

Exploring Various Contributors of Work - Life Balance as a Panacea for Occupational Stress

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Abstract

Work-life balance has become the buzzword for many organizations now and a license for success on every front. Organizations understand that the escalating stress of modern life, mainly caused by work-life conflict (i.e. performing one role at the cost of other), is becoming the number-one reason for employees quitting their jobs. They are trying to nurture a work life balance promoting culture that attracts and retains people. The present study was designed to determine various work life stressors. It also aimed at exploring various contributors to work - life balance. Factor analysis and descriptive analysis were used in the study. The findings revealed that organizational initiatives are important in maintaining work-life balance of employees. It also highlighted work life stressors and various factors which act as facilitators to work-life balance. The study suggests that organizations should understand various stress causing factors and try to eliminate or prevent these factors to alleviate work life stress of their employees. Organizations must promote work-life balance of employees by focusing on various factors (contributors) as explored by factor analysis in the present paper.

Keywords : work - life balance, HR manager, work life stressors, human resource management, organizations

JEL Classification : I31, J53, M12, M54

Paper Submission Date : August 21, 2014 ; **Paper sent back for Revision :** November 15, 2014; **Paper Acceptance Date :** December 15, 2014

The volatile business environment has been hitting the firms from all corners. Firms are under constant pressure to perform well. High competition, work intensification, pressure to meet deadlines; all have stolen the time of employees which they would have otherwise spent with their families or for personal chores. Long working hours and the disappearance of the boundary between work and personal life due to advanced technology (cell phones, computers, and the Internet) has led to high levels of stress. People remain busy with their work even at home, in family functions, and even on vacations. Work is interfering in the personal lives of employees, and their personal lives are getting disturbed. Employees are now seeking a greater balance between their work and personal lives, more leisure time, and a greater flexibility in their work schedules to tame stress.

Employees have been demanding that managements should look more closely at their family and personal needs in addition to the needs of the organization. Consequently, it has become imperative for organizations to include various fringe benefits to improve the employee morale, introduce a machinery to settle grievances, provide proper counseling, encourage employees' participation in decision making, and many such initiatives (Gupta & Joshi, 2004). HR managers have to find innovative ways of keeping

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employees challenged and satisfied. Large corporate houses have realized that they have to manage their human resources with a difference to remain in competition. Therefore, work-life balance has become the buzzword for many organizations now, and a license for success on every front.

Work-life balance (WLB) denotes a satisfactory fit in multiple roles of life. The satisfaction in work - life plays a predominant role in achieving and maintaining this balance and effectively performing different roles. Organizations understand that the escalating stress of modern life, mainly caused by the work-life conflict (i.e. performing one role at the cost of other) is becoming the number one reason for employees quitting their jobs, and are trying to nurture a culture that attracts and retains people.

Labour management relations are being looked at seriously. Motivation of employees at work is being stressed. The managers are making innovations in HRM for they know that they will get lucrative returns on their investment by investing in human resources. More opportunities for employees' growth are provided. Efforts are made to provide participative management for employees where their views are honoured. Various work life policies and strategies are tailored in such a fashion that suits the employees' need of better work-life balance. The entirely new approach is being adopted by corporate bodies for managing human resources, which is a healthy and welcome approach (Sheikh, 1999).

Literature Review

Adams, King, and King (1996) revealed that the relationships between work and family can have an important effect on job and life satisfaction, and that the level of involvement the workers assign to work and family roles is associated with this relationship. Grandey and Cropanzano (1999) explored that work- role stress increases work to family conflict, leading to greater job distress ; whereas, family role stress leads to greater family- to- work conflict resulting in greater family distress. Mc Donald, Brown, and Bradley (2005) developed a five dimensional construct 'organizational work – life culture' and concluded that work-life policies have the potential to provide substantial benefits to both employees and organizations.

Hayman (2005), in his study, evaluated a 15 item scale for assessing the construct of work life balance. He emphasized that a better understanding of measures for attaining best practices has direct consequences for HRM. He also revealed that the provision of effective work life initiatives is fast becoming a priority for organizations and HRM practitioners throughout the modern world. Bird (2006) highlighted the organizational need for employee-oriented work life strategies and their effective implementation to have effective return on investment, employee commitment, better customer service, competitive advantage for talent, and health care cost solutions. Furthermore, he suggested a dual-purpose work and life training to be given to employees, which will become helpful in their on-the-job lives as well as off-the-job lives. Jain, Jabeen, Mishra, and Gupta (2007) confirmed that the presence of a high degree of occupational stress adversely affects the level of job satisfaction. However, perception of high and conducive organizational climate leads to greater satisfaction.

Fub, Nübling, Hasselhorn, Schwappach, and Reiger (2008) investigated predictors for one particular direction of work-family conflict – namely work interfering with family conflict (WIF), and revealed the incompatibility between work and family as one of the major reasons for the increasing departure of German physicians (covered under their study) for non-clinical occupations or abroad. Kalliath and Brough (2008) emphasized that work-life balance is emerging as a key strategic element in the HRM policies of successful organizations due to growing participation of women in the work-force, the anticipated worldwide shortage

of skilled labour, and various benefits associated with work-life balance policies. O'Neill, Harrison, Cleveland, Almeida, Stawski, and Crouter (2009) found significant associations between work–family climate, and both organizational commitment and turnover intent. Their study highlighted the importance of managerial support for employee work–family balance.

Kanwar, Singh, and Kodwani (2009) revealed that the work-life balance and job-satisfaction were positively related to each other, while de-motivation, exhaustion, and meaninglessness were negatively correlated to the level of job satisfaction. They also revealed that a significant contribution to job satisfaction came from work life balance. Vijaylakshmi (2012) emphasized on need to find out the reasons for moderate satisfaction and dissatisfaction prevailing among women police personnel and suggested a focused approach on improving the quality of work life by providing an attractive system of rewards and recognition of work and by improving the working environment.

Varatharaj and Vasantha (2012) studied the work life balance of working women in Chennai city and revealed that the majority of the women employees felt comfortable in their work place, irrespective of their personal and work place issues. They suggested various strategies at the personal and organizational level to maintain a healthy work- life balance.

Need of the Study

Work and life are the two sides of the same coin. Both are interrelated and equally important. More importance to one at the cost of other creates conflict and emotional stress, which affects physical and mental health of employees and the financial health of the organization. To maintain a balance between work and domestic life is one's personal domain, yet organizations are now helping in better managing work and personal lives to keep their employees away from the clutches of work - life stress as it is beneficial for employees as well as the organizations. Employees feel a strong bond with the organization which cares for their work (professional) as well as personal lives.

The present study is an endeavor to explore various work life stressors and significant contributors to work-life balance. It will be helpful to policy makers and HR managers in finding health care cost solutions, improving employee retention, and developing corporate identity.

Objectives of the Study

- (1) To study work life stressors in general.
- (2) To study organizational initiatives for work - life balance.
- (3) To determine significant contributors towards work - life balance.

Methodology

The primary data for the study was collected with the help of a self-administered questionnaire. The statements included in the questionnaire were selected after pilot testing the same and were modified accordingly. Personal observations and interviews were also carried out to draw more meaningful conclusions. The sampling technique used was multistage sampling and sample size drawn was of 432 respondents . The present study, carried out during 2014, is confined to one of the biggest rail coach manufacturing units of India located in Punjab.

Analysis and Results

⇒ **Work Life Stressors - A Factor Analysis Approach** : The earlier discussion has pointed out that the work-life conflict stress has detrimental consequences. Therefore, an attempt was made to find out various stress creating factors prevalent in the environment which every employee confronts daily. Factor analysis was used to identify these work life stressors.

Factor analysis is often used in data reduction to identify a small number of factors that explain most of the

Table 1 . KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.771
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2941.946
	Df	276
	Sig.	.000

Table 2 . Work Life Stressors: A Rotated Component Matrix^a

Work life stressors	Component						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Working hours	.811	.070	-.027	.070	-.015	.038	-.024
Job insecurity	.762	.009	.005	.170	.096	.253	.028
Lack of work autonomy	.738	.090	-.113	.115	.049	.000	-.011
No work recognition	.675	.062	.376	-.034	.045	-.142	-.024
Supervisory treatment	.622	.162	.075	-.134	-.047	.051	.069
Lack of opportunities to develop new skills	.551	.283	.054	.141	.129	.226	-.095
Inadequate salary	.496	.273	.122	.238	.074	.372	.061
Poor relationship with supervisors	.133	.803	.046	-.025	.000	-.001	-.070
Reward and punishment	.171	.785	.079	-.014	-.031	.017	.105
Lack of promotional opportunities	.120	.558	.055	.143	.279	.161	-.030
Performance appraisal system	-.110	-.097	.781	.042	.172	.153	-.011
Ineffective redressal of grievances	.128	.180	.704	.023	-.120	-.023	-.073
Discrimination	.429	.242	.472	-.214	.262	-.093	-.072
Work overload	.187	.275	.415	.104	-.312	.081	.173
Child care	.073	-.190	.241	.741	.007	-.076	.083
Care of elderly parents	.262	.136	-.239	.652	.202	.001	-.282
Managing household responsibilities	.067	.276	-.155	.612	.119	.344	-.318
Lack of opportunities for scholarly pursuits	.088	.011	.154	-.022	.651	.033	-.243
Inadequate opportunities for participation	.026	.211	-.006	.431	.623	.014	.059
Frequency of meetings	-.208	.165	.125	.471	.582	.105	.201
Organization structure	.300	-.047	-.264	.014	.543	-.067	.171
Personal health	.022	-.053	.281	.069	.028	.771	.210
Marital/family problems	.199	.157	-.181	-.075	-.044	.689	-.245
Lack of time for social or religious activities	.032	.036	-.079	-.094	-.012	.007	.848

Extraction Method : Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method : Varimax with Kaiser

Normalization

a. Rotation converged in 9 iterations

variance observed in a much larger number of manifest variables. It is also used to identify underlying variables or factors that explain the pattern of correlations within a set of observed variables. In this study, factor analysis identified only 24 variables as major stressors out of 40 variables after data reduction and clubbed them under seven factors.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was used to examine the appropriateness of factor analysis. Higher values between 0.5 and 1 indicate that factor analysis is appropriate. As per the results (Table 1), the KMO measure indicates a sampling adequacy value to be .771; therefore, the factor analysis is considered appropriate. The Bartlett's test value is .000, indicating that the value is highly significant.

Further, varimax rotation was used to carry out factor analysis of the refined data. Factor loadings indicate the strength of the relationship existing between a particular factor and a particular variable. In a simple component matrix, a particular variable may show higher loadings for many factors, making it difficult to determine the variables under any given factor. This problem is solved by rotating the matrix, which makes it easier to assign a number of variables with greater loading for a particular factor. The rotated-component matrix (Table 2) shows that most of the items load well on seven factors.

The first factor is named Job Factors and includes variables like working hours, job insecurity, lack of work autonomy, no work recognition, supervisory treatment, lack of opportunities to develop new skills, inadequate salary. The next load is represented by variables like poor relationship with superiors, reward and punishment, and lack of promotional opportunities. So, these variables could be summed up as a factor named Departmental Factors. The third factor is identified with weight on four variables, that is, performance appraisal system, ineffective redressal of grievances, discrimination, and work overload. These could be termed as Management Related Factors. The fourth factor finds its identification with variables like child care, care of elderly parents, and managing household responsibilities. These variables could be labeled as a factor named Family Care Responsibilities. The fifth load is characterized by variables - lack of opportunities for scholarly pursuits, inadequate opportunities for participation, frequency of meetings, and organization structure. These variables are named as the factor Institutional Factors. The sixth factor is loaded with personal health and family/marital problems. Therefore, these variables could be named as a factor called Physical and Emotional Health Problems. Lack of Time for Social or Religious Activities has been identified as a unique factor (the seventh factor).

👉 **Organizational Initiatives and WLB - An Analysis :** No one can deny this fact that financial needs have increased due to our modern lifestyle, and now, people have to work longer hours. Moreover, globalization and privatization have led to tough competition and high levels of stress. Employees find it difficult to maintain a balance between their work and personal lives due to increased pressure of work and are becoming victims of escalating stress, which is associated with adverse consequences for the individual as well as for the organizations. Stress costs individuals their health, and the organizations, their profits. Therefore, organizations are now taking up various initiatives to help employees in maintaining a better work-life balance. They are improving the work environment to provide a quality work life to employees. Efforts are also being made to make jobs attractive to enhance job satisfaction levels and reduce job stress. The importance of employees' personal life is also acknowledged through the provision of various family welfare facilities and employee assistance programmes.

In this context, the opinion of employees has been analyzed. An attempt was made to ascertain upto what extent employees thought that the organizational level initiatives like providing sound organizational

Table 3. Organizational Initiatives and WLB: An Analysis

Organizational Level Initiatives	<i>Large Extent</i>	<i>Some Extent</i>	<i>Not at all</i>	Total	$\bar{X}$	σ	SK	Kt	X^2	p- value
Sound Organization Climate	376	51	5	432	2.8588	.38046	-2.682	6.813	568.014	.000
Enhanced Job Satisfaction Level	378	48	6	432	2.8611	.38434	-2.805	7.601	576.500	.000
Reduced Job Stress	224	202	6	432	2.5046	.52764	-.304	-1.280	200.056	.000
Work Life Policies (Employee Welfare activities / Employee Assistance Programmes)	297	126	9	432	2.6667	.5143	-1.165	.275	2910.375	.000

Note : $\bar{X}$ denotes mean value, σ denotes standard deviation, SK denotes skewness, Kt denotes Kurtosis, X^2 denotes Chi-square

climate, better work life policies, enhancing job satisfaction level, and reducing job stress help in maintaining work-life balance (Table 3). The results exhibit the fact that majority of the respondents thought that sound organizational climate largely helps in maintaining the work-life balance. The mean value observed for this viewpoint is 2.85, while the deviation is .38. Respondents opined that the sample organization made sincere efforts to provide better employer-employee relations, had good HR practices, and an effective performance appraisal and grievance redressal system in place. The value of skewness shows a negative tilt of the curve towards the higher side, whereas kurtosis shows leptokurtic distribution. The significant chi-square value also confirms that the opinions are not distributed equally, and supports the above analysis.

Furthermore, the analysis concerning enhanced job satisfaction demonstrates the preponderant belief that organizational efforts to increase job satisfaction levels help in maintaining work-life balance to a large extent. This is also evident from statistical values, that is, mean score (2.861) and negative skewness value (-2.805), which depict that the perception of the respondents fell heavily towards the higher side. The respondents were of the view that jobs, which provide autonomy, require optimum working hours, involve rational workload, less monotony & provide immense pleasure, are necessary to drive energy and perform various obligations at work and at home.

The organization, taking steps to reduce job stress, largely helped employees in maintaining their work - life balance. This viewpoint was supported by a majority of the respondents, with average of 2.50 at a 3- point likert scale. The deviation in this viewpoint is noted to be .527. The negative value of skewness confirms that opinions are scattered more towards the higher side. The value of kurtosis shows platykurtic distribution. It is further noted that the mainstream of the respondents thought that prevalence of work life policies in the organization helped in maintaining work-life balance of the employees. The negative skewness value shows that the distribution falls on the higher side with a variation of .514 in the viewpoint. The leptokurtic distribution of kurtosis and significant chi square value also confirm the same viewpoint (refer to Table 3).

✍ **Significant Contributors Towards WLB - A Factor Analysis Approach** : Work life balance (WLB) has become a buzzword for many organizations now, and is a mantra for attracting and retaining talented employees as it is associated with numerous positive outcomes for employees as well as the organizations. Therefore, it becomes imperative to know the important factors at the organizational level and in personal life which help in maintaining this work life harmony.

In order to explore these significant contributors to work life balance, factor analysis was performed. The results of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO=.807) measure and Bartlett's test of sphericity with highly significant value clearly indicate the appropriateness of the use of factor analysis. The Table 4 shows the rotated component matrix by using varimax rotation for all variables taken into account to represent the contributors

Table 4. Significant Contributors Towards WLB : A Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Open Communication	.720	.117	.252	-.004	.123	.045	-.079	.037	-.022	.041	.067	-.018
Other Fringe Benefits	.705	.166	.160	-.087	.059	.366	-.119	-.059	.075	-.144	-.057	.072
Counselling	.672	.033	-.132	.174	.222	.000	.189	.054	-.009	.043	-.051	.037
Employees with more friends	.614	.183	.108	-.124	.128	.029	.252	.250	.032	.251	.024	.113
Employees with well matched skills	.571	.179	.440	-.009	.053	-.046	-.090	.058	.037	-.054	-.140	.002
Better employer-employee relations	.559	.058	.540	-.009	.130	-.041	.020	.035	.059	.039	.190	-.023
Supervisors' behaviour	.501	.114	.180	-.231	-.074	.423	-.125	-.052	.165	-.121	-.055	.144
Colleagues behaviour	.478	.146	.016	.427	.053	.172	.077	.037	.074	-.035	-.211	.014
Grievance handling	.468	.180	.011	.047	.007	.450	-.218	-.067	.329	-.073	.019	-.024
Business ethics	.423	.417	.161	-.010	.073	-.359	.163	-.181	-.133	.072	.144	.061
Eco-friendly environment	.259	.753	.082	-.020	.136	-.024	.061	.088	.027	.048	-.205	.021
Medical Facilities	.267	.704	.003	.004	.126	-.071	.131	.107	.035	.097	-.262	.086
Recreational facilities	.060	.680	.060	.096	.112	.156	.110	-.123	.018	.125	.358	-.005
Exercise / benefits facilities	.041	.663	.048	-.022	.108	.144	.023	-.160	.117	.157	.180	.263
Meditation campus	.032	.616	-.002	.095	.270	-.039	-.029	.164	.139	-.134	-.065	-.189
Spiritual Seminars	.068	.519	-.081	.103	.047	.249	.253	.155	.086	.087	.211	-.418
Appreciation	.143	.448	.152	-.005	.229	.029	.207	-.025	.328	-.040	.134	-.317
House facilities	.161	.072	.774	-.106	.047	.020	.062	.142	.066	-.045	-.113	-.041
Child care facilities	.166	.019	.773	-.049	-.022	-.079	.065	.048	.103	.037	.055	-.092
Travel Facilities	.077	.055	.762	-.029	-.080	-.053	-.043	.022	.247	.082	-.038	.114
Educational Facilities for Children	.106	.421	.448	-.022	.211	-.032	-.130	.093	.095	.038	.252	-.017
Leave arrangement	.143	-.008	-.423	.024	.098	.009	.304	.209	.006	.105	.376	.155
Wages & Salaries	-.163	.050	.113	.746	-.062	.022	.199	-.081	.007	.223	.025	-.050
Safety of Women	.007	-.030	-.175	.705	-.005	-.085	.269	-.071	-.142	-.105	.067	.182
Safety of Employees	.095	.154	.190	.613	.099	-.119	.152	.049	.145	.445	-.023	-.175
Job Security	.202	-.036	-.307	.599	.044	.154	-.145	.145	.060	-.165	.142	-.051
Safe Occupation	-.099	.008	-.400	.583	-.082	.173	-.061	.236	.141	-.266	.013	.176
Support of Family Members	.111	.245	.052	.017	.779	.078	-.076	-.051	.027	.026	.038	-.063
Good Health	.075	.142	-.077	-.029	.766	-.023	-.021	-.035	.138	.005	.050	.155
Socialization	.160	.389	.112	-.003	.596	-.241	.241	.103	-.010	-.036	.060	.006
Good relations with spouse	.228	.020	-.061	.005	.594	.050	.175	.156	-.112	.164	-.124	-.083
Time for personal activities	-.035	.418	.173	-.021	.478	-.034	.144	.244	-.081	-.062	.087	.105
Performance for appraisal system	.192	.070	-.298	.154	.017	.762	.016	.095	-.057	.068	.006	-.002
Recognition of better performance	.288	-.054	.405	.078	.053	.603	.006	-.125	-.086	-.221	.011	.001
Job and enlargement	-.146	-.018	-.310	-.109	-.096	.542	.288	.061	.017	.036	-.042	.358
Opportunities for promotion	.056	.165	-.050	.153	.084	-.141	.753	.066	.160	.064	.135	.049
Job enrichment	-.057	.154	.089	.238	.079	.160	.681	.189	-.061	-.117	.051	-.020
Feeling about job	.137	.003	.091	.027	-.017	.039	.106	.786	.000	.277	-.041	-.038
Overcoming role ambiguity	-.007	.105	.078	.030	.149	-.009	.112	.752	.050	-.072	.205	.081
Incentive Pay Plans	.100	.155	.167	.210	.029	.065	.023	.156	.768	-.019	.153	.052

Performance Bonus	.036	.094	.345	-.139	.029	-.063	.101	-.100	.737	.138	-.056	-.116
Celebrating festivals with families of employees	.098	.320	.109	.094	.196	-.094	-.108	.138	-.139	.604	.067	-.032
Organizing social functions with employees' families	.235	.116	.060	.167	.150	.042	.060	-.109	-.258	-.550	-.096	-.039
Inviting employees' family members in reward functions	.182	.308	-.011	.136	.310	.103	.313	-.018	.049	.458	-.020	.008
Recruitment and selection	-.022	.042	-.099	.166	-.039	-.056	.109	.217	.036	.157	.603	-.122
Grievance redressal system	-.220	.052	.146	-.171	.115	.011	.104	-.103	.179	-.277	.515	.323
Participation in decision making	.200	.061	-.068	.096	.079	.107	.063	.075	-.038	-.010	.026	.743

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 20 iterations.

towards better interface of work and personal life. The factor analysis has clubbed various variables under 12 factors, which emerged as significant contributors.

The first factor is related with industrial relations and includes load on variables like open communication, other fringe benefits, counseling, employees with more friends, employees with well matched skills, better employer-employee relation, supervisor's behaviour, colleagues' behaviour, grievance handling, and business ethics. This factor is named as Better Industrial Relations. It conveys that effective counselling, open communication, better interpersonal relations, and effective grievance handling promote good human relations at the workplace and facilitate work- life harmony.

The next load is represented by variables such as eco-friendly environment, medical facilities, recreational facilities, fitness facilities, meditation camps, spiritual seminars, and appreciation. These facilities improve the physical and emotional health of employees, which is important for better work life balance and can be regarded as Health Promoting Activities. It conveys that the role of employees' good physical and emotional health cannot be undermined in achieving work - life balance, and the organization should play an active role in promoting employees' health and fitness.

The third factor finds its identification with variables like housing facilities, childcare facilities, travel facilities, educational facilities for children, and leave arrangements. As these variables promote an employee's and his/her family's welfare, so these variables could be collectively named as Employee Welfare Activities. These facilities help in better interface of work and personal life. So, the organization can help employees in maintaining work-life balance by taking care of their families' needs.

The next factor is related with wages and salaries, safety of women, safety of employees, job security, and safe occupation. These variables could be named as Safety and Security. It conveys that financial and physical security help employees in enjoying work as well as their domestic life. Therefore, the organization, through secured jobs and adequate safety arrangements, can facilitate employees' work life integration.

The fifth load is characterized by variables like support of family members, good health, socialization, good relation with spouse, and time for personal activities. These variables could be summed up as a factor named Satisfaction with Personal Life. It indicates that leisure, fun, and peaceful domestic/personal life promote work-life balance. So, employees should perform their different roles effectively to enjoy healthy and peaceful lives. Organizations can arrange workshops to help employees learn the importance of peaceful domestic lives and can provide certain tips for leading a peaceful life.

The sixth factor encompasses three variables, that is, performance appraisal system, recognition of better performance, and job enlargement. It indicates that work life balance is maintained when employees are

recognized for their good performance or their jobs are enlarged as a result of an effective performance appraisal system. Hence, this factor can be labelled as the Performance Appraisal System.

The next factor is loaded with opportunities for promotion and job enrichment and could be named as Scope for Advancement. It signifies that promotional opportunities are necessary for personal and work life satisfaction.

The eighth factor is identified with weight on two factors namely, feeling about job and overcoming role ambiguity. This factor is named as Job Satisfaction. The ninth factor is named as Monetary Incentives as it includes two variables, that is, incentive pay plans and performance bonus. It conveys that incentives for better performance improve work life balance. The 10th factor is named as Social Relationships. The variables that load heavily on the 10th factor are celebrating festivals with families of employees, organizing social functions for employees' families, and inviting employees' family members in reward functions. It indicates that the organization, by providing a platform for promoting social relationships, can facilitate employees' work life harmony. The next factor consists of variables like recruitment & selection and grievance redressal system. It is labelled as Recruitment and Grievance Redressal System. Participation in Decision Making has been identified as a unique factor (factor 12).

Summary and Conclusion

The factor analysis identified job related factors as the major stressors followed by departmental and management-related factors. Family care responsibilities were also considered stressors as more time devoted to work means compromising upon the time set aside for domestic responsibilities, which creates work-life conflict, and thus, stress. Institutional factors were ranked as the fifth major stressor. Emotional & health problems and lack of time for social activities were also named as work life stressors. Thus, the factor analysis pointed out that major stress arises from work and the workplace. The sample organization can focus on these factors to identify causes of stress experienced by its employees. It will help in framing suitable strategies to alleviate their stress.

The results of descriptive analysis revealed that employees strongly perceived that the sample organization's initiatives with respect to providing a sound organizational climate, enhancing job satisfaction level of employees, reducing their job stress, and increasing their welfare through the provision of work life policies would help in maintaining their work-life balance. It was observed that their organization was providing a good working environment to them, designing jobs in a way to made them (the jobs) more attractive and thereby reducing the job stress level. The respondents also revealed that the organization has developed a pollution-free residential colony with lake and sports club for its employees to enhance their quality of life. It has made its environment eco-friendly. Various facilities and schemes are also in existence to increase the welfare of employees and their dependents. Employees are encouraged to attend meditation camps, and expenses are reimbursed by the organization. The study revealed that the employees did not feel much stress, and they were able to manage their work and personal lives effectively.

The factor analysis proved useful for reducing the list of variables taken into account and identified 12 factors as significant contributors to work life balance. Better industrial relations were considered as the most important contributor to achieve work life balance. It means employees valued interpersonal relations and felt good when their problems were sorted out properly, and a supportive work environment was created. The health and welfare of the employees is also of prime concern and promotes their work-life balance. Safety and security of employees develops their confidence and was considered as an important

contributor. The satisfaction with personal life helps in enjoying life more and was ranked as the fifth most important factor followed by performance appraisal system and scope for advancement. Job satisfaction and monetary incentives also facilitate in maintaining work life balance and were ranked as the eighth and ninth important contributors respectively. Social relationships add charm to life and were also considered as important factors for achieving better work-life balance. Similarly, transparent recruitment & selection as well as a grievance redressal system also facilitate work-life balance as these factors promote employee commitment, which is necessary to enjoy work and personal life. Participation in decision making was identified as a unique factor. All these factors are correlated with each other and were considered as important contributors to maintain work-life balance in the sample organization.

Suggestions

The findings of the study suggest that the management of the sample organization should take the various factors, as revealed by the factor analysis, into consideration and provide a consistent support mechanism accordingly to maintain the work life balance of its employees. Bird (2006) and Varatharaj and Vasantha (2012) advocated certain strategies at the organizational level, including work-life training, job security, recognition, rewards, participative management, and welfare schemes to enjoy a better work-life balance. It is recommended that efforts should be made to promote better industrial relations. The organization needs to further improve the work life balance of its employees and provide help in maintaining this balance by focusing on the above-mentioned factors.

The sample organization, and organizations in general, should provide a work climate where employees can feel like coming to a second home. Jobs should be created in such a way that the employees should have a feeling that they are enjoying their work. Due importance should also be given to their lives apart from work. Their family needs should also be taken care of through various family welfare schemes and provisions. To combat high work life stress, organizations should keep a watch on their employees. Informal relations with them should be promoted. It will help in identifying the stress level of employees at the earlier stages, and they can be helped out before it is too late. Organizations should promote work arrangements facilitating work-life harmony. Workaholics should be encouraged to avail leaves to regain more energy. They can be taught how to better manage work and personal lives. Various workshops can be arranged for this purpose. More facilities should be provided to promote employees' family welfare. Occasionally family functions, parties, or trips can be arranged to help employees in sparing some time for personal or family life. In this way, the sample organization and the organizations at large can attain a competitive edge with a healthy and satisfied workforce.

Limitations of the Study

- ✎ The present study is confined to the respondents of the sample organization. Hence, the findings may not be appropriate to be generalized elsewhere in India or outside India.
- ✎ Incomplete and non-responses on certain items involved extra time and effort to sort out such questionnaires and getting them filled up from the respondents.

Implications for Practice and Future Research

The work-life balance issue is a big challenge for human resource management. It has become a matter of strategic concern for every organization. The need of hour is to assess various work life stressors and create a work life balance supportive work climate to keep employees healthy, stress free, and energetic. It will lead to a win-win situation for employees and organizations.

The present paper has made an attempt to provide some directions to HR professionals to review their prevailing HR policies and practices in the light of the above explored factors, and if required, redesign their policies to enhance work life balance of their employees. However, certain cautions and proactive actions should be undertaken to make work life balance initiatives really fruitful. This paper is just an attempt to set the base for further research in this area. Other organisations from other parts of India can be considered for research purposes, and their work culture and climate can be studied to identify work life stressors and facilitators to work-life balance.

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