: Majority (78%) of the respondents agree that they experience high levels of stress and anxiety due to poor work-life balance. Working women not only have to manage the tasks involved in bearing and raising children but also have to deal with high levels of anxiety in having to compete in a man's world. Besides, they have to constantly juggle between the family and work preventing them from aspiring to progress in their career beyond a particular level. Some working women may choose to prioritize career over family. In such cases, they may experience frustration and guilt in compromising on the time to be spent with family. In either situation, working women are forced to make a difficult choice or compromise resulting in stress and anxiety thereby adversely affecting their health.

Disharmony at home:

68% of the respondents agree that the consequence of poor work-life balance is disharmony at home. Indian

societal norms prescribe that women must perform certain household chores whether they are employed or not. In case of working women, their work responsibilities may prevent them from conforming to societal norms causing displeasure among family members resulting in discord and disharmony at home. Unwillingness on the part of other family members to share work exerts pressure on the working women. Moreover, the tendency to belittle a working woman's career and conferring a higher status as the primary breadwinner's role for the man, results in the dumping of all household responsibilities upon the woman. This biased treatment of working women results in imbalance which could lead to frustration and disharmony at home.

Job burnout: Majority of the respondents fall in the age bracket between 35 years and 55 years with more than 10 years work experience. Therefore, they are likely to be in the middle management cadre having to lead teams and fulfill higher level responsibilities. At this stage of their lives, they are also likely to be engaged in the upbringing of teenage children and caring for elderly dependents. All this exerts tremendous strain as, often the working women are torn between the demands of their personal and professional lives. In the workspace, they need to compete with younger colleagues and keep themselves updated of developments in their areas of work. Beyond a point, it becomes very difficult for working women to cope with the pressures at work. Many of them are also affected by deteriorating health which further aggravates their problems both at work and at home. A large majority of the respondents agree that one of the consequences of poor work-life balance is job burnout. The analysis clearly indicates that excess work and the resultant imbalance leads to job burnout among working women.

Inability to realize full potential: Most Indian women are not encouraged to prioritize career over family. Therefore quite often they forsake their chances for career advancement in the early stages of their work lives. In the process, they lose many opportunities and by the time they are in a position to accept greater responsibilities, no such position may be available. Moreover assignments of repetitive and

monotonous nature assigned to women also inhibit their creativity and prevents them from realizing their full potential. This builds frustration and resentment among working women which impacts their various roles causing imbalance. Thus it may be inferred that poor work-life balance inhibits ability of working women to realize their full potential. As women play multiple roles, very often, the roles overlap preventing them from delineating their workspace from family space. The working women therefore, make compromises in one or the other space in order, to manage situations momentarily. Therefore, they are unable to realize their full potential in both domains.

Perceived improvement in work life balance:

Five factors that are considered to contribute to work life balance are assessed. While three of these are work related, two are family related factors. Work based factors are, flex time, option to work part time and freedom to work from home. The family related factors considered in this survey are, availability of child care facility and flexibility to take care of emergencies at home.

Table 1: Perceived improvement in work life Balance

Variable		Men	Women	χ^2	SSig.
Flexible time	Yes	70	35	1.5	ns
	No	2	3		
Option to work part time	Yes	60	36	2.91	$p < 0.05^*$
	No	12	2		
Option to work from home	Yes	63	32	0.2	ns
	No	9	6		
Availability of child care facility	Yes	55	35	4.13	$p < 0.05^*$
	No	17	3		
Flexibility to meet emergencies at home	Yes	54	34	3.25	$p < 0.05^*$
	No	18	4		

Table 2: Perceived adverse impact of work

Variable		Men	Women	χ^2	SSig.
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Health	Yes	39	17	0.88	ns
	No	33	21		
Sleep	Yes	23	17	1.75	ns
	No	49	21		
Exhaustion	Yes	38	13	2.2	ns
	No	34	25		
Notes: ns – not significant.					

CONCLUSION

Work schedule in IT segment is exceptional. Work-life balance is a subject which is concerned to almost all the executives in the organization. HR profession's concern for better workplace is to address the work-life balance issues and create a great place to work. employees of both Private and Public sectors enjoy their work and are happy working with/under their managers. This means they are influenced by the motivational factors. On the other side employees are not benefitted by the workshops on work-life balance, they do not get sufficient time to get updated with latest trends in their job. Balancing is a most important part for all the employees. A healthy balance between work and home should be a priority for everyone. Implementing proper work-life balance offers many important benefits. There are, however, many hazards linked with an unbalanced work and home life.

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