



SCHOOL TEACHERS WORK-LIFE BALANCE INFLUENCING FACTORS

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Abstract

Dynamic people can build dynamic organizations. Effective employees can contribute to the effectiveness of their organization. Competent and motivated people can make things happen and enable an organization to achieve its goals. Hence, organizations should continuously ensure that the dynamism, competency, motivation and effectiveness of the employees remain at high levels. Human resource is even the most critical factor for determining the efficiency and effectiveness of an organization because it is precisely the people who will decide when and how to acquire and utilize various resources, including human resources, in the best interest of the organization. The ultimate success and survival of an organization will invariably be determined by the quality and competence of its human resources. Of all the tasks of management, says Likert "Managing the human component is the central and most important task, because all else depends upon how well it is done". Human resources are the most valuable and unique assets of an organization. In the changing economic environment, Human Resource Management is assuming much greater importance than ever before. It is conceived to be different from the traditional and conventional notion of Personnel Management. Subsequently Human Resource Management (HRM) has become the central concern of any organization either in public, private sector or co-operative sector. It is therefore necessary for all managers to understand and give due importance to the different human resource policies and practices in the organization. Human Resource Management outlines the importance and different functions in an organization. It examines the various HR processes that are concerned with attracting, managing, motivating and developing and retaining employees for the benefit of the organization.

INTRODUCTION

A nation may be endowed with abundant natural and physical resources and the necessary capital and technology but unless there are competent people who can mobilize, organize and harness the resources for production of goods and services, it cannot make rapid strides towards economic and social advancement. The strengths and weakness of an organization are determined by the quality

of its human resources, which play a vital role in using other organizational resources and the development process of modern economies. Human resource is the most strategic resource as no other resource can be fully utilized to generate income and wealth of a nation without the active involvement of this resource. In fact, the differences in the levels of economic development of the countries are largely a

reflection of the differences in the quality of their human resources and their involvement in national building. Ginzerberg points out that the key elements such as values, attitudes, general orientation and the quality of the people of a country determine its economic development. However, he says that human resources are being wasted through unemployment, disguised unemployment, obsolescence of skills, lack of work opportunities, poor personnel practices and the hurdles of adjusting to change. Human resource accounts for a large part of national output and there exists a wide scope for increasing national wealth through their proper development. Human factor provides value to physical resource and necessary dynamism in the economy.

DEFINITION OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT:

Personal management is the planning, organizing, directing, controlling of the procurement, development, compensation, integration, maintenance and separation of human resources to the end that individual, organization and social objectives are accomplished.

OBJECTIVES OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT:

- To ensure effective utilization of human resources. All other organization resources will be effectively utilized by the Human resources.
- To ensure respect of human beings by providing various services and welfare facility to the personnel.
- To ensure reconciliation of individual groups goals with those of the organization in such as a

manner that the personnel feel as sense of commitment.

- To achieve & maintain high moral among employees in the organization by securing better human relations.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE:

There is a complex relationship between work and personal life of individuals. In the present context, the concept of Work-Life Balance (WLB) has gained immense significance. Clark (2000) defined Work-life balance as satisfaction and smooth functioning at work and home without any role conflict. Work-life balance can be defined as a measure of proper control as to how, when and where people work. Proper work life balance can be achieved when an individual is able to fulfill all his/her needs in respect of family, work and society. Within the social sciences there is much contemporary concern regarding work-life balance (Warren, 2004)'

With increasing demands and pressures of work-life, conflicts between work and personal roles seem to be increasing. Changed demographics of the workforce have been the primary force for the increased focus on family-work issues. Organizations where there is sound work-life balance practices and policies experience better financial outcomes (Fleetwood, 2007). These benefits include: lower rates of absenteeism, increased productivity; improved customer experience; improved recruitment and retention; reduced overheads; more motivated, satisfied and equitable workforce (Employers for Work Life Balance, 2006). Work-life balance is a term



that is always used in context of employees in general, but nowadays teachers are found to be overburdened due to their academic work load and career issues (Hakanen et al., 2006). All this adds to the stress among teachers leading to imbalanced work- life equations. Thus, there is a need to study work-life balance issues vis-à-vis teachers.

THE CONCEPT OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE:

The term work life balance (Work Life Balance) was coined in 1986 in response to the growing concerns by individuals and organizations alike that work can impinge upon the quality of family life and vice-versa, thus giving rise to the concepts of “family- work conflict” (FWC) and “work-family conflict” (WFC). The former is also referred to as work interferes with family” (WIF) while the latter is also known as “family interferes with work”(FIW). In other words, from the scarcity or zero-sum perspective, time devoted to work is construed as time taken away from one’s family life.

Work/life programs existed in the 1930s. The policies and procedures established by an organization with the goal to enable employees to efficiently do their jobs and at the same time provide flexibility to handle personal concerns or problems at their family. People entering the workforce today are more likely to turn down to promotions if it is new job means, the employee is having to bring more work to home.

In most developing countries, at least until recently, only men worked outside of the home. The old, established joint Hindu family system facilitated a clear division of responsibilities between

the old and the young in terms of decision making, the oldest male member in a patriarchal society is the head of household and would make all the important decisions; male and female the men would work outside the household, whereas the women are responsible for raising children and taking charge of a myriad household responsibilities, including in some low-income families in certain parts of India, walking many miles each day to fetch water and fire wood.

More recently, the scarcity perspective has given way to the expansion-enhancement approach that views that work can facilitate participation at home and vice-versa. This has given rise to the concepts of “work-family facilitation” (WFF) and “family-work facilitation” (FWF) where experiences acquired at work can facilitate participation at home and vice-versa. These two notions have contributed to the construct of work life balance where a balanced life consists of work and family that are mutually reinforcing-the family experiences of workers can enrich their contribution to work and organizations, and vice-versa.

DEFINITIONS AND IMPLICATIONS:

The word Work-Life Balance is sometimes considered as interwoven with Work-family conflict. However, it can be argued that the latter is more limited in scope than the former because the focus in work-family conflict is more on the relations between work & family. It is also referred to as family friendly work arrangements, (FFWA), and in international literature, as alternative work arrangements (AWA).

Work-Life Balance is the relationship between time and space of



work & non-work in societies where income is predominantly generated and distributed through labor markets. Work-Life Balance is being aware of different demands on time and energy saving the ability to make choices in the allocation of time and energy knowing what values to apply.

Much confusion and ambiguity surrounds in understanding and defining the term Work –Life Balance. As a term in its own right Work-Life Balance is rarely defined for reasons that will become clearer as the discussion progresses.

Many authors attempt to define Work-Life Balance policy or Work-Life Balance arrangements. Nevertheless it is possible to discern a number of distinct strands in the literature in relation to definitional and conceptual issues. The first of these themes concerns the contention area of family friendly versus Work-Life family in order to reflect a broader and more inclusive way of conceptualizing the issue and to enable men and those without children, for example to identify with them .

However the perception that Work-Life Balance policies are a family matter and aimed solely at women with children is still held by many employees & employers.

Despite the worldwide quest for Work-Life Balance very few have found an acceptable definition of the concept: here are some proven definitions that will positively impact one's every day value & balance. Best individual Work-Life Balance will vary overtime, often on a daily basis. The right balance today will probably be different for tomorrow. The right balance when one is single will be different when after marriage and having children; when one is on a start to new

career versus when one is nearing to retirement. There is no perfect, one size fits all, as balance is different for each of us because we all have different priorities and different lives.

THE SCOPE OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE:

The issue is complex and difficult to tackle from an organization's perspective because it is different for every individual. The traditional definition of family is a husband who provides financial support, a wife who maintains the household. Cultural differences influence family decisions, and more and more families represent blended racial backgrounds but making work–life integration a way of corporate life is much more difficult. The change in workforce composition has been gradual, but steady. More women are working and, thus, more mothers are in the workforce. In 1996, women comprised 46 percent of the total workforce, compared to 1986 when 44 percent of the work force was women.

Women are less likely to drop-out of the labor force for significant periods of their lives, and more and more women are responsible, alone or with a spouse, for the economic security of their families. The Family and Medical Leave Act, signed by President Clinton in 1993, allowed all US workers to take unpaid leave for up to twelve weeks to care for a seriously ill or new member of the family without putting their jobs at risk. This Act has made the employment picture even more desirable for working mothers, single parents, future parents and two career families. Those demanding balance, however, include not only parents with children, but the rest of the employee population, as well. Older



employees need flexibility when dealing with ageing parents.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE-THE CHALLENGES AHEAD:

The complex society of ours makes the individuals with conflicting responsibilities and commitments; hence the work-life balance has become a predominant issue at the workplace. The major factors such as the global competition, the renewed interest in personal lives/ family values; and managing the workforce etc. have made it more significant. Studies have revealed that human resource professionals seek innovative ways to attain their organization's competitive advantage in the marketplace and it is found that work-life balance activities offer a win-win solution in this regard.

THE INFLUENCING ELEMENTS IN WORK- LIFE BALANCE:

Many companies have responded to the evolving set of issues and with the influencing elements related to work life balance by introducing a wide variety of work-life balance practices. These practices help the employees to balance both work and life equally where it supports the employer to increase the retention of the employee. Some of the influencing factors include working hours and flexibility, time bind, Job satisfaction, Job Autonomy and Organizational Commitment.

THE GLOBAL SCENARIO OF WORK LIFE BALANCE:

During the 1960s and 1970s, employers considered work-life mainly an issue for working mothers who struggled with the demands of their jobs and raising children. During the 1980s, recognizing the value and needs of women contributions,

pioneering organizations (IBM, Deloitte) began to change their internal workplace policies, procedures and benefits. The changes included maternity leave, employee assistance programs (EAPs), flexi-time, home-based work, and child-care referral. During the 1980s men also began voicing work-life concerns. The term 'work life balance' was first coined in 1986 in reaction to the unhealthy choices that many Americans were making in favor of the work place as they opted to neglect family, friends and leisure activities in the pursuit of corporate goals. Articles of the time suggested a sharp increase in the working hours of the Americans. This had started to affect their families and individual health. Work life balance slowly was gaining grounds in the various organizations. By the end of the decade, work life balance was seen as more than just a women's issue, affecting men, families, organizations and cultures.

In 1990s the recognition of work-life balance as a vital issue for everyone women, men, parents and non-parents, singles and couples. The 1990s saw a rise in the number of working women and dual-income families. A second family configuration, the lone parent household also became prevalent in the 1990s. This growing awareness of the central importance of the issue resulted in major growth in attempted work-life solutions during this decade. Numerous studies showed that the generations from baby boomers to new college graduates were making job choices based on their own work-life issues and employer's cultures.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE -THE TRENDS AND NEW APPROACHES AHEAD:

The challenge of work-life balance in our society is unlikely to disappear. The concept of work life balance is gaining a great deal of attention in both the academic and corporate worlds. The employees are often preoccupied with work when not working, and when in the company of family and loved ones, experience an inability to be meaningfully engaged in no work spheres. Modern work has become more knowledge based, fluid, and intellectual; overworked people think about work all of the time. For many people, work has become cognitively intrusive. To understand work/life balance a cognitive approach was been introduced that is "Cognitive Intrusion of Work". In simple terms, this means that work/life balance is not just about finding "physical time" to do all that needs to be done. Instead, and more importantly, it is about the "cognitive space" necessary to process, organize, and respond to the thinking demands of life within a complex society.

Total life planning is the latest and innovative approach to work life benefits that helps employees understand the important aspects of their professional life, personal lives and their relativity. Their goal is to encourage employees to look at their lives as a whole and assess relationships, emotional and physical wellbeing, careers, spirituality, and their personal financial situation.

From these programs, employees can assess their available choices to improve balance in their lives and develop an

individualized life plan. The most successful programs set a goal oriented environment with a meaningful and transformational component for each individual. The concept of total life has the major benefits such as renewed employee energy, enthusiasm and attachment for work, and enhanced productivity. Total life planning programs may be offered in conjunction with benefits such as health, life, and disability insurance, or on a stand alone basis.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE AMONG SCHOOL TEACHERS:

Ample researches were conducted on teachers Work-life balance as it has been found that teaching is a stressful profession (Rosser, 2004). Another most important reason for studying teachers on the aspect of Work- life balance is that, this is the profession that has overwhelmingly female than in any other profession (Acker 1996). Clark (1989) concluded that it is the teaching profession that has different dimensions such as pattern of work, authority, identification and career etc, and most important thing is that all these dimensions differ with different institutes and subjects that is why this field is most preferred for Work family conflict. Near (1989) studied the feasible ways in which work and life away from work are connected among university faculty members. This study identifies differences on the basis of rank and gender, and also suggests implication of family friendly policies for institutions of higher education. Winslow and Jacobs (2004) find out relationship between faculty workload and their dissatisfaction. The authors find proof that how many professors are discontented because of their workload. In



addition, dissatisfaction enhances among those working the longest hours. The data also point out that extended hours on the job really contribute to research efficiency. The extended hours demanded by faculty jobs therefore pretend a problem for those parents (professors) who want to splurge time with their families and their children

CONCLUSION

To achieve work-life balance, every employee should set the goal and excel both in career and family. Some of the strategies and skills at work such as planning, organizing and setting limits can be used at home and work place for accomplishing a satisfying and fulfilling well balanced life both professionally and personally. Women employees should care the family both physically and financially to satisfy the family needs. Also work for the accomplishment of institutional objectives and individual upliftment to satisfy the career needs. Institutions need to adopt human resources strategies and policies to overcome the issues of the work-life balance of the employees in the current environment. Educational institutions should address the work-life balance related issues among their staff, specifically women and take a holistic approach to design and implement policies to support the teaching staff to manage their work-life balance which would add to the performance of these staff members.

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