WORK-LIFE BALANCE PRACTICES AND ITS IMPACT ON EMPLOYEES WORKING IN HOTEL INDUSTRY IN INDIA

Abstract

This article reviews work life balance and its impact that inspire employees more in control of their personal life, work life and family life. It helps in growth of employees individually and further development of hotel industry, one of the major components of service industry and is closely affiliated with travel and hospitality industry. Due to the different factors affecting hotel industry business such as competition "marketing trends", 24x7 working hours, seasonality, technological changes etc., the increasing workload of the staff generates heavy demands for night shift and long-working-hours. It develops certain negative impacts on the organization like employee's turnover, work life imbalances thus producing demand for semi-skilled and unskilled labour and staff forever. Therefore, the hotel industry is required to maintain good and harmonious work life balance of the staff, so that the negative impacts is minimized. This piece of work reviews the effectiveness of different work life practices prevalently followed in hotel industry. This work is based on primary and secondary data.

Keywords: Work-family conflicts, Employees performance, Stress, Work-Life Balance, employees Turnover, Hotels Industry.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The hotel industry one of the core segments of the hospitality sector, performs a crucial role in the global economy, along with tourism industry. As an industry, it is required to be in operation 24/7 and its demands can be exacting. The unique challenges faced by those working in hotels – from front-desk executives to housekeeping staff – underscore the importance of work-life balance. In this context, work-life balance refers to the equilibrium an individual aims to achieve between professional responsibilities and personal life. Even though the hotel industry faces many challenges through the time, in order to maintain balanced workforce that would ensure better experiences for guests and a positive work environment for all, recognizing the importance of work-life balance and implementing strategies to achieve that can be beneficial for both employees and employers is the need of the hour.

According to **Paresh, Manohar, & R K Gupta, (2021),** wo*rk Life Balance experienced by an employee, with age, follows a U shape curve. Factors like gender and family structure also effect levels of WLB*. **O'** Dricoll (1996) identifies stimuli such as work and life satisfaction, personal well-being, physical health and mental health on individual performance in organizations. For, the expectations of the individuals vary from time to time depending upon their social, cultural, physical and mental needs. As far as the hotel industry is concerned, the employees are required to pour in more and more efforts and hard work to gain the satisfaction of the guests, thus, developing stress and workload both in their work and family life.

Mohanty and Mohanty (2014) are of the view that due to the characteristics of the hotel industry many employees fail to manage their work life causing unpredicted results for both organisation and workers. It can consequently result in lower customer satisfaction due to poor employee performance. Ibid opines that balanced family and work commitment is necessary for better performance of the employees, but unfriendly shift or late-night shifts with unsocial long working hours, low pay scale, low status and heavy workload produces negative impacts on employee work life balance in their existing jobs. This circumstance stresses the hotel industry to impose additional or extended working hours up 16 to 24 hours at a go. 24x7 check in, checkout, bars, and restaurant facilities have unbelievable negative effects on the Work life balance conditions of the employees since they rarely get sufficient time for their own, social and family responsibilities. However, the factors like technological changes, social freedom and awareness, consumption pattern etc. compels to re-look into the work-life conflicts and balance which are the major problems in employee turnover in hotel industry.

Employee turnover could be the outcome of various factors including compensation and benefits, limited career growth and advancements opportunities, poor management, job-fit, lack of work-life balance, company culture and values, job security, poor work environment, inadequate training and development, overwork, mismatch job expectations, lack of recognition and feedback, inflexible work schedules and lack of autonomy. Every individual's main objective usually comes around with family safety, security and survival. With this aim, he or she employs more effort and hard work. As expressed in Maslow's Hierarchical theory, the needs keep on increasing to the extent that he or she forget himself or

herself in the struggle of accomplishment of needs, the needs turn to be demands. This makes him overlook his or her family, thus, arising imbalances in work and family life.

In the concept of "Work-life balance", the aspect of balance refers to the balance between an individual's personal and professional activities, and this balance can also be physiological, psychological and sociological. (Kidd & Eller, 2012). Everyone may define work- life balance differently because it's a particular idea. According to (Felstead & Jewson, 2002)," particular and professional time and space dedication in the society" is a description of work- life balance. According to Sturges & Guest (2004)," time for home and work commitments" is another description of work- life balance. Along with the idea of" work- life balance," there is also the idea of" work- life conflict," which directs people's attention to an imbalance between work and life. It's described as" a conflict which happened through life pressures and work, videlicet family, child care, work cargo etc. that seems discordant in various aspects, means doing further than one task simultaneously is delicate" (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

According to Vernekar & Heidari (2019), these are psychological constructs that make up work-life balance, salient conflict, and facilitation. Thus, work-life balance has been defined as the absence of conflict and the presence of facilitation: "low levels of inter-role conflict and high levels of inter-role facilitation represent work-family balance" (Frone, 2003).

The nature of the hospitality industry, especially the hotel sector, is multifaceted, for example, 24 x 7, service centric, cross-cultural amalgamation, quick adaptability of changing trends, global reach with local touch, seasonal and cyclical nature etc. While the primary aim remains to provide comfort and memorable experiences to guests, various other factors like economic contributions, adaptability to changing trends, and sensitivity to external factors play significant roles in shaping the industry, thus attract more and more human resources to be functional ever. This develops a lot of work life imbalances among the employees.

The aim of this study is to highlight the work life balance practices followed in the world particularly in India and to analyse the impact and effectiveness of these practices.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A study by *Peacock et.al., (2007)* titled Work, Life and Time: The Australian and Life Index "is consistently associated with poorer work life outcomes across all our work and life measures". The findings suggest that there is an unhealthy acceptance of long working hours in hospitality and tourism, which is part of the service sector. affecting younger workers in particular, these working hours are anti-social and often mean that there is little flexibility in the way these workers lead their social/family lives. Ultimately, this lack of flexibility often leads to employees leaving the industry, not just the organization, further exacerbating the labour shortages that exist in many industries. (Deery and Leo Jago, 2009) describe that work-life balance in the tourism industry finds that long working hours, unsocial working hours, time pressure, work autonomy and job insecurity work-life pressure are variables that they negatively affect the work-life balance of working employees in the field.

Lewis & Gruyere (2010) discloses in their work that employee retention could be made possible with the help of effective work life balance programmes causing positive impacts on employees' social and family life. With the help of work life balance programs, employees could be able to manage the long working hours and private life as well.

The hospitality industry, with its unpredictable working hours and schedules, perpetuates work-life imbalances even as it helps in talent acquisition, productivity and better recruitment. As the work-life balance issues are increasing day by day, key people in various industries are paying more attention to this issue than before to find a way (Sharma & Shekhawat, 2017).

The International Labor Organization (ILO) has published a report on working time and work-life balance around the world, which looks at two different aspects of working time, working hours and working time arrangements, and their impact on business performance and workers' work. he lives Balance. This is further supported by the ILO when it states that organizations have implemented programs to extend leave, flexible working hours, overtime pay, this report shows that long working hours and work schedules have a negative effect on workers and work-life balance, while short working hours Clock systems help increase productivity and promote a good work-life balance. Baral and Bhargava (2011) report that work-life balance policies and programs increase mental and physical health, make people stronger, more productive and motivated to work, reduce mental stress and work-family conflict, and help retain employees. several studies have shown that implemented work-life balance programs have excellent results in leading to exceptional work performance that contributes to business development and industry performance. According to Adnan Bataineh, K. (2019) focusing on happiness at work, high productivity and better employee performance is the result of good work life balance. This paper includes employee engagement, job satisfaction and affective organisation commitment effected by the work and personal life of employee. Work life balance policies are employees friendly in number of industries such as information technology, business sector and in service industry thus revealed by Chaudhuri et.al., (2020)

Liu et.al., (2021) disclose in their work the impact of women employees works life balance on organisation commitment in hospitality industry through the independent and dependent variables of their sociodemographic features (working years, age, position level, education) at different levels.

Various studies of common themes have persistently emerged from review papers. As a result, there are hypotheses that have confirmed that job satisfaction and employee performance are positively affected by the implementation of work-life balance (Eldeen & Shawky, 2013). A number of past studies have shown a relationship between the implementation of work-life balance and a decrease in employee turnover (Aggarwal, 2012; Deery & Iverson, 2004). According to (Rincy & Panchanatham, 2011), both mental and physical health are improved by the ability to balance family roles and work. A survey of 3,381 US workers found that flexible work policies and childcare assistance are associated with employee loyalty for those with family responsibilities (Roehling, Roehling and Moen 2001).

Employee benefits are associated with a better work-life balance. A high level of work-life balance has been shown to increase employees and employers' sense of security and job satisfaction (Chimote & Srivastava 2013). A good work-life balance also has a positive effect on the physical and mental health of workers, according to research based on data from the US National Study of the Changing Workforce, which examines whether work-life balance policies reduce stress levels. According to ILO reports, India belongs to the middle-income group which shows an underemployment rate of -54.3 percent, which may mean that people are looking for job opportunity according to their needs and which may mean that the existing job opportunity is not satisfying people. According Yu, et.al., (2022) work life balance works as mediating effect among turnover intention and organizational culture based on culinary staff members at hotels in Incheon city south Korea. This work revealed that organization culture supports work life balance which reduce the turnover rate in hospitality industry. According to Kim, et.al., (2023) the work-family supportive policies and programmes revealed in the hospitality industry for employee's welfare through the systematic review. This work used the meta-analysis field through the theoretical model of family support policies and the outcomes. Most of the studies included in this review were conducted in United States of America, Australia, Germany and Korea. Thus, revealed work life balance need work-family supports for example parental leave, childcare-related support, informal support.

The work life balance policies and practices vary from one country to the another. The current study is undertaken with the aim of analysing the employee turnover problems being faced by Indian hospitality industry in the aspect of work-life balance with the following objectives:

1. To throw light on work-life balance practices followed in India
2. To analyse the impact of these practices on employees working in the hotel industry in India.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The first objective of this study is covered theoretically by analysing data collected from secondary sources such as articles, journals, books etc. However, the second objective is covered by collecting data from the people working in hotel industry. Telephone numbers and / or email ids of 250 alumni of hotel management graduation and post-graduation programs, passed out in the previous five years, were collected from an academic Institute in India, with the permission of the Director of the Institute concerned. These alumni were contacted telephonically and / or by email for primary data collection. A well-structured questionnaire was employed for this purpose. Non-probable random sampling method was applied. The data was collected in the month of June, July and August 2023.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study to throw the light on work life balance practices in India, and its impact of working employee life in hotel industry. The hotel industry is part of service industry involving guest services, for special evening, vacations, special holidays and short time lodgings and accommodation providing services 24x7. Hotel industry is mostly characterised with long working hours, night shifts, heavy workload that generates negative

impact on employee work life, personal life and family life. Therefore, employees are facing imbalance between work and family. Even though the industry has faced unavoidable problems of very high employee turnover due to poor work-life balance of employees, It is unable to find a perfect solution causing turnover. Still the hotel industry has, through the time, taken some initiatives and developed programs that would improve work life balance among the employees in India.

V. WORK LIFE BALANCE PRACTICES FOLLOWED IN INDIA

There are two state of work life balance practices in India. statutory practices and non-statutory practices. Statutory benefits are the set of rights and advantages for employees. These practices are mandatary with minimum benefit (work life balance practices) provide to an employee under Indian labour law and non-statutory benefits are not compulsory but are optional in nature. Therefore, the organization determines independently whether or not these non-statutory benefits should be given to its employees.

1. **Work Life Balance Practices as Statutory Benefits in India:** According to maternity benefit act, 1961, working women is allowed for a paid leave of 12 weeks, six weeks before delivery & six weeks after delivery. This same benefit is provided in the case of miscarriage. these practices make women more financial stability during pregnancy. This act provides two nursing breaks per day.

   Under the Factories Act, 1948, it served as an aid in formulating policies in India with regard to occupational safety and health, efficiency and wellbeing of the employees at work places in India. According to this act workers are not allowed to work more than 48 hours in a week. Every worker who has worked for a period of 240 days or more in the calendar year allow with leave with wages.

   The Gratuity Act of 1972 allowed employees who had worked for their employer for more than 5 years to be entitled to gratuity. This equates to 15 days' wages for each year of employment. This act provided for welfare payments for employees who resign, passed away, retire or become disabled.

   According to Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948 (ESI) These beneficial policies are provided in cases of maternity, sickness and employment injury. Employee State Insurance are allow to receive the medical treatment for working employees and their dependents.

   Employee Provident Fund, is retirement benefit scheme in where the certain percentage of basic salary contributed to the fund by employer and employee. Which is received by an employee after his/her retirement.

2. **Work Life Balance Practices as non-Statutory Benefits in India:** Mostly hospitality and service industries have initiated the non-statutory benefits for their employees by the employer such as flexible timings, work from home, compressed work week, vacations, child day care facilities etc. These benefits are the perks provided to employer to retain and attract new employees in India. Following are some examples of work life balance practices in India.

- Health Insurance is the assurance of immediate financial assist in the case of emergency medical arises, it is a contract between policyholder and insurance company which is given by employer to employee.
- Travel allowance is type of compensation provide by the employer to the employee for travel expenses for tour and transport for working duties.
- Capacity Building Programs are established for the entry level and junior staff working in hotels to enhance the skills and abilities of the workforce employed.
- Seminars are conducted for benefits for employee, which improves employee performance and increase employee satisfaction level and reduced the stress.
- Workshops enhance employee skill development ability, increase the problem solving and team building ability which reduce the work stress
- Workplace and Location Flexibility allow to the employee can work and collaborate form different range of locations.
- Scheduling Flexibility allows to employee to choose their arrival and departer time its is based on preferences and need of employee and the employer.
- Employee Incentives programmes are benefits that may be provided by the employer to their employee in form of non-monetary and monetary incentives such as reward and privileges.
- Living stipends are fixed amount of that is cover to living expenses such as food, transportation, grants and loans etc.

3. **Analysis on the Impact of Work Life Balance Practices followed in India on the hotel Employees:** To achieve the second objective primary data were collected through questionnaire on telephone and email. The questionnaire with two sections, one on work life balance practices with 15 items and another on support for work life balance with 5 items was prepared. The same was distributed by email as well. Telephonic interviews were also conducted wherever possible. 250 employees of the hotels were requested to choose their response from out of 5 point likert scale such as Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). From out of 250 employees contacted, the responses of 161 employees were valid for further study, as per Table 1 given below.

Table 1: Breakup Details of the 250 Respondents

Sl. No.	Break up	No. of Respondents	Remaining Number of Respondents used out of 250
1.	Phone Number Changed or not reached or not received any reply by email or email not sent.	43	207
2.	Invalid Responses	14	193
3.	Total No. of respondents currently not working in hotel industry	32	161
4.	Total No. of respondents working currently in hotel industry	161	0
	Total Respondents	250	Not Applicable

Source: Authors' own source

It is also found during analysis that 32 respondents are not serving in hotel industry currently. The reasons for leaving the hotel industry is given below in Table 2.

Table 2: Table on Reasons for leaving the hotel Industry

Sl. No.	Reasons	No. of Respondents
1	Got Government Job	4
2.	Shifted to Other Industries (due to poor remuneration, long working hours, unpredictable shifts etc.)	13
3.	Social Reasons (family issues, social issues etc.)	11
4.	Medical Reasons	2
5.	Not at all working anywhere	2
	Total	32

Source: Authors' Own Source

The Table Two clearly shows that 75% of the applicable respondents have left industry hotel industry due to unfriendly work-life balance policies followed in India. It is also clear from the above table that people in India are more attractive towards government job in which work-life balance would be easier.

From out of 161 valid responses, 22 respondents (13.66%) 94 respondents (58.38%) and 45 respondents (27.95%) deliver their duties and responsibilities at higher level, middle level and lower level. This crystal clear from the Table Three given hereunder that hotel industry, being run as private organizations, promote their staff with an aim of motivating them, based on their performance. However, the fact that cannot be neglected that promotion in the career comes along with higher more duties and responsibilities.

Table 3: Working Levels of Respondents

Sl. No.	Working Position	No. of Respondents	Cumulative Respondents
1	Higher Level	22	22
2	Middle Level	94	116
3	Lower Level	45	161

Source: Authors' Own Source

The Table Number Four given below illustrates the policies applied by hotel industry in India along with the number of respondents who had either agreed or disagreed with the policies.

Table 4: Responses of 161 Respondents

Sl. No.	Items	No. of Respondents										Total	
		SA		A		N		D		SD			
	Work life balance practices:	In No.	In %	In No.	In %	In No.	In %	In No.	In %	In No.	In %	In No.	In %
1	I am enjoying flexible working hours in the hotel	6	3.73	7	4.35	13	8.07	46	28.57	89	55.28	161	100
2	Yes. We have health insurance policies provided by the hotel	5	3.11	6	3.73	15	9.32	51	31.68	84	52.17	161	100
3	Yes. We are offered life insurance policies by the hotel.	1	0.62	5	3.11	20	12.42	43	26.71	92	57.14	161	100
4	We have gratuity facilities in the hotel for the staff.	0	0.00	4	2.48	22	13.66	36	22.36	99	61.49	161	100
5	We have the facility of enjoying sickness and/or maternity leave.	4	2.48	20	12.42	30	18.63	40	24.84	67	41.61	161	100
6	We enjoy medical allowances or reimbursement facilities.	2	1.24	16	9.94	35	21.74	72	44.72	36	22.36	161	100
7	We have travel allowance / reimbursement facilities.	25	15.53	46	28.57	33	20.50	20	12.42	37	22.98	161	100
8	The hotel offers time to time capacity building programs, the participation in which makes our CV stronger and better further.	4	2.48	12	7.45	14	8.70	46	28.57	85	52.80	161	100
9	The hotel offers	7	4.35	11	6.83	26	16.15	49	30.43	68	42.24	161	100

	seminars and workshop programs to improve the skills of employees.											
10	Depending upon our needs, we can get ourselves transferred to any branch of the hotel.	15	9.32	20	12.42	31	19.25	47	29.19	48	29.81	161	100
11	Our services in the hotel is recognized and appreciated with rewards, awards and privileges.	6	3.73	13	8.07	28	17.39	55	34.16	59	36.65	161	100
12	Our hotel arranges family get-together programs for the employees.	3	1.86	11	6.83	26	16.15	28	17.39	93	57.76	161	100
13	We enjoy family or child educational allowances	2	1.24	6	3.73	25	15.53	43	26.71	85	52.80	161	100
14	Our hotel conducts wellness programs for the employees.	4	2.48	10	6.21	24	14.91	47	29.19	76	47.20	161	100
15	Our hotel conducts employees' personal or professional counselling programs.	8	4.97	18	11.18	21	13.04	36	22.36	78	48.45	161	100
	Work life balance supports											
16	I am able to spare time separately for family and work.	4	2.48	9	5.59	37	22.98	27	16.77	84	52.17	161	100
17	I am able to spare time for life individual life.	2	1.24	10	6.21	40	24.84	24	14.91	85	52.80	161	100
18.	My colleague support me to maintain	19	11.80	38	23.60	59	36.65	24	14.91	21	13.04	161	100

	work-life balance											
19.	My family gives me support in maintaining work-life balance.	76	47.20	58	36.02	20	12.42	5	3.11	2	1.24	161	100
20.	My hotel values work-life balance.	5	3.11	12	7.45	40	24.84	32	19.88	72	44.72	161	100

Source: Authors' Own Source

In order to know whether the responses are related to the practices followed in the hotel industry, chi square test was applied.

- **Chi Square Test One for Work life balance practices**

  Ho: There is no significant relationship between work life balance practices and the responses of employees of hotels.
  Ha: There is a significant relationship between work life balance practices and the responses of employees of hotels.
  X^2 (56,161) = 351.63, p=0.0002; p<0.05 Significant

  The result is significant and it implies that the responses and practices are independent and related.

- **Chi Square Test Two for work life Balance support**

  Ho: There is no significant relationship between supports of work life balance and the responses of employees of hotels.
  Ha: There is a significant relationship between supports of work life balance and the responses of employees of hotels.
  X^2 (16,161) = 418.73, p=0.0001; p<0.05 Significant

  The result is significant and it implies that the responses and supports for work life balance are independent and related.

- **Pearson Correlation Coefficient:** The correlation coefficient was found between the practices and supports for work life balance. Since r=0.74 (closed attached to 1), this can be interpreted that the strong support of colleague and/or family members is a must for better work-life balance.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

In the hotel industry employees are facing various problems related to work life such as (long working hours, unfixed schedules, heavy work load) from that employee could not spare time for their family life (family, child care,). this shows poor work life balance in the

hotel industry and it also impact on employee turnover. Based on the finding there is some recommendation to improve the work life balance of working employees in hotel industry given below

1. **Recommendations to Government**

   - **Awareness Programmes:** Government can implement work life balance awareness programmes for the employees and encourage to participate in these programmes and implement it in their life to maintain their work and family life. That will increase work life balance practices in employee's life.

   - **Training and Counselling:** It is suggested that government can conduct the training and counselling programmes time to time as strong support of employers and employee which direct impact on more productivity, good employee performance, decrease turnover, and also effect on good mental and psychological and mental health.

   - **Build Resilience:** Government should make course on work life balance, to aware students to develop coping mechanisms and strategies to deal with stress and setbacks. Additionally, the government must make it sure that the strategies and policies suggested by the government is properly implemented by the employees. A common forum or platform must be generated by the government. This forum would be efficient enough to address the problems faced by the employees working in the hotel industry.

2. **Recommendations to Employers in Hotel Industry**

   - **Supervisor Support:** Supervisors can play a crucial role in creating a supportive work environment by actively listening to employees' concerns, providing guidance and resources, and promoting work-life balance. Its help to reduces the employee turnover.

   - **Wellness-Focused Initiatives:** Hotels can provide fundamental tools and initiatives to support employees physically, mentally, and emotionally.

   - **Flexible Work Schedules:** it can be suggested to hotel employers for implement flexible working schedules for improve the production and reduce the employee turnover intention in the industry.

3. **Recommendations to Employees**

   - **Flexible Work Scheduling:** Providing flexible scheduling can help male and female employees balance their work and personal lives. which provide motivation for work more and increase employee's retention. This reduces workload and stress of hectic schedules in hotel industry.

- **Organizational Support:** Perceived organizational support can be offered in many ways, such as freedom of creativity in their work or an ample amount of vacation days for health or leisure. The better the perceived organizational support within an employee base, the happier employees are with their workplace.

- **Family Support:** Family support has a positive impact on employees work life and personal life that motivates employees to fulfil dependents' requirements and their individual goals that further helps to procced to achieve organisation goal.

VII. CONCLUSION

According to results, there has been significant relationship among work life balance support and work life balance practices. Because without organizational support, family support and self-motivation, work life balance practices will not work effectively, no matter how good the policies and practices are. Therefore, government and employers of hotel industry has to seriously implement work life balance policies and programmes for employees working in various sector specially in hotel industry. It needs to improve and strictly regulate the work life balance programmes for growth of every employee individually and further development of hotel properties/organization, in turn, it would reduce turnover**.**

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