

WORK LIFE BALANCE- AN INTEGRATIVE REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT-

Career these days is not merely a need; rather it is a necessity for each and every human. In today's time every employee is more concerned about work life balance rather than money. 21st century has given us modern economy and as a result of it one can see better opportunities, jobs and salaries. This brings many flows and flips with itself that can be easily seen in all organisations in the form of work life imbalance. This integrative review on work life balance is created because the idea of work life balance is still a hot topic simply due its failure, and hindrance in work life balance practices. This review paper will try to introduce new terms like Work Life Integration and its benefits. This will bring out all the hidden aspects of work life balance. For this paper the references were derived from various different journals, books, thesis, working papers, internet sites etc. Also, this integrative review of literature is to study and understand the past review of literature thoroughly because in order to create a new knowledge and understanding, it is worthwhile to critically examine the existing knowledge and work done.

KEYWORDS- Work life balance, Dual career couples, Work life integration, Professional institution, Mental Health, Working environment, Employee policies and practice.

INTRODUCTION

The author is trying to find work life balance is being studied and understood in past. The author will also try to understand how the work life balance is managed and maintained by the dual-career couples. It was in the year 1960's and 1970's that all the big corporate and MNC's were struggling with the issues of life and at that time very few women were working therefore, the issues for balancing life was a little less complicated. Also, dual-career couples were more in west at that point of time. Working women back in times used to face a lot of empirical problems biggest among those problems were to balance and manage both professional and family expectations. During 1980's it was seen that various new policies were implemented which were quite useful for all the employees. These were maternity leave, staff counselling program, flexibility of working hours, crèche facilities for the children of working women and also working from home to some extent.

Now that things have changed and even men have started raising concerns about the work life balance its importance is felt more seriously by both the genders. From 1990's till date the importance of work life balance is on the top of priority list for all. Knowledge and information regarding work life balance shows that the issues is no more a female centric issues, it's even affecting the male work force in all the societies.

Hence, work life balance becomes today's hot topic and the reason why work life balance is on everyone's mouth who is working is due to its disequilibrium. The main purpose of this paper is to review relevant literature from past till date. This will not only give new ideas and knowledge on the various aspects like dual career couple, work life integration etc, rather it will also focus on the various ways that will help everyone to achieve work life equilibrium and scope of future areas of research will be seen the findings of this paper.

WORK LIFE BALANCE

In order to establish a family friendly system and to take account of the broad implications of family responsibility is important to have work life balance. **Redmond et.al.,2006** highlighted that in present time there are many provisions and policies that provides a balance in both responsibilities at work and at home. **(Clarke et.al. 2004)** defines work life balance as 'a satisfactory level of involvement or fit between the multiple roles in a person's life. This is also having a line with the concept of equilibrium, that 'maintaining an overall sense of harmony in life.'

Myrtha Casanova (2001)¹ highlighted in the work that companies and organizations in Spain are not aware of the effects and impacts of work life balance. 67% of organisations and companies in Spain do not give priority to the idea of work life balance. On the other hand, all those companies that do feel work life balance is worth considering have implemented many work life balance policy and prioritized it as well.

Helen De Cieri (2002)² This article indicates that work life balance is the only way one can get an valued and ethical employees at workplace in a time where labour market is filled with competitions. All those HR policies and practices give importance to the organisations along with the employees these results in a holistic development of both; organisation and HR.

Stephen P. Robbins (2003)³ the focus of this paper is on the employees state of mind and situations. As employees at work place worries about personal/family problems and think (at times over think) about their work related issues at home. Also, now everyone is realizing that work load is somewhere directly or indirectly taking off their personal as well as mental peace. People are recognizing that they are not happy about it. Organizations that fail to achieve work life balance do not attract and sustain employees who are highly skilled and motivated. Reason for work life conflicts as shown by many researchers is because of work life imbalance and not the time pressures or deadlines. It is only because of the psychological influence and interference of work into family domain and vice-versa. This paper also states that every organization must start spending more time on work life balance than spending on time management issues.

Hymans & Summers (2004) highlighted many major difficulties which are associated with the empirical implementation of work life balance. Some of these implementations which fails to practice are lack of formalization of policies at institutional level, unequal adoption across various sectors and organizations, restricted employee's involvement in decision making, Focussing only on business needs and profits rather than on employees, and shockingly even till date the domestic responsibilities are still on the head of women irrespective of their employment status.

DUAL-CAREER COUPLES

Globally women coming from any class or creed have empowered themselves and reached a new platform which is to create their own self-autonomy, freedom, personal and professional growth and they are now in a better position to express themselves also they are now working really hard for achieving their career objectives. This has made dual –career couples a term which needs special attention. Now the roles are not gender specific, new roles have come up for both the dual- career couples it's an end to traditional roles and responsibility. Both the couples look after both child rearing and management of domestic and household work along with their professional responsibilities. The term dual- career couples were firstly coined by **Rapoport and Rapoport** in the year (1969-71). This term refers to a working couple or a family wherein both the members/couple pursue their professional career and also aspire to have a successful occupational advancement.

SOURCES OF STRESS FOR DUAL-CAREER COUPLES

The biggest task is to get rid of the exacerbating conflict between professional and family demands. This is the result of the work culture which is to 'arrive early and to leave late' this makes a pressure that exists in almost all the organisation. Dual career employees have to live with a constant juggling in order to have a synergy between work and family. Parker and Arthur identifies the dual-career couples challenges as two coordinates between independent journey of both the individuals and assuring that both contributes in each other's accomplishments.

OTHER SORTS OF BARRIES TO DCC (DUAL-CAREER COUPLES)

Family /relationship related barriers-

According to comparative study held in 2004 by **Williams and Cooper** the work structure between Americans and Europeans is so that 65-85% of elderly care work along with child care work is done by women. This explains that the gender division of labour make the male section free from the entire domestic as well as children responsibility.

Societal Barriers-

The negative effect of the model of an ideal worker's belief about working mothers that a good/perfect mother must give less effort and priority to her professional work demands. This was reflected from **Ridgeway and Correll (2004)**.

Feugen el.al.'s (2004) work also demonstrates the social stereotype and social role theory wherein the mothers who are also working are shown in dim light. It is said that they are somewhere violating the norms of a perfect care giver role. But on the other hand for males it is said that they are embodying the perfect role of "provider".

Organisational Barriers-

In 1996 **Harvey and Brown** has very nicely explained the term and concept of organizational culture. They defined it as a joined system and functioning of values, beliefs, practices, meaning, and various group names of the members to produce behavioural norms with regard to the working environment of the organisation.

Charles and Davies,2000; Wise and Bond, 2003; Ismail and Ibrahim,2007 have started one common perspective which says, if the organisational culture is helpful and supportive then in surely can improve values and motivate employees to reduce stress anxiety and absences.

WORK LIFE INTEGRATION

Work life integration creates an idea that one can have synergies between all the areas that are included in life. Work/ home/ family/ community/ personal well-being/ health etc. on the other hand work life balance makes a binary opposition between work and life. It also makes an antagonism between these two elements. Work-life integration becomes the best way to create an environment wherein one can give equal time and attention to all the areas of once life, without sacrificing any one for the other. Below are the few benefits of work life integration given by **Amber Rolfe**

- **It's more realistic.** Our mood is depended on our balance of work and life; we need to create a clear division between home and work.
- **A new outlook on work.** Integrating work with personal activities can make our day to day work more interesting and exciting. New policies like 'work from home' in many organisations help us to enjoy the company of our family members along with work.
- **It's a great way to prioritise effectively.** Integrating 9to 5 jobs with house hold responsibility can help any working employee to manage both the needs of work and home. This means that one thing is followed by the other thing like- work in the morning followed by work outs (time for self), followed by making food, followed by child rearing etc.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This integrated review of literature on dual career -couples and work life balance is based on the secondary sources of data. For which various on line journals were reviewed related to this topic.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

WORK LIFE BALANCE AND INSTITUTION

Varuhas.j.et.al (2003) indicates that the most important factor that affects work life balance in an organisation is the work environment/work culture of an institution. The organisation must have healthy and family friendly measures for its employees; otherwise it will be difficult for them to have a sound work life balance.

Sarang Bhola (2005) ⁴ elucidates and reflects on '**Richard Walton's** work- that moves around Quality of work life and work life balance. In this he explains that in total there are 8 conceptual categories that go like that following. 1) Adequate and fair compensations 2) Safe and healthy working conditions 3) Opportunities to use and develop human capacities 4) Opportunity for career grow 5) Social integration in the work force 6) Constitutionalism in the work organisation. 7) Work and quality of life and lastly 8) Special relevance of work.

Baralet .al(2011) explained that there are cases where the institution does have an effective policies for their employees but the employees itself are not aware of them.

Sue Yeandle (2005) ⁵ here the author tries to emphasize on a very realistic facts of every human that exists in all the society. It is between the ages of 50 to 75 where people wish to remain active as they were previously. Also, things like family roles which include household compositions and other unpaid roles are continuously in a flux. This has prompted the older working and their life experiences resulted in many discussions regarding restructuring of work.

John I, Robert K, Michael M, (2006) ⁶ this paper focuses on various types of role conflicts that can be seen. When non work and work roles intrude each other, For instance the role of spouse and parent managing the demands of family roles along with work as a vital task for every individual adult other sources of conflict between work and family is also discussed in this paper. Factors like relocating in order to advance spending more time on travelling, carrying work to home and anxiety because of work pressure.

MENTAL HEALTH OF PROFESSIONALS AND WORK LIFE BALANCE

Jennifer Smith, Dianne Garden (2007) ⁷ in this paper the author tries to emphasize that work life balance and its practices gives a lot of flexibility and helps employees dependents their care is ensured while the individual employee is at work. It has also emphasized on the idea that both the work to family conflict and family to work conflict can be cut shorted when every individual employee use work life balance initiatives.

Dr.Rajesh, Garima, Dabjeev Arora (2008) ⁸ this article conveys that dissatisfaction with one's work and working life is a major point of concern and is problematic that can lead to ill health of the employee. This not only affects worker particularly but personally it also affects the position and status of workers at one point of time. **Distress, anxiety boredom, frustration, anger and detachment** are very common in such cases. This problem can harm both individual and organisation.

Mughal et.al(2010) gives a clear picture of employees job & personal life, which is the independent variable like role demands, organizational culture, interpersonal demands and job security and much more have a direct impact on work life balance which is the dependent variable.

Katyal. Et.al(2011) indicates that there is a lot of difference between various types on banks like national bank has different job related stress as compared to non-nationalized banks. The amount of work related stress faced by non-nationalized workers is high than the nationalized workers.

Jawaharani(2011) and Rania.S et.al(2011) focuses on work life balance and found out it to be the key driver of employees satisfaction along with other aspects like recruitment and retention of various human resource, lack of employee's stress, health benefits, job related satisfaction and turnover rates in organization.

Florian Pichler(2009) ⁹ In this research paper it was found that in work life balance the ‘work’ element is more specifically conceptualized than the ‘life’ element. Authors make a very clear difference between **life** and **home** and **housework/family** responsibility.

Julie McCarthy (2011) ¹¹ this paper focuses on the higher rates work related anxiety, depression, burnout, and bad health. Everyone is into various multiple roles this can be the cause of accomplishment, a sense of achievement. Author conveys that one must be aware of the risk involved in all this. And every individual employee must assess the suitable strategies that can be used to cope up with their problems. The sources of such speedy recovery are a must.

Hegde and sandeep Vasudeo (2012) ¹² Authors have described job satisfaction a pleasurable emotional state coming out from the job experience/working environment.

Manisha Purohit (2013) ¹³ in this research article the author tries to emphasize that work life balance gives proper priority to both workaholics and to the lifestyle of individuals. It also shows that issues of corporate an opportunity for human resource (HR) professionals.

ABOUT ‘SHE’AND WORK LIFE BALANCE

The society in general categorises individuals and demarkates their roles based on gender differentiation. However, men have the privilege to shift their gender roles as per their convenience and comfort. Whereas, a women is still arrested (socially and traditionally) in the specific gender based biases. The challenges of child rearing for Urban Working Women is one of the greatest ‘arrest’ in this respect.

One cannot be ignorant of the fact that the affection tendencies which are so important to psychological adjustment in adult life are depended on the nature of parent child relationship. Also, the Child rearing practices and the parenting styles are the channels for socializing children and positive parenting practices are the root for holistic development of the child. Moreover, even in the present context, women are essentially perceived as wives, mothers and home-makers and are expected to be the main source of ‘nurturance and emotional support for their children.’ The challenges posted to the Urban Working Women by the very existing patriarchal sytem wherin there are domains [pre-defined lines based on gender affiliated with sex] demarcated by the society and are assigned to each individual depending upon the sex of the person. Changing of the gender baesd roles and frame of life, as per the demarcated patterning of social norms, is possibility (though a bit difficult one) for ‘MEN’ but the same turns out to be ‘abnormal’, unattainable and ‘taboo’ for a ‘WOMEN’. The men have the freedom to choose the gender roles they wish to accept and reject with some little amount of difficulty. But in the case of a women, the very thought of such a ‘freedom’ is enslaved.

Urban working women the plight of women empowerment in reality is not merely to be a financial aid, but also (and definitely/predominantly), to uphold the ethos of ‘Motherhood’. The early preparation for an assignment of the home maker role is deeply ingrained in the girl-child. Her primary role is to fulfil wifely and motherly duties and devote her priorities and energies to domestic obligation and responsibilities. She is expected to learn to manage a household and raise the family and do this well according to society’s standard, for good mothering. The ultimate existence of humanity undoubtedly rests upon the women and the most crucial aspect of motherhood is to rear children in the best possible manner working women pertains to be a tag of modernity and feminism.

Women are shifting their identities from being at home as only house wives as working women. Women today are balancing both work and family responsibilities but their gender role holds them back, **Choudhary. M (2013)** lays emphasis on the fact that working women are consistently growing in India, the need of the hour is to carefully increase the affable conditions must be developed so that the working women are able to balance their professional and personal needs.

Dubey.Set.al(2010) conveys that both professional factors along with the personal can affect the work life of a women employee. Therefore, it also becomes important that the institution along with the family plays a vital role in work life balance.

Kumari.Kat.al(2010) and Thriveni &Rama (2012) states that variables like demography has a important role in balancing work and life for working women. Factors like age, income, experience and marital status.

Maran &S, (2014)¹⁴ Author in this research article describes work life balance not as an equal balance. It changes over time often on a daily basis. There are no ideal balance according to the author, balance differ when one is unmarried and when married or even when she /he has children. When a person just starts a new career or when one person is about to finish his career (retirement), all these various phases of life does changes our work life balance. Therefore, there is no perfect fit for all he concludes.

Dr. Pallavi Mehta, Neera Kundnani (2015) ¹⁵ the focus of this paper is to bring an insight into various farces surrounding work life balance and to the hindrances in the equilibrium of work life balance along with the measures to overcome the disturbance in equilibrium. This paper lays attention on the effects of organisation support, work family conflict, workplace stress and personality on work life equilibrium. This research paper had found that women are still treated unequal to that of male workers in various organisations.

Chaitra R, Ashok Kumar RS, Dr. T.P. Renuka Murthy (2016)¹⁶ in this paper it is found that work life balance is a key factor for the employee to achieve success. Employee participation in forming the policies and in decision making will be very effective for both employee as well as organisational development. Effective flow of organisational policies can strengthened to make a highly balanced work-life of its employees. This study also asserts that work related responsibilities create negative effect on the personal life of employees.

PERSONALITY TRAITS OF PROFESSIONALS AND WORK LIFE BALANCE

It is somewhat clear that organization's plays a significant role in the lives of people in balancing their work life. **Rajadhyaksha.U(2012)** stated that organizational work life involvement can only be seen at formal sector.

Sharma&Bajpao (2013) analysed that age, marital status, experience these entire have a high impact on work life balance. All these factors which is beyond the control of humans but these days individuals personal traits also effects their way of balancing work and life.

Kumar&Singh (2011) stated that there are different categories of personality such as extraversion, neuroticism and psychotics this reasonably adjusts stress and job attitudes.

Dumitru & Cozman(2012) highlighted that there are various personality traits in professionals like social presence, soft skills, empathy, independence, intellectual efficiency, psychological intuition, work orientation etc makes every individual professional more susceptible to stress.

Dr. Saloni Pahuja,(2017) ¹⁷ In her work she has emphasised on work life balance of working parents of educational sector and its impact on the personal as well as the professional lives of the working people. Through this research paper it was revealed that working parents in education sector just have minimal level of work life balance in a situation where it can be seen that there is a significant relationship between the personal and professional life of the working parents.

Suhendro Oktosatrio (2018) ¹⁸ this research paper highlights the relationship between work life balance and employee motivation. It was seen through this paper that personal life majority affects the work of any employee. Also, what was revealed was that females in contrast to males are much more organized in managing professional requirements along with the personal agendas.

FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS

Till today all the domestic duties are assigned more on women than on men, immaterial of the fact that women are also working and earning in the family. Paternity leave and fatherhood is still a less discussed issue in our country, organisations must work on these aspects. Currently also there is a gap between organizational practices and work life balance. It has been seen that the disturbance in work life equilibrium leads to job related stress, job dissatisfaction and due to this the turnover rates also goes down. Personality of the individuals helps a lot in balancing the work life balance. As some people are strong with their traits and therefore they manage the differences more rightfully. It is found by this integrated review paper that no one especially in India focus on 'SELF', everyone is busy with either 'work' or 'family'. Time for self is what we lack in today's area. Lastly, we can also see that work life integration is less visible in work culture these days among working individuals.

CONCLUSION

In this integrated review of literature work life balance and its related issues were highlighted, we had also come across various findings that are mentioned above. There are various reasons even in today's time that makes work life balance one of the major issues of the world. The issue of work life imbalance persists because there is lack of HR Policies, Perspective issue, Work culture, job insecurity, and many more. One of the major problems is that people do not think about 'self' they are busy in work and family. Particularly, the working women of our society face this problem of self ignorance. This can be one of the major reasons for work life imbalance. One must take out time for self. Working individuals must work towards work life integration that will remove the concept of balance and will work towards work life fit. Organizations must have a responsibility towards their employees and they must work for their job satisfaction and welfare. Organizations giving topmost priority to their employees will surely see organizational growth. We can't ignore the harsh reality of our society that even today our society is male dominated and as a result of it we can see that working women are sole responsible for domestic duties and are also not treated as equals as men. The use of the faculties (freely) of both men and women is only possible when there is 'Equality'. This equality, in the present context, is not merely expressed through the face of working women of the 'Modern urban Society' but also through the way she embraces her freedom. The notion that motherhood is an ancient and powerful magic which shapes the world had been (and still is) the predominant law. The fact is- exquisite, powerful and healing connection between every mother and her child makes women the **necessary** care giver and care taker of the child. As a sociological fact, Child Rearing Practice is very important and plays an important role in the most formative years of a child's life. It is a process by which the child gains the knowledge and skill needed to function successfully in adult life. Parental attitudes which are so important to psychological adjustment in adult life are dependent on the very process of how a child has been reared. The "Home" is probably the most influential factor of all the environmental impacts in determining the process of child-rearing. Hence, we can conclude that all other factors being secondary in creating work life balance the equilibrium will be balanced only when the individual personality traits will be correct and therefore these sociological evil will come to an end as mentioned above. If both men and women work collectively & passionately for work life integration they will manage their personal as well as professional life and along with it they will take out some time for themselves too!

FUTURE SCOPE FOR RESEARCH

Although lot of research has already been conducted on work life balance and its related issues and challenges from the perspective of organization, but now the time has come to focus more on paradigm shift and taking into consideration the dual career couple's perspective along with individual professionals perspective on work life balance. So, Future research can be conducted on the perception of work life balance by dual career couples and behaviour of individuals with heterogeneous professions.

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