

WORK LIFE BALANCE AND STRESS MANAGEMENT AMONG FEMALE EMPLOYEES IN IT SECTOR VS DELHI UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

Post industrialisation and IT revolution; business world has become very volatile as far as change is concerned. One thing that remains permanent is change. Change has become the order of the day. Apart from other challenges like work life balance and managing turnover, the most important challenge now a days is providing stress management to employees. Work-life balance can be defined as the perfect management between work and life both not interfering with each other. It is the boundary between your profession, career, or business and every other segment that makes up your life. To avoid delays and failures, employees are working hard and giving their best to achieve work-life balance which is creating a lot of pressure on them and hence they are forced to finish their jobs irrespective of time limit. In the highly competitive global scenario, society and organizations are filled with conflicting commitment and responsibilities. Hence, work life balance has become an important issue at workplace. It is a key factor which determines employee satisfaction, loyalty and productivity. As the separation between work and home life has diminished, work life balance has become more relevant than before. In this study, Work life balance of female employees in education sector (Delhi university Colleges) and I.T. sector, and opinions about various aspects of work-life are to be studied.

Keywords: Industrialisation, IT Revolution, Business World, Work Life Balance, Education Sector.

Introduction

Work life balance is a phenomenon that occurs to those who are gainfully employed and have to manage their personal life. Work life balance is also about effectively managing the juggling act between paid work and the other activities important to people. The Indian culture with regard to career development of women is undergoing rapid changes due to the increase pace of urbanization and modernization. The work life balance is a very personal thing, and will change from each person at different times of their lives. Work life balance is considered to be the prime factor as now a day's people getting deviated from their goal is becoming a common criterion. The five things that are to be balance in work life balance are "Family, Career, Health, Friends and Life balance". Imbalance of work and life leads to stress. Symptoms of stress are manifested both physiologically and psychologically. Many women feel additional stress when they decide what they feel is the best for the family and career. If a woman takes time off to care their family and children they are tend to be less committed employees. The work life balance stress increases when they get less pay due to the off they take to look after their family or children. Personal coach Laura Berman Fort gang says "getting your priorities clear is the first and most essential step towards achieving a well balance life. If your life could focus in one thing and one thing only, what would that be? If you answer honestly and thoughtfully, the result will be the list of top priorities. Fort gang says a typical top priority list might include children, health, spouse, satisfying career, community services, religion, sports, etc.

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The family and work life are both important to the employees in any sector and if these two are not maintained properly it creates stress and strain and results in various diseases. This study is found to be important because it tries to know how the work life and family life interface results in stress. Women want to balance their work life and family life.

Women face different types of domestic issues in their life. It is more difficult for the married women than the unmarried, because the married women have to earn money, look after the children, look after the family, have concern of their husband, occasions etc. so it is very hard for the women workers to balance their work life. This adds stress to their lives. There is a direct relation between work life balance and stress management of female employees. Especially during pandemic situation it's very difficult for female employees to manage their personal life and professional life as well. Its 24 by 7 for them. Rightly said "***You will never feel truly satisfied by work until you are satisfied by life.***"

Literature Review

Work life balance has been defined as the principle in which employee can integrate his/her personal life and community involvement in his own and social interest (Edmund Heery and Noon, 2008). Work-life balance is defined as a state of equilibrium achieved by an employee when he/she is able to meet the demands of both his/her job and personal life comfortably. Now-a-days with increasing demands at work place employees are experiencing more stress which is invading their personal life. In this context, finding an appropriate balance between work and daily life is a challenge for the employees. According to Heery and Noon (2008), Work-life balance is the principle that paid employment should be integrated with personal life and community participation in the interests of personal and social welfare.

In the words of Morgenstern (2008), Work-life balance is not about the amount of time one spends working versus networking. It's more about how one spends time working and relaxing, recognizing that what a person does in one, fuels energy for the other. Karatepe and Mehmet (2006) based on their studies reported that work-family conflict increased emotional exhaustion and decreased job satisfaction among the employees; Tsigilis, et al., (1994) expressed that there is a negative relationship between job satisfaction and burnout reflecting that higher burnout results in lower job satisfaction and vice-versa. Siw et al., (2008) highlighted the significance of exploring the relationship between work-family interaction and burnout over time. Their findings have shown bi-directional causal paths, i.e., both work family interaction and burnout may be either antecedent or outcome, resulting both loss and gain spirals as suggested by Conservation of Resources theory. Employees viewed that infringement of work responsibilities and pressures into their personal lives affected health adversely (Hyman et al., 2003). A study done by Hughes and Boziones (2007) on bus drivers pointed that work-life imbalance was not only a source of anxiety for the respondents but also was the major source of dissatisfaction. In addition, the participants made a clear association between problems with work-life balance and withdrawal behaviors, comprising turnover intention and absenteeism due to sickness which was not genuine. Jyothi & Jyothi (2012) highlighted that human resources policies intended to help employees balance their work and family lives can positively affect performance, organizational commitment and employee willingness to go the extra mile on behalf of their employers. A healthy balance between family and job leads to higher job satisfaction and contribute to enhancing employee performance (Kanwar et al., 2009). The literature on Work-life balance with different perspectives are studied and available, in recent years, there has been an increased interest in work family interface in the human resource management literature, especially regarding the sources and outcomes of conflict between these two spheres. A number of studies have addressed this issue from different perspectives. Rebecca Bundhun quoted the paper of Dr Katty Marmenout, a research fellow at the INSEAD School in Abu Dhabi with his words that —work-life balance is not simply about equally dividing the time spent on one's work and personal life, but establishing a harmony that reflects an individual's priorities. So, this allows for acceptance of the happy workaholic or the satisfied stay-at-home mum or dad. "How can we measure or evaluate work-life balance? The best indicator would be that it should feel right," she said. Whereas researcher Murphy and Doherty (2011) revealed that it is not possible to measure work-life balance in an absolute way as there are personal circumstances which influence the way that is perceived but establishing a harmony that reflects an individual's priorities whereas employees must draw a firm line between their home and work lives and be confident that the line is in the right place (Harvard Business Review, page 184). Miller (1978) emphasized that earlier the work life used to begin at age 16 and end at age 70 and now begins at 20 and ends at 62 for most of the working personals. However, restrained effects of the increase in average length of life over the last 80 years may be associated with certain changes in work-life history as more people reach the older ages with their health to permit them to enjoy leisure and image of the retirement years.

Objectives of the Study

- To know the challenges faced by women employees in Education field (DU college's female employees) and IT Sector in balancing the work life.
- To know the impact of competitive work culture on work life balance and stress level of female employees in both the sectors.
- To find out the barriers for employees to achieve work life balance.
- To analyse the problems and issues in work life balance and stress management among female employees.
- To suggest remedies to improve the WLB and Stress management.

Research Methodology

The data for this study was collected from primary sources, that are the employees of the respective organizations. Data was collected through survey, Interview and questionnaire method. The study used exploratory research to examine the issues related to work life balance of employees working in education sector (DU Colleges) and .I.T industry. Sample size is 102. 51 women employees from Education field (Delhi University Colleges, female employees) and 51 from IT industries were selected for study. Stratified random sampling was adopted to collect data from two sectors. A structured, self-administered questionnaire was used as the tool of data collection. A Questionnaire was prepared to collect data from the respondents on the basis of self-report. The tool was developed based on extensive survey of the research literature and inputs received from the field personnel. The questionnaire had both open ended and close ended items. The Research was carried out considering the factors like: Work load, Stress, Impact of job responsibility on work and on personal life, Timings and Work-life balance.

Data Analysis

The other factors affecting the work life balance other than money and monetary benefits.

- **Comparison of the Work load among female employees in IT and Education sector:** The average work load of the Women employees per week in I.T industry is 51.08 Hours while the average work load of women employees in DU colleges per week is 30 hours. Work load among IT sector should be reduced so that female employees can spend more time with family and have better WLB. In DU Colleges the work load is far much more less as compared to I.T Industry. So women can give more time to their family and hence have better work life balance.
- **Working on Weekends:** 22% female employees from I.T Sector says that they work most of the time on weekends while rest of 78% says that they work sometimes on weekends and every employee from I.T Sector agrees that they have to work on weekends sometimes or most of the times. It further adds to their stress and hence no time for pleasure activities. While 0% from educational field says that they work most of the time on weekends and 18 % says that they work sometimes on weekends while rest of 82 % says that they don't work on weekends at all.
- **Comparison of the Social Life of Employees of both sectors:** 20 % female employees from different Delhi University Colleges believed that their Social life is affected, 12% remains Neutral and 68% believes that their work life is balanced. 50% from I.T Industry believed that their Social life is affected, 16% remains Neutral and 34% believes that their social life is affected. Thus we can conclude that the social life of women employees in I.T. sector is affected more as their working hours are more so they get less time for social gathering.
- **Comparison of the Work Life Balance of Female Employees of both sectors:** 32% Female employees form I.T industry believes that their work life is balanced and 68% says that their work-life is not balanced. 90% female Employees from DU Colleges believed that their work life is balanced and 10% says that their work-life is not balanced. Thus Women Employees in Education Field are far much more satisfied then in I.T sector.
- **Job satisfaction in women employees of both industry:** 36% female employees form I.T industry are satisfied with their job and 64% says that they are not satisfied. 74% female Employees from Education sector are satisfied with their job and 26% female Employees says that they are not satisfied. Thus we conclude that women's from Educational field are much more satisfied as comparison to I.T field.

- **Major cause of life Imbalance:** 60% female Employees from I.T Industries believe that the major cause of the life imbalance is work pressure, 16% says Personal Ambitions and 24% believes that their work life is imbalanced due to family responsibilities. 54% female Employees from Educational Field believe that the major cause of the life imbalance is Family Responsibility, 36% says Personal Ambitions and 10% believes that their work life is imbalanced due to Work Pressure. Thus major cause of life imbalance in I.T sector is work pressure while in Educational field it is Family responsibilities.

Suggestions and Remedies for better WLB and Stress Management

Remedies are given on the basis of the suggestions received by the Employees to maintain work life balance.

- Stress management lectures should be arranged frequently.
- Facility of flexible timings should be given to the women employees' i.e. Flexi work hours can be offered to them.
- Convenient transportation facilities should be provided.
- Provision of baby crèches day care should be provided for their kids.
- Extending the availability of day care provisions in terms of hour and location.
- Maternity should be minimum six months duration and there should be provision of extension of maternity leave without pay if needed.
- In case of emergencies leave should be given without and delay.
- Other remedies on Work life balance includes: Flexible time, Staggered hour, Time off in lieu, Compress working hours, Shift swapping, Shift rostering, Job sharing, Term time working, Working from home, Tele working, Breaks from home.
- Other remedies for female employees include: Good Time management, Drop activities that sap your time and energy, A little relaxation goes a long way, Be honest, Rethink your errands, Set your priorities, Social networking, Learn to say no, Leave day from work, Bolster your support system, Nurture yourself, Seek help of counsellors, Use technology, Use the facilities available for work life balance in the organization.
- Other Recommendations to the organization includes: Integration, Offer flexibility, Offers medical and other Training programs, Promote awareness, Availability of accommodations, Commitment during hiring, Continuous process, Nominating work life balance champions, Benchmarking against similar organizations, Communication, Feedbacks, Shorten the working hours of the employees, Recruit sufficient staff.

Limitations and Scope for Further Research

- Research is limited to a small group of selected DU colleges and IT industries in Delhi.
- There is a scope to carry out research in larger group.
- There is a limitation of time factor.
- We can also include the income in the research.\

Conclusion

We conclude that women employees of educational field are much more satisfied and their work life is balanced as compared to employees of I.T industry. The work life balance of I.T industries female employees is badly affected. According to the survey, the female employees have admitted that their jobs are affecting their personal life. The pressure of the work leads to stress; which leads to frustration and tension. Due to this their overall productivity and performance decreases. If it is not improved it leads to poor performance, absenteeism and sick leave. This is a challenge for the industries to maintain work life balance to increase the productivity of their staff and this is also a challenge for the family to keep peace at home and contribute in maintaining the work life balance. Achieving a good balance between work and family commitments is a growing concern for contemporary employees and organizations. The women employees face different types of problems like, in the house they have to manage everything i.e. to look after their children, do household chores, earn money and in the workplace, some of them have to work extra time to get more money since their salary is not sufficient for them, they also have difficulty of changing shifts due to insufficient staff in the

organization. In short, we can conclude that Benefits of work life balance and stress management for female employees are: Reduces stress, absenteeism and health costs, Improve staff moral and engagement, improve customer satisfaction, Reduces cost, Improve recruitment, retention and reduce turnover.

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