

CLUSTERING OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE PRACTICES: A STUDY OF EMPLOYEES WORKING WITH IT ORGANISATION

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ABSTRACT

Service sector organization has witnessed a phenomenal growth over the past few decades. The growing competition, Extended working hours and work complexity are some of the issues that has become a big challenge before these organization. The continuous growing work pressure, high demanding jobs, use of sophisticated technology has made it difficult for employees to keep a balance between their job at work place and family responsibility. Maintaining the balance between work and family life has become the key issue before employees as well as organization as a whole. Several policy interventions are initiated by organization to manage the work life balance. Present research work focus on analyzing the factor of work life balance and clustering this policy initiative which is most suited for employees work life balance. In a survey of 163 employees associated with IT industry in NCR region, it was found that organizational factors are most effective in bringing work life balances. Some of the suggestion n the basis of study are also drawn and presented in the study.

Keywords: Work Life Balance, family life, Cluster Analysis, work pressure, etc

INTRODUCTION

In the continuous rapid growing business world, Work life balance is considered as one of the key factors for the employees to achieve success. Globalization of business world have created new activities and opened many new opportunities to the business organizations. Integration of Indian economy with global economy has made the employee's retention very hard to the management in the organizations. The present situation becoming very hard for organization to retain their competitive advantage in market. Service sector organization has witnessed a phenomenal growth and has become more competitive. These organizational are passing through transformational phase and facing a big challenge in getting committed employees. Extended

working hours and work complexity are some of the issues that have become a big challenge for them. Globalization, liberalization and privatization of economy are forcing organization to bring structural changes which are posing a challenge before employees. These structural changes has affected not only in business activities but also in culture and perception of the employees. Most of the Organizational changes happen due to down-sizing, mergers or acquisitions and radical changes in technology. These changes have changed the work setups. The employees in present environment are more involved in their jobs than past times. The working hours, work pressure, high demanding jobs, use of sophisticated technology made it difficult for employees to keep a balance between their job at work place and family responsibility.

Work life balance practices are the mean through which the tensions between the work life and personal life are minimized. It is achieved by having proper policies, systems, supportive management and provisions at work place and good relations in personal life. Work life balance of the employees helps in reducing the stress level at work and increases the job satisfaction. Work-life balance practices are deliberate organizational changes in programs or organizational culture that are designed to reduce work-life conflict and enable employees to be more effective at work and in other roles.' In recent years, the term "work-life balance" has replaced what used to be known as "work-family balance" (Hudson Resourcing, 2005). This semantic shift arises from a recognition that childcare is by no means the only important non-work responsibility and the issue can be applies to any non-paid activities or commitments and to a diverse range of employees such women, man, parents and non-parents, singles and couples. Work-life balance is an important topic in both professional business practice and academic research. Work-life balance (WLB) has become a popular research area in different fields such as sociology (e.g. Allan, Loudoun & Peetz, 2007), psychology (e.g. Greenhaus, 2008; Frone, 2000), human resource management (e.g. McCarthy), organization studies (e.g. Murphy & Kaskubar, 2008), and gender studies (e.g. Sullivan & Smithson, 2007; Sullivan & Lewis, 2001).

The majority of research on the correlation between work and family life refers to WLB and organization policies, WLB and organization culture, WLB and HR management, WLB and work commitment, WLB and absenteeism, WLB and gender equality, WLB and family life, and many more (Casper, Eby, Bordeaux, Lockwood & Lambert, 2007). Work life balance is defined as a satisfactory level of involvement or 'fit' between the multiple roles in a person's life. To understand work-life balance, it is important to be aware of the different demands upon us and our personal resources- our time and our energy- that we can deploy to address them. With this awareness, we are able to review and value the choices we have in terms of how we allocate our precious resources. Such conscious decision-making provides a sense of control over our working arrangements in order to better accommodate other aspects of our lives, while still benefiting the organizations.

There are a number of studies examining WLB and workers wellbeing. These studies however were mainly conducted in the United States (e.g. Grzywacz & Marks, 2000), the United Kingdom (e.g. Wise, Bond & Meikle, 2003), Australia and New Zealand (e.g. Bochner, 2003). In addition, several researchers (e.g. Greenhaus, Collins & Shaw, 2003; and Grzywacz & Marks, 2000) noticed that work and family literature, while assessing relationships between work and family domains, considers family life as time spent with a spouse and children, ignoring other important aspects of family, such as time spent with parents, siblings and other relatives. With the integration of Indian economy with global economy and changing family structure in the Indian context, it is become necessary to explore the work life balance practices which are most suited to the employees associated with IT organizations in India. Accessibility of researcher with the respondents associated with some service sector organization in NCR region has motive me to select this topic for the proposed study.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The literature on work-life balance is quite varied. Family- friendly work environment such as flexi time, tele-work, etc. has been portrayed as an important component of an individual worker's preferences towards work time. It has been suggested that such work arrangements seek to help employees obtain a better blend between their work and non-work lives while providing organizations with a means of recruiting, retaining and motivating their work force (Bachmann, 2000; Schwartz, 1994). R Baral and S Bhargava (2011) in their research titled "HR interventions for Work life balance" quotes that work life balance is the concern for both research scholars and the business leaders in the view of technological, demographic and organisational changes related to it. They have explained about the challenges that the HR managers face while effectively implementing the policy in their organization. They suggest that the organisations must implement Work life balance policies and incorporate the organizational culture that ensures employee commitment and productivity. Sarah Holly and Alwine Mohnen (2012) in their study titled "Impact of working hours on Work Life balance" their main objective was to examine the influence of the working hours of the employees on their satisfaction on the job. They explain that the overall number of the employees wants to reduce their working hours is influenced mainly by the overtime compensation. Their study result shows that generally the long working hours do not lead to the dissatisfaction among the employees, but long working hours have a positive effect on the employee's life and job satisfaction and the desire to reduce the long working hours have a negative impact on the job satisfaction of the employees. Clark (2000) defines work-family balance as satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home, with a minimum of role conflict. Grover & Crooker (1995) identified 12 family friendly policies items and divided into four main categories which were compressed work week (Five day work week), Flextime policies (flexible scheduling programme, job sharing, work at home, part time

work), Family Leave policies (shorter work days for family issues, compassionate leave, extended paid maternity leave, paid leave to care for sick family members) and Employee assistance programme (professional counseling, life skill programmes e.g., stress management, subsidized exercise). The literature suggests that lack of balance between work and non-work activities is related to reduce psychological and physical well-being (Sparks *et al.*, 1997; Frone *et al.*, 1997; Thomas & Ganster, 1995; Martens *et al.*, 1999; Felstead *et al.*, 2002). An interesting empirical research in the UK (Hyman *et al.*, 2003) indicated that intrusion of work demands into personal life (e.g. working during the week-end) was related with reports of heightened stress and emotional exhaustion for employees. Furthermore, employees perceived that intrusion of work obligations into their personal lives negatively affected their health (Hyman *et al.*, 2003). Work-family balance plays a mediating role in assisting social support's contribution to both job & family satisfaction (Ferguson *et al.*, 2012). A recent study (Hua Jiang, 2012) indicated that, when employees' immediate supervisors respect their subordinates as individuals with unique characters and needs, and treat them differently but fairly, employees perceive high levels of trust, commitment, satisfaction, and control mutuality, moreover, employees when perceiving that they are treated fairly by their organisations develop quality relationships with their organization.

Finally, it was felt that the work-life balance of employees is one of the major areas in which employees are highly concentrated to make them satisfied and sustained. The American Society of Training & Development defined that the concept of Work-Life Balance (WLB) is the degree to which members of a work organization are able to satisfy their personal needs through their experience in the organisations. It focuses of creating a human work environment where employees work cooperatively & contribute to organisational objectives (Chhabra, 2010). Work-life balance is about effectively managing the juggling act between paid work and all other activities that are important to people such as family, community activities, voluntary work, personal development and leisure and recreation Dundas (2008). Work-life balance is based on the assumption of the separation of work & private life, & that "balance" is achieved when there is equal division between the two (Sally Khallash & Martin Kruse, 2012).

Work-Life Balance Initiatives and Employee's Retention: Experiences from Insurance Companies in India Work-life balance is basically daily achievement and enjoyment in each of four life quadrants-work, family, friends, and self. Mathew & Panchanatham (2011) revealed that role overload, dependent care issues, quality of health, problems in time management and lack of proper social support are the major factors influencing the WLB of women entrepreneurs in India. Lakshmi & Gopinath (2013) stipulated that majority of women teaching faculties are working 40-45 hours per week and 53% are struggling to achieve work/life balance.

Thus, it is clear from above cited literature that work-life balance is an emerging concept which is being considered as an important tool for employee engagement as well as retention. Many studies have been conducted in various sectors like Banking, Academics, BPOs, Hospitals, Airlines etc. But there has been least focus made on IT industry. The paper is focused on the various dimensions of work-life balance for employees of IT organization and what are the appropriate organization as well as individual interventional scheme most suited for employees WLB. The most prominent research questions focused in the study are:

- I. What are the various techniques being adopted by the IT organization as a work-life balance initiatives?
- II. Does any difference exist between the work-life balance initiatives with regard to gender
- III. Which factor (organization factor or individual factor) are more helpful in work life balances.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY & METHODOLOGY

The objective of the study is:

- To identify the various work life balance practices opted by the management for employee well being in the organization.
- To carryout clustering of work life balance practices as perceived by employees in the organization.

The following hypothesis was assumed:

H0: mean of various Factors of Work Life Balance Practices does not differs significantly across the Gender Categories of Respondents

H0: mean of various Factors of Work Life Balance Practices differs significantly across the Gender Categories of Respondents

Present study is based on descriptive study. Study is based on primary as well as secondary data. Secondary data was collected from various news paper, research journals, magazines, internet etc. primary data was collected from respondents using questionnaire. A structure questionnaire was designed covering different aspect of work life balance and organizational initiative of work life balance. The data used in this study has been compiled from the employees working in various IT organsiations around NCR region. These data offer information on work life balance and organizational initiative towards WLB and how employees perceive these initiatives. Questionnaire was used personally visiting different IT organization a total 250 questionnaire was circulated to the employees and 185 questionnaires was received. After editing 163

responses were found fit and were taken for the analysis. The collected information was systematically arranged, tabulated and appropriate analysis was carried out. To test the hypothesis, descriptive statistic like, Mean, standard deviation, ANOVA and cluster analysis was carried out. Table 1 indicates the demographic characteristics of respondents.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics	Group Category of respondents	No. of Respondents	%
	Total Number of Respondents	163	100
Age	Up to 25 Years	9	5.5
	26-35 Years	133	81.6
	36-45 Years	10	6.1
	46 to 55 Years	7	4.3
	above 55 years	4	2.5
Gender Categories	Male	143	87.7
	Female	20	12.3
Marital Status	Married	80	49.1
	Unmarried	83	50.9
Education Qualification	Up to matriculation		
	Intermediate		
	Graduation	2	1.2
	Post Graduate and Other	5	3.1
	Professional and others	15	9.2
		65	39.9
		76	46.6

<p>Demographics are the study of general and particular population factors such as age, gender or occupation, as well as population density, size and location.</p> <p>Demographics are the quantification of statistics for a given population and are used to identify the study of quantifiable sub-sets within a given population and are widely used variables, in relation to employee’s motivation and job performance. The information presented in the above table1 reveals that 5.5% of respondents are from the age group of up to 25 years, 81.6% were from 26-35 years.6.1% respondents belong to the age group of 36-45 years. 4.3% respondents are in the age group of 46.55 years and remaining 2.5% employees are in the age above 55 years. Majority of the respondents are from male categories. Out of 163 respondents in a survey, almost 49.1% respondents are married and 50.9% respondents are unmarried.</p> <p>Information related to education level of respondents, it is observed that sample is the combination of most qualified employees as majority of them are either educated up to post graduation or having profession qualification like technical diploma, certificates or other technical qualification.</p>	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
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Valid	1-3 Years	8	4.9	4.9	4.9
	3 to5 years	27	16.6	16.6	21.5
	5 to 10 years	55	33.7	33.7	55.2
	10 to 15 years	63	38.7	38.7	93.9
	15-25 Years	3	1.8	1.8	95.7
	More than 25 years	7	4.3	4.3	100.0
	Total	163	100.0	100.0	

Work experience of the employees provides many benefits to the organization. The work experience gives employees a skills and experience that helps the employees to balance them self with work and family responsibility and enable employees to stand out with potential employers as well as helping in choosing the right sector to work in. the survey reveals that sample is the combination of experiences employees as majority of them having experience more than 5 years. It is seen that almost three fourth employees are having work experience between 5 to 15 years.

Table 3: Reasons of Joining this Organization

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Better prospect	17	10.4	10.4	10.4
Global Presence and global recognition	65	39.9	39.9	50.3
Good package	18	11.0	11.0	61.3
Diverse in nature	61	37.4	37.4	98.8
Other reasons	2	1.2	1.2	100.0
Total	163	100.0	100.0	

Service sector industry in India has witnessed phenomenal growth in the past two decade. This significant growth has prompted large number of prospect to be associated with this industry. There are numerous reasons to join with this industry. Survey reveals that Global Presence and global recognition of the organization has attracted majority of the respondents to join with as it was indicated by 39.9% respondents in the sample. It was followed by Diverse in nature which was indicated by 37.4% respondents in the sample. Other 10.4%, 11.0% and 1.2% respondents indicated Better prospect, Good package and other reasons for joining such organization.

Table 4: Factor of Work Life Balance: a descriptive Statistics

		N	Reliability (α)	Mean	Std. Deviation
	Individual Factor		.855	3.1779	.85690
1	I am comfortable with my nature of work	163		2.9939	1.14124
3	I can take work to home in order to accomplish some pre-Defined goals.	163		3.0920	1.19572
5	I get enough time to spend with my family.	163		3.2699	1.07187
6	I get work flexibility to manage time to attend family functions and other social activities.	163		3.3006	1.01309
9	I can get time to relax during working hours.	163		3.4540	1.23330
13	My job is Flexible in nature and can be completed by working part-time work, roistered hours, night/day shifts	163		3.0123	1.03033
18	My supervisor encourages my development and hence I have improved my own performance	163		2.9571	1.35332
	Organisational Factor		.659	3.3926	.95576
4	My organization provides healthy working conditions.	163		3.5706	1.18618
7	My organization provides technological support (laptops, smart phones etc.) for balancing work and family commitments.	163		2.9816	1.40314
8	I am getting remuneration as per my skills, knowledge, ability and experience.	163		3.6258	1.11159
	Social Factor		.755	3.1018	.95952
10	My organization facilitates professional counseling in order to assist employees about their career plans.	163		3.0982	1.42385
11	My organization provides medical facilities for me and my dependents.	163		3.4356	1.11132
12	My organization really cares about my well-being.	163		3.1656	1.36202
15	child-care available at the location of the company	163		3.2454	1.17637
16	organization facilitate paid Paid maternity leave / paternity leave/ financial support for eldercare	163		3.0061	1.13582
	Family and Other Factors		.641	3.2822	.87378

14	My family give me support to complete my organization obligation	163	3.1779	.94882
17	At work, I have the opportunity to do my best everyday	163	3.1043	1.34996
2	Management sympathetic enough in rescheduling work for meeting family commitments.	163	3.5644	1.10015
	Valid N (listwise)	163		

Today, almost all organizations, either reactively or proactively, have become serious on their productivity. Service industry is emphasizing on providing its services to customer round the clock. Due to high work load, high attrition rate, and seasonality in the business most of the organization are facing manpower. This situation forces the employees to take up the extra load by working for long hours and sometimes their duties are stretched too long. This factor has a great negative impact on the WLB situation of the employees since they do not get sufficient time for their person. In an environment where there is high level of competitive pressures stemming largely from efforts to deliver quality service, the weight of this on employees is enormous (Karatape, 2010; Lourel et.al.,2009). Most of the work in Indian setting dealt with the aspects of managing work-life balance at both the ends. For measuring the factors of work life balance the variable under different construct related to factors promoting Work life balance were identified on the basis of review of previous literature. Further respondents were asked to rate them on a scale of 1 to 5. 1 indicates strongly disagree and 5 indicates strongly agree. Descriptive statistics was carried out to analyze the comparative importance of the construct related to WLB. The most recognized types of descriptive statistics are the mean and standard Deviation that are generally used at almost all levels of mathematics and statistics applicable in sociology or psychology. The results presented in Table 4, provide further insight about the dimension of work life balance. The first factor of managing work life balance is the individual factor which is the combination of variable like I am comfortable with my nature of work, I can take work to home in order to accomplish some pre- Defined goals., I get enough time to spend with my family, I get work flexibility to manage time to attend family functions and other social activities, I can get time to relax during working hours, My job is Flexible in nature and can be completed by working part-time work, roistered hours, night/day shifts, My supervisor encourages my development and hence I have improved my own performance. Combined together this component has scored reliability of .855, mean of 3.1779 and Standard deviation of .8569. second factor of Work Life balance emerged as Organizational Factor which is the combination of variable like My organization provides healthy working conditions, My organization provides technological support (laptops, smart phones etc.) for balancing work and family commitments and I am getting remuneration as per my skills,

knowledge, ability and experience. Combined together this factor score the reliability of .659 mean 3.3926 and standard Deviation of .95576. Third factor of work life balance is sociological factor which is the combination of factors like My organization facilitates professional counseling in order to assist employees about their career plans, My organization provides medical facilities for me and my dependents, My organization really cares about my well-being, child-care available at the location of the company, and organization facilitate paid maternity leave / paternity leave/ financial support for eldercare. Combined together this factor has scored a reliability of .755, mean = 3.1018 and Standard Deviation of .95952. fourth factor of WLB is the Family and Other Factors which is the combination of variable like My family give me support to complete my organization obligation, At work, I have the opportunity to do my best everyday and Management sympathetic enough in rescheduling work for meeting family commitments.. Combined together this factor has scored reliability of .641 mean =3.2822 and standard Deviation of .87378. Looking at the descriptive statistics, it is evident that Organizational Factor has scored highest mean followed by Family and Other Factors, Individual Factor and sociological factor.

Table 5: Mean of various Factors of Work Life Balance Practices across the Gender Categories of Respondents

Gender wise classification of respondents	Individual Factor	Organizational Factor	Social Factor	Family and Other Factors
Male	3.1429	3.3590	3.1846	3.2797
Female	3.2357	3.6333	3.2300	3.3000
Total	3.1543	3.3926	3.1902	3.2822

Table 6: One Way ANOVA of Mean of various Factors of Work Life Balance Practices across the Gender Categories of Respondents

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Individual Factor * Gender wise classification of respondents	Between Groups (Combined)	.151	1	.151	.211	.646
	Within Groups	115.236	161	.716		
	Total	115.387	162			
Organisational Factor * Gender wise classification of respondents	Between Groups (Combined)	1.321	1	1.321	1.450	.230
	Within Groups	146.662	161	.911		
	Total	147.982	162			

Social Factor * Gender wise classification of respondents	Between Groups	(Combined)	.036	1	.036	.046	.831
	Within Groups		127.548	161	.792		
	Total		127.584	162			
Family and Other Factors * Gender wise classification of respondents	Between Groups	(Combined)	.007	1	.007	.009	.923
	Within Groups		123.678	161	.768		
	Total		123.685	162			

The information presented in the above table no 5 and 6 indicates the Mean of various Factors of Work Life Balance Practices across the gender categories of Respondents and whether the mean of various Factors of Work Life Balance Practices differs significantly across the Gender Categories of Respondents assuming null hypothesis as; mean of various Factors of Work Life Balance Practices does not differs significantly across the gender categories of Respondents. The calculated value of F at (V1=1, V2=161) at 5 percent level of confidence is less than the table value (3.84) and $p > .05$ in all the factors under consideration. And hence null hypothesis is accepted and it is concluded that mean of various Factors of Work Life Balance Practices does not differs significantly across the gender categories of Respondents

Table 5: Factor of Work Life Balance: A Cluster Analysis

	Cluster			
	1	2	3	4
Individual factor	2.65	3.31	1.75	3.99
Organizational Factor	2.68	3.44	2.29	4.29
Social Factor	2.49	3.28	1.40	4.04
Family and Other Factor	2.98	3.31	1.75	4.08

Table 6: Number of Cases in each Cluster

Cluster	1	38.000
	2	51.000
	3	21.000
	4	53.000
Valid		163.000
Missing		.000

Cluster analysis or **clustering** is the task of grouping a set of objects in such a way that objects in the same group (called a **cluster**) are more similar (in some sense) to each other than to those in other groups (**clusters**). Cluster analysis is a class of techniques that are used to classify objects or cases into relative groups called clusters. Cluster analysis is also called classification analysis or numerical taxonomy. In cluster analysis, there is no prior information about the group or cluster membership for any of the objects. Cluster Analysis has been used in marketing for various purposes. Segmentation of consumers in cluster analysis is used on the basis of benefits sought from the purchase of the product. It can be used to identify homogeneous groups of buyers. First cluster is composed of responses of 38 employees who give more priority to family and other factors with mean 2.98 followed by Organizational Factor with 2.68, Individual factor with 2.65 and Social Factor with mean of 2.49. Second cluster is the combination 51 respondents who first priority is Organizational Factor with mean 3.44 followed by Individual factor and Family and Other Factor with 3.31 and Social Factor with 3.28. Third cluster is of 21 respondents while first preference is Organizational Factor with mean 2.29 followed by Individual factor and Family and Other Factor with mean 1.75 and Social Factor with 1.40. Last cluster is of 53 respondents who first preference is Organizational Factor with mean 4.29 followed by Family and Other Factor with mean 4.08, Social Factor with mean 4.04, Individual factor with mean 3.99. The cluster composed of maximum responses is fourth cluster in which the most preferred work life balance factor is Organizational Factor. The cluster composed of second highest responses is second cluster in which the most preferred WLB factor is Organizational Factor.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The initial question that guided our research was how work and family related factor influence work life balance of working women engaged in IT organizations. We tried to understand how work and family related elements influence the WLB of these employees. Initially, descriptive statistics of organizational policy related issues were found to be higher than the other factors under study. It is also noticed that out of eighteen (18) variables under study, fifteen (15) variables which mean score found greater than 3.00 that is inclination towards satisfactory. It shows that there are a wide variety of practices currently being used by IT organization to help employees achieve work-life balance. Four arguments emerged from the narratives: Individual factor, organizational factors, social factors and family related and other factors. Study confirms that organization factors are the most important factors affecting work life balance of women. The study confirms that organizational intervention can be more effective in bringing WLB of Women engaged in IT organization. Our cluster analysis also confirm that almost two third respondent are of the opinion that organization factors and organizational support can be more helpful in bringing WLB among IT employees. However as against to this findings from Ali

(2006) in a study on women in the IT industry, found that for women social support from the family and the organization is crucial in combining multiple roles. With this study it is on the importance that balance is specific to each person and relates to satisfaction with a job and all other parts in life, especially family life and free time. Therefore, a good work–life balance results in high satisfaction and employees well being. Further effort is needed to examine the effects of those arrangements and develop working conditions with positive impacts on employee satisfaction. Our findings offer greater understanding of organization environment for employees well being. This finding is a suggestion to rethink working conditions and other organization setting that is highly relevant. The present study concludes that it is better for the organization to address the work-life balance issues of Employees engaged with IT organizations in a holistic manner at organization level, so as to have more dedicated workforce as majority of the respondents are of the opinion that organisational factors are more important predictor of work life balance. Developing strong relationship in the workplace either formally or informally, addressing relationship issues, mentoring the employees with regards to their personal as well family needs and managing their finances, engaging them in community initiatives, providing training and support will be more help full in managing the work-life balance issues of the employees.

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