

ACCESSING WORK LIFE BALANCE AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN INDIAN ITES COMPANIES

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Abstract

The purpose of this research work is to access the Work Life Balance (WLB) and Employee Performance (EP) in the ITES sector with special reference to Bengaluru city. In today's scenario Work Life Balance has become the most important issues faced by employees in the world over. Managing personal & professional life has become very difficult over the years. ITES sector on the whole has taken a paradigm shift in terms of its contribution & expectation. With a poor Work Life Balance there is poor Employee Performance. This paper aims to classify underlying magnitudes of Operations and HR services in ITES sector of Bengaluru city and its influence on Quality Work Life (QWL) factors through pragmatic study. The five QWL factors identified are Demographic factors, Work related factors, Human resource policies and practices, KPI (Key Performance Index) and Continuous Improvement. The study incorporates a sample of 163 respondents in major ITES firms in Bengaluru and employed frequency distribution, factor analysis, correlation and regression analysis using SPSS tool.

Keywords: Employee Performance, ITES sector, Work life balance.

Introduction

ITES sector has played an important role in increasing the GDP of India. The contribution to the GDP of the nation by this sector has increased from 1.2% in 1998 to 7.7% in 2020. The nature of ITES sector includes Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) and Knowledge Process Outsourcing (KPO). Back office operations include data entry, data conversion including finance and accounting and HR services. "Do we work to live or live to work" – has been an unanswered question for ages now. Work has always been understood with the underlying characteristics like long hours, deadlines, less leaves, less family time, no time for personal interests, etc. Majority of the population of India is working in public or private sector to make their livelihood. As the mind set of this majority has always lacked work life balance. This has caused an awful damage in Employee Performance in various sectors. The impact of the Employee Performance has resulted in high attrition. The attrition gave raise to high unemployment in the late 2000's. Unemployment coupled with skill based jobs caused an inequality in the society and the mind set of people. The entire process affected the GDP of the nation and led to many unwanted and unhealthy activities in the business environment in India.

In the late 1960s the concept of work life balance emerged. This was due to the movement of women employees in the corporate world. This gave rise to many questions – such as managing home and work. Later over the years work life balance became an important aspect of Human Resource Management. Nowadays, managing work and home has become an expectation from every employee (male or female). Both work and home are interdependent variables. If there is an issue at home it will have a direct impact on the performance at work. This has been observed over the years and the issue seems to persist. This paper intends to identify a few persisting problems and suggest amiable solutions for the same.

I. Review of Literature

In order to gain a deeper insight about the study area, some of the previous researches conducted in India and abroad have been reviewed and presented in this part. **Kossek and Ozeki**

(1998) have revealed that many of the people are in the believe that work life balance means contributing 100% in work and ensuring to dedicate 100% at home as well. The definitions of work life balance may vary, but the truth is that – what matters is the way the employee manages work and life to ensure he lives both the aspects to the fullest. This will ensure the employee is able to contribute his best towards the organization at any given point in time. Also the employer will also be there to support the employee in any situation. In his study **Greenblatt (2002)** has mentioned in the late 1900s the normally seen behaviour shows that the male in the household goes to work. He supports the family and ensures all the necessary support is given to the family. However, women were supporting the family work working at home in various aspects like cooking, cleaning, taking care of children, etc. Later there was an increase in the women population in the workforce which changed the very nature of the work. This resulted in the increase of financial burden at home. This had affected the work life balance in a very serious way. Work Life Balance has different meaning in various work places. However, the baseline remains constant with the understanding of the balance of work and life. **De Cieri, Holmes, Abbott & Pettit (2005)** revealed that there have been many new patterns that have emerged to defining the work life balance which include: Employees able to balance their work and life at mediocre level, Employer introduced practices at work places which help employees to maintain a perfect work life balance which has proved to give good profits to the organization and also has reduced cost considerably. **McPherson and Reed (2007)** concluded that the increase in the demands of work and home has resulted in many issues says There were families which were single parent, joint families, nuclear families, both parents working families, etc. The work expectations had increased which made the individuals spending less time at home. This resulted in more issues at home which made the individuals perform badly at work. This affected the organization and home in critical way. To ensure this is taken care of the employers introduced new practices through the Human resource departments to ensure employees are able to manage work and life. There were many new policies and procedures in place to ensure the smooth function of work and employees given multiple options to perform and manage their personal lives. Work Life balance is an important aspect for both employees and employers.

In their study **Abbott and De Cieri, (2008)** concluded that employees must be able to manage their work and personal life which will help the employers to make more profit which in return will save the organization a lot of cost. A study by **Beauregard and Henry (2009)** has revealed that the main contributors of work life balance can be a characteristic of the changes observed in demographic displacement of the work force, technical and technological improvements, the office timings in the current day scenario. In their study, **Kamauet.al. (2013)** have found that the problems faced by employees are mainly due to the lack of work life balance which has increased over the years now. Most of the employees suffer to manage their personal and professional life with the associated responsibilities. ECO bank has introduced many programs that help employees to strike a perfect balance between their work and life. Since there was a lack of study of work life balance in a bank, this study has dealt with all possible issues of the employee working in a bank. The study showed a good relation between the employee assistance programs and the job performance of employees. **Hofacker and Konig (2013)** studied the contribution of work life balance with a gender perspective. The observations was very different when a male and female were monitored in their work and a general family life. The observations led to certain practices followed by individuals that gave them a perfect mix of work life balance. A study by **Gupta and Sharma (2013)** has shown the two important factors affecting work life balance are time and stress. By achieving a perfect combination of time and stress one can get the secret ingredient of work life balance. $Work\ Life\ Balance = Time + Stress$. As derived by them, the Work Life Balance is best defined as the fulfilment level of act / state in more than different nature in a employee's life. The composition must be in an accurate manner of work (Career and Desire) and life (family, health, friends, lifestyle). They have concluded that if the combination is perfect then one can see a magic of work life balance. **Mwangi Lucy Wambui et al. (2017)** did a study in the Kabarak University which is private Chartered University in Nakuru County. The objective of the study was to know the effects of work life balance on employee

performance in Kabarak University. The study focussed on the work done by employees in detail to identify the issues it caused in the personal lives of the employees and found the correlation between the variables. A few suggestions were given to the management of the university to ensure the work and life of the employee is uplifted in all the ways possible.

II. Need for the study

The problem of quality work life has always affected the home first then the organization. The damage is however severe in both the places. This affects millions of employees who work for the same organization. If the organization is able to help and equip their employees with better work life balance techniques the employee performance will increase. In order to find out the factors influencing the work life balance of the employees, especially those who working in the ITES - the area which is unattended till now, the researchers have undertaken this present research work and the outcome of this work would be more useful to the employers to understand the needs of the employees since the employee performance as a whole leads to the success of an organization and which might help the employees to balance the work and life more effectively to lead healthy life both mentally and physically.

III. Objectives of the Study

1. To study the understanding of the employee on the factors affecting the work-life balance.
2. To analyse the effect of work-life balance on Employee Performance with the Indian ITES employees.
3. To identify the demographic profile of employees working in ITES sector and examine the varied and often complex problems of employees working in call centres.

V. Hypotheses of the study

1. Null Hypothesis (Ho): There is no association between Age and satisfaction on health and safety conditions.

Alternate Hypothesis (H1): There is association between Age and satisfaction on health and safety conditions.

2. Null Hypothesis (Ho): There is no association between QWL and No. of years of experience.

Alternate Hypothesis (H1): There is association between QWL and No. of years of experience.

IV. Research Methodology

Particulars	Description
Sampling Method	Simple Random Sampling
Sample Size	163 Respondents
Data Collection by Questionnaire	20 questions segmented between factors affecting the work-life balance and Employee Productivity
Scaling Technique	5 point Lickert Scale (1:Strongly Agree & 5:Strongly Disagree)
Inferential Statistical Techniques	frequency distribution, factor analysis, correlation and regression analysis
Statistical Package	SPSS Epi info v3.5.1

V. Analysis and Interpretations

This paper aims to classify underlying magnitudes of operations and HR services in ITES sector of Bengaluru city and its influence on QWL factors through pragmatic study. The five QWL factors identified are Demographic factors, Work related factors, Human resource policies and practices,

KPI (Key Performance Index) and Continuous Improvement. The study incorporates a sample of 163 respondents in major ITES firms in Bengaluru and employed frequency distribution, factor analysis, correlation and regression analysis using SPSS tool.

Table No: 1

Chi- Square test for Association between Age and satisfaction on health and safety conditions

Satisfaction level of employee								
Age	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied	Total	Chi-square Value	P-Value
< 20	14(35%)	5(12.5%)	6(15%)	7(17.5%)	8(20%)	50		
21-30	7(23.3%)	10(33.3)	8(26.6)	3(10%)	2(6.6%)	30		
31-40	19(44.1)	13(30.2)	4(9.3%)	5(11.6%)	2(4.6%)	53	20.470 ^a	.000*
41-50	3(37.5%)	2(25)	1(12.5)	2(25%)	0(0%)	18		
> 50	1(50%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	1(50%)	0(0%)	12		
Total	44	40	39	28	12	163		

The Table 1 analyses the relationship between Age and satisfaction of the employees on health and safety measures of the organisation. It is inferred that out of 163 respondents the respondents falling under the age group of < 20 and 21 – 30 and 31-40 are highly satisfied with 35%,33.3%,and 44.18% on the health and safety conditions of the organisation when compared to employees falling in the category of 41-50 and >50. The chi square value is 20.470. The calculated P value is less than 0.05. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected at significant level of 5%, and we accept the alternative hypothesis and it says there is association between age and satisfaction of employees on health and safety measures in the organisation, it is also clear that people who are falling in the category of less than 40 years of age are either satisfied or highly satisfied with the health and safety conditions of the company than the employees falling under the category of 41 and above. Hence from the table it is inferred that there is association between Age and satisfaction of health and safety conditions in the organisation.

Table No 2

Chi- Square test for Association between Work life balance and Number of years of experiences.

QWL&EXP									
No. of years of experience	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied	Total	Value	Value	Value
< 1yr	4(26.6%)	2(13.3)	8(53.3%)	1(6.6%)	0(0%)	35			
1-2 yrs	23(41%)	1(1.7%)	13(23.2%)	17(30.3%)	2(3.5%)	56			
2-3 yrs	2(8.3%)	4(16.6%)	14(58.3%)	3(12.5%)	1(4.1%)	44	40.886	0	
3 -4 yrs	6(33.3%)	4(22.2%)	3(23%)	3(16.6%)	2(11.1%)	18			
>4 yrs	4(40%)	4(40%)	0(0%)	2(20%)	0(0%)	10			

Total	39	35	38	46	5	163		
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Source: Primary data Note:* - Indicates Significant at 5% level

The Table: 2 analyses the relationship between years of experience and satisfaction of training programmes. It is inferred that out of 163 respondents 41% of the respondents with less than 2 years of experience feel that they are highly satisfied with training programmes conducted by organisation whereas 58.3% of the respondents falling in the category of 2-3 years' experience feels that the training programme conducted in their organisation is neutral and 11.1% of the respondents falling in the category of 3-4 years feels that they are not satisfied with the training programmes conducted in their organisation. The chi square value is 40.886. The calculated P value is less than 0.05. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected at significant level of 5%, and we accept the alternative hypothesis and it says there is association between years of experience and satisfaction of training programmes conducted in the organisation. Hence from the table it is inferred that years of experience and satisfaction of training programmes has significant association on the performance of the employees.

Table 3
Model Summary(b)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	Sig.
1	.698(a)	0.487	0.483	135.418	.000(a)

Predictors: (Constant), Work life balance, Transportation, Remuneration, Recognition
Dependent Variable: Mean QWL

Coefficients(a)

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T value	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.195	0.108		11.108	0
Work life balance,	0.151	0.028	0.214	5.435	0
Transportation	0.272	0.022	0.492	12.238	0
Remuneration	0.047	0.018	0.078	2.576	0.01
Recognition	0.112	0.02	0.169	5.511	0

Dependent Variable: MeanQWL

Table 3 Here we analyse the coefficients using the statistical tool called Regression indicates when a model summary of coefficients QWL(work life balance, Transportation, Remuneration and recognition) which is a dependant variable is checked for correlation with Mean QWL the correlation is significant and hence the coefficients of QWL are well correlated to Mean QWL.

VI. Findings & Conclusion

In this study we have seen the relationship between a few factors in a positive way. There is association between age and satisfaction of employees on health and safety measures in the organisation. It is inferred that years of experience and satisfaction of training programmes has significant association on the performance of the employees. This clearly shows employees having a safe environment and clear mind to focus on the job and give their 100% at work. These factors show a positive sign of work life balance and employee performance in an ITES sector.

Firstly, there is a need to identify problems faced by employees both men and women in the workforce and to address them. Keeping in view the projections that women are going to outnumber males in the future workforce, there is a need to give some specific and urgent attention to QWL and their incorporation in the organisation.

Secondly, government interventions are required to help employees in leading a QWL. There is a need to classify some jobs as 'Family Friendly'. The Government should ask employers to identify suitable jobs and earmark them as 'family friendly'. Lewis (1997; p.18), too, advises that "State support is, therefore, a necessary context for broad organizational change, providing a platform of rights from which workers can negotiate the conditions needed to balance work and family."

Thirdly, observing healthy workplace practices would help organizations in engaging employees. Organizations need to establish formal complaint or request mechanisms for employees having WLB-related issues. Employers should offer open door policies to women and devise specific mechanisms to identify the WLB-related problems they encounter. This would also increase the "sense of entitlement" (Lewis, 1997; p. 15) among the workforce. Organizations employing women need to develop culturally-sensitive infrastructure providing basic amenities like washrooms and a common area for women to use. Companies need to do some cost-benefit analysis to accommodate their needs.

Fourthly, increased cooperation of families and societies to women would ensure sustainability and QWL. Women should get help from their husbands, especially in the nuclear families, and from their siblings and in-laws in the extended families. Some kind of education or awareness programs should be developed for family members and society generally to support working women in ways, which are needed above and beyond the legal support system.

We understand the personal life and professional life are two sides of a coin for any employee. They have always been interdependent and have shown good results when managed well. The organization culture and the managers can make life easier for employees by devising processes to ensure the quality of work life and employee performance are easily achievable. The basic facilities, work related assistance, safe and secured future of the employee makes the employee work extra towards the organizational goals. This helps the employee to manage his/her work life balance and the organization is able to get better day by day in the challenging market. This will promote in employee personal happiness and employee performance in the ITES sector.

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