



Work-Life Balance: A Study Among the Teaching Staffs of Bengtol College of Chirang District, Assam

KEYWORDS

Work-life balance, maintaining equilibrium and enhancing work-life condition.

P. Ashok Alexander

PhD Research Scholar, Department of Social Work, Pondicherry University, Puducherry-605014.

Ebria Khakhlari

Assistant Professor, Department of History, Bengtol College, Chirang District, Assam-783394.

ABSTRACT

The term work-life balance refers to the condition of maintaining equilibrium between work and personal life. In the modern day of life; one finds very difficult to balance the work-life. The difficulty is caused by the additional work load and work pressure. This builds lots of challenges in the work-life. Teaching is one among the challenging job with definite passion involved in it. A proper work-life balance is essential to perform the job of teaching in an effective manner. On the onset of understanding the work-life balance of college teachers; the current study was conducted among the teaching staffs of Bengtol College. The study aims to understand the problems faced by the teaching staffs of Bengtol College in balancing their work life, to study how the teaching staffs manage their work-life balance and to provide suggestions and recommendations to enhance their work-life balance. Census method was used to collect data from the respondents. Descriptive research design was adopted for the study. Self structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents.

"You cannot imagine the craving for rest that I feel—a hunger and thirst. For six long days, since my work was done, my mind has been a whirlpool, swift, unprogressive and incessant, a torrent of thoughts leading nowhere, spinning round swift and steady"

-H.G. Wells

"You will never feel truly satisfied by work until you are satisfied by life"

-Heather Schuck

The quotes given by the two eminent scholars greatly explain the importance of work-life balance in life. An unrest mind cannot give a good output and it stays unprogressive. Sensible prioritization between the work and family life results in progress in work and peace in the family life. The current study focuses on the work-life balance of teaching staffs of Bengtol college of Chirang district, Assam.

About Bengtol College

The concept of establishment of Bengtol College started way back in the year 1977. A committee was formed by the educated intelligentsia or conscious citizens of the area with the solemn purpose of education of the area. So it has a long journey of odds and tribulation with the time running and finally the College Management Committee was formed in the year 1981 with the sole aim of the long cherished dream of College. But the actual functioning of the College began in the year 1997 and in that very year in the month of August the college was opened along with the classes. The number of students in the initial years was very less in number with just seven (7) students in total.

Bengtol College is also one of the premier colleges in the Lower Assam district of Chirang on the Indo-Bhutan borders and which has been imparting quality education to the entire area, where most of the students belong to poor socio-economic background mostly belonging to schedule tribes of India. Bengtol College has been affiliated to University of Gauhati since 1999 and it is purely Degree College recognized by the University Grants Commission and the Government of Assam.

Bengtol College is an epitome of the entire northern region of the Bodoland area. The College is purely Degree College with Arts stream offering Honours courses to the students in various subjects.

The College has been established with a mission and vision of educating the young learners as well as learners of different ages and communities. The College has central Library which is the centre of learning for the students and the library is well-equipped with academic texts and other knowledgeable texts too. Bengtol College has rendered lots of voluntary services to the locality for development in various fields.

The teaching staffs of the College are from different regions of Assam and North-East India. The teachers with their best effort try to impart the best lessons to the students.

Importance of work-life balance

Teaching is one among the noble profession which has the bottom line of educating the students. The teachers require a balanced work-life condition in order to perform well in the profession. In the recent era teaching profession has become more challenging and it demands perfection. Academics tend to work more on their own research and publications after hours and, in addition make use of their vacation time to attend or present at research conferences (Santos & Cabral-Cardoso, 2008). The busy working condition blurs the boundaries between work and family life. They lose the connectivity between the family affairs, needs and demands.



Diagram 1: Pictorial illustration of work-life balance

This current study on work-life balance tries to find out the cause of imbalance between the work and personnel life of the teaching staffs of Bengtol college. It also makes an attempt to provide some suggestions to improve the quality of work-life balance.

Objectives of the study

1. To understand the problems faced by the teaching staffs of Bengtol College in balancing their work life.
2. To study how the teaching staffs manage their work-life balance.
3. To provide suggestions and recommendations to enhance their work-life balance.

Review of Literature:

Caproni P J (1997) the author states that performing office work at home surely affects the family life. The family expects some times to be spent with them. Busy with office work at home results in limited conversation with family members and keeps outdated about the family condition. This may lead to poor interpersonal relationship and thus it results in conflict with the family members. The author suggests spending sometimes with family members' gives relaxation and patience in life. This enables to perform better in the office.

Tausing M and Fenwick R (2001) schedule control improves work-life balance. The study focuses on the schedule control on office timings to improve the work-life balance. The imbalance in work-life affects the family and its function. It also affects the performance of work which results in poor performance. The study suggests maintaining a proper schedule control in work time improves the performance of work and it gives sufficient time to spend with the family.

Smithson J and Stokee E (2005) gender equality and flexible working plays a vital role in work-life balance. The article elucidates about the importance of flexibility in working hours and gender equality in the work place. Comparatively women are more engaged than men in household activities such as rearing children and family maintenance. The author states that women shall be given flexible timings which help them to maintain the balance between work and family life.

Currie J and Eveline J (2011) benefiting through academic work at home, came at the cost of family life. The study

was conducted among the academicians of Australian University. The academicians stated that they have achieved more in their carrier by performing the office work at home. But it created a lot of imbalance in their family life and also in the work place. Due to this factor the success and achievement in academics came at a cost of their family life.

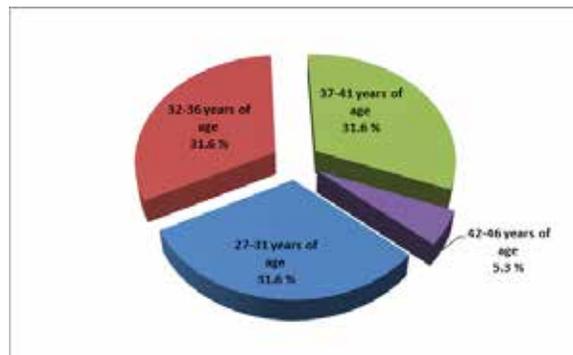
Koteche K, Ukpere W and Geldenhuys M (2014) the usage of ICTs enhance the working potentials of South African higher education academicians. The study reveals that the usage of ICTs among the academicians gives a flexibility to perform the academic works even after the duty hours. The academicians state that the usage of ICTs makes their work easier and enable them to complete it on time. Here comes the question of balancing the work-life with family life. The constant focus on academic work during off duty hours can create an imbalance between the work and family life.

Methodology:

Bengtol college of Chirang district, Assam is the field of study area for this research. Census method was used to collect data for this study. The researchers have used self structured questionnaire for the study. *Inclusion:* The teachings staffs of Bengtol college were included in the study. *Exclusion:* The non-teaching staffs of Bengtol college were not included in the study.

Analysis and findings:

Figure: 1 Age group of respondents



The above figure 1 shows the age group of respondents. The respondents who belong to the age group of 27 to 31 years of age are 31.6 percent. Respondents who belong to 32 to 36 years of age are 31.6 percent and respondents who belong to 37 to 41 years of age are also 31.6 percent. The respondents who belong to 42 to 46 years of age are 5.3 percent.

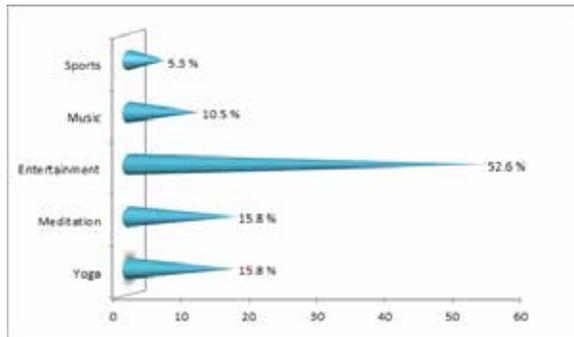
Table: 1 Years of experience

Years of experience	No. of respondents	Percent
1	2	10.5
2	1	5.3
3	1	5.3
4	5	26.3
6	1	5.3
7	1	5.3
8	1	5.3
10	5	26.3
13	1	5.3
18	1	5.3
Total	19	100

The above table 1 elucidates the respondents years of ex-

perience in Bengtol College. The respondents who have 4 and 10 years of experience are 26.3 percent. Around 10.5 percent of respondents have 1 year of experience. The respondents who have respectively 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 13 and 18 years of experience are 5.3 percent.

Figure: 2 Managing stress arise from work



The above figure 2 states the stress management of respondents which arise from work at college. Majority of the respondents (52.6%) manage their stress through entertainment. Around 15.8 percent of respondents' manage stress through meditation and yoga. The respondents who manage stress through music are 10.5 percent. Only 5.3 percent of respondents manage stress through sports.

- Around 68 percent of respondents travel less than half an hour and 5 percent of respondents travel more than 2 hours to the college.
- Forty two percent of respondents sometimes feel worried about the work and 26 percent of respondents don't feel worried about the work.
- Sixty eight percent of respondents got married and 58 percent of respondents have children.
- Twenty six percent of respondents' spouses take care of their children.
- Around 6 percent of respondents never spend time with the children.
- Around 11 percent of respondents spend less than 2 hours with their children.
- It is found that around 26 percent of respondents meet the teachers of their children once in a week.
- The respondents who feel happy about the time spent in work place are 79 percent.
- Sixty eight percent of respondents sometimes miss family functions because of work load.
- Fifty eight percent of respondents sometimes feel tired or depressed due to work.
- Almost all the respondents said that the college doesn't provide master health check up.
- Around twenty six percent of respondents suffer from headache due to stress arise from work.
- It is found that around fifty nine percent of respondents carry homemade food to the college.

- Seventy eight percent of respondents spend time in exercise.
- Twenty six percent of respondents spend more than one hour for exercise.
- Forty two percent of respondents do exercise at their home.

Suggestions:

- Prioritizing the personnel commitments during off duty could enable the teaching faculties to manage the stress.
- More time to be spent with the family members and try to know what they need. This is a major aspect in work-life balance.
- Missing the quality time with family due to work pressure leads to dispute in family. Main concern shall be given to family by proper scheduling of work.
- Scheduling the work and performing it according to time improves the quality of work-life balance.
- A little break or relaxation during work can do wonders and improves the performance.
- Master health check-up shall be advisable once in a year to be provided by the college management.
- Practicing yoga and exercise can relieve stress raised through work pressure. These practices could help the teaching staffs who suffer with hypertension, frequent headaches, obesity and diabetics which are the by-products of stress.
- Yoga classes and gym facilities can be provided by the management for the betterment of teaching staffs to maintain a healthy work-life balance.

Conclusion:

Balancing work-life is an art which everyone must learn. Work-life balance acts as equilibrium between the working life and family life. Carrying out office work at home results in less attention to the family affairs and it may lead to misunderstanding with the members of the family. The kayos condition in the family can show the impact on the quality of work in the work place. This acts as a cycle where work pressure affects the family life; once the family life gets affected then it leads to decline in quality of work. Avoiding official work in personnel time and scheduling appropriate time for work and personnel life can lead to a healthy work-life condition.

REFERENCE

- Kotecha, K., Geldenhuys, M., & Ukpere, W. I. (2014). Technology and work-life conflict of academics in a South African higher education institution. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol.5, No.2.
- Currie, J., & Eveline, J. (2011). E-technology and work/life balance for academics with young children. *Higher Education*, 62(4), 533-550.
- Tausig, M., & Fenwick, R. (2001). Unbinding time: Alternate work schedules and work-life balance. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues*, 22(2), 101-119.
- Caproni P J (1997) Work-life balance: You can't get them from here. *Journal of Applied Behavioural Science*. Vol. 33. No.1. March 1997, 46-56.
- Smithson, J., & Stokoe, E. H. (2005). Discourses of work-life balance: negotiating 'genderblind' terms in organizations. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 12(2), 147-168.
- Santos, G. G., & Cabral-Cardoso, C. (2005). Work-family culture in academia: a gendered view of work-family conflict and coping strategies. *Gender in Management: An International journal*, 23(6), 442-457.