

A Review of Literature

Work Life Balance and Job Satisfaction

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ISSN 2348-2869 Print

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Journal of General Management Research, Vol. 6, Issue 1, January 2019, pp. 65–77

Abstract

Purpose: Work Life Balance (WLB) has become a common phenomenon and is gaining attention these days,. However, there is a need to explore the factors that affects the ‘work’ and ‘life’ balance and then the resulting outcome. Thus, the purpose of this study is to map the factors and outcome of Work Life Balance.

Design / methodology / approach: This study is qualitative and is based on the extensive literature review. On the basis of

Literature review, different factors were identified which can be further used to develop a model in order to carry a quantitative study.

Findings: Different antecedents like organizational culture, flexible time and Socioeconomic factors, etc., were some reason that when present can cause work life balance and job satisfaction as the positive outcome.

Managerial implications: This study may provide insight regarding the problem that employees usually face. There should be employee friendly policies, flexi time and family support, etc., and then that can led to more committed and satisfied employees otherwise there will prevail problems like turnover and absenteeism, etc.

Research Limitations: The study is based on a literature review. There is a need to carry out a quantitative approach to make the research more useful and applicable.

Keywords: *Work-Life Balance, Family Friendly Policies, Job Satisfaction, Organization Culture*

INTRODUCTION

Clark (2000) defines 'balance' as 'satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home with a minimum role of conflict', stating that, though many aspects of work and home are difficult to alter, individual can shape to some degree the nature of work and home domains, and the borders, and bridge between them, in order to create a desired balance and thus to attain job satisfaction. Work-life balance is about creating and maintaining supportive and healthy work environments, which will enable employees to have balance between work and personal responsibilities and thus strengthen employee loyalty and productivity, job and life satisfaction and overall employee development. Perceptions of job satisfaction are a result of employees 'perception of how well their jobs provide things which are viewed important, including personal satisfaction, security, and benefits (Tella, Ayeni, & Popoola, 1997). Job satisfaction includes attitudes about the work itself, as well as job characteristics that may affect satisfaction such as future opportunities, compensation, and relationships with colleagues (Luthans, 1998).

The pressure of work and for those in work, have been intensifying in recent decades. Factors such as advancement in information technology and information load and the need for speed of response, the importance

attached to quality of customer service and its implication for constant availability and the pace for change with its resultants upheavals and adjustments all demands our time can be a sources of pressure. Numerous studies have been conducted on work-life balance. According to a major Canadian study conducted by Lowe (2005), 1 in 4 employees experience high levels of conflict between work and family, based on work-to-family interference and caregiver strain. If role overload is included, then close to 60 percent of employees surveyed experience work-family conflict.

Today's workers have many competing responsibilities such as work, children, housework, volunteering, spouse and elderly parent care and this places stress on individuals, families and the communities in which they reside. Work-life conflict is a serious problem that affects workers, their employers and communities. According to Duxbury and Higgins (2007), women are more likely to report high levels of role overload and caregiver strain as compared to men. This is because women devote more hours per week than men to non-work activities such as childcare, elder care and are more likely to have primary responsibility for unpaid labour such as domestic work. Furthermore, other studies show that women also experience less spousal support for their careers than their male counterparts. Although women report higher levels of work-family conflict than do men, the numbers of work-life conflict reported by men is increasing.

Employees, especially the younger generation are faced with long hours. The ever-increasing working hours leave the individuals with less time for themselves and to pursue his hobbies or leisure activities. This hinders the growth of the person as an individual in terms of his

personal and spiritual growth. Professionals working in the multi-national corporate such as BPO industry, doctors and nurses, IT, banking industry professionals are the few examples who are facing the brunt of the hazard constantly. It has really become an important issue for the companies, and area which requires special attention, employees are been considered as an asset for the organization, it is really important for the organizations to take care of their employees so that they do not face work life conflict in their work and home life because it will ultimately affect their productivity, their satisfaction from job and overall performance of the organization and the employees (Duxbury & Higgins, 2007).

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Work Life Balance (WLB) has become a topic of interest in almost every sector. Changes in the workplace and in employee demographics in the past decade have led to an increased concern for the boundary between employee work and non-work lives. More number of women are joining the workforce and dual career couples are becoming increasingly common. As a result of these changes, there has been an increasing interest among researchers and practitioners to study the phenomenon of work life balance, because it is a broad concept encompassing prioritization between 'work' (career and ambition) on the one hand and 'life' (health, pleasure, leisure, family and spiritual development) on the other. Related, though broader, terms include 'life balance' and 'lifestyle balance'. However, there is a need to explore the various dimensions, the factors which affect the work life balance and job satisfaction of an employee. Thus, the purpose of this study is to explore the concept of work life balance, identify the factors which affect the 'work' and 'family' life of an

employee, as the balance between these two results in an overall satisfaction from 'job' and 'family' life.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Human resource (HR) management is considered to be crucial for companies to obtain competitive advantages in the market (Wright, McMahan & McWilliams, 1994; Wright & Barney, 1998). Today, WLB practices are highlighted and research on WLB is gaining importance in the academic world (Fleetwood, 2007; Greenhaus, 2008; Rigby & O'Brien-Smith, 2010) due to demographical, societal and cultural changes that have made individuals to face the difficulty of finding balance between their personal lives and their work. Different motives have fostered this challenge such as changes in the labour market due to women incorporation, the existence of dual career couples and the individuals' desire to achieve higher levels of quality of life through enjoying free time and leisure activities (Greenhaus, 2008). On the other hand, gender values are also changing in the era of the equal gender society. Traditionally, men were devoted to career and job, whereas women were in charge of children, elderly care and household commitments (Halrynjo, 2009). In contrast, women today pursue being involved in the professional world in order to achieve higher levels of self-realization (Halrynjo, 2009). According to Martinez and Vela (2002), when the traditional values are lost and the gender roles are not so clearly separated, individuals may experience more difficulties in balancing their work and their non-working life: men trying to fulfil their family responsibilities who try to perform in the job as others without family responsibilities, and women interested in developing their professional career while

feeling that house and child care are their own duties. For all the above, understanding the individuals' need of balance between work and personal lives has become one of the pivotal concerns of work and family academics. Work life balance is defined in the literature as the 'individuals ability, with independence of age and gender, of finding a life rhythm that allow them to combine their work with other responsibilities, activities or aspirations' (Felstead, Jewson, Phizacklea & Walter, 2002). When employees cannot find balance for their work and non-working life, they experience an inter-role conflict. The role conflict may be Work-Family-Conflict (WFC) Or Family-Work-Conflict (FWC). Work Family Conflict has been defined as a type of inter-role conflict wherein some responsibilities from the work and family domains are not compatible and have a negative influence on an employee's work situation. Family-work conflict (FWC) is also a type of inter-role conflict in which family and work responsibilities are not compatible. Workplace characteristics can also contribute to higher levels of WFC. Researchers have found that the number of hours worked per week, the amount and frequency of overtime required, an inflexible work schedule, unsupportive supervisor, and an inhospitable organizational culture increase the likelihood that women employees will experience conflict between their work and family role specially in a country like India where still such kinds of problems persist, Females are still not given freedom and if they are allowed to work, the conditions at the workplace are still not as comfortable and flexible as compared to Anglo-Western Countries, Because of which females have to face problems either at their workplace or at their Home.

Family and personal role, includes caring for

children, the sick or the elderly, non-caring domestic work (cleaning, cooking, laundry, etc.), consumer work (shopping) or home maintenance (Collins, 2007). According to Hyman, Baldry, Scholarios and Bunzel (2003), individuals' pressures of life have increased dramatically over the last decades generating tension and complexity in the household life of workers, particularly when both members of the couple work and there are dependent children or elderly to take care of. Personal role also demands time for leisure activities, resting or social life. On the one hand, the labour role demands employees highly committed to their organizations, which is translated into managers' expectations for their employees to work long hours and prioritizing work over personal life (Hyman et al., 2003; Hughes & Bozionelos, 2007). Furthermore, over the last years of economic uncertainty, organizations have faced challenges derived from the financial crisis, organizational restructuring and intensive competition in the business environments which have fostered 24 hour services that negatively affect WLB of employees. Technological advancements such as teleworking make employees to be available for the organizations even during their 'holidays' or 'weekends'. Moreover, due to the economic crisis and perceived insecurity in the labour market, employees feel they need to demonstrate their commitment to their organizations by a continual presence at the workplace (Hyman et al., 2003), which becomes a problem for the female employees to work in odd hours, in unfavourable working environment, and unsupportive Organizational Culture.

Factors Affecting Work Life Balance and Job Satisfaction

One of the most prevalent issues, as a

result of unhealthy work life balance, that is too much time spent at work, is familial discord. With less than sufficient time being spent with the family there is an increase in disputes, misunderstandings and problems in a marriage and in the family. Bad family life in turn takes a toll on an employee's performance at work. When family life is riddled with strife and insecurity this results in low motivational levels, which affects the overall performance at work. Major factors that affect work family conflict among women executives are harmony in home and office, organisational support, family expectations, parenting effect and professional skills, nature of organisation, education (Sandhu & Mehta, 2006). Role overload, dependent care issues, quality of health, problems in time management and lack of proper social support are the major factors influencing work life balance of women employees in India (Mathew & Panchanatham, 2011). The major factors that affect are education, incoming ratio, professional experience, spouse stress and work load and stressors of professional women's work family conflict (Fan Wei & Liangliang, 2009).

Organizational Policies and Work Conditions

As the other factors affecting the work life balance the organizational environment, policies and support of the supervisors and attitude of the employers along with the management are some of the important factors that affect the work life balance. An unsupportive organizational policies and culture can increase the work life conflict and decrease the job satisfaction of employees, increase absenteeism and turnover rate. Work-life balance policies may be tailored to the need of different organisations depending

on culture, demographic and needs of the organisation and its employees. Such practices may include

1. Flexible hour's arrangement e.g. job-sharing, flexi-time and part-time working
2. Flexible leave arrangements e.g. career breaks, sabbaticals and parental leave
3. Possibility of teleworking
4. Availability of information on possibilities
5. Emergency childcare
6. Parental Leave
7. Supportive organizational culture
8. Situational factors
9. Support from employer and management
10. Support from colleagues
11. Policies of organization

Organisational support offered by the organisation in the form of HR practices does influence work life balance that is experienced by the employees. If employees experience high level of organisational support in the form of benefits then they exhibit less work life conflict and so more work life balance is experienced (Shripra, 2013).

There is a positive influence of work life balance policies and practices on women's career advancement into senior management positions only in the case of payment of additional amount for maternity leave (Straub, 2007). Achieving work family balance can be improved through training (Eugenia Petridou & Niki, 2008). By offering work place flexibilities, employers can accommodate the diverse goals and objectives of their employees. Moreover organisations should build loyalty thereby improving retention of key staff members (Hudson, 2007). HR department of the organisation and the employees together must work out strategies to help attain work-life balance which makes the organisation the happiest place to work

in (Priscilla, 2011). Many women encounter difficulties in the course of their occupational career linked to organisation aspects, informal norms related to management positions and social and cultural representations attached to leadership (Ceccile & Sophie, 2009). If women want to be a good mother and have a bright career there should be better managing of work practices that are imposed by the whole team and adapt their work life balance (Dambrin, 2008).

The flexible work schedules and work at home is more common among women, married and parents. Therefore organisational policies should be focused to spread flexible work arrangements more towards those who value it and back it (Golden, 2008). Managerial women reports that organisational values which are more supportive for work personal life balance has a greater job and career satisfaction, less work stress, less intention to quit, greater family satisfaction, fewer psychosomatic symptoms and more positive emotional well-being (Burke, 2001). Family friendly policies at work place are becoming a challenge for the employers to provide. They commonly refer to policies that enable employees to balance the demands of paid work and personal life which can be in the form of workplace flexibility or work time flexibility (Subramaniam, 2010). Flexible working practices can enable child care for women employees beyond the working time (Doris Ruth & Axel, 2009). If we talk about Banking sector and Medical sector which faces more problems because flexible working hours facilities cannot work over there because of the type of their jobs other policies can be provided to the females working in these sectors so they should not face the work life conflict.

Work conditions are found to play a larger role than family characteristics for work family conflict. Therefore organisational policies should be emphasised on improving work conditions which are likely to have major leverage in reducing work family conflict (Gallie, 2009). As more women enter the work force, the need for counselling to help these women explore how work and family issues influence career choices will increase (Sullivan & Sherry, 1992). Effectiveness of work life balance initiatives are helping women to progress to senior management (Doherty, 2004). Family policy, welfare state provision and labour market structure behave jointly to determine distinct models of work family balance and the financial consequences associated with them (Frances & Patricia, 2007).

Organizational Culture

Because of increased Cultural diversity at the work place, it has become important for the organizations to understand the culture and its positive and negative effect on the employees and the organization itself. Cultural differences cannot be fully understood unless gender differences are taken into consideration as well. Culture dimensions are likely to influence the work-family interface and gender is integral to any discussion about the relation between the spheres of work and family life (Aycan, 2008). Nowadays, growing numbers of organisations with a multicultural workforce are realising that in order to effectively manage diversity, they need to develop work-life balance policies which are sensitive to cultural differences (Aycan, 2008). So it has become necessary for the organization to introduced WLB supportive culture, those organization which have good and supporting working environment are far

more successful as compared to those who don't have WLB supporting culture.

'WLB supportive culture' is used to describe firms in which positive values towards WLB are supported and encouraged by the organisations. Workers develop perceptions about the extent to which their employers value their contribution to the firm and take care of their welfare (Casper et al., 2004). Hence, individuals who feel they are being treated positively will develop positive attitudes towards the source of that beneficial treatment, and hence, a more positive job attitude will develop, improving their commitment and performance.

Organizational Culture has some positive effect as well as some negative effect in consideration to WLB. If the culture of an organization is favourable it will increase its productivity and performance, job satisfaction and job commitment as a whole and will help to reduce the turnover rate and absenteeism. So it is necessary for the companies in India to introduce the Work life balance initiative for better talent attraction, better talent enhancement, increased productivity, etc.

Working Hours

The complexity of today's business market, influenced by globalisation and characterised by harsh competition as well as the changes to traditional gender roles require a rethink of conventional work-life patterns. These changes have brought to the fore the issue of reconciliation between work and life commitments. Flexible working arrangements have been identified as one important means of balancing work and personal commitments (Russell, O'Connell & McGinnity, 2009) and are becoming increasingly common within modern economies. In many

countries, legislation has been introduced enabling certain groups of employees to request flexible working conditions (Joyce, Pabayo, Critchley & Bambra, 2010). Both employers and employees are becoming more aware of the potential gains of flexible working arrangements. Employers are learning and experiencing how critical it is for their organisations to offer the right work-life balance to their employees, in order to achieve worker productivity. Similarly, employees are realising how important it is for their personal well-being and family functioning to be in control and to have the ability to juggle between family and work roles (Pedersen, Minnotte, Kiger & Mannon, 2008).

In addition, (Jones et al., 2008) in a study about perceived and used workplace flexibility in Singapore found that the perception of being flexible in where and when one works is a better predictor of work-family fit than its actual application. In a similar vein, Hill et al. (2008) showed that perceived flexibility significantly predicted less family-to-work conflict and less stress and burnout. Beauregard and Henry (2009) found that positive benefits of flexible working hours including organisational commitment, reduced turnover intentions and increased job satisfaction apply only if the employees perceive that the usability of flexibility is to increase their control over time. Yet other researchers who reviewed flexi-time literature determined that there was no clear relationship with organisational commitment (Wang & Walumbwa, 2007). Flexible working arrangements have often been projected as a way to reduce work-life conflict because of employees' discretion with regard to starting and finishing times at work (Kinman & Jones, 2008). But if we talk about India the concept of flexible working hours has been introduced on paper but it is yet too

implemented properly in companies. Because of inflexible working hours it becomes a problem for the females to go out of their home and work. Singh (2010), based on their study on work-life balance in IT sector in India suggested that Flex time, home working, child care facilities, option to work part time are facilities that need to be introduced and recommended for building a supportive work environment in the organizations. Work-life balance is a challengeable one even for hospital nurses (Lakshmi & Ramachandran, 2012). Patwa (2011) conducted a study to understand work-life balance in banking & insurance sector in India.

The findings revealed that in spite of certain policies & provisions provided by their organizations for helping them to maintain their work-life balance; they still lack in doing so, and are not able to manage their professional life along with their personal life well. It was still observed that the respondents from the banking sector enjoyed better work-life balance as compared to the respondents from the insurance sector. Indian companies need to realize the importance of flexibility in work for the females, as they are the part of their organization and their work-Life-conflict will ultimately affect their working and performance as we have seen in the studies conducted earlier.

Moderating Variables

Socio-economic factors are also found to play a role in work-life balance. Demographic variables such as age, income, experience, marital status influence the women employees in their work-life balance. Various studies were conducted in this direction to determine the impact of demographic variables on work-life balance of women employees. Changes in the

workplace and in employee demographics in the past few decades have led to an increased concern for understanding the boundary and the interaction between employee work and non-work lives (Hochschild, 1997; Hayman, 2005).

- (a) **Age:** Age is one of the factors of work life balance. As per Indian tradition majority of Indian women get married during the age of 20-30 years. As the age increases there is a juggling in variety of roles that have to play irrespective of having children. Therefore age is one of the constraints for work life balance (Emsile, 2009).
- (b) **Marital status:** Being married and having children have an affect with the satisfaction level of work and personal life (Nathalie & Philippe, 2006). Social support from spouse relatives, friends, supervisors and colleagues can reduce family and work conflict (Geertije, 2006). Never married women without children do experience conflict specifically work to life conflict and often at similar levels to that experienced by other groups of working women.
- (c) **Number of dependent members in a family:** It is one of the factors of work life balance affecting the female employees, the more the number of dependent members in a family the more it becomes a problem for a married women to work and manages its house at the same time. The problem is more with the married females as compared to those who are not married (Gupta, 2009).
- (d) **The other factors:** education, income ratio, professional experience, spouse stress and work load are stressors of professional women's work family conflict. More number of women are

leaving workforce to stay at home with their children (Cabrera, 2007). 60% of women who quit their jobs were between the age of 25-39, primary child bearing and raising them (Walker, 2007).

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND JOB SATISFACTION

Work life balance and Job Satisfaction are very much related to each other, as Work life balance means adjusting the pattern of work so that your employees can benefit from a better fit between their work and areas of their personal life and in long run hope to achieve sustainable development and profitability (Verma, 2007). The profitability and productivity of organization depends on two factors that are interrelated to each other performance and commitment of employees. These factors depend on workforce of the organization. But every employee has two aspects, personal life and professional life. Both of these are difficult to separate from each other and form a source of conflict. If an organization wishes better productivity and more committed employees, then they have to be happy and satisfied. The balance is achieved when an individual's right to a fulfilled life inside and outside paid work is accepted and respected as a room, to the mutual benefit of the individual business and society (Narenderanath, 2007). Work family balance is a form of inter role conflict in which role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect (Koizumi, 2000). And Job satisfaction is a mental feeling of favourableness which an individual has about his job. To the workers, job satisfaction brings a pleasurable emotional state that often leads to a positive job attitudes. A satisfied worker is more likely to be creative,

flexible, innovative, and loyal (Ajmir, 2001). Achieving work-life balance yields benefits for both the employee and the employer. 'Exceptional organizations have leaders that create work environments where people can achieve work-life balance and well-being as they define it for themselves' (Spinks, 2004). Job satisfaction is an emotion, a feeling, an attitude and a matter of perception. It involves likes and dislikes as well as needs and wants which are internal and external to the employee. Higher financial benefits can be realized by organizations when the employees are committed. A satisfied work force is essential for the success of organizations and their businesses. Dissatisfied employees make organizations dysfunctional in businesses, damaging their financial performance. Such employees, when unattended, do not have loyalty towards their organizations and there for, making employees behave in a desired manner is extremely important for managers. 'Job satisfaction is the amount of pleasure or contentment associated with a job. If you like your job intensely, you will experience high job satisfaction. If you dislike your job intensely, you will experience job satisfaction' (Draflke, 2008). Employee's happiness from their jobs critically depends on the duration of working hours. Organizations are social systems where human resources are the most important factors for effectiveness and efficiency and need effective managers and employees to achieve their objectives. Organizations cannot succeed without their personnel efforts and commitment. Job satisfaction is critical to retaining and attracting well-qualified personnel.

CONCLUSION

This review of work life balance and job satisfaction studies shows us the picture of

work life balance and how it plays an important role in one's life. The study was qualitative in nature and it focused on the different dimensions of work life balance along with the factors affecting work life balance and job satisfaction. It has been found from the literature review that organisational support offered by the organisation in the form of HR practices influence work life balance which is experienced by the employees. If employees experience high level of organisational support in the form of benefits then they exhibit, less work life conflict and so more work life balance is experienced (Shriptra, 2013). An unsupportive organizational policies and culture can increase the work life conflict and decrease the job satisfaction of employees, increase absenteeism and turnover rate.

Work conditions and organizational culture are another important factor which we explored through literature review that they play a major role in influencing employee work and family life. If the culture of an organization is favourable it will increase its productivity and performance, job satisfaction and job commitment as a whole and will help to reduce the turnover rate and absenteeism. So it is necessary for the companies to introduce the Work life balance initiative for better talent attraction, better talent enhancement, increased productivity, etc.

Therefore organisational policies should be emphasised on improving work conditions which are likely to have major leverage in reducing work family conflict (Gallie, 2009) Another important factor identified was the working hours. Several studies found that the perception and satisfaction of flexible working arrangements were associated with organisational commitment regardless of whether or not the employee had actually

utilised the programme (Scandura & Lankau, 1997). Along with the different organizational factors, Demographics also play an important role in work life balance and job satisfaction concept because changes in the workplace and demographic profiles of employees have led to better work life balance and overall job and life satisfaction of employees. These were the different factors which were identified from the literature which plays a major role in balancing 'work' and 'family' life of employees and thus helping them to attain job satisfaction. Further, more research can be done in this perspective by identifying some more factors and doing a quantitative research to add a different dimension to work life balance.

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