WORK-LIFE BALANCE AMONG SOFTWARE ENGINEERS AT TECHNOPARK

Dr. SUMI. K V

Faculty, Department of Management
University of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, India

ABSTRACT

Software industry in Kerala is booming at an ever increasing speed. With automation and computerization an ample opportunity employment scenario was opened up particularly in IT and software sector where the salary is attractive and the job is mostly desk type in nature. But at the same time these jobs are accompanied with extended work schedule and deadline oriented leading to work place stress. At the same time with domestic commitment the work life balance becomes a challenging issue for software engineers. This study tries to find out the issues of work life balance of software engineers of Techno Park, Trivandrum. The study was conducted among 200 software engineers with different years of experience were given a questionnaire to provide their inputs on various factors of the Work-Life balance and issues like working hours, family responsibilities and career growth were considered as parameter of work life balance. The data were collected by Random Sampling method by using the questionnaire with 15 questions and answers in a five point Likert scale. Four factors such as Gender, Age, Marital Status and Experience which influence the work-life balance were analyzed from the questionnaire.

Keyword: Factors of the Work-Life Balance.

Cite this Article: Dr. Sumi. KV, Work-Life Balance among Software Engineers at Techno park, *Journal of Management*, 6(1), 2019, pp. 146-151.

<http://www.iaeme.com/jom/issues.asp?JType=JOM&VType=6&IType=1>

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Indian IT industry has achieved an iconic status in the Indian economy, and is considered as a highly significant economic growth engine for the success of the nation. In less than two decades, advances in information technologies have revolutionized government, scientific, educational, and commercial infrastructures. Powerful personal computers, super computers, high-bandwidth and wireless networking technologies, and the widespread use of the Internet have transformed stand-alone systems and predominantly closed networks into a virtually seamless fabric of interconnectivity. During this period, Indian IT industry has also built up an enormous confidence for itself in the global markets. Today India is recognized as the outsourcing destination of choice in the world. The major developed markets are sourcing

IT/ITES from India to gain bottom-line benefits so as to improve their competitive edge this outstanding growth has been attained only because of the employees in the IT sector. They have worked without any rest for attaining the target fixed by the company. They have even risked their health for attaining the target. Many of the labour laws applicable to the industry have been simplified in the name of requirement for growth and development of the industry and employers are now playing with these simplified laws by taking advantage of the existing loop holes. Success of every business enterprise depends on its human resource. Money, material and machines are inert factors; but man with his ability to feel, think, conscience and plan is the most valuable resource. At the same time, human elements are most difficult to be inspired, controlled and motivated. The upcoming competition in India will demand high motivational level of its employees. Growth of an enterprise is vital for the economic development of the country. This is possible only by maintaining the enthusiasm and motivation of the employees, which is vital for carrying out the operations in most efficient manner. The most successful companies, all over the world have designed their business policies to achieve higher productivity by using potentiality and strength of people. The basic aim of human policies is the genuine concern for the people. Proper design of human policies and settlement of their concerns is of great importance. This study will reveal to the management of the organization on how the software engineers maintain the work-life balance and whether they are successful in attaining the same.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Voydanoff (2001) have found significant interdependence between the roles that each requires workers to perform work-family conflict practices when balance cannot be achieved between the two roles. Either role may demand more time or more responsibilities, potentially leading to a reduction in. Kelkar (2003) observed that heavy work schedules and 14-16 hours' workdays is the norm of IT companies. The employees work long hours in office and 2-3 hours in home. Work Life Balance is the part of HRM jargon of IT companies, but in reality it is only work. There is no such balance between work and family in the industry. Family Friendly Working Hours Taskforce (2009) in their report "Flexible Working: working for families, working for business" identified that Women are still the primary careers in our society and, as a result, face the greatest difficulties in reconciling their caring responsibilities with the demands and expectations of full time work. Many changes in the workplace and in employee demographics in the past few decades have led to an increased concern for understanding the boundary and the interaction between employee, work and non-work lives (Hochschild 1997; and Hayman 2005). As more and more women are joining the workforce and dual career couple are becoming increasingly common (Moorhead et.al, 1997). One of the major reason for this increasing concern for work life balance is due to technological advancement which has morphed the work and personal lives of working professionals into a single whole. Lester (1999) argued that technology can help and hinder work-life balance by making work more accessible at all times of the day and night; and also in terms of enabling a more flexible approach to when and where to work. Castells (2000) observed that technological development may also facilitate social change leading to redefinition of gender relations and social cultural norms. Lewis, (2000) The concept of work-life balance is based on the notion that paid work and personal life should be seen less as competing priorities than as complementary elements of a full life. The way to achieve this is to adopt an approach that is "conceptualized as a two way process involving a consideration of the needs of employees as well as those of employers"

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Employees in the IT & ITES take painful effort to deliver the various needs of its customers. Work deadlines are getting compact and the individual's jobs are loaded and added with quality

output. Due to work in pressure, it becomes hard to maintain balance between professional and family life. The output of the IT sector is dependent on the quality of human resources. The basic function of human resource development is to facilitate performance improvement, measured in terms of finance indicators of operational efficiency and quality of financial services provided. The twin challenges faced by the IT managements are that of retaining the prevailing employees and providing a satisfying work environment for all employees. The study attempts to find out the issues related with managing professional and personal life of employees in IT industry at Techno park. The major objective of this paper is to identify specific issues and challenges in work life balance in IT industry and to suggest measures to improve work life balance.

4. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Work life balance necessitate in attaining equilibrium between professional work and other activities, so that it decreases friction between official and domestic life. Job satisfaction refers to the attitude people have towards their job and the organizations they work for. The quality of work life policies is gradually becoming a part of the business strategy and the focus is on the potential of these policies to persuade employee's quality of working life and more importantly to help them maintain work-life balance with equal attention on performance, commitment at work and Work life and personal life are inter-connected and interdependent. Spending more time in office, dealing with clients and the pressure of job can restrain and affect the personal life, sometimes making it impossible to even complete the family responsibilities. Work-life balance is a key area for quality concern gurus, who consider that balance between work and life is of crucial importance when it comes to performance of the workforce in general and service industry in particular. But increasing work pressures, globalization and technological advancement have made it an issue with both the sexes, all professionals working across all levels and all industries throughout the world. Attaining "work-life balance" is not as simple as it sounds. Work-personal life conflict occurs when the burden, obligations and responsibilities of work and family roles become incompatible. Obligation of one can force an individual to neglect the other.

5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the work and family related factors that influence the work-family balance of IT professionals
2. To understand the challenges they face and the type of coping strategy they use to achieve work family balance

6. METHODOLOGY

A survey was conducted with 60 software engineers of different years of service in organizations related to information technology. Data were collected by using a questionnaire containing different indicators of work-life balance.

6.1. Research Design

6.1.1. Population

There are 200 software development companies working at Techno park. In each company an average of 80 software engineers are working making a total of 16000 population

6.1.2. Sample size

A random sample of 200 software engineers are selected from various software development companies at Technopark, Trivandrum

6.1.3. Sources of data

Primary data is collected by using a well-designed questionnaire specifically designed for this purpose. Secondary data is collected from various journals and website of NASSCOM.

Table 1 Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Factors Classification	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Age 20 – 25 Years	50	25%
26 – 30 Years	100	50%
31 – 35 Years	30	15%
Above 35 years	14	7%
Sex		
Male	130	65%
Female	70	35%
MaritalStatus		
Single	80	40%
Married	110	55%
Separated	10	5%
Experience		
0-3 years	110	55%
3-5 years	29	15%
5-7 years	37	17%
7-9 years	21	10%
Above 9 years	7	3%
Income- Level		
Less than 25000	85	42.5%
Rs 25001-Rs 50000	60	30%
Rs 50001 –Rs 100000	40	20%
More Than Rs 100000	15	7.5%

The above reflects the composition of respondents with regard to age, income level, gender, marital status and the percentage of their perception on work life balance.

Table 2 Frequency of Respondents having difficulty in adjusting their family life with their Organizational workload

Response	Frequency	Percentage
yes	144	72
No	50	25
undecided	6	3
Total	200	100

The above table indicates that 72 per cent of respondents will have difficulty adjusting their family life to the demands of their work. 50% of respondents have no problem in adjusting their family life with work.

Table 3 Frequency of Respondents having problems with adjusting their Personal Life with Organizational Workload

Response	Frequency	Percentage
yes	134	67
No	60	30
undecided	6	3
Total	200	100

Table number 3 shows that 67% of respondents face problems with personal life and workload and 30% of respondents have no problem in adjusting their personal life with organization performance.

Table 4 Perception towards Factors affecting Work-life balance

Variables	Mean
Support from Management	4.33
Support from colleagues	3.33
Organizational change	3.2
Work life conflict	3.1
Physical Health	2.1
Work overload	2.33
Working hours	3.12
Managerial style	4.22
Additional job responsibilities	2.3
Personal financial problems	3.3

Scale 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Disagree 4 = Neither Agree or Disagree, 5 = Somewhat Agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly Agree

The above table reveals the average responses with regard to various factors affecting the work life balance

7. CONCLUSION

Work Life Balance (WLB) is an important area of Human Resource Management which is gaining more attention from Policy Makers, Organizations, Management, Researchers, Employees, and their representatives globally. The pressure of the workload and personal life can lead to stress. According to the study, it has been found that such situations affect an individual's health both physiologically and psychologically. The Work Life Balance policies and programs are an investment in an organization for improving productivity, reducing absenteeism, achieving improved customer services, better health, flexible working as well as satisfied and motivated workforce especially in IT industry. Achieving work life balance in the fast pace of IT system and creating a balance between professional and personal life is a challenge for an individual. Employees' are the pillars of the organization. So organization should give its attention towards the welfare and needs of the employees. So that employees can able to balance their dual role i.e., work as well as personal life.

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