

A STUDY ON WORK LIFE BALANCE AND HEALTH PROBLEMS FACED BY WOMENS IN COIMBATORE CITY

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ABSTRACT

There is a developing readiness in today's workplaces that employees don't surrender their lives only on the grounds that they work. Work and life remain the two most paramount areas in the life of a utilized single person. Employee Work Life Balance (WLB) is a major driver in the organization that helps to achieve higher productivity. It is a healthy blend of both employee's work life and personal life. Both work to family conflict and family to work conflict are associated with negative effects for the individual which deals with health outcomes of an individual. As this is associated with depression, poor physical health and burnout. Career women are challenged by work and family commitment at the end of each day in their lives. Majority of women are working through-out week and are struggling to achieve work-life balance and to maintain their health problems. A work life balance and health problems faced by working women are discussed in this contribution.

KEYWORDS

Work life balance, working women, health problems, work life and personal life.

INTRODUCTION

In this globalized world, lots of people face the problem of balancing work and family life. A valuable quality of leadership is the ability to balance work and life. When an individual maintains a balance between his personal and professional life, the phenomenon is called Work-Life Balance. Work-family balance as the “extent to which an individual is equally engaged in -and equally satisfied with- his or her work role and family role”. Work life balance is at the forefront of the world of work. The balance between personal and professional life vary from person to person and the organization where he or she is working. There should be a balance between an individual’s work and their life outside work, and that these balances should be healthy.

When an individual does not maintain a balance and works too much in the organizational setting, this may cause some medical, psychological and behavioural consequences; as a result his or her productivity will also be low. Work - life balance employment practices are concerned with providing scope for employees to balance what they do at work with the responsibilities and interests they have outside work. "Balance is not better time management, but better boundary management. Balance means making choices and enjoying those choices." - Betsy Jacobson.

WLB is gaining more importance in the dynamic working environment, since it has the capacity to create a great impact on the productivity and profit of an organization. Proper work- life balance helps employees to build better relationship with management, improve individual's health, job satisfaction, commitment, involvement morale reduces absenteeism, and stress and results in better team work. Work-life balance consists of three components:

Time balance refers to equal time being given to both work and family roles;

Involvement balance refers to equal levels of psychological involvement in both work and family roles; and finally,

Satisfaction balance refers to equal levels of satisfaction in both work and family roles. Therefore, in order to achieve a work-life balance these components should be considered. Work-family conflict may be viewed as a stressor for individuals. Problems in work-family balance have been associated with a number of negative consequences include emotional distress and depression, poor physical health, fatigue, and family disruption.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Aggarwal (2012) investigated the relationship between work-life balance initiatives and employee's attitudes toward work-life conflict and the workplace in general. Study identified employees perceive work life balance enables them to work better and suggested it should be a joint responsibility of Employer & Employee.

Soi and Massey (2011) studied the concept of work life balance and its impact on employment relations and productivity of the employees. Study illuminated the dissymmetry between the work and life that today's fast-paced working generation is experiencing. It was observed that majority of the respondents weren't happy with the shape that their lives have taken recently due to imbalance that has crept in their work and life.

Vittal (2003) observed that the dropout rates of women have increased with their marriage and childbirth as childcare and housework remain women's responsibilities, irrespective of her income, educational level or employment. Study also reflected that there is great burden on women which restrict her choices in terms of better job opportunities

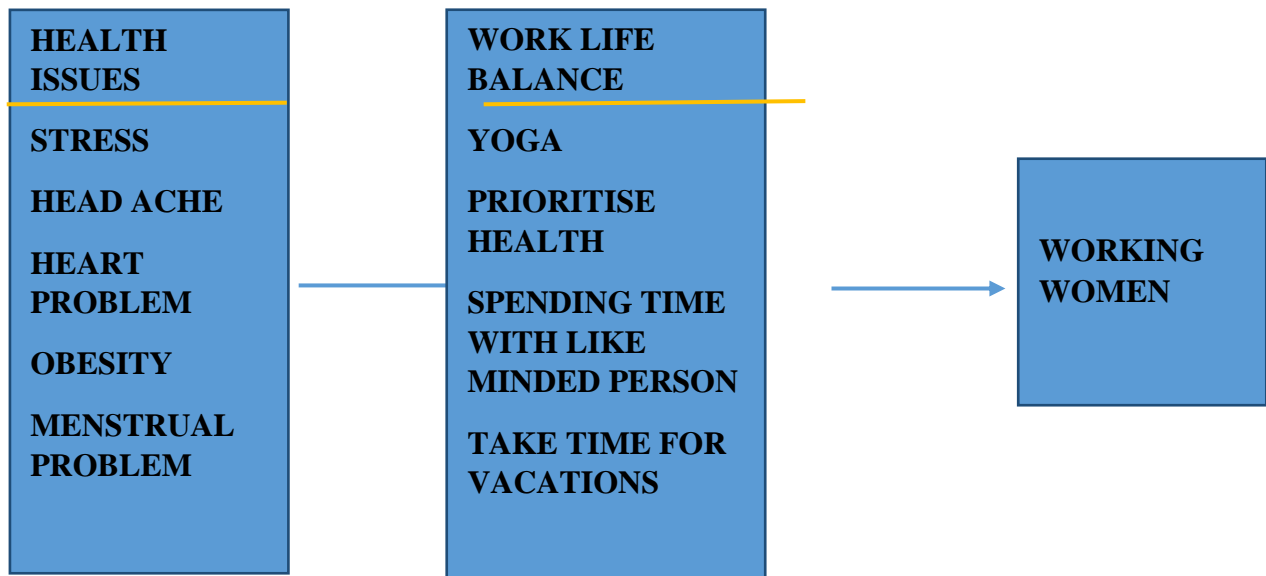
As Kodz et al (2002) explain the principle of work – life balance is that: “there should be a balance between an individual's work and their life outside work, and that these balances should be healthy.”

Problems in work-family balance have been associated with a number of negative consequences. Negative effects on individuals include emotional distress and depression, poor physical health, fatigue, and family disruption (Frone, 2003).

Work-life balance is about finding the right balance between one's work and one's life (i.e. life outside work) and about feeling comfortable with both work and non-work commitments. Many people find it difficult to manage their time in a way that is healthy for their work as well as for their personal life (Vleems, 2005).

Work–life balance is defined as an employee's perception that multiple domains of personal time, family care, and work are maintained and integrated with a minimum of role conflict (Clark, 2000; Ungerson & Yeandle, 2005).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



HEALTH PROBLEMS

The health problems faced by working women are described as follows

STRESS

Stress is the body's reaction to any change that requires an adjustment or response. The body reacts to these changes with physical, mental, and emotional responses. The human body is designed to experience stress and react to it. As a result, the person becomes overworked, and stress-related tension builds.

HEAD ACHE

A headache can be a sign of stress or emotional distress, or it can result from a medical disorder, such as migraine or high blood pressure, anxiety, or depression. It can lead to other problems. People with chronic migraine headaches, for example, may find it hard to attend work or school regularly.

HEART PROBLEMS

Heart disease describes a range of conditions that affect your heart. The term "heart disease" is often used interchangeably with the term "cardiovascular disease." Cardiovascular disease generally refers to conditions that involve narrowed or blocked blood vessels that can lead to a heart attack, chest pain (angina) or stroke.

OBESITY

Due to irregular meal time, unhealthy food, continuous sitting and lack of exercise results into obesity. Obesity can cause health issues like hypertension, improper cholesterol levels, heart diseases etc.

MENSTRUAL PROBLEMS

Menstrual cycles often bring about a variety of uncomfortable symptoms leading up to your period. Menstruation that is too heavy or too light, or the complete absence of a cycle, may suggest that there are other issues that are contributing to an abnormal menstrual cycle.

WORK LIFE BALANCE

Work Life can be balanced among those health issues. Thus, working women must able to balance work life as well as personal life. And to overcome these issues the below were discussed.

YOGA

One of the most positive ways to reduce stress is exercise, and every able-bodied adult should be getting at least 30 minutes of it per day. Employees who eat healthy and exercise are less at risk of getting sick and missing days from work, which could ultimately detract.

PRIORITISE HEALTH

The overall physical, emotional and mental health should be main concern. "Prioritizing your health first and foremost will make you a better employee and person".Prioritizing health doesn't have to consist of radical or extreme activities. It can be as simple as daily meditation or exercise.

SPEND TIME WITH LIKE-MINDED PEOPLE

While your job is important, it shouldn't be your entire life. You were an individual before taking this position, and you should prioritize the activities or hobbies that make you happy. Just because work keeps you busy doesn't mean you should neglect personal relationships. So spend time with the person whom you love the most.

TAKE TIME FOR VACATION

Sometimes, taking vacation time and shutting work completely off for a while. "The truth is, there is no nobility in not taking well-deserved time away from work; the benefits of taking a

day off far outweigh the downsides". "With proper planning, you can take time away without worrying about burdening your colleagues or contending with a huge work load when you return."

WORKING WOMEN

Work life balance is a term used to describe the balance between an individual's personal life and professional life. A healthy work-life balance assumes great significance for working women particularly in the current context in which both, the family and the workplace have posed several challenges and problems for women. The dynamics of the work environment have exerted enormous pressure on working women as they need to cope with virtually two full time jobs – one at the office and the other at home.

CONCLUSION

In the first part of this paper, the health problems faced by working women are compiled. Besides to succeed in one environment, working women are often called upon to make sacrifices in another as each of the environments makes different demands on them and have distinct norms to adhere to. Conflicts in work-life balance of working women affects their health who report more stress, headaches, muscle tension, weight gain and depress than their male counterparts. The second part of this paper briefly discussed about the ways in which the working women overcome those work life imbalances. The factors which equip women with the mechanism to strike a fine balance and make them smarter, healthier and happier in every facet of their lives. The findings have implications for working women and provide insights into finding solutions to maintain healthy work life balance. Manipulating between the obligations towards the families and expectations of the organization and constant struggle to maintain a balance between work and family can have serious implications on the life of an individual by affecting their well-being and overall quality of life. There is a widespread demand from employees for the right to balance work and home life in today's busyworld where finding time for oneself seems impossible. But they alone cannot be the answer to addressing the problems of imbalance.

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