

International Journal of Research in Human Resource Management



E-ISSN: 2663-3361
P-ISSN: 2663-3213
IJRHRM 2022; 4(1): 92-95
Received: 02-05-2021
Accepted: 05-06-2021

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Impact of employee work-life balance on performance of software employees' during COVID-19 pandemic

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Abstract

During the emergency situation all over the globe due to Corona Virus (COVID-19) pandemic it was difficult for everyone to cope up with specially the labor class. The emerging challenge for today's employees is to find the right balance of the work and the family as most of the people especially in cities are failing to balance between work life and family life due to demand in changing work pattern, competition, unemployment etc. Hence software companies are implementing work life balance practices such as flexi work schedules, compressed work week, work from home, self directed teams etc to comfort the employee on job and ensure good employee performance leading to good organizational performance. The present study focus on impact of work life balance on performance of software employees of Karnataka, a sample of 200 employees have been chosen randomly for the study. The online survey using a structured questionnaire has been conducted to collect the required data from the respondents. A pilot study was made before finalizing the questionnaire and made the required changes to the questionnaire. The aim of the study is to analyze the work flexibility and family life of software employees, the study also made an attempt to analyze the opinion and satisfaction level of employees working in software industries during COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: Corona Virus, work-life balance, labor class

Introduction

The outbreak of Corona virus since March, 2020 has affected the way the companies, organizations, business, institutions, software companies works all over the globe. During pandemic companies, organizations made alternate arrangements to work, most if not all employees have experienced working from home (WFH) following the lockdown in the country and world. This practice of working from home employed widely by organizations, companies, government. Initially employees enjoyed work from home as it helps to balance work and family simultaneously, but over the time they had some issues also as many companies, as institution and employees were not prepared for the sudden change in way of working, the reasons being digital gap like lack of awareness about the tools, online apps, less network or sometimes no network in rural areas, many employees during financial crunch had to spend money for buying gadgets or tools or buying internet package required to work online. Most of the software companies are working from home even today using information and communication technology (ICT).

Multi-faced demand from professional and personal life has assumed more relevance for employees. Work life balance practices are designed to reduce work-life conflict and ensure employee give their best towards their work. The work-life conflicts may be due to changes in workplace demographics, such as dual career couples, single parent, live in relationship, staying separately from family, competition, unattainable targets, advanced in technology, work pressure, health related problems etc, responding to these changes are issues organizations are forced to design some practices to facilitate efforts of employees to fulfill both professional and personal commitment. Achieving and enhancing work-life balance has received a significant attention from organizations, employer, researchers, media and government.

Review of Literature

There are many studies regarding the work-life balance and addressed many issues in multiple perspectives. Few of them are been reviewed in this research \

1. ILO (2020) explained that the major problem faced by employees working from home during COVID-19 pandemic is the conflict between professional and personal life as they experience a blurred line between personal and work life.

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2. Ramakrishna, (2020) Work–life balance, especially for an indefinite time, such as caused by COVID-19, is essential for employee growth, personal happiness and company retention. When employees receive support to find a positive work–life balance, they are usually more motivated to do the job qualitatively.
3. Ramakrishna (2020) Work life balance for an indefinite time due to pandemic is essential for professional growth, personal happiness. Whenever there is positive work-life balance employees are more focused and perform well on their jobs.
4. Korpa (2012) Work life balance concept is widely used to increase awareness on which areas need to be combined and reconciled, thereby framing a division of work and non working life, emphasizing that reconciliation is required not only for work and family life.
5. Saline and Bhawna (2012) has reported their study on Work-life balance, it is one of the strategic tool which is used in an organization to retain and attract the employees and helps them in equally balancing their personal and professional life. And spending equal attention, commitment, and performance in both the aspects of their works.
6. Grover and Croker (1995), organizations are applying employee-friendly strategies in order to bring changes in the demographic shifts, talent attrition, market changes, needs and demands of the employees.
7. Marafi (2013), in his study he has reported that because of allotting overtime work schedules to the employees this leads to the situation where employees are facing imbalances in their personal and professional life. The suggestion which he has given is that it is better to inform employees in advance where he can balance the situations.
8. According to “Rajadhayaksha”, in 2012, has stated that many organizations are providing different policies to manage the work-life balance to the employees. the two major reasons are :-

Statement of the problem

In the competitive era the employees are facing lot of issues with balancing their personal & professional lives due to various reasons, the organizations also striving hard to help the employees to balance their work life, the major reasons for facing the imbalances are due to heavy competition and stressed work environment, which leads to poor performance on job.

Hence the researchers have made an attempt to understand or to know the impact of Work life balance on employee performance.

Objectives of the study

- To understand the concept of work-life balance.
- To understand the impact of work-life imbalances on employees performance of software employees.
- To understand the measures taken by software companies to help the employees to balance their personal and professional life.

Need of the study

Work-life balance is one of the important tasks of an employee which shows the balancing level towards how better he/she is balancing the personal & professional life. Work-life balance leads to various decisions that are taken by an employee regarding the managing / satisfying work-family issues and thereby how better an individual is focusing on his/her career growth.

The need of work-life balance of software employees is to understand the various reasons for imbalances that the employees face in an organization and also to understand the measures taken by software companies to provide their employees different benefits which will help the employees to balance their work and family life.

The need is to understand the impact of work-life balance measures taken by software companies to help the employees to balance their personal and professional life which can lead to the best performance by employees.

Scope of the study

Work-life balance is important to each and every individual. Work-life balance is how an employee is able to manage his (or) her family and work. Many of the researchers have done their project on work-life balance. Hence, the scope of this study is limited to only work-life balance of the employees of software companies.

Limitations

- The information given by the respondents are highly depends upon their interest and the accuracy may fluctuates.
- Time constraint.

Research methodology

Data collection

The data required for the study is majorly primary data hence to collect primary data a structured questionnaire is chosen in Google forms. A pilot study was conducted before sharing the questionnaire links to the target respondents and accordingly required changes were made A questionnaire was designed to measure the performance, challenges and satisfaction of software employees using five-point Likert scale. The required secondary data was collected from sources like news papers, research articles and journals, books, different websites including government websites.

Data analysis

To analyze the Correlation between personal and professional life performance different variables of Likert five-point scale was performed to determine the significant difference between personal and professional life and performance and satisfaction during pandemic. A version of SPSS (statistical package for social science research) 20.0 was used for data analysis.

Research design

An empirical research design was chosen to analyze the mentioned objectives. A descriptive research design was selected to describe the performance of software employees.

Table 1: Demographic profile of participants

Variable	No. of respondents (%)	%
Gender		
Male	80	53.4
Female	70	46.6
Experience		
0-5	50	33.4
6-10	60	39.9
10+	40	26.7
Marital status		
Married	110	73.3
Unmarried	40	26.7

Source: Survey result

Interpretation

The survey shows 53.4% of employees are males and 46.6 % are females, majority of employees are with 6-10 year

experience with 39.9% followed by 0-5 years being 33.4% and 10+ being 26.7%. Majority of employees are married with 73.3 % and unmarried being 26.7%

Table 2: Respondents opinion to statements from Questionnaire

Sl. No	Statement	5 (SA) %	4 (A) %	3 (N) %	2 (DA) %	1 (SDA) %
1	Able to manage both work and family during pandemic	40	33	10	9	8
2	Facing more work pressure	40	17	29	7	7
3	It is good to work from home than office	52	12	3	8	25
4	Company is taking care of employees during pandemic	47	15	13	13	12
5	May hinder the performance by WFH	10	37	5	48	0
6	Abide by the company policies even when working online/from home	76	14	10	00	00
7	WFH helps achieving work-life balance	59	23	11	10	7
8	Company implemented best WLB practices	60	10	7	15	8
9	Salaries are paid regularly	48	29	15	13	5
10	There is satisfaction with the new work arrangements	36	31	17	6	10

Source: Survey data

Interpretation

The above data shows 40% of employees strongly agreed that they are able to manage both work and family during pandemic 33% agreed to this statement, 10% remained neutral, 9% disagree and 8 % of employees are strongly disagree with the statement. 40% employees have strongly agreed that they facing more work pressure followed by 17% of them agreed to this statement, 29% remain neutral and disagree and strongly disagree with 7% each. 52% employees strongly agreed that it is good to work from home than office followed by 25% of them strongly disagreed, 12% agreed, 8% disagree and 3 % remained neutral to this statement. 47% of employee strongly agreed to the statement that Company is taking care of employees during pandemic followed by 15% agreed 13 % neutral and 13% disagree, 7% strongly disagree to the statement. 48% of them disagreed that May hinder the performance by WFH followed by 37% agreed, 10% strongly agree, 5% neutral and 0 % have strongly disagreed to the statement, 76% of employees have strongly agreed that they are abide by the company policies even when working online, followed by 14 agreed, 10% neutral and 0% disagree and 0% strongly disagree. 59% of employees have strongly agreed that WFH helps achieving work-life balance followed by 23% agree, 11% neutral, 10% disagree and 7 % strongly disagree to the statement. 60% of employees have opined that Company implemented best WLB practices followed by 15% disagree, 11% agree, 7% neutral and 8% have strongly disagreed to the statement, 48% of them have strongly agreed that Salaries are paid regularly followed by 29% agree, 5% neutral, 13% disagree and 5% strongly disagreed

to the statement, 36% of them have strongly agreed that there is satisfaction with the new work arrangements followed by 31% agree, 17% neutral, 10% strongly disagree and 6% disagree with the statement.

Findings of the study

The findings of the study revealed that majority of the employees with 90% are abide by the company policies even when working online or from home, 70% opined that Company implemented best WLB practices 82% employees feel work from home helps to achieve work-life balance although employees had issues related to attending both works due to change in way of work and being new to the work practice. By evaluating the data of survey we can say that employees are able to perform work even being at home and taking care of family responsibilities as well. The performance of employees is found to be almost same as when working from office, study shows employees are happy spending time with family members hence enjoying both simultaneously. The responsibilities of women have significantly increased due to pandemic specially the women with kids. It has also increased the burden of unpaid work in private sector. Obviously COVID-19 had affected both men and women but women were affected more due to work and family responsibility.

Conclusion

The study showed the varying degree of impact of pandemic on performance of software employee. Work from home helped them to balance both work and family during pandemic. The present found that initially majority of the

employee had issues as there is digital gap and financial problem. Employees with different issues and challenges some of them were not able to cope up due to financial problem.

Work life balance (WLB), a very important aspect for the organizational employees, it is an issue which requires a proper attention from the organizations. In the rapidly changing environment requiring where organizations to operate 24/7, and advances in the technology made it possible for the organisations to be connected at all times, Work life programs in organizations have potential to improve employee morale, reduce absenteeism, and retain organizational knowledge, and help organizations particularly during difficult times. Organizations must take the conscious efforts to counter barriers to work life balance. Employee must ensure effective time and stress engagement. Today, companies aim to reduce costs, it falls to the human resource professional to understand the critical issues of work/life balance and work/life programs. The work life programs implemented at organizations provide support and flexibility which helps individuals combat the increasing complexities of today's working life that includes number of aspects like dual earning families, eldercare and childcare. Work life programs in organizations provide a win-win situation for both employers and employees ensuring quality of work life.

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