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Role of Family Support in Balancing Personal and Work Life of Women Employees

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ABSTRACT

The Economy and Financial needs of the Family made the women to come out the home and work for livelihood. They try to perform various jobs and sometimes may opt for the difficult jobs in order to satisfy the above need. Organizational efforts at providing a supportive work environment are appreciated as they go for a long way towards enhancing Work-Life Balance. The study has aimed to find the impact of family support and suggests the need to initiatives of Work-Life Balance practices. Family support, spouse support, Social support may require for care giving for Children, Elder parents / in-laws and dependents, etc., for balancing the work and non-work responsibilities.

KEYWORDS : family support, work life, women employees, children, organizational efforts.

INTORDUCTION

Work-life balance of women employee has become an important subject since the women are equally sharing the earning responsibility for the betterment of their family. Women are getting into job and they continue to work even after marriage. A woman has more responsibilities than man in taking care of young children and family. Achieving work-life balance is not as easy around 70% amongst the married working women population are still struggling to achieve work-life balance. This has compelled many women to leave their jobs as they do not have child care facilities at work. Women have to make tough choices when their work and personal life is nowhere close to equilibrium. Working women have multiple responsibilities to do, right from business trips, work pressure, projects to handle, and cherry on the top is managing the home and her life. The trend has begun wherein the employers have initiated to retain talent and satisfy their needs, such as providing facility of Work-Life Balance practices. According to a survey, psychologists concluded that, women are mentally stronger than men and are better at multitasking. In Indian society, it is observed that working women sacrifices her careers at peak for reasons such as children or ageing parents. One needs to keep patience and great expertise to have a perfect balance.

Many women are opting jobs in order to build a good career and give financial support to their families. To lead a comfortable living and self satisfaction, women are working hard to get a balance between their personal and work life. Indian women's is needs a lot of loving support to set back, their life a vision for themselves, have tools or resources and create structures to support themselves in an environment where there are a myriad of culture and societal factors not very conducive for them to thrive. The support from their spouse, parents, children, friends, and peer group will them in gaining the balance between paid and unpaid responsibilities.

MEANING AND DEFINITION OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE

"Work-life balance is not just about women juggling work, home and family – although that is certainly an important part of it. It is also about adjusting working patterns and policies so that everyone – regardless of age, race or gender, can find a rhythm that enables them more easily to combine work with their other responsibilities or aspirations." - DfES.

Most of the women are coming forward to work in order to support their family. This change is now natural and dynamic due to change of environment and economic conditions. The biggest challenge for women is how to balance the demands of family and career because of these factors such as over work burden, work stress, nuclear family, work commitment, work- family conflict, childcare, ageing parents, lack of social support etc.

Small nuclear families have come to stay, where both the spouses go to work. In addition, there are an increasing number of single parent households due to increase in divorces (Amato et al. 2003).

Family life is also becoming more complex. The extended family, even in India, is a slowly disappearing **(Patel 2005).**

Social support from spouse, relatives, friends, and colleagues can reduce family and work conflict **(Geertije, 2006).**

Women with dependent children are finding it more difficult to balance their life, who have dependent children would like to spend most of the time with them and their education (Sanjiv Gupta, 2009).

SCOPE OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE

The scope of work life balance does not restrict to home and work only. The scope is much wider. It takes into itself the four quadrants of our life also. Life delivers the value and balance we desire for. Our life has four quadrants: Work, Family, Friends, / community and self. To make one's life happy, it is very important in today's world to maintain a right balance between all the four quadrants.

CONCEPT OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Work-Life Balance is a broad concept. The term simply means maintaining a balance between the professional and personal life and not sacrificing either of them. Life includes giving time to family members, pleasure, leisure time and spiritual development. The concept of work life balance has stemmed from the fact that an individual's work life and personal life may put forth conflicting demands on one another and the demands from both the domains are equally important. Work-life balance refers to maintaining the balance between responsibilities at work and at home. Work life balance is one of the most challenging issues being faced by the women employees in the 21st century because of the type of roles they play at home and the spillover of personal life over work life.

WHY WORK LIFE BALANCE?

Employees in the present time prefer job between that entail the content of flexibility. Working people including dual career couples require availability of time at different points in different stages of their career to meet different personal and social needs. Resultantly, working people struggle to strike balance between working hours and personal obligations. Organizations in abroad appear to quite alarmed about Work-Life Balance, organizations in India have started realizing the urgency of the need of Work-Life Balance and taking the needed steps. Consequences of good Work-Life Balance benefit the organization in a variety of ways as improved performance, increased productivity, augmented employees satisfaction and happiness, sound well-being, enhanced organizational image, improved employee retention, reduced cost, reduced stress and improved quality of life and so on. Likewise, the consequences of poor WLB can be low level of morale and motivation, increased number of grievances, work-family conflict, productivity level, poor organizational image, poor quality of work life, poor quality of life and so on.

PROBLEMS FACED BY WOMEN EMPLOYEES

The main problem for most of the employees is child care and assistance for which they depend upon their parents and in-laws. The in-

laws at the old age feel difficult to handle the children. The mother in-law may show some kind of authority and anger towards the working women, which leads to conflict. This conflict may spread throughout the family leading to distortions where women lose social support from family members not only this, the other life issues or crises can also contribute to work-life conflict. These issues include the need for family, community and personal time, managing ongoing family needs, family emergencies, and community involvement.

One of the most significant trends in work-life balance is the increasing focus on eldercare. Work-life professionals anticipate eldercare and dependent care will become a major issue in their busy schedule. When providing eldercare, caregivers engage in a variety of activities, including providing physical and medical, helping with housework and socializing and communication.

Both work-to life and life to work conflict have also been associated with increased stress and burnout, cognitive difficulties such as staying awake, lack of concentration, and low alertness and reduced level of general health and energy. While the majority of work-life balance research focuses on employees family responsibilities, there are also a number of studies that recognize commitments to friends and community groups, expanding the affected population to virtually all employees.

PROBLEMS AT WORKPLACE

Working conditions, Number of days of work, balance all the needs with income, long working hours, worry about work, stress arising from work, feel pressure by many work demands, sexual harassment, travel and satisfy their boss attitudes.

PROBLEMS AT HOME

Marital relationship, Hindrance to carry out the responsibilities, Domestic responsibilities, suspicion from family members, Husbands attitude and non co-operations, Attitude of family members, Quality time with family. Women sacrifices are often made in the area of home and family.

SUPPORTIVE STRATEDIES

Most of the employees require multiple supports and strategies they use to assist them achieve a healthy work-life balance. The use of time management strategies and the presence of social support from family, friends and neighbors are possible supports in enabling them to manage the demands of their various roles.

SOCIAL SUPPORT

Social support can be bifurcated into two facets such as organizational support and family related support .Work related social support comes from the organizational members, such as peers and supervisors, where an employee works, whereas personal social support comes from spouse, parents, children, extended family or friends.

Social support is believed to have a positive impact on the working roles performed by women at work places by enhancing job satisfaction and creating balance, thereby eliminating work-family conflicts. It is one of the important resources for working women to manage their work and family domains. It helps to balances their work and family roles in a positive way by sharing the thoughts and the problems arising out of work and personal affairs

FAMILY SUPPORT

Family support policies are expected to play a crucial role, not only in enabling people to have the number of children they want, thereby contributing to demographic renewal, but also in combating child poverty. Family policy is multifaceted and involves a range of objectives. These include combating child and family poverty and promoting child development and well-being by helping households to have the number of children they desire at the time of their choice. The role of family policies is to create a context where these different primary objectives are compatible, although relative priorities may vary across countries. The way in which objectives are framed, and the policy instruments used to achieve them also differ widely from country to country.

HUSBAND ATTITUDE AND CO-OPERATION

The relationship between wife and husband should be lovable, affectionate, friendly, cordial and smooth. Women expect social support from spouse and family members. 60% of the men whose wives work outside the home sometimes take on household responsibilities and chores. The relationship between wife and husband should be like fish and water. But, due to the imbalance their relationship changes to fish and fisherman. Sometimes due to inadequate time, long working hours, stress and ego feelings, the employees stay rigid to share their problems and ideas. Thus they loose co-operation from the husband and experience imbalance.

PARENTS SUPPORT

Working parents (especially those with young children) are likely to have an acute need for working arrangements that allow them to strike a balance between the demands of their jobs and their parental responsibilities. The right balance between work and the rest of our lives varies from person to person and the policies and practices an employer can introduce will depend very much upon the organizational setting in which employees work. The Government's campaign encourages employers to adopt working practices which are consistent with business goals at the same time as improving their employees' work-life balance.

The support of the women's parents is a significant source of career support. The subjects talked about how they were raised, the examples set by their parents, their invaluable advice, and their inculcation of the belief that their children could do anything.

CHILDRENS SUPPORT

The children have clear task to be done, such as help to cooking, setting the table for dinner, finishing homework and taking care of pets, etc., with these help from children women able to cope up with their dual responsibilities.

FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS SUPPORT

Friends and neighbors also playing active role for supporting the working women by way of take care of children, old age and also for financial support.

HOW TO MAKE FAMILY SUPPORT MORE EFFECTIVE?

1. To assist parents with the direct costs of children in order to reduce differences in the standard of living between households with and without children
2. To help parents to combine work and family life this can be achieved by investments in all-day childcare facilities and/or entitlement to short parental leave schemes that encourage parents to work before and to minimize time away from work after a birth. These work-life balance policies not only encourage mother's labor market participation and gender equality in a larger sense but also have social and educational aims.
3. To support children's cognitive and social development particularly by promoting equal opportunities for children and by compensating for any disadvantages they may experience from an early age.

CONCLUSION

Work is important for people in order to lead a happy and comfortable life. But the primary group of any employee is her family members. If she gets the required support from spouse and parents, it becomes easy for anyone to maintain a balance in their life. Low balance may result into employee attrition, high absenteeism and sometimes may lead to health problems. It is essential to have maximum family support to ensure excellent Work-Life Balance.

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