

WORK LIFE BALANCE OF IT EMPLOYEES IN COIMBATORE

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Abstract

Work pressure among Information Technology (IT) employees is keep on increasing. Considering the career growth, IT employees have to spend maximum of their time at their work place as a result they found difficult to fulfil their personal and family commitments. Employees who found difficult to fulfil both work and family commitment feel frustrated on their job and may quit the profession. Hence, in this study an attempt has been made to identify how IT employees are managing their Work and Life Balanced. The result of the study disclosed that by prioritizing the work IT employees are balancing their work and family commitments in a peaceful manner.

Keywords: Work Life Balance, Information Technology

INTRODUCTION

Employees who are continuously tied to their jobs have to face the consequences of neglecting their personal lives and responsibilities. Employees fail to find time for their friends and family and often take their stress out on their loved ones. In short, they don't have the time to enjoy the life they have worked hard to create. It will impact their performance at work as their ability to do the job decreases and feel frustrated leads to symptoms of stress and burn out. As a result of stress employees suffer from several illnesses and physical disorders like heart diseases, diabetes, etc. The benefits of Work Life Balance (WLB) policies for both organisation and employees are immense. It helps an organization in retaining talented employees, reducing absenteeism, improving their productivity and also enhances the image of the organization. IT management has to initiate suitable measures and offer necessary benefits to their employees for raising their performance, reducing stress levels, increased job satisfaction and job security. According to Rife and Hall (2015) Work life balance signifies the extent to which employees experience feeling their both personal and professional commitments are fulfilled. Thus, in this study an attempt has been made to ascertain method by which IT employees who work at Coimbatore city manage their Work and Life commitments.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Vanitha (2011) in her study mentions that companies downsize due to business slump, but they don't hire more people when business picks up. Many IT employees are forced to work in the weekends and 14 hours per day. When there are long intervals between projects, they are asked to attend training sessions to keep them occupied. It makes the employees feel that they don't have the competency and skill for the job or their capability is not properly utilized.

Pandu et.al. (2013) in their study state that Indian IT professionals are not exposed to the work life balance practices and organizations on their part have not done much in introducing HR policies and practices to improve the WLB of their employees. They also mention that higher work life imbalance is found among employees in large organizations compared to small and medium size IT companies. Their study also reveal that older workers, self employed professionals, and employees who work for less than 25 hours per week and those who work no over time find it easier to balance between work and personal responsibilities.

Umer and Rehman (2013) mention that work Life imbalance can have significant impact on the life satisfaction of working women. Women's participation and involvement in business and enterprise is crucial for the advancement of the society and better quality of life of families. However, additional domestic responsibilities of women often create work life imbalance and work life conflict which eventually affects their life satisfaction. So, organizations should introduce work life balance initiatives that can help working women to improve their life satisfaction.

Singh (2014) in his study points out that work life balance is a mounting issue in the fast growing Indian economy. Organizations and employees strive hard to achieve balance between work and personal responsibilities. Work life balance challenges reduce the health and well being of individuals and families.

Tewathia (2014) suggests that flexible working hours and work from home option can enhance the work life balance of both male and female employees in the IT industry. However, women employees also require child care facilities in the work location. The spill over of work into family leaves little time for employees to spend with family and the work pressure affect the quality of their family life. She also states that the work life issues in India are very similar to those in the developed countries in the west, but unlike in the western countries, family friendly practices are yet to be seen in good measure in India.

Johnson (2015) in his article mentions that a supportive work environment enables employees to maintain a healthy balance between profession and personal life, which in turn strengthen their loyalty and productivity. In today's competitive business environment, employers very well know the cost implications of demoralized staff and its impact on performance and productivity. The major reasons for organizations to introduce work life balance practices in organizations include high return on investment, recruitment and retention, legislation, cost and labor unions.

Rife and Hall (2015) mention that work life balance signifies the extent to which employees experience feeling fulfilled and have their needs met in both personal and professional facets of life. They also mention that employees who are capable of managing the WLB behave in favourable ways to the organization like lower turnover, reduced absenteeism etc.

Yadav and Rani (2015) in their study mentions that the benefits of WLB for both employer and employees are immense. It helps an organization in retaining talented employees, reducing absenteeism, saving employees' time, improving their productivity and motivation and also enhancing the image of the organization. Benefits to employees include enhanced performance, reduced stress levels, increased job satisfaction and job security, better physical and mental health, customer satisfaction etc.,

Das and Mishra (2016) in their research paper state that kids are the biggest causality of work life imbalance of women employed in the IT sector as they do not get the required parental care. Work life imbalance result in poor quality work style which leads to family conflicts and substandard

performance in the office. Many women employees get stranded in the lower levels of the job hierarchy, not because of any professional incompetency, but because they are finding it difficult to balance between work and family life.

Mohanty and Jena (2016) in their study mention that most of the research on WLB focuses on women and work life issues of men are mostly ignored. However, as larger number of women enters the work force, there has been a realization that fathers also get involved in raising children and other domestic work. Recent researches reveal that fathers in dual earner families spend more time with their kids than single breadwinner families. Studies also reveal that husbands of full time working wives suffer from several neurotic disorders and experience role stress compared to the husbands of non-working or part time working wives.

Sangarry and Srinivasan (2016) in their study point out that work life programs are beneficial for both employees and employers. It is helpful for an employee whose family members have been called to serve the nation, or a single parent who is trying to raise the children without sacrificing or compromising on profession, or a millennial employee who values his or her personal time or the employer who may lose critical knowledge when a talented employee quits the organization. Work Life initiatives can reduce absenteeism, improve the morale of the workforce and retain organizational knowledge especially during difficult economic times.

Aveline and Kumar (2017) in their study mention that WLB plays a very important role in employee engagement. They further say that employees in shift jobs generally do not get time to spend with the family and this creates problems in their family life. So, some organizations have introduced work from home option for the employees in shifts especially for women employees as it helps them to save their travelling time and complete household work. Such family friendly policies introduced by the employers help the staff to balance between their work and personal responsibilities and feel engaged in their jobs.

Divya and Suryanarayana (2017) state that employees are the pillars of an organization and the organization should help its employees balance between their personal and work responsibilities. Work balance practices such as part time working, flexi timing, job sharing, telecommuting, compressed work week and benefits such as maternity leave, paternity leave, parental leave, crèche facilities and paid leave for short period of time to attend to emergencies are an investment for improving the productivity and job satisfaction of the employees.

Narendra et. al. (2018) in their study ascertain that many IT companies are moving from a standardized 8 hour in a day to operate 24 hours per day on all seven days of the week. So, employees working in these organizations perform under pressure and many are likely to go under depression. Job dissatisfaction, absenteeism, employee turnover, alcoholism, reduced efficiency, lack of motivation and creativity are the results of over stressed work organization. It makes the distinction between work life and family life vanished.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Success of any organization resides with its employees. Satisfied employees will put their maximum effort for the growth of their organization. Whereas, employee satisfaction is related with fulfilment of work and life commitments. Thus, in this study an attempt has been made to identify how employees are able to manage their work and life commitments and succeed in their work and life.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- ❖ To ascertain the method by which IT employees manage their Work Life Balance

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data

Data required for the study is primary in nature. Hence, primary data is collected by making use of questionnaire.

Sampling

By adopting convenience sampling method, the data was collected from 150 software professionals in Coimbatore city.

FINDINGS

To find prominent methods by which IT employees manage their Work Life Commitment, Weighted Average Score is employed. Tale No. 1 portrays the result of the study.

Table 1
WORK LIFE BALANCE

Particulars	Mean Rank	Rank
Work Prioritization	24.42	1
Work overtime at office for completing the task	24.10	2
Handle one work at a time	23.80	3
Availing work from home option	23.68	4
Complete official works with colleagues support	22.05	5
By availing leave at the time of emergencies	21.00	6
Wish to work in team	20.85	7
Avail all privileges offered at work place	20.66	8
Take care of health by carrying out exercise regularly	20.40	9
Feel happy with assigned work	20.06	10

The result of weighted average score disclosed that by prioritizing the work, the employees are able to manage work and family commitments followed by working overtime at work place for completing the assigned task, handling one job at a time, availing work from option and the like.

SUGGESTIONS

- ❖ IT employees have to prioritize their work thereby they may manage their work and life effectively
- ❖ Employers should offer necessary leave to their Employees, in case of emergency needs
- ❖ Employees should not postpone their work, (i.e.) They should complete their assigned task in time by working extra hours
- ❖ Employees Work Life problems may be solved by HR departments. Employers in this case; represented by the HR department can aid their employees in maintaining a WLB. This can be through ensuring the formulation of employee friendly policies, the provision of equal benefits

and offering services that are friendly and geared towards the maintenance of a stress-free working environment

- ❖ These departments have adjusted their working policies thus making it possible for their employees to work at home unless it is necessary for them to be at the office
- ❖ These policies also cover how the work schedules are laid out. HR departments plan employee schedules around the employee needs.
- ❖ The goal is to ensure that the employees achieve their goals, complete their task within a set deadline as such they leave the employees to set their own time schedules.
- ❖ Some employers also go to the extent of creating child care facilities in the offices which allow their parents to check in on their children during the work day. Some of the benefits offered include the provision of secure networks in the employees' homes to help them work at home.

CONCLUSION

The responsibility of maintaining a work-life balance does not solely lie on the employee alone but also reside with employers. The organization should base its policies on employee welfare and job satisfaction in addition to offering the best quality to its customers. Human resource managers are responsible for the formulation of any employee related policies as such they are in charge of ensuring that the employees are free of any unnecessary stressors by fulfilling their work and family commitments in time.

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