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A STUDY ON WORKLIFE BALANCE OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES IN IT INDUSTRY WITH REFERENCE TO WORK FROM HOME

Dr. DAISY SAMUEL

Assistant Professor,
Department of Commerce,
Mar Ivanios College (Autonomous),
Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala)

UTHARA VISWANADH

M.Com,
Department of Commerce,
Mar Ivanios College (Autonomous),
Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala)

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Abstract:

Today's work environment and the culture have seen a sea change. The nature of work is changing and everybody is under constant pressure to strike a balance between work and personal life and women are no exception to this. The introduction of MNC culture and women entering the workforce and competing with men has not only increased the pressure and need for performance in the workplace but has also resulted in increased stress among the women employees of IT sector. Perhaps now more than ever before, job stress poses a threat to the health of the organizations. Remote work has been shown to increase worker productivity, but it can lead to isolation and stress as the line between work and home blurs. There are also concerns that the lack of serendipitous encounters with co-workers could stifle creativity and reduce team cohesion. School closures, meanwhile, have placed an extra burden on working women. There are potential benefits for both organizations and individuals in work from home and taking steps to challenge stress in the workspace, and likewise both are likely to suffer if stress is ignored or mismanaged. Therefore my study focuses on the work from home and maintenance of work life balance among women executives working in IT Parks

Keywords: *Women, Work-Life Balance, Work from Home, IT industry*

INTRODUCTION:

The coronavirus pandemic has dramatically altered the workplace. To slow the virus's spread and protect employees, many companies have shifted to remote work, with video calls and instant messaging replacing meetings and break room conversations. Some, including several Silicon Valley giants, have announced that they will allow employees to work from home permanently. Yet huge swathes of the labour force are unable to work remotely, and experts say these developments could have profound implications for the economy, inequality, and the future of big cities.

Work from home is a working arrangement in which a worker fulfils the essential responsibilities of his/her job while remaining at home, using information and communications technology (ICT). It requires a shared responsibility and commitment by both employers and workers to ensure business continuity and employment.

The term “Work Life Balance” is used to describe the balance between an individual’s work and personal life. It tends to provide satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home, with a minimum role of conflict. It is a generally agreed fact that work life balance is important for an individual’s psychological wellbeing and that high self-esteem, satisfaction and overall sense of harmony in life can be regarded as indicators of a successful balance between work and family roles. Over a period of time women accomplished remarkable progress in every walk of life. But there is no significant change in performing the role of home maker. In majority homes, the women still does household work, cooks, take care of the family members and manages the house. With increase in demands at work place and at home the work life balance of women is at stake.

In the cut throat competitive environment the organization’s expectations from the employees are increasing. In order to meet the employer’s demand, the employees have to stretch themselves and focus more on their work which is creating work life balance. In fact striking a balance between work life and personal life is one of the most challenging issues being faced by the women employees in the 21st century. It is said that many women employees working in IT sector have a disturbed work life balance leading to increasing number of divorces, strained relationships among the family members, conflicts in the organization and suicides.

A lack of synchronization between the domestic life and personal life causes great personal and financial hardship both to the individual and the company. In the competitive era, organizations are under competitive pressure to achieve high productivity and require employees with healthy. Work life balance as an employee with good work life balance will be in a position to contribute more towards the organizational growth and success. Therefore it is high time for employers to draw out strategies and help the women employees to enjoy their work and live life to the fullest.

The study includes insight into the factors which contribute to work from home and proper work life balance, the relation between the work from home and work life balance on job satisfaction, stress management, benefits of work from home and effective work life balance, the policies adopted by organization towards balancing work and personal life and the awareness and preference of employees towards it.

The positive effect of work from home and proper work life balance are motivation towards work, positive job satisfaction, improving employee morale and productivity, enough time for personal and family life, improved health condition, etc. The negative effect of an imbalance in work

life is associated with the indicators such as job stress, work life conflicts, absenteeism, job switching, work alcoholism, health issues, etc.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To examine the perception of the women employees on work from home and maintenance of work life balance.
2. To identify the factors that cause stress for the women employees in the IT industries with relation to work from home and work life balance and its management
3. To measure the level of satisfaction of the women employees on the varied determinants of work from home and work life balance.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Research Design:

The present study consists of women employees who are currently working in work from home arrangement and facing the problem of work life balance in the IT sector. The study would be descriptive as well as analytical in nature.

Sources of Data:

Primary data is collected through structured questionnaire from 60 women employees in IT parks. Secondary data is collected through Journals published by experts Books Data available on internet Magazines and newspapers.

Sampling Techniques

- **Population:** The population of the study includes the women employees in IT sector in IT Parks.
- **Sampling method:** Snowball sampling technique is used for collecting the data from different women employees.
- **Sample size:** Sample size is 60 which comprise of women employees from IT Parks.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

- The study revealed that majority of the respondents' lies below the age group of 25, holds a post- graduation degree and were unmarried, had annual income below 2.5 lakhs and majority of the respondents had 1-3 years of work experience.
- As per the study respondents agreed that the company conducts training and developmental programmes and among those most of them mentioned that they are satisfied with the conduction of training and developmental programmes offered by the company.
- The study reveals that merit and seniority were the factors considered by the companies as a basis for promotion.
- The study shows that most of the respondents agrees to the fact that the company support in participation of employees in decision making.

- The study reveals that majority of the respondents agrees to the organisations performance towards job linking rewards to job performance and consider increase in salary as a motivating factor.
- The study reveals that majority of the respondents need a separate work life policy and the major factors to be included while forming a new policy are ‘Paid maternity leaves’, ‘Flexible working hours’, ‘Holidays/ paid time off’, ‘Family support programs’ and ‘Exercise services’.
- The study reveals that majority of the respondents are satisfied towards the current working from home arrangement and their work life balance.
- It is revealed from the study that most of the respondents had an optimistic approach towards work from home.
- The study reveals that almost all the respondents have support from their family while work from home and the major form of support they provide is arranging a peaceful work space without distractions.
- The study reveals that most of the respondents are offered with shift based works at sometimes.
- The study reveals that most of the respondents gets regular intervals often during work from home.
- The study reveals that most of the respondents are at times tired and depressed during work from home.
- The study reveals that most of the respondents gets quality time sometimes in order to reduce their work pressure.
- The study reveals that majority of the respondents are often able to balance their work life and work from home.
- The study reveals that majority of the respondents strongly agreed to ‘Poor internet connectivity’, ‘Lack of interaction with co-workers’ as a major challenge during work from home.
- The study reveals that majority of the respondents agreed that they have achieved a good work routine while work from home.
- The study reveals that majority of the respondents were highly productive in work during work from home when compared with work at office.
- The study reveals that majority of the respondents the always maintains and keeps a regular contact with the team members while work from home.
- The study reveals that majority of the respondents strongly agreed to Long working hours as a major factor leading to stress during work from home.

- The study reveals that majority of the respondents enjoys work from home arrangement.
- The study reveals that majority of the respondents prefer work from home rather than work at office

SUGGESTIONS:

Following suggestions can be arrived at on the basis of the above findings:

- Management should measure the women employees' performance effectively, so that they can tell how employees are reacting to their work accomplishment. A sound measurement of the overall job performance of the employees is one of the most useful information an organization can obtain about its employees. □
- The women employees have to think themselves about balancing their work life—while work from home rather than organizational policies by prioritizing their work, accomplishing the task within time without extending the working hours to late night by spending time unnecessarily during the work hours for other leisure purposes. Thus they are able to spend the rest of their time in a day with family and friends.
- The organization should always hire women executives whose values align with the organizational values. Thus it helps to yield employees with high motivation, commitment and satisfied with the job in the organisation.
- An organisation should formulate policies after consulting or deriving suggestions from women employees too. Then only rational and productive policies can be formulated which is beneficial to the employees.
- The existence of work stress itself need not imply the low performance of women employees, it can be either be positive or negative. The managers should take initiative to identify and convert negative stress to positive stress by suitable policies and procedures in order to help the employees from stress free professional and personal life.
- Women employees should provide with proper feedback regarding how well they are faring in pursuit of their tasks assigned and accomplished while work from home.
- Participation of women employees in work scheduling, target setting makes them more loyal, committed, motivated and satisfied since they fixes the target achievement within the attainable time limit thus no room for stress in target achievement with short span of time.
- The organization should take proper feedback of women employees of the policies and procedures of the organisation which is a crucial factor in deciding the future life of the organisation. If there exists any significant difference then necessary changes have to be formulated to eliminate distortions in future.
- It is the attitude of women executives to be changed rather than organizational measure in

stressful situations. Happy and peaceful mind can always take wise decisions than the stressful mind.

- The employees should train to change the attitude, perception towards such situations by adopting own self-care methods.
- Women employees should do proper yoga, meditation, mind relaxation and other health care methods in order to care themselves from health problems creating out of work pressure. The employees should take time to consider them to remain healthy at each moments of life than to attain a better health tomorrow.
- The organization should make necessary arrangements to overcome the challenges faced while work from home and the employees also must report about their insecurities while work from home.

CONCLUSION:

In today's world, work from home and attaining work life balance is a holistic approach that takes into consideration the management of the multiple aspects of professional as well as personal life. It is the responsibility of both employees and employer to manage work life effectively and efficiently with balance beyond, a 360 degree outlook, with the right mind set and willingness. Work is a reflection of the quality of life we used to lead on a daily basis. Mind acts as an important factor in balancing work and life. A healthy happy family can lead to attain good work life balance while working from home among the employees. It can be concluded from the study that work from home and maintenance of work life balance among the employees is an important phenomenon to be kept in mind by every organization.

Human resource being the most valuable asset of the organization has to be considered for the better functioning of the organization. Over work can lead to burn out, which is a state of feeling mentally and physically exhausted, devoid of motivation and ultimately work life imbalance. Workplace flexibility is crucial factor to be promoted in IT organizations. Thus the company's human resource team along with the active cooperation of the employees should take initiatives to facilitate proper work life policies and see to it that the employees are benefitted from such policies. The employee side should practice self – management so as to reduce some of the worklife imbalances arising out of work from home stress, burnout, family commitments etc. They can probably make use of meditation techniques, yoga, extracurricular events, proper self-appraisal of jobs, adequate training for improvement, etc. IT leaders should focus on developing, formulating, implementing and reviewing better facilities to work from home and better workbalance policies in order to build a sustainable and enriching organization. Thus a better work place as well as secured and happy life is possible.

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