

WORK LIFE BALANCE IN REAL LIFE AND ITS IMPACT ON INDIVIDUALS CONCEPTUAL PAPER

BY PARVATHY.L

Assistant Professor, Dept of Commerce and Management

SDC Degree College, Kolar Kodiramasandra, NH-75 Bypass KOLAR, Karnataka PIN: 563-101.

Abstract:

Work life balance a beautiful concept of how an individual either man or women balance their professional life and personal life. It is very important that the balance remains in equilibrium and how this can be achieved is a greater task for each individual. "Employers who are committed to providing environments that support work-life balance for their employees can save on costs, experience fewer cases of absenteeism, and enjoy a more loyal and productive workforce," said Chancey.

The above quote is apt in many cases as it is seen that during pandemic also workforce needed a hybrid system and this kind of support from companies could expect work done at the right time. Managing work, juggling around the chores of home, managing kids and looking into their requirements, meeting deadlines and moreover doing everything within a limited time will surely bring in a burnout situation in individual.

This study will aim at looking into the realistic way of how individual can balance work, responsibilities at home, priorities to the said work, taking time off, and possibilities of overcoming an ideal balance and see what methods can be implemented and how it can uplift the way individuals look at this "Balance".

Today, the significance of this topic is felt in many ways as every man and women find it hard to give time and their complete concentration to the work that they do and mostly have health disorders. We need to understand one thing, that this is just not a one-time implementation in life rather a cycle to be followed again and again.

Key words: Burnout, stress, long working hours, responsibilities, prioritization, Gender, Stressors, lifestyle change.

Introduction: The term "work-life balance" was coined in 1986 in response to the growing concerns by individuals and organizations alike that work can have a tolling effect upon the quality of family life and the other way round. It is always noticed that the work and family always interfere with each other, "work interferes with family" (WIF) and "family interferes with work" (FIW). Time devoted to work is constructed as time taken away from one's family life (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985). This balance or interface can be adverse in nature (e.g., work-life conflict) or can be beneficial (e.g., work-life enrichment) in nature. Recent research has shown that the work-life interface has become more boundary-less, especially for technology-enabled workers.

Definition: Work-life balance is defined as "A state of equilibrium in which the demands of both a person's job and personal life are equal" (The Word Spy, 2002). Work-life balance generally refers to a balance between your personal and work life. The goal is to strive to keep that balance so that we are managing stress and burnout by fulfilling other areas of our lives that aren't swallowed up by work. It's about finding harmony between your professional and personal life, ensuring that no single element dominates and overwhelms the others.

"Work-life balance is the concept that you effectively manage your professional life and responsibilities so that you are productive and successful at work while ensuring you have plenty of dedicated time to live a fulfilling, grounded, personal life," says Abbey Sangmeister, MS.Ed, LPC, ACS.

The individuals and the perceptions are different from one another which lets them be unique in their own aspect. The ways and means of one individual managing his professional responsibilities and his personal life can be different from others. The general rule of thumb might not apply in these situations.

Literature Review:

Work Life Balance: What DO You Mean? The Ethical Ideology Underpinning Appropriate Application by Natalie Reiter volume 43, issue 2; NTL Institute for applied behavioral science:

In his paper presented the author argues that definitions reflecting a situationists perspective are most valuable to academics and practitioners.

Definitions from a situationists perspective offer an opportunity to explore what factors contribute to attainment of WLB for groups of people. Once there are broadly agreed definitions of WLB for groups of people, relevant measures of WLB and WLB initiatives that respond to these definitions can be developed.

This will provide a baseline for the comparative analysis of WLB programs. Implications for organization development interventions and change management practice are explored.

Work/ Life Balance: Wisdom or Whining, by Edy Green Blatt; Organizational Dynamics, Vol.31, No.2,pp.177-193, 2002, ISSN 0090-2616/02

In this article the author's research shows that successful Personal resource Management can improve individual effectiveness and satisfaction with work/life balance. While much discretion remains in the hands of individuals, a worker's ability to manage his personal resources remains constrained and potentially enhanced by organizational culture, structure, and policy. Her ideas presented in this paper allow individuals and organizations to begin using successful work/life balance strategies as a source of competitive advantage.

Time and Work–Life Balance: The Roles of 'Temporal Customization' and 'Life Temporality' by Emma Roberts First published: 26 September 2008

This article poses a challenge to the orthodox binary conceptualization of work–life balance only made possible by relying on the widespread 'clock time' worldview, which understands employment practices in terms of the basic time = money equation. In particular, it is the balance metaphor which relies on a quantification of both work and life in order to make sense and can therefore be seen to be based on an understanding of time as a measurable and value-able unit.

Work-Life Balance During COVID-19 Pandemic and Remote Work: A Systematic Literature Review June 2021; DOI:10.2478/9788366675391-009 License CC BY 4.0 In book: Emerging Trends in and Strategies for Industry 4.0 During and Beyond Covid-19 (pp.59-80); Chapter: 4; Publisher: Sciendo Authors: Helena Bulinska-Stangrecka ;Warsaw University of Technology, Anna Bagińska :Bialystok University of Technology, Anuradha Iddagoda: University of Sri Jayewardenepura

In this research paper the authors have looked at work life balance during the pandemic time which had hybrid system of work conditions for most employees. Due to the extension of working time at home, time limits have also changed. As a result, the work-life balance was disrupted, negatively affecting the mental health of employees. The systematic literature review in this chapter concerns the analysis includes an analysis of key research areas of work-life balance related to remote working. The study analyzes various aspects of the imbalance between home and work as well as the most acute effects of new forms of work introduced because of the pandemic.

Statement of problem:

The challenge lies in understanding the difference in implementing contemporary ways of WLB to that of the current need and individual perception towards WLB.

Objective of the study:

To understand why the contemporary ways of WLB a great hit or not.

To know the impact of using the contemporary ways of WLB on the individual's health and family.

To identify ways of inculcating WLB in daily life without considering it as a hassle.

Research Methodology:

The approach to this study is mostly qualitative by nature and the information collected here is based on the research article, paper presentations and some opinions of the experts. The limitation to the study is that it gives a bird's eye view of all individuals and does not pertain to certain groups of people.

Findings

Significant attention to WLB:

We have all heard some people complain about lack of time and expressing frustration towards life. Juggling around work and non-work life in a satisfactory manner was the traditional perspective of looking at WLB.

Work Life Balance has its origin in the US and UK and moved to other countries too. The meaning and adjustments of WLB has changed over multiple situations like globalization, change in technology, age groups, gender and recently the pandemic too.

The current trends in WLB are having a hybrid working environment or flexible work timings, employee well-being, result-oriented evaluation, job satisfaction and overall success of the individual. Personal evaluation comparing the past and present performance of the individual is the new trend, this gives a better sight of a poor WLB.

Time Management technique for WLB:

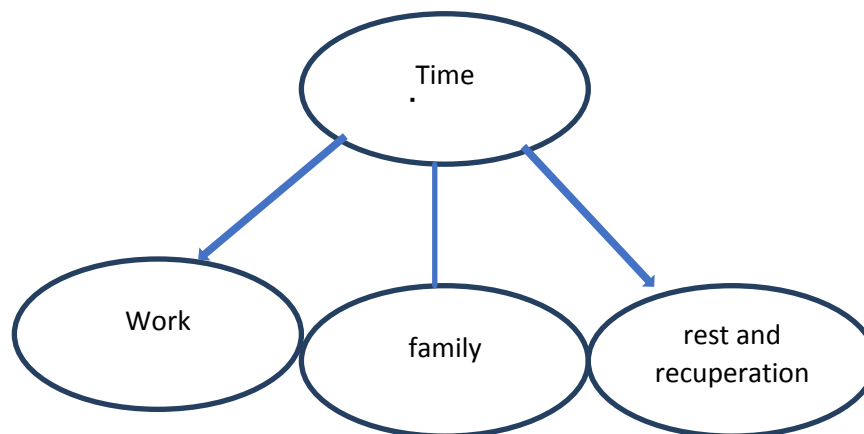
Many think this is an easy task as we differentiate professional work and personal work very easily and find a dedicated time for both. Theoretically speaking it is correct but in practicality life is not only about work either it can professional or personal for that matter. Time taken to fulfill those unfinished tasks, hobbies, health and few important movements of your life. If one manages time for all these activities and yet work, then WLB is found at its equilibrium. Time once lost will never come back with all the wealth that the individuals would have gained.

Setting up Boundaries:

Accepting everything that comes your way will not only increase the problems of WLB but also gives a lot of stress to the individuals. The first thing someone who wants to achieve WLB needs to know is how to say “NO” to that extra work that comes in their way and manage life accordingly. So, the key here is proper communication as what your expectations are from work and your commitments to life. Therefore, adjust the workload, look for ways that suit your lifestyle and inculcate ways to overcome procrastination

Finding time for breaks:

Split the time as shown below and make sure you have enough time to recharge your energy so that any work that you do personally or professionally gets the best of you not the other way round. Mostly it is found in much research that if a person is overstressed, he gets into a burnout situation. which leads to less productivity or no productivity at all. The goal here is to reach a Eustress which can benefit the individual with maximum and full productivity in all walks of his life.



Gender and WLB:

When the issue of gender and the work life balance are spoken together, women are mostly the ones juggling between multiple jobs; one paid the other unpaid. Earlier or even now in some ways unequal distribution of household work, kids, parents and health etc; women juggle with all these jobs very well and try to balance all this single handed. Men and Women have a different view about WLB. Among men we have the once who are married and the bachelors who look at WLB differently as bachelors has less stress compared to the married men.

Indian Married men take family responsibilities fulfilling the needs on their children and other family members. Some women make personal choice on leaving job and taking care of family when WLB is not in equilibrium. Most men have the assumptions that working late hours help them to climb the corporate ladder and its much needed for their career growth, whereas women do not get this opportunity because she needs a dedicated timeframe for both personal and professional life. Which leads to dreams and desires shattered to ground for women.

Suggestions to inculcating certain changes in the lifestyle:

Love your job not the organization concept must be thought over because if your current job doesn't give you healthy balance or opportunities to be flexible and growth, it's better to look for additional options within time. Fretting on the same situation will not bring WLB instead brings in sorrowness in life.

WLB is very subjective by nature so, what works for everyone might not bring change for you. Find your plan of action.

Bringing in a few changes to maintain WLB might look like a major change at the beginning but over the period life goes on as it is planned. Dedication is the key.

Try to be gadget free whenever possible avoids procrastination.

Have a to-do list all the time, this gives you a clear indication of what is done to what is left.

Take time for mindfulness, meditation or practicing yoga which has shown results in reducing all kinds of ailments relating to stress or calming one's mind.

Multitasking if possible is another way to target WLB i.e. working on scrambles, quizzes or reading books while commuting and finding ways to occupy your invaluable day time.

Having a regular healthy eating and good night sleep will overcome the complication of WLB.

Women need to take help or ask for help when required. There is no harm in asking for help when you need one.

As women get maternity leaves nowadays corporates are giving paternity leaves for fathers so that they can actively participate in the parenthood and share the responsibilities equally.

Hybrid system has helped women balance job and family leaving her out of time for self-care, here boundaries and have required time frame is important.

Like team outings that are arranged in the corporate world, a meeting should be arranged to discuss the mental health status of an individual, monitor their progress in life and look for stressors among its employees.

Do not force anything on yourself, it's difficult to achieve such tasks, instead love what you do and make it a general habit or routine or your life. This can eliminate boredom and bring in health change in individuals.

Being a workaholic is good but too much of anything is bad for the individual, compromising health and family which once missed hard to incorporate latter.

Plan your Sunday scaries well and take enough time to recoup your energy by going on vacation not on your Sundays but by taking separate time for this.

Hang your work luggage outside the house and enjoy the time with family.

Make healthy choices instead of getting into depression and other things, talk about your situation with the company and find some alternative ways to overcome it.

Conclusion:

Work life balance is a dynamic process and keeps on changing. It always demands an individual to find harmony between personal well-being and professional responsibilities. It is a very unique process and very different from person to person. Choose the right plan that works for you and have a chart with a specific time frame that can include yoga, personal time, fun time and professional work too. When looking at gender and WLB it should not go as individual responsibilities but should be looked at the situation collectively as a family.

References:

Perspectives on work-life balance: Implications for the indian context (Rosalie L Tung) NHRD Network Journal ISSN-0974-1739 July 2009 volume 2 issue3.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Work%E2%80%93life_balance

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0021886306295639>

<https://execu-care.com/PDF/EdyOrgDynamics.pdf>

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1468-0432.2008.00412.x>

<https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/5244-improve-work-life-balance-today.html>

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/352738293_WorkLife_Balance_During_COVID19_Pandemic_and_Remote_Work_A_Systematic_Literature_Review

Why Work-Life Balance Is So Important—and How to Nail It (verywellmind.com)

The damaging effect of gendered views of work-life balance | Gender and the Economy (gendereconomy.org).