WORK LIFE BALANCE OF WOMEN IN IT SECTOR

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ABSTRACT

Worklife balance of women in IT secors is gaining the domain place in highly discussed topics. Family–work conflict and work–family conflict are more likely to exert negative influences in the family domain, resulting in lower life satisfaction and greater internal conflict within the family. Variables such as the size of family, the age of children, the work hours and the level of social support impact the experience of Work family conflict and Family work conflict. It is also significant to note the success level gained by women in career and family inspite of all the stress they undergo at workplace. It is also important to consider the consequences these variables have on psychological distress and wellbeing of the working women.

INTRODUCTION

The term "Work- life Balance (WLB)" was coined in 1986, although its usage in everyday language was being made for a number of years. Interestingly, work/life programs existed as early as the 1930s. The policies and procedures established by an organization with the goal to enable employees to efficiently do their jobs and at the same time provide flexibility to handle personal concerns or problems at their family front In fact; dual-wage-earning families in general are working longer hours.

Work and family life have been an integral part of a woman's life. These two together forms an integrated whole and therefore attracts a lot of attention. The need to study the inter-linkages becomes all the more important with the increasing number of women entering the formal labour market. The very fact that they go out of home to work in a public sector poses all kinds of pulls and pushes upon home life which includes their work to be maintained at home and the family. A plethora of research has been conducted to ascertain the impact of a job outside home on the home life and vice versa or to understand the relationship between the two. Researchers have been emphasizing on the conflict between the home and office life of a woman as a result of employment outside the home. There was a time when the boundaries between work and home were fairly clear. Today, work is likely to invade our personal life and maintaining work-life balance is not so simple task. A decade back, employees used to have fixed working hours or rather a 9 to 5 job from Monday to Friday. The boundary between the work and home has disappeared with time. The advent of globalization makes people work across countries as a result, concept of fixed working hours is fading away. Instead of just 7 or 8hours a day, people are spending as much as 12-16 hours every day in office. The technological blessings like e-mail, text messaging and cell phones which were thought of as tools to connect them to their work being away from their workplace, have actually integrated their personal and professional lives. Therefore, tension and work related pressure, responsibilities at family makes an individual difficult to find balance between work and personal life. Professional working in BPO industries, top executives, doctors, nurses, bank employees, and IT professionals are the few examples who are facing the brunt of hazards constantly. Today, industries have realized the importance of the work life balance of their employees

Meaning

Work-life balance is the term used to describe those practices at workplace that acknowledge and aim to support the needs of employees in achieving a balance between the demands of

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their family (life) and work lives. The Work Foundation, earlier known as "The Industrial Society", believes that '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 a 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 OF WORK

Work may be defined as various activities carried out by human beings for varying purposes. Activity is an important aspect of life and it is essential for growth and health. It is through activities that human beings adjust to environment. Sometimes activity is engaged in for its own sake; sometimes it is reflexive and often it is purposive with an end, object or purpose in view. Purposive activities are termed as work.

Work-Life Balance definitions

Work-life balance is defined as "the management of one's professional responsibilities and family responsibilities toward s children, ageing parents, and disabled family member, or a partner/spouse effectively. One can have work-family balance, but may or may not have anything left for oneself, for one's community, for one's own personal growth and development, rest and relaxation".(Buddhapriya,2009)

According to Hudson (2005), work/life balance, in its broadest sense, is defined as a "satisfactory level of involvement or 'fit' between the multiple roles in a person's life".

Voydanoff (2004) drew on person-environment fit theory and suggested that work-family balance is "a global assessment that work resources meet family demands, and family resources meet work demands such that participation is effective in both domains".

Multiple roles and professional women

Super[5] identified six common life roles. He indicated that the need to balance these different roles simultaneously is a reality for most individuals at various stages throughout their lives. Rather than following a transitional sequence from one role to another, women are required to perform an accumulation of disparate roles simultaneously, each one with its unique pressures.[6] Multiple role-playing has been found to have both positive and negative effects on the mental health and well-being of professional women. In certain instances, women with multiple roles reported better physical and psychological health than women with less role involvement. In other words, they cherished motivational stimulation, self-esteem, a sense of control, physical stamina, and bursts of energy.[7] However, multiple roles have also been found to cause a variety of adverse effects on women's mental and physical health, including loss of appetite, insomnia, overindulgence, and back pains

Work Life Pyramid :

SELF: One cannot exist in harmony without the other and it all starts with the self. This is the foundation of any woman's legacy. 'Who am I?' 'Why do I do what I want to do?' are the guiding questions to the journey as a person, daughter, sister, wife, mother, friend. It is not about the destination and all about the journey. The
self is the whole package of spirituality, health, personal grooming and education. The sense of well being then reflects on every facet of life –family and work. The secret is to put your own oxygen mask on first to be empowered to support and nurture the people around you. Happy, healthy women make great role models for their families and the resulting support

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drives them to be successful employees. It is like a stack of building blocks forming a pyramid.

FAMILY:
 It's an interesting to note that majority of women employee
s are married; obviously pointing to a trend that financial and emotional support is required not only to ensure success, but also to provide meaning to life.Strong family relationships are the foundation for most career women and they form great role
models for their children and social network. All relationships need nurturing with time, love and a constant effort to fulfill needs and expectations. Happy healthy individuals have happy and healthy relationships and this then spills over into their work.

WORK :
 "When you're passionate about what you do, would rather give their business to you than to your competitor," explains Richard Nelson Bolles, author of the bestselling book 'What Color is Your Parachute?' The intrinsic feminine qualities of multi-tasking, networking, and communication results in a workplace which motivates and empowers. Their more worker - friendly policies boost morale and lead to less turnover, less absenteeism and higher productivity. A supportive circle of family and friends is the
platform available to seek advice and assistance and a major factor in the success of women employees .

COMMUNITY:
Once they move beyond the self and family, women employees
find that their playing field encompasses the community and they have the power to make a difference and leave a legacy of positive change in the word. In following their passion and purpose in life they touch the lives around themselves through contribution and effective giving to become social activist .

Some common work challenges experienced by women working in a IT and TES environment have been enlisted here:

- Most employers are skeptical about the ideas and communication skills of women hence, most females do not get a job that goes with their talents and experience.
- Females are subjected to constant discrimination in their offices. Often, the roles involving leadership qualities, quick decision making abilities and team management skills, are not handed over to a woman.
- Safe transportation is a major setback for girls, irrespective of small or big cities.
- Irregular availability of work, zero job security, low salaries and varying working hours are general problems experienced by girls working in metropolitan cities.
- Â Sexual harassment by colleagues and senior staff is a blatant issue nowadays. Numerous cases involving sex scandals, physical abuse and forced rapes are highlighted by media on regular basis. These cases are commonly encountered by the staff working in night shifts.
- Â The average literacy rate of Indian women is quite low in comparison to the average literacy rate of Indian men. Low-level of education hampers their growth opportunities. Further, due to lack of self confidence and fluent communication skills, most females find it difficult to express their standpoint in the corporate sector.

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- Female employees are handicapped by their own family members and associates. Lack of motivation from the loved ones, hinders their progress.

CONCLUSION

The work place and working environment peacefulness are the important

aspects for employees. It is the instrument that leads to productivity and

commitment. In order to obtain these, the employees need optimum level of stress and proper work life balance. Today work life balance has become the challenging avenue among employees irrespective of their work nature and their work places. The modern day employees are undergoing personal, family, social and work related pressures simultaneously and that leads to work lif

e imbalances. Compared with male employees female are encountering high work life balance related issues. The women employees irrespective of their designation carry various forms of work load and work pressure, in addition to their personal and family set up and the influences are attributing more work life balance related issues. To study these aspects among the working women, the present study has been framed by considering selective industries of banking, healthcare and IT/ITES. These industries are selected for the reasons of present day working systems and demands to perform in the given market

conditions.

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