



DEVELOPING A RESEARCH FRAMEWORK FOR STUDYING WORK-LIFE BALANCE

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ABSTRACT Work-life balance had become one of the most important aspects in the technologically advanced world. The employees in the modern world are carrying work from office to home and vice-versa especially due to smart phones and internet technology etc. The aim of the research study is to explain the concept of work-life balance. Further, this study proposes a theoretical model for work-life balance and also measurement scale to collect primary data. The items for each construct are also mentioned in detail. The propositions developed by using theoretical framework of quality of work-life are mentioned in this research work.

KEYWORDS work-life balance, work-life management, flexible work hours, work-life fit, personal life, family life

INTRODUCTION

The modern lifestyle and work environment of employees had created importance for work-life balance. The employees are in the present era performing multiple tasks and they are also working beyond standard hours. Work-life balance can be simply defined as “balance between an individual’s work and his life outside work” (Dhar, 2008). Work-life balance refers to organizational policies that seek to balance the need for worker productivity on the job with the realization that people have personal lives, family responsibilities, and interests outside the workplace that also require nurturing and attention (Daly, 2015). Work-life balance is also used interchangeable with terms like work-life management, work-life fit and personal life etc. Many researchers have defined work-life balance in various ways. In simple words work-life balance can be defined as “managing professional life without any negative impact on personal life”.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY

1. To understand the concept of 'work-life balance'
2. To develop research model and measurement scale in work-life balance area.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to Valta (2014) the quality of work-life is negatively impacted by work related factors like psychological, sociological and physical health etc. The flexible work hours helps women employees to attain work-life balance. The job satisfaction, performance level enhances and absenteeism declines with effective human resource polices from the perspective of work-life balance.

Malik et al (2014) had considered job satisfaction, job benefits and work-life balance in their study and stated there is significant relationship among those three factors. It is also understood from their research that work-life balance is influenced by job benefits and job satisfaction. Bhatnagar and Jain (2014) had explained the impact of demographical variables on work-life balance among professionals in Information Technology (IT) sector. They have stated that professional in metro cities are unable to balance professional life and personal lives by empirical verification.

According to Azeem and Akhtar (2014) had stated that significant relationship exists among work-life balance, job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The management commitment is essential to implement strategies for attaining work-life balance irrespective of the industry. The organizations implement work-life

balance (WLB) programs if their performance is better which means management consider WLB only for themselves instead of implementing as a natural human resource management policy (Adame-Sanchez, Gonzalez-Cruz, & Martinez-Fuentes, 2016). According to Adame et al (2016) the presence of female employees may not represent efficient implementation of work-life balance programs but the presence of women represent healthy implementation of work-life balance programs in organizations.

Haar et al (2014) had stated that employees can attain job satisfaction and life satisfaction with effective implementation of work-life balance and they can also overcome anxiety and depression. In 20th century the work-life programs had considered about working mothers and caregivers etc but even in 21st century the firms are unable to overcome traditional thinking that only female needs work-life balance programs. In the present era all the employees need work-life balance programs irrespective of gender, marital status and company position (Southworth, 2014). According to Baber et al (2014) male medical students would like to pursue a career in surgery than female medical candidates because it helps them to attain intellectual satisfaction and work-life balance.

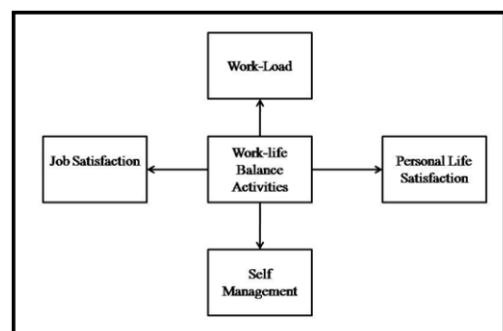


Figure 1: Proposed model for studying impact of work-life balance activities

(Source: Developed by the researchers)

Proposition 1: There is a significant relationship between job satisfaction and implementation of work-life balance activities in organizations.

Proposition 2: There is positive association between self-management and work-life balance activities.

Proposition 3: There is significant relationship between work-load and work-life balance activities.

Proposition 4: There is positive relationship between personal life satisfaction and work-life balance activities.

Table 1: Proposed measurement scale

Construct	Items
Job satisfaction (JS)	1. I feel satisfied with fair treatment and respect at my workplace. 2. I get proper feedback about my work performance from my superior. 3. I feel satisfied with the separation of both my professional and personal life without any conflicts.
Self-management (SM)	1. I have enough time to think, plan and schedule my day-to-day activities. 2. I have enough time to take care of myself. 3. I undergo physical exercise and yoga regularly.
Work-load (WL)	1. I feel appreciated because of my responsibilities of my job. 2. I often reach home at right time during evenings. 3. I plan my work and perform orderly without any delay.
Personal life satisfaction (PLS)	1. I am happy with my free time/ leisure time. 2. I can have my breakfast without hurry. 3. I am able to get minimum 6 hours of nice sleep at night
Work-life balance activities (WLB)	1. In my organization specific work-life balance (WLB) has been established. 2. My job had become easier with effective implementation of WLB activities in my organization. 3. All employees are aware about WLB activities implemented in my organization.

(Source: Compiled by authors based on literature)

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this paper the research model had been developed based on the existing literature on work-life balance. The factors in the proposed research model Figure 1 are job satisfaction (JS), work load (WL), work-life balance activities (WLB), self –management (SM) and personal life satisfaction (PLS). The items for each construct or factor are mentioned in Table 1. All the items under each construct are adopted from previous published papers. The items are slightly modified according based on suggestions from experts in human resource management area. The items need to be measured on Likert-type scale which can be either five-point or seven-point.

FUTURE RESEARCH

This research paper had developed research model and measurement scale for studying work-life balance. The primary data can be collected by using the proposed measurement scale and it can be analyzed by framing hypothesis. The hypothesis can be formulated based on the propositions which are mentioned in this paper. There are four propositions mentioned in this paper. The research model and measurement scale can be used to perform research in different organizations, different industries and various geographical locations by future researchers.

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