

Quality of Work Life Balance: One Lives to Work or Works to Live

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Abstract

Having a measure of control when, where and how individuals work, leading to their being able to enjoy an optimal quality of life. Work /life balance is achieved when an individual's right to a fulfilled life inside and outside paid work is accepted and respected as norm, to a mutual benefit, of individual, business and society. Quality of work life and Work life balance cannot be seen as two independent entities. Both depend on each other. Nowadays Managerial personnel feel frustrated because of alienation over their conditions of employment. The factors contributing to the problem are that the workers themselves are changing. They are more educated, more independent and they began reaching for higher –order needs, which is more than psychological needs. Therefore, employers now have to redesign jobs for a better quality working life i.e. work life balance. The purpose of this paper is therefore to quantify the effects of quality of work life on women employees, as well as work-life balance issues. Recommendations to management are presented for both government and organisational consideration to accelerate the implementation of a very successful work-life strategy within organization.

Keywords: Quality of work life, work life balance, physical needs, psychological needs, inter family conflict.

1. Introduction

Quality of Work Life is a prescriptive concept it attempts to design work environment so as to maximize concern for human welfare it is a goal as well as process Quality of work life improvements are defined as any activity which takes place at every organization, which seeks great organization effectiveness through the enhancement of human dignity and growth a process which the stake holders in the organization management unions and employees learn how to work together better to determine for themselves what actions changes and improvements are desirable and workable in order to achieve the twin and simultaneous goal of an improved quality of work life.

The concept of work-life balance (WLB) is not a new but with the changing pace of life and increase in stress levels, negatively affecting the quality of work, has made many organizations think about the strategies for maintaining a work life balance. A group of workforces that is greatly affected by the quality of work life as a result of dynamic changes in work life balance of employees is specifically women employees working in organized sector.

As the aim of Quality of work life is to identify and implement alternative programs to improve the quality of professional as well as personal life of an organization's employees the work life balance strategy offers a variety of ways to reduce stress levels and increase job satisfaction of the employees. Indian Organizations are setting up policies for maintaining a work life balance they are going in for innovative methods to keep their employees happy and satisfied, as it makes office a better place to work and also positively impact productivity.

2. Need of the Study

One of the major problems facing the developing and developed countries is the quality of work life of a vast majority of employees engaged in productive pursuits. This issue is not just one of achieving greater human satisfaction but it also aims at improving productivity, adaptability and overall effectiveness of organisations. Today's work force need to balance between carriers and personal lives. Successful organization supports and provides facilities to their people to help them to balance the scales. So there, is a need to concentrate on one's Quality of Work Life as it is also viewed as an alternative to the control approach of managing the employees and realizing the importance of relationships in order to strike the people.

3. Quality of Work Life

Quality of work life is a generic phrase that covers a person's feeling about every dimension of work including economic rewards and benefits, security, working conditions, organizational and interpersonal relationships and its intrinsic meaning in a person's life. The essential component of any quality of work life improvement program is the existence of genuine opportunity for individual or task groups at any levels in the organization to influence their working environment.

According to J. Lloyd Suttle, Quality of work life is the degree to which members of a work organization are able to satisfy important personal needs through their experiences in the organization. More specifically, Quality of work life may be set into operation in terms of employee's perceptions of their physical and psychological well-being at work.

4. Work Life Balance

The expression "work life balance" was first used in the late 1970's to describe the balance between an individual's work and personal life. Work life balance can be defined as "the perfect integration between work and life both not interfering with each other. According to Julie Morgenstern "Work life balance is not about the amount of time you spend working vs. not working. It's more about how you spend your time working and relaxing, recognising that what you do in one fuels' your energy for the other."

Work and balance are both principles, and they should be leveraged to bring maximum effectiveness in both areas. Involve children and family in building bridges between work and home. Poor work life balance leads to many disastrous things like tardy, bad performance, lack of motivation, more errors, absence from work and so on. The worst thing is that poor work-life balance reduces quality of work life and productivity without any doubt. There is a strong link between work life balance policies and increased productivity. Organizations are setting up policies for maintaining a work life balance they are going in for innovative methods to keep their employees happy and satisfied, as it makes office a better place to work and also positively impact productivity.

5. Quality of Work Life versus Work Life Balance

Quality of Work Life can be defined as "The quality of relationship between employees and the total working environment" Whereas "Work life balance is an individual's ability to fulfill their work and lifestyle responsibilities with minimum conflict and maximum contentment." 'Quality of work life' refers to how are the working conditions i.e. it can be temp., humidity, or any other environmental factor ,or it can be work culture, amenities or facilities or the factors that directly affect the work. Suppose if output is Y & like above there are certain factors like {a,

b, c, d, e} on which your output is dependent so these factors will decide quality of work life. On the other hand 'Work life balance' means the work life affecting personal life. Because of working life, if employees don't have enough time to spend with their family; to eat normally or they are not living their life usually because of work life, is work life balance. Factors can be many which can improve or degrade employees work life balance.

A major component of Quality of Work Life, which is important for both the employees and the employers, is the relationship between work and home life. In an increasing competitive environment, it is difficult to separate home and work life. Employees today are more likely to express a strong desire to have a harmonious balance among career, family life and leisure activities. This has been suggested at the international level the need for national policies in many countries.

6. Quality of Work Life Balances on Women Employees

Quality of work life (QWL) is a philosophy, a set of principles, which holds that people are the most important resource in the organization as they are trustworthy, responsible and capable of making valuable contribution and they should be treated with dignity and respect (Straw and Heckscher 1984). Quality of Work Life encompasses mode of wages payment, working conditions, working time, health hazards issue, financial and non-financial benefits and management behaviour towards employees (Islam and Siengthai 2009). According to Gadon (1984), QWL programs have two objectives: (a) to enhance productivity and (b) to increase the satisfaction of employees. Thus QWL provides healthier, satisfied and productive employees, which in turn provides efficient and profitable organization (Sadique 2003). Traditionally female participation in labour force has been restricted by social, cultural and religious norms (Baden et al 1994, Hossain and Kusakabe, 2005, Hafiza, 2007), but more and more females are now joining the organized sector. It is generally viewed that female employees are somewhat neglected in their work places, which in turn can lead to lower level of job satisfaction and employee productivity (Islam and Sahan.d.). The female employees are found in vulnerable positions at the workplaces and gender discrimination in terms of pay, promotion and other facilities is visible in many private industries. This scenario has created an urge to the policy makers to identify the underlying situations and reasons and brought them into consideration the Quality of work life issue. Thus it is a necessity to evaluate the Quality of Work Life of the employees in the organized sector. Because if employees feel that quality of working life is not balanced, they may leave the job and seek a better Quality of Work Life. It has been further envisaged that employees in organized sector play the key role in manipulating their services through implementing policy that has appeal to the society. Various researches has consistently shown that employees with a better Quality of Working Life are happier, have less stress, are less likely to be absent and are more engaged at work.

7. Work Life Balance and Women Employees

Times have changed. From the time the husband earned, and the wife stayed at home. To the time now when the husband earns and the wife earns too. In fact between 1991 and 2001 female employment in India on the whole, have increased by 3.6% per annum with in the professional world, which reflects India's small but growing middle class more than the country as a whole, the phenomenon of Indian women "breaking through the glass ceiling" is perhaps more muted. Today's career women are continually challenged by the demands of full time work and when the day is done at the office, they carry more of the responsibilities and commitments

to home. Majority of women are working 40-45 hours per week and 53% are struggling to achieve their work life balance. Women reported that their lives were a juggling act that included multiple responsibilities at work, heavy meeting schedules, business trips, on top of managing the daily routine responsibilities of life and home. "Successfully achieving work/life balance will ultimately create a more satisfied workforce that contributes to productivity and success in the workplace." Employers can facilitate Work life balance with many schemes that can attract women employees and satisfy their needs.

8. Quality of Work life on Work Life Balance

Work and balance are both principles, and they should be leveraged to bring maximum effectiveness in both areas. Involve children and family in building bridges between work and home. Sound work life balance will definitely have a positive impact on your business. The quality of work improves significantly as employees feel fresh and not stressed out at all. They know when they go home; they will have enough time to spend with their families. Thus, this practice most certainly enhances productivity and results in business growth.

Walton (1975) mentioned, "Dissatisfaction with working life is a problem which affects almost all workers at one time or another, regardless of position or status. The frustration, boredom, and anger common to employees disenchanted with their work life can be costly to both individual and organization." Thus, Quality of Work Life stimulates the employee job satisfaction (Ruzevicius 2007) and is essential for improving organizational and operational productivity (Sink and Tuttle 1989). According to Hanlon and Gladstein (1984), Quality of Work Life programs can improve employee morale and organizational effectiveness. Pay, benefits, supervisory style - these extrinsic determinants of Quality of Work life play a major role for job satisfaction as well (Lewis et al. 2001). Moreover, Quality of work life has direct impact on human outcomes and it significantly reduces absenteeism, minor accidents, grievances, and quits (Havlovic 1991). It is found that employee turnover can be minimized with better Quality of work life (Newaz ET al. 2007). Thus it can be said that Quality of work life can develop jobs and working conditions that are excellent for people as well as for the economic health of the organization (Kanagalakshmi and Deveji 2003). In fact, individual's quality of working life directly influences the quality of life value (Ruzevicius 2007) as the factors of Quality of work life could be defined as physical and psychological results of the work which affect the employee (Art et al. 2001).

Thus one of the major factors of Quality of work life, which is important for both the employees and the employers, is the relationship between work and home life. In an increasing competitive environment, it is difficult to Separate home and work life. Employees today are more likely to express a strong desire to have a harmonious balance among career, family life and leisure activities. This has been suggested at the international level the need for national policies in many countries.

The advantage of being able to work anywhere and at anytime has blurred the boundaries of work and leisure hours. The threat of imbalance in work and non-work life has implications not only on the employees but also on organizations, governments and society (Grzywacz and Marks, 2000; Swanson, Power and Simpson, 1998). This relationship is bi-directional because previous studies have indicated that less conducive environments in the workplace have a greater impact on home life than vice versa. Another important factor that creates an imbalance work condition was a commitment to the work activities. In an organized work sector work environment is widely assumed to be a high-commitment workplace

that forces the organized sector employees to sacrifice their personal leisure hours to meet their work demand. Such a work arrangement demands the professionals to be committed with work whenever possible and hijack them from joining non work related activities .A meta-analysis has confirmed that conflict between work and non-work life is associated with impaired psychological well-being and other negative outcomes (Allen et al., 2000). The study carried out by Aminah (2002) supports that inter-role family conflict occurs when the cumulative demands of multiple roles at home and at work become too great to manage comfortably. The problems associated with family responsibilities are additional sources that may diminish Quality of Work Life among employees. They additionally assert that when an employee has higher work responsibility there will be more spill over of negative work outcomes on family life. The demands of managing higher responsibility at work and home are also a potential Source of stress because it allows a spill over to family life thus creating an imbalance working environment.

Bradley (2001) argued that constantly increasing work demand creates an isolation of the personnel from their families. Personnel and family responsibility are neglected in the process of securing an economic prospect; hence, it deteriorates the interaction of Family life that reduces Quality of Work Life. The existing low level of organizational support with increase in work-life conflict provides the risk of lower Quality of work Life. Organizations need to provide alternative means of employment practices to eliminate the pressure of spill over without influencing the career progression. The balance is important particularly among the women employees in order to nurture and develop the sustainable human resource practices in the organized work environment. Therefore, balance between work and non-work life is suggested as one of the measures of Quality of work life.

9. Conclusion

Indian Organizations are setting up policies for maintaining a work life balance they are going in for innovative methods to keep their employees happy and satisfied, as it makes office a better place to work and also positively impact productivity. These recommendations include the need for legislation on maximum, as well as minimum working hours, good role models at the workplace, flexible working hours and arrangements Life is very short and let us make it sweet. Striking the right balance amongst the personal life, professional life and social life is essential. To sum up in the words of Theodore Roosevelt, "When you play, play hard; when you work, don't play at all". The result of this study supports the proposition that the degree of satisfaction in Quality of Work Life is related to the degree to which the employees believes his or her success criteria have been met, especially if the individual places great importance on these criteria which include pay, respect, personal growth and family life balance. This supports the materialistic work ethic that place strong emphasis on corporate power, income and personal growth as parts of their careers.

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