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IMPACT OF WORK LIFE BALANCE IN EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Work plays a significant part in all our lives. Our earnings ensure that the lights stay on, there is food on the table and the rainy-day pot is full. It is no easy task to achieve worklife balance in today's unpredictable and fast-paced business world. As we grow increasingly more connected through technology and social media, it is becoming more and more difficult to separate work from our personal lives. It is commonplace to check emails at all hours, take business calls at the dinner table and work on our laptops on weekends. Employers expect more from their people, which leads to them feeling more pressure to achieve greater results. Consequently, this leads to longer working hours, and less time spent at home.

A business leader has the responsibility to help the team members to balance the demands of their work and personal lives. Even your most engaged employees may still be struggling to find balance. Companies are increasingly recognizing the importance of helping their employees to achieve this balance, as more staff are experiencing conflict between their work and personal roles. In today's age, many workers are seeing their personal responsibilities increase, from childcare and elderly care, to volunteer work, and family commitments. This comes at a time when their work responsibilities are also increasing, resulting in a conflict between personal and work commitments and an increase in stress.

Another factor, which is contributing greatly to the difficulty in achieving a work life balance, is the changing landscape in how and where employees are expected to work. As more and more companies embrace the technological age and move into globalization, work is no longer restricted to the workplace. Employees can work from almost any location with the use of laptops, tablets, and smart phones and telecommuting is on the increase. Employees can access work emails and assignments 24/7, meaning that they can also be accessible to employers and clients. Although there are multiple benefits to this flexible working pattern, it can run the risk of blurring the lines between work and personal life. Remote working also means that staff may now find that their typical workweek is no longer restricted to the traditional 40 hours a week.

The result of a poor balance between work and personal life not only affects employees, but it also affects the companies that they work for. Employee stress can increase

to the level of burnout, resulting in lower productivity and performance at work, a higher potential for stress related health problems and absenteeism, with the associated costs related to these being passed on to the company. In addition to this, employees may also experience poor personal and co-worker relationships and reduced job satisfaction. Maintaining a healthy work-life balance is not only important for health and relationships, but it can also improve your employee's productivity, and ultimately performance. Put simply, if your people do not view work as a chore, then they will work harder, make fewer mistakes and are more likely to become advocates for your brand. Businesses that gain a reputation for encouraging work-life balance have become very attractive, especially when you consider how difficult it can be to attract and retain millennials.

The Oxford Economic suggests, 'Replacing an employee costs on average around £30,000 and it takes up to 28 weeks to get them up to speed'. Bearing this in mind, it might be a good idea to keep your existing employees happy. Focusing on work-life balance will help you draw a valuable talent pool for new recruits and boost retention rates. It will save time and money, whilst ensuring a high level of in-house talent. Work life balance can be defined as a method, which helps employees of an organization to balance their personal and professional lives. Work life balance encourages employees to divide their time on the basis on priorities and maintain a balance by devoting time to family, health, vacations etc. along with making a career, business travel etc. It is an important concept in the world of business as it helps to motivate and improve the performance of the employees and increases their loyalty towards the company.

1.2 IMPORTANCE OF WORK LIFE BALANCE



The result of a poor balance between work and personal life not only affects employees, but it also affects the companies that they work for. Employee stress can increase to the level of burnout, resulting in lower productivity at work, a higher potential for stress

related health problems and absenteeism, with the associated costs related to these being passed on to the company. In addition to this, employees may also experience poor personal and co-worker relationships and reduced job satisfaction.

There are several ways in which companies can help to encourage a work life balance for their employees. Offering employees flexible working options helps employees design their work pattern to fit their personal commitments, ultimately reducing conflict between work and personal responsibilities. Flexible working options include allowing employees to work from home, adjust their working hours to meet personal commitments, use remote working, compressed work weeks, and job sharing. Managers should encourage staff to use annual leave and help employees to set boundaries by encouraging staff not respond to work related emails and calls during non-working hours.

An employee's satisfaction in their personal life and their ability to meet personal commitments greatly affects their success as a worker, which greatly benefits any company. Helping employees to achieve a good work life balance increases work satisfaction, increases their loyalty to their employer, and helps employers to achieve career longevity. A company which recognizes these benefits and implements policies to promote a work life balance is one which will not only see an increase in the productivity of their workforce but which also sees increased retention of staff and reduction in costs associated with high turnover.

1.3 GENDER PERSPECTIVE ON WORK LIFE BALANCE

Worklife balance is the maintenance of a balance between responsibilities at work and at home. Work and family have increasingly become antagonist spheres, equally greedy of energy and time and responsible for work–family conflict. The art of managing such conflict is work life balance.

WOMEN, WORK AND LIFE

Women are increasingly encouraged to seek self-fulfillment in demanding careers, they also face intensified pressures to sacrifice themselves for their children by providing “intensive parenting”. Striking a cord between their job and family is what the women must master. Some of the most successful women worldwide have expressed their thoughts on work life balance such as:

“I don't think women can have it all. I just don't think so. We pretend we have it all. We pretend we can have it all.” – Indra Nooyi

“Don't confuse having a career with having a life.” - Hillary Clinton

"We need to do a better job of putting ourselves higher on our own 'to do' list." - Michelle Obama

“We think, mistakenly, that success is the result of the amount of time we put in at work, instead of the quality of time we put in.” - Arianna Huffington



Women work 8 hours per day and 5 days in a week and are faced by increasing workload every day. Most of them carry work and responsibilities to home and have to copewith high work targets, office commitments and many more. Many of the women because of this busy schedule are stressed up and which leads to low performance at workplace. Women have to see that career does not take over their lives but they must not also be totally lost in their family life and loose their individual identity but women must balance these worlds and be well rounded women. The organizations should allow women to work from home, work in virtual employment and provide flexible time arrangements in order to improve their performance.

MEN, WORK AND LIFE



For the majority of people around the globe work-life balance is an ongoing battle, and it is not going to be resolved by viewing the issue as something that only affects women. Both men and women struggle to find balance between these two elements of their lives. The work-life balance issues that men face may differ from women, but they are just as difficult to navigate. The Indian workforce, as a whole, struggles to find balance between work and family, which can lead to various mental health issues such as irritability, stress and depression. For instance, every working father has felt at some point of time that they are letting someone down either their kids, spouse or boss. Working fathers feel guilty or overwhelmed that they are not keeping up with their children's schedules, school work and extra- curricular activities etc. It is very important that we need to change the conversation, perception and policies surrounding work- life balance.

Previous studies have found that men often do not feel comfortable discussing work-family concerns because of fears of being stigmatised, threats to their masculinity or negative career repercussions. In recent years, men also have increasingly become primary caregivers for young children, and fathers on average are spending more time caring for their children and completing household chores, although women still spend more time on both tasks.

1.4 WORK LIFE BALANCE ISSUES FOR DUAL CAREER COUPLES



Dual-career couples and working parents might be subjected to pressure in their attempts to balance their work and family responsibilities. And this pressure is even greater when dual-career couples have a child or children and the pressure is associated with the child care when both parents are at work and a sense of guilt felt by some working parents for not being able to spend enough time with their children.

The proportion of dual career couples and parent employees are increasing among the workforce and this relates to organizations of all sizes. However, while large organizations are dealing with this issue through introducing a wide range of relevant

policies and initiatives, organizations of smaller sizes are finding this issue challenging to deal with due to their limited resources. In other words, large size organizations can afford to offer financial compensations for the spouses of employees assigned for relocation, offer the reimbursement of tuition fees of their family members whenever necessary, assist with the employment of employee spouses once they are relocated and even they can organize onsite child care facilities for the children of parent employees. Accordingly, multinational companies have devised relevant schemes and HR policies that aim to eliminate the negative effects of above discussed pressures on employees and consequently on the quality of their performance.

1.5 GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCE IN WORK LIFE BALANCE



For an employer, promoting worklife balance can seem a daunting challenge. By creating a work environment that prioritizes work-life balance, employers can save money and maintain a healthier, more productive workforce. Over the years, the knowledge and approach of work-life balance has been constantly evolving, and it might be helpful for employers to identify the difference in opinions among the Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials.

Baby Boomers and WorkLife Balance

Born between 1945 and 1960, around the time of World War II, this generation was exposed to a lot of hardships at a very young age. Making a decent living was no small task, and in turn, this generation craved stability in the workplace and valued the opportunity for employment. Because of this, worklife balance was not a main priority or concern. Baby Boomers tended to stay at companies for longer periods of time than following generations. Many of these employees are currently in senior or director level positions that require a high degree of responsibility.

Gen X and WorkLife Balance

As the children of the Baby Boomers, Gen Xers (typically born around the years of 1961 and 1980) grew up witnessing the long hours and poor worklife balance of their parents. Many Gen Xers were exposed to the effect such a relationship with work had on the family unit. As a result, this generation put more emphasis on creating worklife balance in their own lives. Many of these employees prioritize spending time with their family. Because of this, Gen Xers tend to think of worklife balance as a necessary prerequisite to a company of employment. They look for perks such as telecommuting, extended maternity/paternity time and adequate vacation time.

Millennials and WorkLife Balance

Being a millennial comes with its fair share of stereotypes. Generally, for those born between the years of 1981 and 2000, work ethic is thought to be secondary, or 'just a part of life'. But for the generation born into the harshest student loan burden in history, finding stable employment to pay for the higher education of both themselves and their children – as well as soaring housing costs – remains amongst the highest of priorities. With this generation growing and in their prime-working years, figuring out what attracts millennials remains one of the biggest HR decisions at any major company.

1.6 WORK LIFE BALANCE IN IT SECTOR



The issue of worklife balance has permeated the business community for decades and companies have responded with work-life programs to address the issues raised by their employees. Employee turnover is the biggest challenges for this sector. Reasons of employee turnover are less salary, problem of work life balance, less company benefits, less growth, fewer opportunities. In the current scenario, IT employees are faced with unrealistic deadlines, and there are enormous unpredictable peaks and troughs during the course of the working time. Managerial personnel have to work for long hours and in different shifts to

meet those deadlines. All these things make the work a hectic activity and a strenuous one and creating enormous stress due to work-life conflict there by hampering performance, which is causing decline in productivity levels and also forcing them to leave organizations due to work-life problems.

Many organizations of Information Technology sector adopted work styles and organizational practices from developed countries in the west. Companies like Infosys, Wipro, Yahoo India, Google India Dell India, Microsoft India, Accenture and HCL Technologies amongst many others have already begun taking steps in this direction. Majority of employees in IT sector are expected to work 24/7 × 365 days of the year. To prevent such a work style from affecting worker health and productivity, workplaces offered services traditionally associated with the family and non-work domain within their premises such as fitness center, day-care facilities, laundry services, cafeteria, even futons to sleep. Nearly 50,000 employees at IBM India and about 15,000 tech workers at HP India are taking advantage of their companies' work-life balance option

“The Indian IT industry is determined to support mothers to return to their careers by helping create a worklife balance for women”, says NASSCOM, the IT industry body. As part of its ongoing efforts to enhance diversity and inclusivity in the sector and build a robust ecosystem for returning mothers, NASSCOM launched a report – ‘Facilitating Return ships: Providing Infrastructure to Returning Mothers’ in partnership with Mercer, a leading human resources consulting firm. The report showcases the IT-BPM industry’s readiness to support new mothers, who want to return to their careers, focusing on the impact of child care provision at the workplace.

1.7 WORK LIFE BALANCE IN EDUCATION SECTOR



Education sector is the ultimate cognitive work where the development and exchange of ideas are constantly infusing in people's mind; the job offers an enormous amount of flexibility, other than giving lecturers and attending the academic meetings. Academicians

whether male or female have to render their services for specific period of time as in traditional 9 to 5 jobs. On this surface, this appears to be ideal job for achieving worklife balance.

But the nature of academic work is never ending. One always has to be thinking about working on next course, applying for next grant, developing the next research project, board of studies meetings, paper settings and paper corrections. The flexibility of education sector, specially the 9 to 5 job, dangles the possibilities of a desirable work life balance in front of female faculty, but several barriers persist preventing a desirable worklife balance from becoming reality. In that case organization support and family support helps the women in achieving desirable balance.

Poor work life balance has negative implications for organization in the global economy, as well as for individual women and their families. Balancing family and academy, especially for women, is a chronic challenge. Women have been struggling with this issue since they were first admitted into academy. Research reveals that there had been a slight change over the past 100 years as women have many barriers to overcome to meet the demands of work and home, but they have crafted strategies for being successful. Academicians has to make tough choices even when their work and personal life are close to equilibrium. A balance between work and life has to exist for work performance in the education sector.

1.8 WORK LIFE BALANCE IN MANUFACTURING SECTOR



Manufacturing is the production of merchandise for use or sale using labour and machines, tools, chemical and biological processing or formulation. The term may refer to a range of human activity, from handicraft to high tech, but is most commonly applied to industrial production, in which raw materials are transformed into finished goods on a large scale. Such finished goods may be sold to other manufacturers for the production of other,

more complex products, such as aircraft, household appliances, furniture, sports equipment or automobiles, or sold to wholesalers, who in turn sell them to retailers, who then sell them to end users and consumers.

Only some companies had worklife balance policies as part of the policies concerning employees. These are mostly multinational companies. Manufacturing sector had more employees working in the age group of 31 to 45 years age. Adding to the pressure, today's portable electronic devices have obliterated the line between work and home. Gone are the days when leaving the plant or assembly line meant leaving our work behind. Today employees are available to their supervisors, coworkers, and customers around the clock.

The coupling of increased workloads with technology that keeps us constantly connected to our jobs finds an increasing number of workers feeling overwhelmed, discouraged and depleted in the manufacturing sector.

1.9 WORKLIFE BALANCE IN HOSPITALITY SECTOR



The hospitality industry is a broad category of fields within the service industry that includes lodging, event planning, theme parks, transportation, cruise line, and additional fields within the tourism industry. The hospitality industry is a multibillion-dollar industry that depends on the availability of leisure time and disposable income. A hospitality unit such as a restaurant, hotel, or an amusement park consists of multiple groups such as facility maintenance and direct operations (servers, housekeepers, porters, kitchen workers, bartenders, management, marketing, and human resources etc.).

Some of the reasons worklife balance is so critical to the hospitality industry are 24/7 Operations and Presenteeism. Unlike most other businesses, hospitality establishments usually operate around the clock. Functioning 24/7 requires many employees to work non-standard hours: not just through the night, but on the weekends

and holidays as well. Unfortunately, shift work is positively correlated with marital and familial conflicts. Even those without partners or children struggle; after all, it's hard to maintain normal friendships when your schedule keeps you busy at night and free during the day.

The hospitality industry is also plagued by “presenteeism,” which was first defined by researchers John Cullen and Andrew McLaughlin. Presenteeism is an “overwhelming need to put in more hours.” Hotel employees are usually strongly attached to their team, and they feel obligated to be there for emotional support. Going along with that, many employees think of themselves as the face of the establishment. Because of presenteeism, the researchers say employees end up staying “far longer than is necessary or required,” which eventually leads to burn-out, and unsurprisingly, an almost nonexistent sense of work-life balance. Although work-life balance is harder to achieve in hospitality than other industries, it's not impossible. Design a healthy workplace and the employees, till the bottom line will be happy and satisfied and the productivity will be maximum.

1.10 WORKLIFE BALANCE IN AVIATION SECTOR



As Elizabeth Bierman, outgoing president of the society of Women in Engineering and a program leader at Honeywell Aerospace, says: It is more a matter of integrating personal and professional, in a way that meets the needs and aspirations of the individual. Sure, technology is behind some of this—allowing most people to be anywhere at any time. But integration implies more than mere balance.

Most young professionals covet private time—the ability to buy vacations, go on sabbaticals to recoup from weeks of long hours while meeting a program milestone, and the flexibility to slide between work and private life as the opportunity arises. Barbara Esker, NASA's deputy director for advanced air vehicles, who led the American Institute of

Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) on Work-Life Balance at the recent Propulsion and Energy Conference, gave a much broader definition. Work-life integration is a matter of balancing work, children, partner or spouse, and aging parents.

Jim Free, director at NASA's Glenn Research Center and father of school-age children, provides a candid view as the head of a fairly large organization of people who work on three shifts. He admits his life is out of balance and that his view of that balance cannot serve as a model for anyone else. He misses birthdays and school events, but he coaches his children's hockey team. His wife does want to throw his cellphone out the window on occasion, and he knows he needs to work on his health a bit more.

Manipulating between the responsibilities towards the families and opportunities of the organization and continuous fight to maintain a balance of work can have serious effects on the life of an individual. Work and personal life conflict occurs when the liability, obligations and household tasks of work and family roles become mismatched Therefore, it is important for employees to maintain a healthy balance between work and their private lives. This will help them achieve their personal and professional goals as well the organization they are working for. Many study concluded that the work life balance has become a quest for professionals of aviation industry both in private and public sector and also that employee's work better when they do make time for family and personal interests

1.11 ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY TOWARDS WORK LIFE BALANCE



Technology makes workers accessible around the clock. Fears of job loss incentivize longer hours. In fact, a whopping 94% of working professionals reported working more than 50 hours per week and nearly half said they worked more than 65 hours per week in a Harvard Business School survey. Experts agree that the compounding stress from the never-ending workday is damaging. It can hurt relationships, health and overall happiness.

Technologies though convenient, play on our anxieties and insecurities and leave towards much more bound to work than it used to be. Robert Brooks, a professor of psychology at Harvard Medical School and co-author of *The Power of Resilience: Achieving Balance, Confidence and Personal Strength in Your Life* says that phone notifications interrupt your off time and inject an undercurrent of stress in your system.

With today's modern technological workflow, the employees can get work done in significantly less time than they might have even just a decade ago. Using the right technology, the staff and employees can actually complete their days work in the eight hours they are allotted to do it. Trying to stay ahead of the curve and meet deadlines helps us to progress at work. However, this can often lead to long hours, missed meals and checking work email late at night. It is safe to say that technology is not helping us maintain a healthy worklife balance. Many employees either have at least one phone synced to our work emails. This means employees are on call 24/7 responding to calls and queries as soon as they come in, leaving them thinking about work, on edge expecting a call or email, when they should be winding down.

1.12 TIPS FOR BETTER WORK LIFE BALANCE



According to Maslow's hierarchy, your needs should be satisfied sequentially. First come the survival needs of food, water and shelter, followed by emotional needs of safety, love, belonging to a group and self-esteem. Going to work earns you money for basic needs and surrounds you with people, thus partially providing for emotional needs. The next category constitutes mental and creative needs for knowledge, beauty and achieving one's full potential. Only a well-planned lifestyle with adequate personal time can fulfil these.

Prioritize

Randi Zuckerberg, the sibling of Facebook's founder, says that one can pick only three things out of work, sleep, family, friends and fitness. It is important to know what really matters to you and to prioritize it. Define the parameters of success in each area you choose and consciously distribute time among multiple goals. Learn to say 'no' to people and activities that distract you from your priorities.

Draw your clock

Use a diary to track how you spend the hours of your workday as well as on a holiday. Put those hours in different buckets i.e. work, family, chores, fun and categorise each task into urgent/not urgent and important/not important. Draw a circle with different segments representing each bucket. This is your current life. Now draw new circles to represent your ideal workday and holiday and mark out your desired segments. Work on moving from your current to your ideal clock. Focus on eliminating unimportant tasks and completing important task on time

Look for change

Do not assume that your lifestyle has no scope for improvement. Ask yourself what changes to your routine would improve your balance. Can you schedule client meetings in off-peak hours, so you spend less time in traffic? Can you order groceries online instead of spending an hour in the market? Create habits that ensure good nutrition, sleep and exercise. Build support systems within your family and team that help you out when you need it and enable better time utilization.

Mind and body

If you are constantly stressed, your worklife balance needs fixing. The best way to de-stress is to focus on your body and mind. Daily physical exercise triggers the release of endorphins, which relieve stress. Similarly, meditation, music, a hobby or enjoyable companionship can enable your mind to disengage from stressful thoughts, at least temporarily.

1.13 CONCLUSION

Employees expect that organization should be empathetic towards employees' needs by providing work life balance approach. It can influence employees' choice in terms of employment. From organization point of view, it makes good business sense to support work

life balance approach not just to recruit and retain employees but also because employees' feel that work life balance approach enables them to work better and improve performance.

Work- life balance plays a significant role in employees' psychological well-being and behavioral performance. The social situations and lack of organizational support may hinder employees' work-life balance. The ways to overcome this problem is that the work life balance philosophy is associated with real benefits for an organization. This is because the social and psychological life of every employee needs to be rightly put in check for them to be an asset and not just an employee that is used to carry out day to day operations of the organisation. High employee performance leads an organization to have greater opportunities for employees than those who have low performance. Therefore, it is important for employer to look for better ways in improving employee performance.

This can be done by helping them prioritize their work and life activities. When this is achieved, employee is motivated to render their service efficiently and effectively. Employees are happier when they are able to balance their work life demands. Management also experience improved relationship with employees. Management support for employees work life balance fosters a good relationship between the work force and management which improve effective communication in the organization.

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