

# EXPLORING WORK-LIFE BALANCE THROUGH THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

## Abstract

The emerging and budding issue to have balance in professional and personal life termed as 'work life balance' is of great concern. It is associated and connected with employees' burnout and stress in particular and organizational productivity in general. In today's competitive corporate world, a positive relationship between paid employment and unpaid tasks is important for success. Work-life balance is a topic that has evolved as a result of economic, demographic and cultural changes. Work-life balance is a dynamic equilibrium in which a person prioritizes both his and her professional and personal obligations equally. Any conflict between work and family life creates resentment and has a detrimental effect on employees' well-being. This paper focused on ill-effects of work life imbalance and how to combat this issue both at individual and organizational level, thus helping women in developing the sense of contentment, satisfaction and a sense of belonging at place of work. It builds and create healthy atmosphere for work win-win situation for the employees and the organization.

**Keywords:** Employees, Employment, Work-life balance, Work-family conflict, Organization.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Work-life balance relates to how well you manage numerous duties at work, at home, and in other areas of life. Work-life balance, according to Greenhaus & Beutell (1985), is defined as a person's capacity and capability to manage their work and personal lives equally. Time balance, involvement balance and satisfaction balance are three components of this work life balance system (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Kaliannan et al., 2016). It's a problem that both employers and employees are concerned about. In the current financial environment, businesses are under pressure to increase productivity and require employees who have a better work-life balance (Crosbie & Moore, 2004). Employees who have a better work-life balance are more productive (Naithani, 2010). It has an impact on everyone, regardless of their age, gender, level of education, family structure, occupation, work position, or religious beliefs (Stamarski & Son Hing, 2015). Numbers of transformations in the workplace, workforce demographics, and the family sphere have brought this issue to the spotlight (Lee & Sirgy, 2019).

In the competitive era, employees feel compelled to work more hours in order to meet the expectations of their employers. As a result, the 'culture of excessive workload' and a "24/7 life style" have taken over the lives of the world's well-educated and brilliant professionals. A few decades ago, it was extensively assumed that technological innovation would trim down working hours and offer people with more opportunities, rest and recreation (Philipson & Posner, 1999). However, far than providing relaxation and leisure, sophisticated technology has left people, particularly professionals, with little free time.

Organizations are unable to guarantee secure employment as a result of the quickly changing business climate, and as a consequence, employees' attitudes and values are shifting, and they are less willing to demonstrate unconditional dedication to the enterprise (Burke & Ng, 2006; Longenecker et al., 2007). The decrease of work as a core life interest, along with contradictory job demands, leads to imbalance in work-life. Young people's attitudes toward life are also fast shifting. They believe in putting in long hours at work and then celebrating even more. They enjoy travelling, socializing, pursuing hobbies, and participating in adventure sports, among other things. They feel gloomy when they don't have time for these hobbies (Guest, 2002).

The term 'Work-life balance' was first proposed as work-family conflict (Kahn et al., (1964). Erera (1992), Kahn et al., (1964) and Mansoor et al., (2011) defined role conflict as the "simultaneous occurrence of two (or more) sets of pressures such that compliance with one would make more difficult compliance with the other". Further the work life balance is said to be the degree to which people are equally interested and contented in their job and family roles (Clark, 2000).

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Hammer et al. (1997), who studied 399 dual-earner couples, came with findings & conclusion that work-family conflict exhibited high overlap effects for both men and women. The degree of work-family conflict experienced by a person was a significant predictor of the level of work-family conflict experienced by their partner. Clark (2000) explained WLB as satisfaction and high performance at home and at work, with the lowest value of role conflict possible. Eagle et al. (1997) Work-family conflict was much more common and regular than

family-work conflict, signifying that work-family conflict was asymmetrically sensitive. Macky and Boxall (2008) highlighted that the employees who work more hours are marginally more prone to experience imbalance work life. Steiber (2009) studied that both women and men reported having experienced work-family conflict as a outcome of time-based work obligations. According to Yadav et al. (2013), respondents have a good work-life balance and are satisfied with their working conditions. The findings of the study suggest that balancing care and work has an impact on career advancement. Managers function as roadblocks to employees obtaining a healthy work-life balance. WLB is a key driver of job satisfaction on an intrinsic level. S. Padma et.al (2013) have examined the significance of family support in managing personal and professional lives and it was revealed that family support will play an important part in blending personal and professional lives. Employees with grownup children have an easier time balancing their workload than those with younger children. Kumari Lalitha (2012) revealed that factors like psychological distress, organizational changes, work conditions, leadership styles, job duties, heavy workloads, job demands, and personal financial concerns affect the work life balance. Koch and Hill (2004) in their study revealed that WLB is the ability to sustain a general sense of well-being in one's life. The study also found that compensation elements such as pay and monetary perks had a significant impact on WLB. Employees will put forth greater effort to establish a work-life balance if they are satisfied with their compensation packages.

### **III.IMPORTANCE OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE FOR WOMEN**

According to studies, most women work 40-45 hours each week, with roughly 53% of them finding it difficult to create a work-life balance. (Shravanthi et. al., 2013).The reason for this conflict is that they are torn between the demands of their organisation and their responsibilities at home. On the one hand, they must manage their family's daily needs, as well as manifold schedules, meetings, company requirements, and other scheduled work responsibilities. Women at work require special attention from their bosses. Employers must develop tactics that will not only attract and retain personnel for a longer period of time, but also help them advance their careers, and at the same time there is increase their productivity. Transportation, canteens, day care centres, part time working/ flexi-working hours, sharing of information on WLB policies, and special leave accommodations such as public holiday and paid holidays leave, career break leave, maternity leave, leave to attend as a witness at a court hearing in your organization, and health insurance, incentives & appreciation, career advancement, insurance policies, career progression, rewards, performance-related pay, and other government-sponsored benefits such as maternity, marriage, sick leave, and medical coverage are just a few examples. Employee counselling, organizational psychology, workplace health promotion, social clubs, pre-retirement clubs, women's networks, and breast-feeding support groups are some of the additional possibilities for work-life balance. These programmes enable female employees to work in a peaceful environment free of family tensions, allowing them to give their best at work. Furthermore, Women empowerment schemes exist in organizations, such as forums, committees, grievance redress systems, and suggestion schemes, where a woman is empowered to communicate her ideas, concerns, and suggestions with top management and have them addressed.

### **IV. WOMEN AND WORK LIFE BALANCE: NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE**

As a result of transition from traditional to modern times, when the woman earns and manages almost all of the household activities, women are constantly seeking Work-Life

Balance. Most of them have jobs and responsibilities at home in this age of advanced technology and the digital world, but dealing with these two difficult and complex situations requires life talent, tact, skill, and prudence.

Due to the competitive work atmosphere, there is a significant increase in workload. Individuals are under a great deal of stress, which is causing a number of issues & problems. The ability to achieve a work-life balance hinges on the ability to strike a balance between one's job and personal lives. Work-life balance has emerged as such an important topic that it necessitates a great deal of research, which has only recently begun, and the results of which will be beneficial to the individual, the organization, and society. To get the most out of their employees, companies are emphasizing the significance of work-life balance. The younger generation is plagued by a slew of stress-related issues, the majority of which can be traced back to poor health. Improper work-life balance may be the source of stress. Work-life balance regulations that are unfavorable to educational institutions might hurt their performance in a variety of ways. Employers should focus on superior and educated human resources in a lively market by submitting work-life balance policies together with competitive remuneration packages. Work-life balance policies can help employers save money by increasing employee retention. Work-life balance rules can help educational institutions increase their productivity and profitability. Work-life balance rules can also help to minimize stress and contribute to a safer and better workplace by combating weariness, reducing the likelihood of employees making poor decisions in the workplace.

**Indian Context:** In India, the issue of work-life balance is a late bloomer that still requires attention. It is significant in India for socio-cultural reasons. The majority of the employees come from middle-class families with two working spouses. (Chanderasekar, 2011). In today's Indian workplaces, work-life balance is a catchphrase. Balancing work and family life is getting more challenging for both men and women as the number of working women in every area of our economy grows. The shifting patterns of the industrial market economy and the Indian society structure have resulted in changes in men's and women's activities during the last three decades. Changes in the social, economic, and educational position of Indian women have resulted in their greater participation as a significant workforce in the organized economy. On the other side, divorce rates have raised, resulting in a significant number of single parents, increased workforce mobility, an attempt to isolate them from joint family social supports, and the expansion of nuclear families. Women's needs and expectations of corporation, on the other hand, have increased in recent years. Increased working hours, work pressure, and extended evening and weekend work had resulted in a lack of family and other social needs being met. As a result, men had to struggle to adjust to new lifestyles and role reversals in order to assist their wives or outsource household work to others. Working men and women have struggled to maintain a harmonious work-life balance as a result of this. According to a May 2014 Tower Watson report on Indian employers rate stress, if proper balance is not maintained by employees, it causes conflict, which leads to imbalance, stress, and physical inactivity, all of which have a direct impact on employees' physical and emotional health.. The top three reasons determined for stress were job expectation, inadequate staffing and lack of work-life balance. Employers played an important role to help employees reduce the level of stress by providing flexi working hour's option, organize stress management workshop and undertake education and awareness campaigns to help their employees manage stress.

## V. TOP CAUSES OF WORK-RELATED STRESS FOR EMPLOYEES IN INDIA

Reasons for Work Stress among Indian Workers	Percentage
Unclear, vague, contradictory or conflicting job expectations	40%
Insufficient work force/staff ((lack of support & assistance, unbalanced workload, or poor group performance)	38%
Lack of WLB (long duration of work or excessive workload)	38%
Organizational culture	32%
Low pay	29%
Technologies that increase accessibility outside of working hours	27%
Lack of supervisor support	26%
Deficiency of resources, tools and equipment or technology to perform job	18%
Fears and uncertainties related to job stability/ job loss	16%
Uncertainties/fears about benefit cutback/loss	12%

Source: <http://www.indiainfoline.com>

## VI. HOW TO CREATE WORK BALANCE

Stress to a limited extent act as a catalyst in making person work, but when it exceeds it reduces efficiency and has ill-effects on mind, body and behavior as well. Following are some ways to create work life balance at individual level:

- Know your stress triggers.
- Do time management
- Do meditation and relaxation techniques
- Take proper rest and pursue some hobby in your free time.
- Listen to music, do yoga or some exercise.
- Say 'no' for unimportant additional responsibilities and tasks.

Some of the ways at organizational level to create work life balance are as follows:

- Make use of technology to reduce long working hours of employees.
- Provide flexi-hour facility to employees especially women. It will provide them ease and hence increase their efficiency at work.
- Provide job security and stability it reduces unnecessary fears of job loss and job downsizing. Provide required promotion to employees, as it boosts their morale.
- Provide work diversity. It helps to get best results.
- Make communication system good both downwards and upwards.
- Facilitate employees with effective training programme.
- Provide better working condition and recreational facilities to put employees at ease.

## VII. CONCLUSION

Work life balance has gained its domain in society. It is quite evident that work life balance can enhance productivity as quality of work, so organizations need to come up with employee friendly policies. The employees especially of today put their commitment both at

home and to organizations if they are able to create a balance and harmony in personal, family life and work life. It requires on the part of organizations to create such an environment and necessary changes in set up that employees are able to give their best. It will create win-win situation for both.

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