
Research Papers



"Work Life Balance in Today's World: A Necessitate for All"

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Abstract

Our life has four quadrants: Work, Family, Friends/community and Self. To make one's life happy, it is very important in today's world to maintain a right balance between all the four quadrants. To give proper and timely attention to each can create a feeling of satisfaction in oneself. If an individual gives focus on these four areas as key components, they are not hard to implement. Effective work life balance is a valuable marketing method of not only attracting employees but also retaining them for a long time.

Keywords: Four Quadrants, Retention, Stress Management.

INTRODUCTION:-

Health is the best gift, peace is the best wealth. Since two decades, the working environment has seen a drastic change in India. Earlier the job timings were restricted to 9 to 5. The work was fixed and there existed no additional responsibilities than the assigned work for the month. But now the scenario has changed entirely with globalization. Gone are the days of 9 to 5. Instead of 8 hours a day, the working hours are around 12 to 15 hours per day. The industries are also located on the outskirts of city where the time required for travelling has also increased. Technological advancements are a boon for work. But, slowly they have become a bane for the employees during their personal time. Getting phone calls, SMS and official emails have compelled employees feel as if they are working even at home or on a holiday. Thus, the concept of work life balance emerged. Human resources are the biggest asset of any company. Since a long time

now, the companies have started realising the value of human resources and that it is directly related to the profits of the company.

Earlier work life balance was supposed to be only for women. But with time the scenario changed and it became a concern for men as well. Legislation played an important role in it. Work life balance becomes a concern when there are children at home. Maternity Benefits Act was enacted in India in 1961. Relevant amendments are also made as and when required by the legal authorities. A concept of paternity leave has also come into existence in India. Many MNC'S have started to give paternity leave.

The competition is increasing day by day. In this competition driven world, a culture for more performance has come into existence. The talent supply market has become more performance driven. To prove one self, employees usually work more and get overburdened with work. With the extended working hours,

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employees get less time to socialise. This is possible, if their work gives them leisure time to enjoy their weekend and take out time to socialise. They find it difficult to even carry out their hobbies or spare out some time for themselves. Now a days, some MNC's have started gymnasiums and other sports activities in the office premises itself so as to get employees in the fitness groove for long working hours. This is limited up to metro cities only. However, this is not the case in private companies in small cities. In such a working environment, employees are facing difficulties in maintaining a balance between work and life. Mind of humans need some rest. But due to long working hours, the rest is not possible. The fact which is ignored is that this will lead to deteriorating quality at work and home as well. It leads to irritation, short temperness, etc.

Work life balance is a broad concept. The term simply means maintaining a balance between your professional and personal life and not sacrificing either of them. Work includes an individual's aims, ambitions and career. Life includes giving time to family members, pleasure, leisure time and spiritual development.

At the core of an effective work life balance are two main concepts. They are daily 'Achievement' and 'Enjoyment'. Achievement and enjoyment are two sides of the same coin. We cannot have one without the other. Trying to live a one sided life is the reason for many successful people that they are not happy or completely happy or nearly that happy they should be. The word enjoyment also takes into its ambit happiness, celebration, pride, satisfaction and sense of well being, love and all the joys of living. It has been found that those who are able to strike the right balance not only enjoy their job but also return home with zeal and satisfaction. This gives them more energy from within to work in the desired manner.

The issue of work life balance is getting difficult to achieve for women in today's world, especially married working women who are supposed to strike the right balance. Today, women are working equally as men do, however the only difference is that women have additional family responsibilities along with their professional work. They include looking after their family and day to day work at home, taking proper care of elders at home, husband, social life, daily needs shopping and looking after children if any. There are always more expectations from a female at home then their male counterpart.

The concept of female employment due to rise in living expenses has increased rapidly in the last 20 to 25 years. The issue of work life balance for women began when the females had to come out of their homes to support their family, to create her identity, to become independent and to utilise her knowledge & skill. The women wish to utilise the education taken, to gain a better lifestyle and to have extra income at home. But what happens when once a woman is unable to fulfil any one responsibility in a perfect manner. We find that there are very few families where husbands also take an active part in household chores to help out.

Work life balance varies over time often on a daily basis. The right balance today will be different tomorrow. There is no one size – fits all, balance we can strive for. Work life and personal life have become inter related and inter dependent. Spending more time in office, dealing with clients and the pressure at workplace, not only interferes but also affects the personal life. The right balance changes from when we are single to when we marry and further changes when kids become a part of the family. Work life balance is different from individual to individual. Sometimes, this issue aggravates and makes it impossible to even complete the household chores. On the other hand personal life also gets demanding if you have a kid, elders at home, financial problems or some issues in your closed one's life. All these things can affect your work as well. This may come in form of absenteeism, lack of concentration at work, creating a feeling of stress. Responsibilities at one front can force an individual to ignore the other.

Women have to make tough choices when their work and personal life is nowhere close to equilibrium. Achieving work life balance is not as easy as it seems to be. Around 70% amongst the married working women population are still struggling to achieve work life balance. This has compelled many women to leave their jobs as they do not have child care facilities available at work. Working women have multiple responsibilities to do, right from business trips, work pressure, projects to handle, and cherry on the top is managing the home and her life. The trend has begun wherein the employers have initiated certain facilities that can attract women employees to retain talent and satisfy their needs, such as providing facility of crèche. According to a survey, psychologists concluded that, women are mentally stronger than men and are better at multitasking. In Indian society, it is observed that working woman sacrifices her careers at peak for reasons such as,

children or ageing parents. One needs to keep patience and great expertise to have a perfect balance.

According to a recent survey conducted in India, approximately 66% of women confirmed that they could meet career goals and still devote sufficient attention to their personal lives. In another survey conducted in India, 1000 respondents admitted that, they love their work and are in a position to manage work. They were excited about this fact. They find a promising future in the company and feel that the colleagues, managers are really cooperative.

It is the need today to maintain work life balance to keep everything in right place and at right time. Moreover, to lead life in satisfaction it is important to have a feeling of content. It is very vital on the part of the employer also to provide such conducive environment, where women take pride in recommending the company to work with. In order to achieve work life balance, it is necessary that women have to work with time management on full cooperation at work and home both.

SCOPE OF WORK LIFE BALANCE:-

The scope of work life balance does not restrict to home and work only. The scope is much wider. It takes into itself the four quadrants of our life also. Life delivers the value and balance we desire for. Our life has four quadrants: Work, Family, Friends/community and Self. To make one's life happy, it is very important in today's world to maintain a right balance between all the four quadrants. To give proper and timely attention to each can create a feeling of satisfaction in oneself. If an individual gives focus on these four areas as key components, they are not hard to implement.

There are many health related problems which come up due to not having right work life balance in one's life. Thus, it is the need to create such conditions which help everyone to maintain work life balance. At work, one can create one's own best work life balance by making sure you not only achieve but also reflect the joy of the job, and the joy of life, everyday. If nobody pats our back, we should pat our own back and help others to do the same. With improved education and employment opportunities today, most homes have working couples because of necessity and the desire to supplement incomes.

Work life balance has a wide scope. To say, a few are as follows: -

- It helps in establishing proper balance

between work and life.

- It helps in prioritising the tasks.
- It is a stress management tool.
- It helps in increasing productivity of employees.
- The quality of work increases with right work life balance.
- It results in work satisfaction.
- Effective work life balance reduces the side effects on health.

WORK LIFE BALANCE: CONCERNS

Work Life balance has always been a concern for those who are interested in the quality of working life and its relation to broader quality of life. The main reason to select this study is to help the respondents understand the positive effects of work life balance. Work life balance is a concept which is capable of making miracles in life of many. Through the study, the positive points need to come forward. It is towards a better life for all the employees.

Work pressure has been increasing in recent decades. Technological advancements have lead to demand for speedy response. The working hours have continued to increase to maintain and fulfil demands of market and customers. As a result, the demand of work begins to dominate personal life and a sense of work life balance ensues. Quality of home and social life are deteriorating.

Balance is a must in all aspects of life. It's just like walking on a narrow bridge, as long as we keep ourselves well balanced, we will keep walking towards our destination. It involves time management, concentration and coping up with situations in the right spirit. The best way to maintain work life balance is to have time management. If we try and finish off the work in stipulated time frame, there will be no overburdening of work and thus resulting into better management of work and personal life; thus resulting in a perfect work life balance.

If there is work life balance in one's life, the quality at both work and personal fronts can be improved. What if a woman is physically present at work but her mind is at home and revolves around children. Vice versa when she is on leave, she is tensed about losing her job. This study is to ensure that people know about the advantages of work life balance and work towards it. This also enables employees to become self motivated to work with efficiency.

When right work life balance exists, the quality of both work and personal life increases. It is

observed that due to absence of right balance, employees are prone to diseases such as blood pressure, migraine, stress related problems as well. Women start getting irritated and feel that they are dominated. Women start feeling overburdened and overstressed by work at both fronts. The 'self' of a woman fades away and at the end of the day, there is a feeling that she didn't do anything for herself. They tend to develop a pessimistic attitude towards life as a whole. Therefore, to avoid all these problems which may become grave later on, the study is a must. This would certainly result into an overall healthy, happy and satisfied life with zeal to act more and become more creative and enhance quality.

RATIONAL FOR WORK LIFE BALANCE:-

The beginning of work life balance should be made within self and in the work culture by the employer. Following are certain areas where the rational involved can be explained with.

Outsourcing:-

Work life balance is practiced all over the world. India is a developing country and so is its economy. There is a need for work life balance more in India. In India, skilled workers are available at cheap rates. Many companies are outsourcing their work to India. With the start of BPO, the concept of night shifts has also begun. This becomes more difficult for women to handle work due to odd working hours.

Work from Home:-

Work from home facility is also given to many employees by the company. But it also depends upon the type of work performed. If a woman is in administrative capacity, it will be difficult for her to work from home. Some of the similar fields are marketing, sales, etc. If the task is such which is based on computer and internet technology that can be carried out well at home. On certain events such as health problems at home or extension of maternity leave, work from home can be a solution.

Steps taken by Government:-

Through legislation, Government has initiated lot many paths for women to achieve work life balance. Maternity Benefits Act is one of those. A three month maternity leave is available which has been extended to six months. However, all companies are yet to implement it. Paternity leave has also been started.

Example:-

Many companies have initiated steps for work life balance. HP (Hewlett & Packard) in India is an example. They initiate workshops, cultural

festivals, foreign trips, events like fashion shows, etc. In almost every quarter, they have family day celebration where activities are planned for kids, couples, etc. This helps the employees in achieving work life balance.

CONCLUSION:

Effective work life balance is a valuable marketing method of not only attracting employees but also retaining them for a long time. The right balance offers a competitive advantage in all working areas such as recruitment, retention, productivity & customer service. Work life balance is a must for all corporate in the current scenario.

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