

QUALITY OF WORK LIFE BALANCE IN ORGANISATION



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Abstract

Work-life balance is assisted by employers who institute policies, procedures, actions, and expectations that enable employees to easily pursue more balanced lives. The pursuit of work-life balance reduces the stress employee's experience. Work-life balance enables employees to feel as if they are paying attention to all the important aspects of their lives. Because many employees experience a personal, professional, and monetary need to achieve, work-life balance is challenging. Employers can assist employees to experience work-life balance by offering such opportunities as flexible, paid time off (PTO), responsible time and

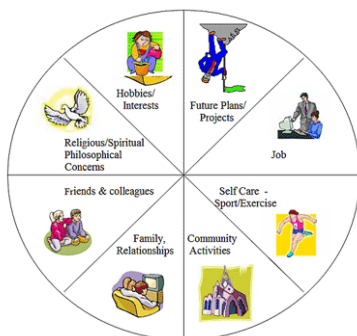
communication expectations, and company-sponsored family events and activities. Dynamic people can build dynamic organizations. Effective employees can contribute to the effectiveness of their organization. Competent and motivated people can make things happen and enable an organization to achieve its goals. Hence, organizations should continuously ensure that the dynamism, competency, motivation and effectiveness of the employees remain at high levels.

Keywords: Work life balance, Employee, Family, Challenges.

Introduction

Work/life balance is a broad concept that encompasses prioritizing between work (including career and ambition) on one hand, and life (including areas such as health, leisure, family, pleasure and spiritual development) on the other. There are also two key concepts related to work/life balance - achievement and enjoyment. Achievement can be related to setting and achieving the goals we have in life i.e. buying a new house, job satisfaction, further education etc. Enjoyment is related not just to happiness, but also pride, satisfaction, celebration, love, and a sense of wellbeing.

Fig 1 Wheels of Work Life Balance



Life will often deliver the value and balance we desire when we are achieving and enjoying something every day in all the important areas of our lives. Therefore, a good working definition of work/life balance is meaningful daily achievement and enjoyment in each of our important life quadrants. These life quadrants will vary for each person but may include, for example, work, family, friends and self. Work life balance is a concept that supports the efforts of employees to split their time and energy between work and

the other important aspects of their lives. Work-life balance is a daily effort to make time for family, friends, community participation, spirituality, personal growth, self care, and other personal activities, in addition to the demands of the workplace.

Work-life balance is assisted by employers who institute policies, procedures, actions, and expectations that enable employees to easily pursue more balanced lives. The pursuit of work-life balance reduces the stress employee's experience. When they spend the majority of their days on work-related activities and feel as if they are neglecting the other important components of their lives, stress and unhappiness result. Work-life balance enables employees to feel as if they are paying attention to all the important aspects of their lives. Because many employees experience a personal, professional, and monetary need to achieve, work-life balance is challenging. Employers can assist employees to experience work-life balance by offering such opportunities as flexible, paid time off (PTO), responsible time and communication expectations, and company-sponsored family events and activities.

Fig 2 Indication of Work Life Balance



Managers are important to employees seeking work-life balance. Managers who pursue work-life balance in their own lives model appropriate behavior and support employees in their pursuit of work-life balance. They create a work environment in which work-life balance is expected, enabled, and supported. They retain outstanding employees to whom work-life balance is important.

Creating Work Life Balance within the Workplace

The following actions are considered to be the most essential for employers that are committed to work life balance:

Ten Essential Management Actions for Creating Work Life Balance are

- Positive "Work life Balance" thinking
- "Work Life Balance" policy
- "Work Life Balance" employer
- Awareness of entitlements
- "Work Life Balance" survey
- Implement flexible work practices
- Willingness to pilot or trial initiatives
- Management accountability
- Management Training
- Pre-exit interviews

Work life balance within the workplace

Retention and attraction strategies are an important means for attracting and retaining skilled employees - particularly in areas where there is a high staff turnover, difficulties in recruiting and retaining skilled staff, a competitive job market, and labour and skill shortages. One of the first strategies to consider is current work arrangements and management practices that may be contributing to the difficulty in attracting and retaining staff. This may require the

assistance of an external person to the work area who may be able to see work and management practices more objectively and therefore obtain more detailed comments and views from both management and staff.

Staff leaves an organization for many reasons, including career advancement, better job opportunities and retirement. These departures may be difficult to prevent. However, another key reason staff - and in particular women - leave their job is to find a better work life balance. Changes to the family situation tends most often to impact upon women and results in increasing difficulty in managing a balance between work and family responsibilities. Factors shown to impact the most upon staff trying to balance work and life include required hours of work, a lack of flexibility in being able to alter their working hours, time off or leave arrangements, a lack of access to suitable childcare arrangements, and undue stresses and tensions in the workplace which make working life more difficult and/or even unpleasant.

Employees who are able to balance their work, family and life commitments have been shown to be happier in their job and are more likely to stay and work towards a rewarding and productive career. The cost of replacing skilled staff has been estimated by various organizations and businesses to be between \$20,000 - \$50,000 per employee. This includes the cost of lost productivity of the departed employee, and time taken by staff involved in the selection, recruitment, induction and on-the-job training processes to bring the new recruit up to the level of productivity of the former employee. Additional costs are incurred in advertising, engaging recruitment agencies, and temporarily filling the vacancy left by the departed employee until the new recruit is working at a reasonable level of productivity. Improving staff retention rates must, therefore, generate cost savings, and these savings could be used to improve flexibilities, facilities and working conditions for all employees.

In the best case scenario, these employer choices help you to recruit and retain the superior employees you seek. Here are ten factors that you control that encourage or discourage employee work life balance.

- Offer a flexible work schedule.
- Offer paid time off (PTO) in lieu of traditional paid sick leave, paid personal days, and paid vacation.
- Allow only limited carryover of paid time off (PTO) into another calendar year.
- Managers and senior managers need to model the work balance they'd like to encourage for their employees.
- With employees electronically connected to the workplace 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, in the office or out, work and life balance is a challenge.
- Allow employees to take unpaid leave as needed for life cycle needs.
- Sponsor employee and family events and activities monthly to encourage team building, friendships among employees, and inclusion of families in work events.
- Expect employees to work hard, work long hours, and weekends, but not all of the time.
- Allow some cross-over of life needs into the workplace and vice versa.
- Offer the opportunity for employees to job share or work part-time.

A nation may be endowed with abundant natural and physical resources and the necessary capital and technology but unless there are competent people who can mobilize, organize and harness the resources for production of goods and services, it cannot make rapid strides towards economic and social advancement. The strengths and weakness of an organization are determined by the quality of its human resources, which play a vital role in using other organizational

resources and the development process of modern economies. Human resource is the most strategic resource as no other resource can be fully utilized to generate income and wealth of a nation without the active involvement of this resource.

In fact, the differences in the levels of economic development of the countries are largely a reflection of the differences in the quality of their human resources and their involvement in national building. Ginzerberg points out that the key elements such as values, attitudes, general orientation and the quality of the people of a country determine its economic development.

However, he says that human resources are being wasted through unemployment, disguised unemployment, obsolescence of skills, lack of work opportunities, poor personnel practices and the hurdles of adjusting to change. Human resource accounts for a large part of national output and there exists a wide scope for increasing national wealth through their proper development. Human factor provides value to physical resource and necessary dynamism in the economy.

Dynamic people can build dynamic organizations. Effective employees can contribute to the effectiveness of their organization. Competent and motivated people can make things happen and enable an organization to achieve its goals. Hence, organizations should continuously ensure that the dynamism, competency, motivation and effectiveness of the employees remain at high levels.

Human resource is even the most critical factor for determining the efficiency and effectiveness of an organization because it is precisely the people who will decide when and how to acquire and utilize various resources, including human resources, in the best interest of the organization. The ultimate success and survival of an organization will invariably be determined by the quality and competence of its human resources. Of all the tasks of management, says Likert "Managing the human component is the central and most important task, because all else depends upon how well it is done".

Human resources are the most valuable and unique assets of an organization. In the changing economic environment, human resource management is assuming much greater importance than ever before. It is conceived to be different from the traditional and conventional notion of personnel management. Subsequently Human Resource Management (HRM) has become the central concern of any organization either in public, private sector or co-operative sector.

Many American are expecting burnout due to overwork and increased stress. This condition is seen in nearly all occupations from blue collar workers to upper management. Over the past decade, a rise in the workplace violence and an increase in levels of the absenteeism as well as rising workers compensation claims are all evidence of an unhealthy work life balance. Many author believe that parents are been affected by work life conflict will either reduce the number of hours one works where other author suggest that parent may run away from family life or work more hours at workplace. The implies that each individual views work life conflict differently.

Employee's assistance professionals say there are many causes for this situation ranging from personal ambition and the pressure of the family obligation. According to recent study Centre for Work life Policy 1.7 million people consider their jobs and their work hours exercise because of globalization. Therefore, implementing proper work-life balancing activities in an organization is the only solution to reduce issues pertaining to work- life balance of employees. Nowadays, world's large-scale organizations are aware of significance of work- life balance and these organizations are implementing work- life balance practices like flexible work hours, childcare services, rest breaks, rewarding environment, initiatives for women, access to the best facilities, fun at work, health care, family programs at workplace, breastfeeding other benefits etc.

Implementing and monitoring well organized work life balancing practices would be beneficial for employees as well as for organizations.

Following are some important benefits of work- life balance practices:

- It will reduce the absenteeism among employees.
- It will reduce the employee turnover.
- It will improve morale and commitment of employees.
- It will improve overall productivity.
- It will give good results like better teamwork, improved interpersonal relationship, improved interdepartmental and intradepartmental communication etc
- It is helpful in reducing training cost and recruitment cost.
- It will improve employee satisfaction and motivation among employees.
- It will help in reducing stress among employees due to various demands.
- The above benefits show that how the work- life balance of employees is important. Hence, it is essential for organizations to maintain proper work-life balance among employees.

Meaning

Work life balance is about people having a measure of control over when, where and how they work. It is achieved when an individual's right to fulfilled life inside and outside paid work is accepted and respected as the norm, to the mutual benefit of the individual, business and society.

Definition

According to Harrison work life is the degree to which work in an organization contributes to material and psychological well-beings of its members. According to American society of training and development. “A process of work organization which enables its members at all levels to actively participate in shaping the organization's environment methods and outcomes”

There is no agreed definition of work life balance but it does appear that the 'right' balance for one person may differ from the next. Balance is achieved in different ways for different purpose for people.

Work Life Balance Benefits as

- Attracts new employees
- Helps to retain staffs
- Builds diversity in skills and personnel
- Improves morale
- Reduces sickness and absenteeism
- Enhances working relationship between colleagues
- Increase levels of production and satisfaction

The Global Scenario of Work Life Balance

During the 1960s and 1970s, employers considered work-life mainly an issue for working mothers who struggled with the demands of their jobs and raising children. During the 1980s, recognizing the value and needs of women contributions, pioneering organizations (IBM, Deloitte) began to change their internal workplace policies, procedures and benefits. The changes included maternity leave, employee assistance programs (EAPs), flexi-time, home-based work, and child-care referral. During the 1980s men also began voicing work-life concerns.

The term 'work life balance' was first coined in 1986 in reaction to the unhealthy choices that many Americans were making in favor of the work places they opted to neglect family, friends and leisure activities in the pursuit of corporate goals. Articles of the time suggested a sharp increase in the working hours of the Americans.

This had started to affect their families and individual health. Work life balance slowly was gaining grounds in the various organizations. By the end of the decade, work life balance was seen as more than just a women's issue, affecting men, families, organizations and cultures. In 1990s solidified the recognition of work-life balance as a vital issue for everyone women, men, parents and non-parents, singles and couples. The 1990s saw a rise in the number of working women and dual-income families. A second family configuration, the lone parent household also became prevalent in the 1990s. The labor force experienced considerable challenges in balancing the work and family responsibilities. This growing awareness of the central importance of the issue resulted in major growth in attempted work-life solutions during this decade. Numerous studies showed that the generations from baby boomers to new college graduates were making job choices based on their own work-life issues and employer's cultures.

Objectives

The present study has the following objectives through which, the research analysis is made. The objectives to be spelt out here are

1. To bring out work life balance as a critical aspect to enhance effectiveness and satisfaction of employees in the company.
2. To investigate the quality of work life balance that results into the wellness of the employees and also improves their efficiency.
3. To highlight the elements of work life balance that cause job satisfaction, organizational commitment and career accomplishment of employees in the company.
4. To examine causes for stress and steps to reduce the stress among employees.

Review of Literature

Maxwell and McDougall (2004), Coughlan (2005), and Cieri et al. (2005) studied and identified different work life arrangements. These included: parental leave, paternity leave, maternity leave, adoption leave, sabbaticals, flexible work timings, job sharing, job splitting, flexi time, compressed working week, annual hours system, banking of hours, telecommuting, supervisory training in work family sensitivity, onsite day care, emergency child care, elder care arrangements

Milkie and Peltola (1999) found that women and men report similar levels of success in balancing work and family and kinds of work family tradeoffs. However, the tradeoffs reported by respondents were gendered. Longer working hours - negatively affected men's sense of balance, but did so only marginally for women. For women who worked full time, work hours did not affect balance. It was also found that young children in the household had a negative impact on success in balancing paid work and family life for employed women but not for employed men. Again, sacrifices made at work affected men more than women whereas sacrifices made in the family affected women more than men.

Dex and Scheibl (2001) in a study of ten small and medium-sized enterprises and four large organizations reported the reasons/motives for introducing flexible working arrangements. These included the need to keep abreast of legislation, business benefits and considerations of

employee well being. It was found that the motives varied by the type of arrangements as well as by the size of the organization and the way employee relations were structured.

Kossek and Ozeki (1998) in their meta-analytical study examined the relationship among work-family (w-f) conflict, policies, and job and life satisfaction. The results showed that there was a negative relationship between all types of w-f conflict and job and life satisfaction. This relationship was stronger for work to family conflict as compared to family to work conflict. Future research needed to be aimed at studying w-f policy variables that affect work to family and family to work conflict and other job and non job outcomes.

Conclusion

The study is concluded that the management of the company likes to accept the valuable suggestion put forth by the researcher. Work life balance is important in accomplishing the needs of the business concern for which the employees have to be aware of work life balance. The behaviour of the employees should be different from family to work. The employees have to relieve their tension to ensure good work life balance forever. So, the company has the practice of providing good work life balance with the employees, in spite of being it, the management is advised to follow up the suggestions to overcome difficulties if any.

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