

Integration of Work-life Issues with Respect to Female Employees

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Abstract

Work-life integration issue has become an agenda of board room meetings across the globe especially in India.

A working person has multiple roles to play at a time at personal as well as organizational fronts; each demanding different skills and anticipations. When such role demands overlap and get clashed, serious problems are faced by the employees. Moreover, in sales, the performance pressure is high leading to work stress reflected in personal life.

This research paper is an attempt to delve into the issue of work-life integration issues with reference to young women working as school teachers in private schools of Mumbai.

Keywords: work-life integration, female teachers, role demand, role clash

Introduction

In India, the metro cities are always attracting large number of females for job. Mumbai is considered as the place with highest percentage of female employees in the country. However, life in a metro city is not so simple. One can get good compensation along with side effects like: performance stress, long working hours, wear outs and

other problems. Females have successfully entered and made inroads into all the sectors once considered reserved for males. They are at times more successful than their male counterparts at all levels whether it is executive, middle level management or higher levels. This trend has been prominently increasing in metros of India since last decade. Whether bachelor or married, female employees are creating big landmarks of achievement. This may be attributed largely due to their dedication towards work.

A working person has two roles to play- organizational and personal roles. In Indian context, where social life has a great impact on one's performance, balancing of these roles has much relevance. Along with the role of an employee, an individual has to play the role(s) of a son/daughter, husband/wife, father/mother, friend etc. Due to organizational and personal level stress, role clashes are common that cause performance deficiency. This stress percolates into social and family life as well. Role clashes can also be caused by the reverse impact i.e. personal life stress affecting job performance. This stress results into burnout and work-life imbalance leading to losses for all i.e. the individual, the organisation and the society. Work-life balance is a state where an individual manages real or potential conflict between different demands on his or her time and energy in a way that satisfies his or her needs for well-being and self-fulfillment (Clutterbuck, 2003).

Life in metropolitan cities is far busy and hectic than other cities. The trend of nuclear families with double-income couple is increasing at faster rate. Double-income-no-kid couples are not more common. Work-life balance is about developing working practices that benefit both businesses and their employees (Coussey, 2000). Work-life balance can be represented with the help of two spheres indicating two lives: organisational and personal life having regular interaction between two spheres. The organisational and personal life of an employee can not be isolated. When organisational stress starts encroaching into personal life sphere and vice-versa, serious problems are faced.

There has to be equilibrium between professional and personal lives. The achievement of better work-life balance can yield dividends for employers in terms of having a more motivated, productive and less stressed workforce that feels valued; attracting a wider range of candidates; increased productivity and reduced absenteeism; gaining the reputation of being an employer of choice; retaining valued employees;

achieving reduced costs and maximizing the available labour (Byrne, 2005: 58). With Indian context, the study of work-life integration becomes important from organization point of view.

Literature Review

This section shows a brief review of the existing research work conducted in this area. Crooker et al. (2002) have studied the relationship between life complexity and dynamism that affect work-life balance. The authors have explained individual value systems on the relationship between life complexity and work-life balance. Guest (2002) has explored the reasons why work-life balance has become an important topic for research and policy in some countries especially European countries. McDowell (2004) has elaborated the ways in which organizations and institutions operate at a range of spatial scales as well as new sets of responsibilities towards co-workers, members of households and the public.

Byrne (2005) has highlighted the concept of the work-life balance as a means of tackling the problem of increasing amounts of stress in the work-place. Morris and Madsen (2007) have shown the importance of work-life balance. By better understanding work-life theory, HR professionals can contribute to the strategic development of policies, practices, programs and interventions. Moore (2007) conducted a research to compare work-life balance issues workers and managers of an MNC. It was concluded that many of the managers are not able to achieve work-life balance.

In a research, Hughes and Bozionelos (2007) observed that work-life imbalance was not only a source of concern, but also that it was the major source of dissatisfaction for participants. To establish and illustrate the levels of awareness of work-life balance policies within the surveying profession in Australia and New Zealand, Wilkinson (2008) conducted a research. It was concluded that the consequences of an imbalance between work and personal or family life is emotional exhaustion, cynicism and burnout.

Research Objectives

In this empirical study, the major issues pertaining to work-life integration have been delved into from the view point of working female teachers in Mumbai. The objectives of research are as follows:

1. To study the work-life integration issues with reference to females working as school teachers.
2. To determine the factors affecting work-life integration of such employees.
3. To find the factors leading to work-life imbalance.
4. To suggest the measures for effective work-life integration.

Methodology

Sampling: It was a study conducted to explore the work-life integration issues with reference to females working as school teachers in English medium private owned primary schools of Mumbai. There were 250 respondents chosen in the age group of 21-32 years, who were married but having no kids.

Tools for data collection: Secondary data were collected from sources like- Internet, books, newspapers, management journals and business magazines. For primary data collection, a self-administered five-point scale questionnaire containing 21 statements was used. Likert's five-point scale of agreement was applied where the respondents have to tick one choice ranging from strongly disagree to strongly disagree. The data after collection was tabulated in Excel sheet and analyzed by using z-test.

Hypotheses

Null hypotheses were framed and tested for significance to prove the objectives systematically. The null hypotheses were as follows:

H₀₁ – There is no significant impact of nature of job on work-life integration with respect to female school teachers.

H₀₂ – There is no significant impact of work-life integration on overall performance of individuals.

The above null hypotheses were tested and results were drawn.

Results and Discussions

On application of z-test, both the null hypotheses were rejected at 0.05 level of significance as shown in the table no 1. It can be concluded that there is significant impact of nature of job on work-life integration with respect to female teachers in Mumbai. Similarly, there is significant impact of work-life integration on overall performance of employees. The nature of job has a vital role to play in terms of work-life integration proposition. Jobs like teaching are preferred by females where they can perform well along with creating balance over personal

lives. However, with increasing compensation package of teachers in metro cities, the expectations are increasing in manifold ways. Merely teaching the students does not constitute the job profile of a school teacher. Result-oriented performance is the key for appraisal. It can be seen that work-life imbalance issue is troubling the female teachers as well due to higher expectations of society.

Table 1: Result of hypotheses testing by z-test

S. N.	Statement	Calculated value of z	Result
H ₀₁	There is no significant impact of nature of job on work-life integration with respect to female school teachers.	2.012	H ₀₁ rejected
H ₀₂	There is no significant impact of work-life integration on overall performance of individuals.	2.467	H ₀₂ rejected

Conclusion and Implications

The study has significant implications for school promoters as well as society in particular. Due to increasing expectations of parents and schools, the lives of school teachers have become more hectic now. Imbalance in work-life causes high employee turnover leading to frequent job hopping. While interacting with the respondents, many of the teachers have now started comparing their jobs with corporate jobs. Some of them conveyed their intentions to quit the job of teaching and join corporate jobs for better package. This is the high time when employers must try to strike work-life balance for the well being of their employees. When employees go back to their homes, they should not carry any organizational related stress with them. Ensure equilibrium between professional and personal life is the need of the hour.

The attitude of colleagues and managers to working parents' responsibilities is of critical importance to their work satisfaction and, in the case of women, to their overall well-being (Davis et al, 2004: 209). If proper balance is maintained in professional and personal lives, employees can do great wonders.

Much work has to be done in this direction. Many organizations have started working on flexible working hours, family get-togethers, time-off and other similar measures. In a nutshell, there should be humanistic way of managing performance of employees. Work-life balance policies are beneficial for individuals, their families, organisations, and society

(Brough et al, 2008: 272). Work-life balance is the key to personal and professional effectiveness in the long run.

This study was confined to female teachers employed in private schools at primary level in Mumbai. The findings of study should not be generalized for other segments of the same profession. The results may differ in case of government school teachers. Further studies can be carried out on large sample and gender-based comparative studies can be done. Significant efforts should be increased by the organizations towards making work-life integration more productive for individuals, organisation and the nation as a whole.

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