

WORK-LIFE BALANCE: NEED OF THE HOUR

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Abstract

Work-life balance is a term that represents a good management of various responsibilities of work and personal life of an individual. As far as personal life is concerned, its needs and complexities are increasing day by day. Whereas on work front, with the fast growing competition in every organization, work pressure is increasing on every employee to achieve the given targets in limited time period and making the organization more successful. For this, employees have to work for long hours which create problems in their personal life. Now a days people have limited time and they want to maintain a balance between their work and personal life. It arise the need of work-life balance. Individuals have become more conscious about the surroundings of their work and prefer a positive working environment. The need for a better work environment and proper space in personal life is high. Because a positive work environment and proper time for personal life can fulfill their need of work-life balance. So the employees could provide sufficient time to both the domains i.e. work and personal life. Work-life balance is not important only for employees but also for organisation and society. Thus, the main objective of the present study is to understand the concept of work-life balance and also to highlight the need, components and importance of work-life balance.

Keywords:- Work-Life Balance, Family, Need, Components, Importance.

1. Introduction

Work-life balance means maintaining a proper balance between the work and personal life of an individual. It is a state of mind which is important for an individual towards both his work and personal life. From an organisation's point of view, it is a concept through which employees are able to divide their time and efforts between their personal and work life. A situation where employees are able to make their work and personal life compatible is known as work-life balance. Today's business is very demanding. There is

extreme competition among organisations throughout the world and employees feel this competition in the form of increasing work and performance pressure with time. This pressure tends to increase gradually. The management of these organizations also face the heat of high competition, tough deadlines, challenging economic scenario and other different problems. Work culture is becoming more dependent on employees' skills and advance technology. This whole situation leads to overburdened management and employees who are working continuously and tirelessly thereby attracting several health problems including sleep disorder, heart problem, bad concentration, depression and also nervous breakdown at times. Such health and work issues then lead to disturbed personal life, personal finance and disconnect from required social life. This disbalanced and stressful personal and professional life of the employees starts affecting their working capabilities. They are not able to achieve their goals and this ultimately affects the organization. The blurred line between personal and profession life has badly affected the concept of "happy and satisfied employees". An unhappy and dissatisfied employee rarely helps organizations to achieve its goals and growth. Ultimately it is the organization who is in loss. It creates the need of a balance between work and personal life of employees. Now a days organizations have become social systems who require effective employees and managers to accomplish their goals and human resource is their most important resource. So it becomes essential for every organization to help their employees achieve balanced work and personal life. Fleetwood (2007) "Work-life balance is about people having a measure of control over when, where and how the work." Such balanced work and personal life will have various positive results in favour of the organisation such as maximized performance of employees, less absenteeism, positive recruitment and high retention rate etc. Work-life balance has become an important part of human resource management. Achieving work-life balance is an equal duty of the employer as well as the employee. An employer can help its employees achieve work-life balance by facilitating them with different facilities. It will generate happiness and satisfaction among employees and growth and revenue for organization as well.

2. Review of Literature

Negi & Singh (2012) conducted a study to compare the work-life balance of public and private sector bank employees and also found the challenges associated with managing personal and professional life of banking sector employees. This study was conducted at public and private sectors banks of Dehradun. It was resulted that work pressure on private sector bank employees is more than the public sector bank employees. It was concluded that work-life balance becomes a problem for employees of banking sector. If employees have sufficient time for personal and professional life then they work in a better way.

Young (2013) studied the work-life balance of doctors working in a metropolitan city, Hong Kong. A sample of 200 respondents was selected of different specialty for the purpose of study. It was resulted that majority of the doctors feel that they have poor work-life balance. They have to work for long hours. Due to

poor work-life balance, they face the problem of reducing work quality and productivity. They also feel sleepiness, extreme tiredness and fatigues.

Sharma & Kakkar (2015) analyzed the affect of work-life balance on performance of banking sector employees and also identified the different factors which affect employee performance. The result revealed that there are several factors such as working environment, technology, team management and organization culture which affect performance of bank employees. The research concluded that work-life balance affect performance of bank employees.

Sarika & Anitha (2015) compared the work-life balance of employees of State Bank of India and Karnataka Bank in Andhra Pradesh State. It was resulted that work pressure is more in private sector bank than the public sector bank. It was also revealed that public sector bank employees feel that they earn enough to take care of their family and are satisfied with spending sufficient time with their family while private sector bank employees are not satisfied with the same. It was found that private sector bank has more gender bias as compared to public sector bank.

Keino & Kithae (2016) analyzed the effect of work-life balance on staff performance of telecommunication sector in Kenya. A sample of 195 staff members was selected from Safaricom, Airtel, Telkom Kenya's Orange and Essar Kenya's Yu Headquarters in Nairobi. The present study determined the effect of work related factors, family life and family responsibilities on staff performance in telecommunication sector. It was revealed that several factors such as long working hours, work burden, extending office work at home, working over the weekend, lack of vacations, lack of work schedules, lack of flexible working time, forgoing annual leave, family responsibilities, family expectations and family work conflict negatively affects staff performance in the organization.

Surapuramath (2017) examined the relationship between work-life balance and organizational commitment among secondary school teachers including government schools, private schools and private unaided secondary schools of Bangalore City. It was resulted that work-life balance is positively related with organizational commitment. It was also revealed that commitment to school, teaching work, work group and teaching profession is also significantly related with work-life balance.

Shaikh & Dange (2017) identified the factors of work-life balance of healthcare professionals working in Nagpur District. Data was collected from healthcare professionals such as doctors, nurses, clinical support staff and administrative staff from both public and private sector hospitals. Data was analyzed by using factor analysis. It was revealed that supportive work culture, working conditions, working provisions and distance from work are the factors of work-life balance.

Jailaxmi & Gautam (2017) studied the relationship between work-life balance and selected demographic variables (age, gender, marital status) of bank employees. A sample of 150 employees was

selected from ten branches of public sector banks in Dehradun. It was resulted that work-life balance has no significant relationship with gender while it has a significant relationship with age and marital status of public sector bank employees.

Thevanes & Mangaleswaran (2018) determined the relationship between work-life balance and job performance of employees working in selected private banks of Batticaloa District, Sri Lanka. A sample of 166 employees was selected for the purpose of study. Data was analysed by using correlation. It was resulted that there is positive and significant relationship between work-life balance and job performance of employees working in selected private banks.

Akter (2019) analyzed the impact of work-life balance on organizational commitment of university teachers working in Jashore University of Science and Technology in Bangladesh. Data was collected from 80 respondents. Correlation and regression techniques were used for data analysis. It was resulted that there was a positive relationship between work-life balance and organizational commitment. It was also revealed that there is a significant impact of work-life balance on organizational commitment. Organization and family should be supportive to a teacher so that they can be more committed towards their organization as well as family.

3. Objective of the Study

The objective of the present study is to understand the concept of Work-Life Balance and also to highlight the need, components and importance of Work-Life Balance.

4. Research Methodology

The present study is descriptive in nature and based on secondary data which has been collected from various sources such as books, national and international journals and websites etc.

5. Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance refers to a situation where an individual has adequate control to when, where and how they manage their work and personal life roles. It is an equilibrium state, where an individual effectively balances work and his personal life. Kirchmeyer (2000) explained Work-Life Balance as “achieving satisfying experiences in all life domains, and to do so require personal resources such as energy, time, and commitment to be well distributed across domains”. So a person’s capacity to remain gainful at work while leading a cheerful and relaxed personal life is called as work-life balance. It means to achieve satisfaction in one’s role. It can be said that when a person has balanced and fulfilled life and his work is accepted and respected then work-life balance is achieved. The criteria of work-life balance differ from one person to another because it always depends upon situation and time. Work-life balance represents that the work environment of organization is good. It can be said that when work and personal

life of an employee is balanced then he utilizes his material resources better, increases work efficiency, manages time well and gets maximum results in minimum time period. A balanced work and personal life is beneficial for betterment of business.

6. Need of Work-Life Balance

An organization consists of both employer and employee. They both need time for their work and personal life. A balance in work and personal life can be attained by achieving work-life balance. The importance of human resources has increased with the development in business world. Without effectively managing human resources, organisations cannot achieve their goals. Employees are the most important resources for any organization. Apart from work they need time for their personal life too. For this they expect their organization to be considerate towards their needs. Employees while on work have a duty to completely focus on their work but they equally need to fulfill the requirements of their personal lives. Recently the dependence on information technology has increased thereby leading to increased load of information on the employees. It is expected that employees should be willing to work on weekends and should also extend their working hours. It has increased the workplace pressure. Increased working hours means employees will spend less time with their family and community. In today's era, the personal responsibilities of employees have increased ranging from children care, elderly care to family commitments. On the other hand, their work responsibilities are also increasing, which results a conflict between personal and work commitments and it increases stress of employees. It is mandatory for a person to get the solution of conflict situations as such situations increase the disturbance of one's life. If an employee is mentally dissatisfied, he will not be able to perform his duties with due diligence and care. If more time is given to work then personal life is affected and more time to personal life means less dedication towards work. So it is must to maintain balance between work and personal life. A person whose work-life is balanced can easily perform his multiple roles of life. By achieving work-life balance a person feels that he is living an ideal life. An employer actually wants profits and growth of his organization. To achieve these, he needs the support of his workforce. New age employees mostly consist of qualified employees who are materially focused, techno-savvy, have higher propensity to switch jobs and are also aware of market real situation. So organization objectives can be only achieved when the work force is happy, satisfied and has a good work-life balance.

An employer has to provide the best technology to his employees in order to get the best results. Along with changing technology he needs to better equip his workforce by providing adequate training to it. Efficiency of the workforce can be easily increased when the employer provides them adequate skill training. Issues like health and happiness of the employee also need to be addressed by employer. Training and skill improvement are also among the factors which an employee needs for doing his work effectively.

Apart from this, the personal life of employees is also needed to keep in mind by the employer. If work and personal life of employees are balanced then they utilize their material resources better, manage time well and get maximum results in minimum time period. Employees are expected to fulfill multiple roles in their work and personal life. So achieving work life balance by managing all these roles is requirement of employees. Work-life balance is a key to happy, satisfactory and peaceful life. It is helpful in reducing conflicts and stress in the life of an individual. Once employees are able to balance their work and personal life, it is helpful in personality development and motivates them for intellectual, emotional and social growth. Balanced work and personal life of employees help the business thrive and simultaneously help employees to easily fulfill their other aspirations and responsibilities along with their work.

7. Components of Work-Life Balance

- **Time Management:-** time management is the process through which we plan and make optimum use of our time and resources. This includes effective planning and organized execution while keeping pace with available time. It increases our effectiveness, productivity and efficiency thereby helping us in achieving our goals and prioritizing what is urgent and important than others. It helps in understanding what a person is best at doing and also in assembling the required tools to achieve any particular task.

- **Stress Management:-** the environment today around us has become more stressful and complex. This complex and stressful environment demands more physical and mental response from our body. Effectively managing such complex and stressful life style is known as stress management. The increasing distractions, noise and number of people irrespective of one's own individual circumstances, demand that we become better at maintaining calm and work ourselves out of stressful situations. Various kinds of multitasking eventually increase our stress whereas when we focus on one thing at a time it helps in decreasing our stress.

- **Change Management:-** change is the only constant in today's fast-paced world. Change management is a systematic approach to deal with the changes that take place in our work as well as personal life. By adopting new methods, adapting to new situations and having a positive attitude towards change, we can achieve change management. The better a person deals with change, better are his chances to thrive. Effective change management occurs when we offer concentrated and timely efforts. So that the changes occurring in work and personal life do not defeat us.

- **Technology Management:-** a set of management discipline through which organisations can manage their technological fundamentals and create competitive advantage is known as technology management. Managing technology effectively requires that rather than abusing us the technology serves us.

Since the first wheel, spear, walking stick at flint etc., technology has always stayed with us. The integrated control, planning, operation, design and optimization of technological services, products and processes can be called as technology management. We have to compulsorily manage technology as we have to live with it.

- **Leisure Management:-** one cannot just short-change leisure as it is important to acknowledge the need of rest and relaxation. Leisure management is a big area which concerns with management of entertainment facilities and leisure. Concerts, festivals, celebrations, sports centre and parks etc. are some of such facilities. Rest and relaxation and “time off” are vital part of human experience which are often overlooked. However monotony can be caused due to too much of leisure activities. So varying one’s activities leads to effective leisure management.

- **Self-Management:-** when it comes to self-management, managing oneself can be challenging, specially getting good nutrition, exercise and sleep. Stress can be avoided and more opportunities can be availed if we adequately manage self-management. When we effectively use our time and space and regulate ourselves, it comes to be known as self-management. Self-regulation is a key aspect of self-management when we manage our selves better, we become driver of our own car.

8. Importance of Work-Life Balance

As per the current situation, the employer of the organization and his employees would be of the opinion that it is very important to have a good balance between work and personal life. The concept of work-life balance stands on the foundation that work and personal life complement each other and need not be seen as competitors. Employees have the concrete idea that their professional and personal life affects each other. After globalization, most of organizations work 24*7 for 365 days. The technology has increased speed of work but the workload has not decreased due to stiff competition. Health problems are being ignored whereas everyone is running after money. The performance level, ability to do job and health of an employee suffers if he does not relax and care about his health. This increased work pressure has affected the life of employees in many ways. They can suffer from illness and physical disorders that stem from prolonged stress such as heart disease, alcoholism, and even diabetes also.

In order to achieve better results, stress on workforce is increased by the organization. Employees expect from their employers that they accept and recognize that apart from work life, the former have a personal life which includes their social gatherings, friends and family. If work-life balance is sustained it will increase employee’s effectiveness in his job, in addition to his good health and personal life. The goals of the organization and the employees can be easily achieved. But due to employers, who always want some

extra time of their employees, such work-life balance is not easy to achieve. One of the main reason which causes employees to quit their jobs is the issue of work-life balance. For both male and female employees, life has become more complex and difficult because of increasing burden of family and other personal life responsibilities. For professionals, who struggle to manage their personal and professional life, work-life balance is a matter of top importance. Therefore, in an effort to retain employees for long time in organization and maximize their performance, it is increasingly becoming important for employer to recognize this balance. Since work-life balance is about improving people's quality of life and widening access to better opportunities and paid employment, it is one of the important and increasingly hot topics. A balanced work and life environment in any organization and individual and will be a win-win situation for both.

From management's point of view, encouraging a person to take off from work is important as he will be able to work at its best when his work and personal life is balanced. Without creating a work-life balance, a person would not be able to take time to enjoy life that he has worked so hard to build. He is not available for friends and family members, and often take his stress out on the ones he love. Creating a balanced work and personal life schedule will help an employee being better workforce, friend, family and society member. Work-life balance of employees helps in progress of business thereby increasing productivity, profitability, performance, job satisfaction, commitment, motivation and reducing the absenteeism, lateness, turnover rate, health issues and stress of employees.

9. Conclusion

Based on the present study, it is concluded that along with work, life has many other aspects. One's life is balanced when he gives required time to every such aspect. But the criteria of work-life balance differ from one person to another because it always depends upon situation and time. The importance of work-life balance has increased day by day. To grow and develop itself, every organization must help his employees achieve work and personal life balance. An organization's success also depends upon the successful work-life balance of its employees. It is the duty of the employer to provide facilities to employees and help the employees to maintain their work-life balance. If employee has attained satisfaction then he will work willingly and is bound to be successful in both his work and personal life. If organization will help employees in achieving work-life balance, it will increase job satisfaction, motivation, commitment, employee retention, happiness, performance, productivity and profitability of the organization. It will also increase morale, improve communication, teamwork and also reduce the stress level, absenteeism of employees. It will also improve the physical and mental health of employees which is helpful in growth of the organisation.

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