



Study On Work Life Balance In It Sector Of India

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ABSTRACT

The study was on IT professionals of some software companies of India. The study sought to determine the effects of work-related stress on employees' personal and professional lives, to learn about existing work-life balance programmes and practises, and to identify the elements that contribute to work-life balance maintenance. Various statistical tools were used to meet the above mentioned objectives. In today's hyper competitive world we have plunged ourselves in to a very vicious cycle of work. The pressure is so overwhelming and so we assume that we want to do everything that the other is doing and more with greater perfection.

A study on work-life balance in the IT sector seems to be needed in this recent time, taking into consideration the high work and time which demands upon employees, thus creating a necessary environment to balance work and personal interests. A study on work-life balance of employees was conducted in IT organizations in Coimbatore and the objective of the study is to find out the causes of disproportionate work-life balance, the benefits for the individual and the organizations in enabling a proper balance between work and life. This study also recommends few suggestions

The Aim of this study is to analyse the causes of imbalance between work and life and suggest suitable measures to leverage the basic human worth leading to a state of genuine happiness.

Key Words

Work, family, Work/family conflict, flexible working arrangements, Work/life programs, Work/life initiatives & Work/family culture.

INTRODUCTION

The expression **work-life balance** was first used in 1986 in the US (although had been used in the UK from the late 1970s by organizations such as New Ways to Work and the Working Mother's Association) to help explain the unhealthy life choices that many people were making; they were choosing to neglect other important area of their lives

such as family, friends, and hobbies in favour of work related chores and goals. Over the past twenty-five years there has been a substantial increase in work which is felt to be due, in part, by information technology and by an intense, competitive work environment. Long-term loyalty and a “sense of corporate community” have been eroded by a performance culture that expects more and more from their employees yet offers little security in return. Many experts forecasted that technology would eliminate most household chores and provide people with much more time to enjoy leisure activities; unfortunately, many have decided to ignore this option being “egged on” by a consumerist culture and a political agenda that has “elevated the work ethic to unprecedented heights and thereby reinforced the low value and worth attached to parenting.” Many countries have incorporated this concept into company legislations. Companies that have acted upon them have realized that providing their employees opportunities to balance their work and personal lives is a motivating factor for their workforce. A good definition of work-life balance is meaningful daily achievement and enjoyment in each of the four life quadrants: work, family, friends and self. Work-Life Balance does not mean an equal balance.

Trying to schedule an equal number of hours for each of your various work and personal activities is usually unrewarding and unrealistic. Life is and should be more fluid than that.

Three major factors contribute to the interest in, and the importance of, serious consideration of work/life balance: 1) global competition; 2) renewed interest in personal lives/ family values; and 3) an aging workforce. Research suggests that forward-thinking human resource professionals seeking innovative ways to augment their organization's competitive advantage in the marketplace may find that work/life balance challenges offer a win-win solution

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Research by Parasuraman and Greenhaus (2002) documented that segments of the workforce may be subject to unique work/family pressures, yet often have few sources of support. The under-representation of these groups of individuals with potentially difficult types of work/family pressures represents a major gap in work/family research and employers’ understanding of their needs. Studies have often concentrated on working men and women who are married, cohabiting, or have children. Single-earner parents, childless workers with significant eldercare responsibilities, blended families with children from both spouses' former marriages, couples with joint custody arrangements, and grandparents raising their grandkids are all left out of the research.

Parasuraman, S., & Greenhaus, J. H. (2002). Toward reducing some critical gaps in work-family research. *Human Resource Management Review*, 12, 3, 299-312.

A work/life balance survey conducted in 2002 by TrueCareers states that 70% of more than 1,500

Respondents said they don't have a healthy balance between their personal and work lives.

The heavy cost of chronic stress. (2002).New York Times. Retrieved December 17, 2002, from <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/12/17/health/psychology/17STRE.html>

On (1997) study was conducted by WFD (formerly Work/Family Directions) with research focused on work/life programs with a number of clients (e.g., DuPont ,Johnson & Johnson, Hoechst Celanese, IBM,and others). At DuPont, for example, “employees who used the company’s work/life programs were 45% more likely to agree strongly that they will ‘go the extra mile’ and are least likely to feel overwhelmed or burned out.”Data from Hoechst Celanese documented that “some 60% of those surveyed reported the ability to balance work with personal and family responsibilities was of great importance in their decision to remain with the company.”

Landauer, J. (1997, July). Bottom-line benefits of work/life programs.HR FOCUS, 74, 7, 3-4.

A review of more than 30 surveys regarding work/life balance published from 1997 to 2003 reveals that the number of employers who offer family-friendly benefits has dramatically increased. According to the SHRM® 2003 Benefits Survey by the Society for Human Resource Management (www.shrm.org/surveys—available late June 2003), the percentage of employers offering family-friendly benefits continues to increase. The survey documents that the top five family-friendly benefits offered are:

- Dependent care flexible spending accounts (71% of respondents)
- Flexitime (55% of respondents)
- Family leave above required leave of the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) (39% of respondents)
- Telecommuting on a part-time basis (34% of respondents)
- Compressed workweeks (31% of respondents)

Society for Human Resource Management. (2003). SHRM® 2003 benefits survey Alexandria, VA.

According to a 2003 research, employees are frequently distracted with work when they are not working, and when they are with family and loved ones, they are unable to be meaningfully involved in non-work domains. As researcher Ezzedeem explains, “modern work has become knowledge based, fluid, and intellectual; overworked people think about work all of the time. For many people, work has become cognitively intrusive.” To understand work/life balance, Professor Swierczand Doctoral Candidate Ezzedeem of The George Washington University developed and tested a cognitive approach, the “Cognitive Intrusion of Work.” In simple terms, this means that work/life balance is not just about

finding “physical time” to do all that needs to be done. Instead, and more importantly, it is about the “cognitive space” necessary to process, organize, and respond to the thinking demands of life within a complex society.

Ezzedeen, S. R., & Swiercz, P. M. (2002). Rethinking work-life balance: Development and validation of the cognitive intrusion of work scale (CIWS)—A dissertation research proposal. Proceedings of the 2002 Eastern Academy of Management Meeting.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The study aims at analyzing the working life of employees and life at home and how these two are balanced effectively. The study also analyzes stress caused by the job to the IT professionals and its impact on employee's work & personal life.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. Examine how workers balance their professional and personal life.
2. To learn how employees deal with job stress produced by the workplace environment.
3. To investigate aspects that contribute to work-life balance.
4. Examine how an organisation helps an individual maintain work-life balance and manage job-related stress.
5. To learn about the organization's present work regulations and practices, as well as work-life balance difficulties.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY:

1. The research looks into all areas of work-life balance and job stress.
2. The study is restricted to IT firms.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

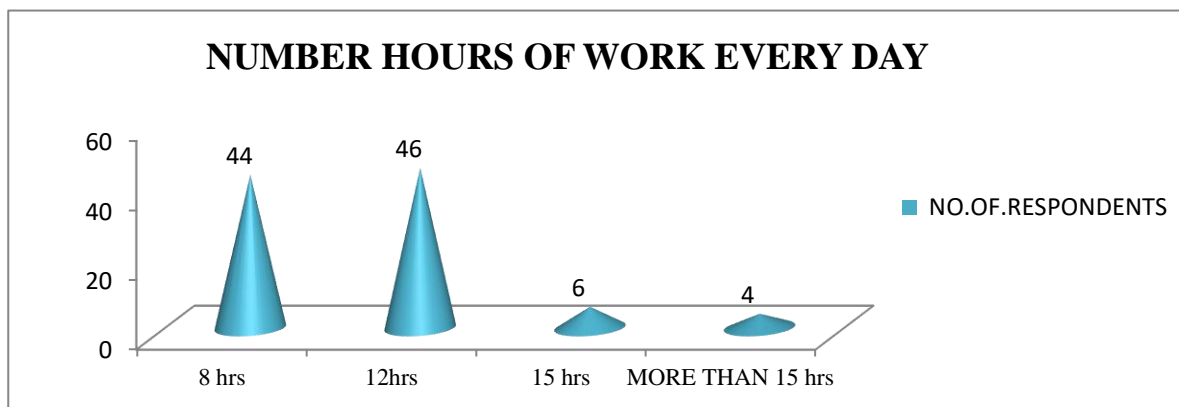
The researcher adopted 'Descriptive design' for this study. The researcher personally visited and collected the data from the respondents. The researcher conducted Pilot study to find out the feasibility of the research. The researcher conducted Pre-test with 10 respondents and he made some modifications in the tool. The study was conducted in four Information Technology Industries. The Researcher has used questionnaire method for collecting the data for this research study. Questionnaire is a list of structured, predetermined questions in written form which is given to the responsible for eliciting the relevant responses. The sample size of this study was 100 respondents. The researcher adopted simple random sampling and the questionnaire was given to the employees based on the selection through random number method. The data are analyzed and interpreted with a view to study the Work Life Balance of Employees.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

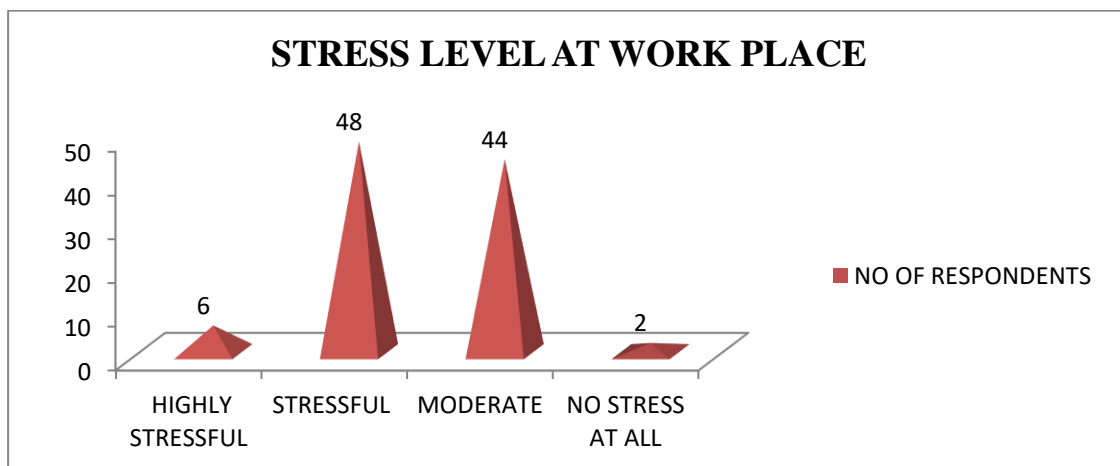
1. The concept is highly abstract and difficult to study
2. Measuring stress and quantifying the same is difficult
3. Respondents views and responses may be biased
4. Respondents are restricted to selected IT Companies

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Data collected from primary and secondary sources was analyzed and interpreted on the basis of objectives of the study. The Statistical information that was collected has been represented graphically with the help of charts.



The analysis shows that most of the respondents work for 12hrs every day which cause stress.



The analysis shows that most of the respondents have stressful experience at work place.

FINDINGS

1. The study shows that most of the respondents do monotonous & repetitive work
2. From study it is known that most of the respondents work for 12 hrs in a day which may lead to possible work stress

3. It is found from the study that most of the respondents in IT sector experience stress in one way or the other
4. From the study it is found that majority of the respondents find it difficult to spend sufficient time with their families because of long working hours and work related stress
5. From the study it can be seen that most of the respondents spend only 1-3hrs in a day with their family
6. The study shows that most of the respondents go out with their family once in a week

SUGGESTIONS \ RECOMMENDATIONS

- Majority of the respondents have stated that extraction of excess work from the employer is one of the causes of work-life imbalance. It is suggested that the organization can grow in size so that the work can be divided and the required work can be allocated properly without extending the working hours of the employees. Thereby reducing pressure and enhancing work-life balance. ÿ
- A work-life balance plan can be charted out for every employee by their respective project managers during the time of their appraisal which may reduce working more for the sake of organizational policies like performance appraisals and promotions therefore, convenient them with proper work-life balance. Thus the organization can have friendly and procedures.
- Since a majority of the respondents has proved a greater benefit by attempting to find balance in their lives, the organization can engage a specialist to conduct workshops and seminars on how to prioritize different commitments, how to manage time effectively and how to plan out activities in order to be making time for hobbies, developments pursuits and quality time for family and friends.
- By designing a work-life balance plan for every individual employee, it would lead to job satisfaction and act as a talent retention tool.
- Work-life balance initiatives can be used as a strategy for talent attraction by highlighting the initiatives of the organization during placement and induction of candidates. This will help in creating a brand for the organization as one of the best places to work for.

CONCLUSION

Work-life balance is still an issue that demands a lot of attention from society. This study was able to comprehend the notion of work-life balance as it exists in the Information Technology industry.

It also revealed the diverse work-life balance solutions employed by various organisations and people themselves.

The IT sector people have been thrown in to a system of competitive nightmare. The stress levels are increasing due to domestic disharmony, materialistic aspirations and degenerating work ethics. Individual material goals are overwhelming leading to total

collapse of morals and values. Work has occupied the entire arena of Life leading to implicit priorities.

We need to optimize happiness in life by a fine balance between life, enjoyment and work. The ratio of each one is entirely individualistic and needs to be established by oneself. Excess of one beyond a point diminishes other drastically and overall happiness is not optimized. Therefore balancing our choices is the dire need in the circumstances, i.e. gaining and maintaining our wants and needs in all areas of life. There is great happiness in being balanced. We have to decide how we want to spend our life and time. As our understanding increase we will be able to materialize our goals and achieve happiness. Our actions, thoughts and beliefs have to be aligned with our goals re-in forced by our values ,only then we can live in integrity and will experience a sense of peace, meaning ,purpose and happiness in life.

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