

A STUDY ON WORK LIFE BALANCE AMONG SERVICE SECTOR IN CHENNAI

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Abstract

Balancing home and work to achieve a good quality of life is a major issue for everyone. For those with children and other dependants, it can be about finding a job with flexibility to fit around these responsibilities. For many it is finding the balance between earning a decent wage and having time to relax and pursue other interests.

In many organizations particularly in service sector, the challenge of work/life balance is rising to the top. In today's fast-paced society, employers seek options to positively impact the bottom line of their companies, improve employee morale, retain employees with valuable company knowledge, and keep pace with workplace trends. Friction in the work/life balance can lead to absenteeism, management problems, personal problems and the departure of talented employees. Employees who have found the right balance for themselves, however, tend to function more effectively.

This study deals with the various issues relating to work life balancing among the employees in service sector in Chennai city. It studies the general opinion and problems relating to work life balance, who plays an important role in attaining work life balance, the caring responsibilities of an individual, major interest outside the employment, solutions to achieve work life balance as self, from employer, from family and community and to give suggestion for an individual to achieve work life balance.

Keyword: Work Life Balance, gender, family, self, employer

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Introduction:

“HAPPINESS DEPENDS ON HOW YOU BALANCE YOUR LIFE’S EQUATION BETWEEN POSITIVE & NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES AND ATTITUDIES”

Work life balance is about being able to maintain a balance between work and personal responsibilities on all fronts, Work & Family, Work & Personal Fulfillment and Work & Social & Community Responsibilities

"Work-life balance is about adjusting working patterns. Regardless of age, race or gender, everyone can find a rhythm to help them combine work with their other responsibilities or aspirations “

Work-Life Balance does not mean an equal balance. Trying to schedule an equal number of hours for each of our various work and personal activities is usually unrewarding and unrealistic. An individual work-life balance will vary over time, often on a daily basis. The right balance for today will probably be different for tomorrow. The right balance for an individual when he is single will be different when he gets married or when he has children, when he starts a new career versus when he is nearing retirement.

There is no perfect, one-size fits all, The best work-life balance is different for each of us because we all have different priorities and different lives. However, at the core of an effective work-life balance definition are two key everyday concepts that are relevant to each of us. They are daily

Achievement and Enjoyment.

Ask yourself now, when was the last time you Achieved AND Enjoyed something at work? What about Achieved AND Enjoyed with your family; your friends? And how recently have you Achieved AND Enjoyed something just for you?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- The primary objective is to study the issues of Work Life Balancing of the Employees Working in Service Sector in Chennai City .
- To study the general opinion and problems relating to work life balance
- To study who plays an important role in attaining work life balance
- To study the caring responsibilities of an individual
- To study about major interest outside the employment
- To study the solutions to achieve work life balance as self, from employer, from family and from community
- To give suggestion for an individual to achieve work life balance

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The primary data was collected from the respondents working in service sector in Chennai (employees of Banks, IT companies, Air Force, TNEB and Educational Institutes) using questionnaire. The secondary data was collected from Books, Journals, magazines and websites.

The sample size was 200 using convenient sampling. The statistical tools like chi-square, Rank correlation were used to check the validity of the collected data.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

1. **Null Hypothesis (H₀) :** There is no significant relationship between Gender & opinion on work life Balance.

Gender / Opinion on work life Balance	Enables to work Better	Puts you into pressure	Attitude varies Based on the situation	Total
Male	44	22	50	116
Female	38	08	38	84
Total	82	30	88	200

Chi-Square table

S.No.	O _i	E _i	(O _i -E _i)	(O _i -E _i) ²	(O _i -E _i) ² /E _i
1	44	47.56	-3.56	12.6736	0.266
2.	38	34.44	3.56	12.6736	0.368
3.	22	17.40	4.60	21.1600	1.216
4.	08	12.60	-4.60	21.1600	1.679
5.	50	51.04	-1.04	1.0816	0.021
6.	38	36.96	1.04	1.0816	0.029

$$\Sigma (O_i - E_i)^2 / E_i = 3.579$$

Calculated value of $\chi^2 = 3.579$ and Table value of χ^2 for 2 degree of freedom at 5% level = 5.991.

It is concluded that there is no significant relationship between Gender & opinion on work life Balance.

2. **Null Hypothesis (H₀) :** There is no significant relationship between Sector & opinion on work life Balance.

Sector / Opinion on work life Balance	Enables to work Better	Puts you into pressure	Attitude varies Based on the situation	Total
Educational	14	11	25	50
Banking	26	05	19	50
IT	25	09	16	50

Communication	17	05	28	50
Total	82	30	88	200

Inference: According to Chi-Square analysis: $\Sigma (O_i - E_i)^2 / E_i = 12.812$

Calculated value of $\chi^2 = 12.812$ and Table value of χ^2 for 6 degree of freedom at 5% level = 12.6.

It is concluded that there is no significant relationship between sector & opinion on work life Balance.

3. **Null Hypothesis (H_0)** : There is no significant relationship between Gender & Major Interest Outside Organisation.

Gender / Major Interest Outside organisation	Voluntary work	Political activism	Religious activity	Course Training	Sports	Combination	Total
Male	21	06	16	29	17	27	116
Female	08	05	19	38	06	08	84
Total	29	11	35	67	23	35	200

Inference: According to Chi-Square analysis: $\Sigma (O_i - E_i)^2 / E_i = 18.5118$

Calculated value of $\chi^2 = 18.5118$ and Table value of χ^2 for 5 degree of freedom at 5% level = 11.1. It is concluded that there is significant relationship between gender & major interest outside the organization.

4. **Null Hypothesis (H_0)** : There is no significant relationship between Gender & Sharing level responsibilities.

Gender / Sharing level responsibilities	I take most of the responsibility	Share of equally	Most of the time is done by others	No responsibilities	Total
Male	41	50	18	07	116
Female	32	32	09	11	84
Total	73	82	27	18	200

Inference: According to Chi-Square analysis: $\Sigma (O_i - E_i)^2 / E_i = 2.608$

Calculated value of $x^2 = 2.608$ and Table value of x^2 for 3 degree of freedom at 5% level = 7.81.

It is concluded that there is no significant relationship between gender & sharing level of responsibilities.

SPEARMAN'S RANK CORRELATION

- Following are the ranking given by Male & Female of Educational , communication, Banking and Information with regard to who plays an Important role in attaining work life Balance for an Individual.

a. Banking Sector

Players	Ranks	
	Male	Female
A – Spouse	1	1
B- Children	2	2
C- Relatives	4	4
D- Friends	6	6
E- Employer	3	3
F- Colleague	5	5

Conclusion: Perfectly correlated

b. Educational Sector

Players	Ranks		$(R_1 - R_2)$ D	D^2
	Male(R_1)	Female(R_2)		
A - Spouse	1	1	0	0
B- Children	4	3	1	1
C- Relatives	2	5	-3	9

D- Friends	3	6	-3	9
E- Employer	5	2	3	9
F- Colleague	6	4	2	4
				$\Sigma D^2 = 32$

$$R = 1 - \frac{6 \Sigma D^2}{N^3 - N} = 1 - \frac{6 \times 32}{6^3 - 6} = 1 - 0.9143 = 0.0857$$

Conclusion : Very less positively correlated
c. Information Technology

Players	Ranks		$(R_1 - R_2)$ D	D ²
	Male (R ₁)	Female (R ₂)		
A - Spouse	1	3	-2	4
B- Children	6	4	2	4
C- Relatives	5	3	2	4
D- Friends	3	2	1	1
E- Employer	2	1	1	1
F- Colleague	4	3	1	1
				$\Sigma D^2 = 15$

$$R = 1 - \frac{6 \Sigma D^2}{N^3 - N} = 1 - \frac{6 \times 15}{210} = 1 - 0.4286 = 0.5714$$

Conclusion : Positively correlated

d. Communication

Players	Ranks		$(R_1 - R_2)$ D	D ²
	Male (R ₁)	Female(R ₂)		
A - Spouse	1	1	0	0
B- Children	2	5	-3	9
C- Relatives	5	6	-1	1
D- Friends	4	4	0	0
E- Employer	3	3	0	0
F- Colleague	6	2	4	16
				$\Sigma D^2 = 26$

$$R = 1 - \frac{6 \sum D^2}{N^3 - N} = 1 - \frac{6 \times 15}{210} = 1 - 0.74249 = 0.2571$$

Conclusion: Very Less Positively correlated

Inference: Since the correlation is perfect in the ranking given by male and female in Banking sector. We conclude that they have the exactly same approach towards who plays an Important role in attaining work life Balance for an Individual. While in case of other sectors, Information Technology has positive correlation, Educational and communication they are very less positively correlated.

FINDINGS

- Out of the total respondents 82 (41%) feel work life balance enable to work better while 30(15%) feel it put them in to pressure while 88(44%) feels that attitude varies based on the situation.
- It was found that majority of respondents both male and female have ranked difficulty to deal with emergencies relating to children or other dependents as NO.1. It was also found that both male and female have ranked spouse as first who plays an important role in attaining work life balance for an individual.
- Out of 200 respondents 99(49.5%) have child care responsibility, 50(25%) have adult care responsibility while 25(12.5%) have both child and adult care while 26 (13%) have no caring responsibilities.
- Out of 200 respondents 153(76.5%) are care takers while 47(23.5%) do not have caring responsibilities
- Out of the total 200 respondents 78(29%) sharing their responsibilities with their spouse while 21(10.5%), 13(6.5%), 15(7.5%), 42(21%), 31(15.5%) the responsibility is shared with servant maid, relatives, friends, others and combination of spouse, servant maid, relatives and friends respectively.

- It can be inferred that 73(36.5%) take most of the responsibility while 82(41%) share the responsibilities equally, while 27(13.5%) most of the work is done by the other person and 18(9%) has no caring responsibilities.
- Out of the 200 respondents 29(14.5%) have voluntary work as their major interest apart from their work while 11(5.5%), 35(17.5%), 67(33.50%), 23(11.5%), 35(17.5%) have interest in political activities, religious activity, training/course study, sports activities, others and combination of all respectively.
- Out of 200 respondents 31(15.5%) said they get support from employer with regard to work life balance issue always, while 102(51.5%) said they get support some time, while 67(33.5%) said that they do not get any support.
- Out of 200 respondents, 4.49 rating (agree) have been given for to achieve a balance between work and personal life is important for an individual, while 3.54 (agree) rating has been given for needs vary based on stages in life while 3.43 (neither agree nor disagree) with regard to work life balance as entirely individual responsibility, While 2.55 (disagree) rating has been given for work balance entirely an employers responsibility, while 3.74 (agree) rating has been given for sharing responsibilities equally by employers and employee for work life balance.
- Out of the total respondents, it can be inferred that time management have been rated 4.74 as a very important solution for achieving work life balance followed by determining boundaries (4.23), being flexible(3.90) & getting support(3.89).
- Out of the total respondents 4.19 rated flexible work arrangement as a solution for achieving work from employer, followed by 4.18 for job sharing, 3.52 for paid parental & maternity leave and 3.50 for confidential counseling services.
- Out of the total respondents 4.71 rating has been given for understanding as solution for work life balance from family and community followed by 4.63 for cooperation, 4.29 for emotional support and 4.21 for sharing work.
- According to chi-square analysis their no significant relationship between gender and opinion on work life balance, sector and work life balance, gender and sharing level of responsibilities whereas there is significant relationship between the gender and major

interest outside the organization.

- According to rank correlation there is a perfect correlation between male and female of educational and communication sector towards the problems related to work life balance and it is also found that there is a perfect correlation between male and female of banking sector towards who plays an important role in attaining work life balance for an individual

SUGGESTIONS

- 1) It is highly required for the Indian companies to provide extensive nursery facilities inside its premises as it is done in foreign countries. Fun and learn programs like yoga, swimming, indoor games, library for children and parenting guide tips for parents can be by the organization.
- 2) Companies should encourage its employees to attend various courses that will improve the individual in turn the organization it may include personality development courses, competency mapping, any other course relevant to their area of interest and job.
- 3) An individual has to find ways to relax relieve tension and minimize stress, avoid feeling guilty, establish limits, determine own standards, taking some time off for himself will not only benefit him, but it will benefit his family and organization tremendously.
- 4) Flexible work arrangements: Flexi work arrangement means it gives people the choice about their actual working hours, (This means staff can vary their starting and finishing times each day at work and sometimes also their break times during the day.)
- 5) The organization can introduce schemes like confidential counseling service for employees and their families. This will improve the morale of the employees.
- 6) An individual has to spend quality/focused time with their family members gain better understanding, same the family members should give them full attention. Develop rituals like relatives and friends get together that you can all look forward to meet. Create relationships with your spouse and children that are not incidental but rather instrumental to your success.

CONCLUSION

Employers who have responded to the changing social and business environment and built Work-Life Balance policies into their culture have benefited tremendously. Recent research has further validated the value of flexible work options for example with 46% of over 4000 job seekers in the UK admitting that they would choose flexible work hours as the benefit they would most look for in their next job, and 60% saying that they would view Work-Life Balance as an important factor in assessing a potential new job. Organizations that do not introduce Work-Life Balance policies are at a distinct disadvantage.

Identify the key need or reason for introducing Work-Life Balance policies in the your organizations, Build the commitment to Work-Life Balance Policies into the organization's vision or value statement, Set up a Work-Life Balance Task Force, Examine current practices in the organization, Hold joint discussions with employees to evolve policies, while also identifying possible barriers Communicate policies through handbooks, newsletters, Intranet and other forms of communication Hold workshops to help Managers implement and manage policies Begin with a few "quick win" policies Monitor implementation and put feedback systems into place.

In India, there is a starting point is that organizations have recognized the need for and value of Work-Life Balance policies. But the debate has to now move into implementation and the Government could play a critical role in being a catalyst of change. An advantage that Indian industry will however have is learning's from the experiences of other countries in what has worked and what has not. There's no 'one size that fits all' and Indian companies will have to adapt policies to fit in with not just the nature of industry, profile of workforce and other such factors but also with the local culture and environment.

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