

A study of work-life balance of women employees during work from home in the period of COVID-19

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Abstract

The concept of work-life balance is a burning issue in all sector. Due to globalization many employees are working in different shifts which is resulting in getting very less time to spend with families and friends. Since past some decades the work life balance issue has given a lot of attention by the researchers. Specially women employees are facing more challenges in balancing their family life and work responsibilities. Corona pandemic situation has brought a concept of work from home for many sectors. Lockdown period has encouraged the industries to allow employees to work from home. During this lockdown period all family members were at home. Children had online classes so it is very stressful for women to manage their all responsibilities. This paper is mainly to find out the causes of imbalance and benefits of balance between work and family during work from home. Women plays an important role in family and hence organization must support to work-life balance policies. In this paper researcher found that women employees are suffering from some health issues and they are satisfied by working from home so researcher suggests and recommend the organizations can come up with some strategies to improve the work-life balance policies and practices to organizations with special reference to women employees.

Key Words: Covid-19, Work from home, Women employees, Lockdown.

Introduction:

Covid-19 Virus found in India in March 2020 and the government of India declared the Nationwide lockdown to prevent the spread of Corona Virus. Many Organizations started working from home strategy for their regular operations. Most of the employees were allowed to work as per their flexible timings. During Lockdown period all the family members got an opportunity to spend some time with each other. Usually employees have very busy schedule to reach to office on time and start working on their regular official duties. Work-life Balance is the concept of balancing professional life as well as personal life Deflect P (2011) explained the determinants of work life balance and the different aspects of balancing work and life. Women performs many roles in the family and domestic tasks are primarily considered as a prime duty of every woman in Indian society. It was a very challenging for working women to take care of family and completing the professional responsibilities specially when they did not have any paid helping hand for domestic work. Work from home practice have its own pros and cons. If organizations come up with some work life balancing policies then it can be a great journey for working women.

Review of Literature

Ms. G. Delina and Dr. R. P. Raya (2013) discussed in their research that married women find many difficulties while managing work life balance irrespective of working sector. Married working women have to deal with work pressure, performance related stress as well as responsibilities towards family. Dr. R. Rangarajan (2018) revealed that working married do not get sufficient quality time to spend with their family and friends. He further stated that working

women worry about their job and they face lot of issues regarding work life balance. They feel tired because of work and performance related activities. Gayatri Pradhan discussed the work life balance of cross cultural working women. It is been observed and proved that there is no difference between work life and family life balancing issues among women working in different countries. Bhumika (2020) studied the challenges of work and life balance during covid 19 lockdown. specially on the basis of gender. She found that working women were more loaded with office duties and personal responsibilities due to which they struggle to balance their work and personal life.

Research Gap: Researcher found the gap in literature review that there is no study done on work life balance of working women during COVID-19.

Objectives

1. To study the challenges faced by working women during work from home.
2. To suggest remedies for improvement in work life balance of women employees during covid-19.

The sample size of the research study is 55 working women in the Maharashtra.

Research Methodology

The descriptive research method has been selected for this research. The researcher's aim is to identify the challenges faced by working women and the impact of work from home on work life balance provided by the organization.

Data Collection

Primary Data - Questionnaire, Interview and Observation

Secondary Data- Articles, research papers.

Sample Design: The sample size of the research study is 55 working women from education, banking, service, government, medical and finance sectors in the Maharashtra. The 55 women were selected by random sampling method

Findings:

1. 13% working women observed, much better Working from home which leads to perform better for official tasks but same time 11% working women feels completely disagree.
2. 25% women agreed with Work from home help them balance between personal life and professional life same time 13% women felt they were not able to balance between personal and professional life.
3. 24% women undergone through frustration due to extra work-load of official duties and family responsibilities same time 15 % manage extra work load and family responsibilities as well.
4. 29% women stated that they were able to spend time for yoga, exercise and medication for fitness and 16% were not interested in this kind of activity.
5. 42% women mentioned they were able to complete their official tasks within deadline and no one is disagreed with this statement.
6. 33% women identified. they were performing their responsibilities more efficiently but 9% women disagreed with this statement.
7. 22% women perceived they were able to concentrate on their career advancement in this corona pandemic.

8. 9% working women suffered stress during work from home but 22% does not feel the same.
9. 47% women experienced that they were got help from their family members for domestic work which is almost half the women felt so.
10. 16% women make out that they can spend more time on their hobbies and 25% does not felt the same.
11. 35% women noted they were able to spend quality time with their family due to work from home but 15% women don't agree with this.
12. 27% women detected that frequently they were worked for long hours or even overtime and even on holidays and same time 47% women mentioned only sometimes they need to work for long hours or overtime or even on holidays.
13. 51% women declared that 2-4 hours they need to spend on domestic activities during Corona pandemic.
14. 29% women declared that they were satisfied with the working flexibility during work from home
15. 71% women noticed that their respective organization provided flexible working hours for work from home and same time 29% completely disagreed with the statement.

Suggestions:

- By observing the above findings, researcher mentioned some suggestions for Working women as well as Organisations which need to implement.
- Communication is a key component between employees and employers.
- If someone faced difficulties while working from home, Employer should arrange meetings and interactive sessions to make them comfortable thro' video and chat instead of sending Emails.
- Employees should plan a work before they start their day. Priorities of work and schedule time including your household work and unforeseen work calls new task received from your employer.
- Employees should know and aware about the technologies available for work from home. They may use various applications which are available from Google like Google Hangout for Video meetings and chat, Microsoft Team, and so on.
- Employees should create a workspace in their house that is conducive for work from home.
- Employer should arrange online sessions for fitness like meditation, Yoga, Zumba.
- No roommates or family members, no refrigerator, not even bed to tempt away.
- Invest in the furniture to make it comfortable.
- The proper desk and ergonomic chair are better than the back pain caused by working on a sofa with your laptop.
- Keep the desk clean and tidy. Make sure there should be a wall or background that suits Skype or video call with colleagues.

Conclusion:

- The present study addressed the need to study working women and their perspectives while working from home in this pandemic situation.
- Given the results of the current study, respondents who are working women of different backgrounds, such as education, service, banking, etc., and those working women who are willing to work from home if the work environment is good and supportive.

- Employers also have the opportunity to provide supportive and flexible working hours in order to create a better work environment, which may result in more working women showing increased willingness to work from home and through higher job satisfaction and efficiency.

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