

Introduction to work life balance management essay



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Man is a social animal, needs time for self, family and society to satisfy their various needs. An individual spends more than eight hours a day in office, remaining is spent in travel to and from office, and with family and friends. Very little time is available for attending to his/her personal needs or grooming. In today's highly competitive environment people are giving more importance to their work, by working hard, spending more time at the office, learning and adapting to the changing business environment to stay relevant. The quality of the time spent by people with their family, friends or for themselves would help the individuals to relax, refocus and perform better in their jobs. This would automatically benefit the organizations in enhancing the overall organizations performance. Work-life balance is a concept including proper prioritizing between "work" (career and ambition) and "lifestyle" (Health, pleasure, leisure, family and spiritual development/meditation)¹. This study aim at understanding the current work - life balance scenario in Pharmaceutical Industry. And the efforts of organization in improving the work life balance. The descriptive study was carried out in the city of Bangalore, which has large number of Pharmaceutical Companies. The sample was drawn from these companies. The study showed that the employees as well as the organizations are able to manage the work-life balance. Even though there was no empirical evidence to suggest the same. Further research is required to find out the relation between work-life balance and performance of individuals and the organizations.

Keywords: Work Life Balance, Stress, Family Life, Quality of work life

Introduction to Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance is a concept including proper prioritizing between “ work” (career and ambition) and “ lifestyle” (Health, pleasure, leisure, family and spiritual development/meditation)¹. Work life balance is a choice an individual has to make. However, it is the organization that needs to take an initiative to help the employees. Today, an employee is not looking at their employer just for a job, also to care for their work life balance and their well being. If a company addresses these needs, in addition to providing better career opportunities, they can be very successful in providing job satisfaction to the employees. Companies are adopting new means to ensure that their employees get enough time to enjoy their personal life and spend time with family. It is very essential for the organizations to have good work-life balance practices and policies; this would ensure various factors like:

Decreased employee turnover rates.

Helps the organization in becoming Preferred Employer.

Improved ROI on employees, as there is reduced turnover.

Enhanced employee morale and satisfaction.

Less absenteeism due to employee satisfaction.

Enhanced employee loyalty and commitment towards the organization.

Enhanced organizational performance.

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Pharmaceutical Industry and Employment in India

Indian pharmaceutical industry is controlled and operated by major foreign pharmaceutical companies having their subsidiaries in India due to the availability of cheap labour in India. The majority of the companies functioning in Indian market are SMEs. Majority of these organizations employ Indians at every level of the organizational hierarchy. Many of the Indian origin companies are a combination of public and private enterprise. Leadership in these organizations generally passes from father to son or from founder to other members of his/her family.

The growth in the domestic market is estimated be 21% for the year 2016 – 2017. In terms of global market India currently has 2% of market share, and is growing at 10% per annum and is estimated to grow at the rate of 18% by the year 2016-17. The Indian pharmaceutical industry today is 3rd largest product in the global market and is expected to grow and become an Industry of \$20bn by 2015 from the current levels of \$12bn.

In the current year pharmacy and health care industry has seen increased hiring and salaries have been growing in the range of 10% to 15%. The Indian industry is undergoing demographical changes in terms of mergers and acquisitions. The career opportunity in the pharmaceutical industry varies widely from R & D, Quality Assurance, Manufacturing, Sales and Marketing. Industry has the ability to retain and attract talent even during the financial crisis in the global economic scenario as industry is recession proof.

Some of the major challenges faced by the pharmacy industry in terms of its manpower are

Retaining and Attracting workforce

Technology adoption

Compliance to statutory standards and practices

Skilled, Competent and motivated work force

Lack of research orientation

Review of Literature

Employee well being has often been examined using measures of work-life conflict and work-life balance. (Rumi & Arushi 2011) Work-life balance is about employees having a control on their activities which they perform at various times and at different places. This balance is achieved when an organization accepts it as basic right of an employee to have satisfied life both in the organization and outside the organization this would result in benefits to the individual, organization and society as a whole. (Niharika & Supriya 2010) Organisational efforts at providing a supportive work environment are appreciated as they go a long way towards enhancing work-life balance. (Lobel 1991) defined work family conflict as a condition that arises when participation in either role (work or non-work) is incompatible with participation in the other role. Work-life balance has been defined as satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home with minimum of role conflict (Clark 2001), and also as the degree to which an individual is able to

simultaneously balance the temporal, emotional and behavioural demands of both paid and family responsibilities (Hill, Hawkins, Ferris, & Weitzman 2001). (Clark 2001) used different scales to represent work-life balance, role conflict, work satisfaction, home satisfaction, family functioning and employee citizenship. Many of the researches have provided evidence for the advantage of work life programs for both the employee and the organizations. Across these studies, researches have selected various aspects of work life programs, but have majorly chosen childcare (Goff, Mount and Jamison 1990) and flexible time policies (Thomas & Ganster 1995). These studies have found work-life programs to be associated with increased levels of employee commitment and loyalty (Grover & Crooker 1995, Roehling, Roehling & Moen 2001), reduced absenteeism and turnover (Goff et al., 1990) and reduced stress and work-family conflict (Thomas & Ganster 1995).

Research Design

In today's fast changing business environment and the changing lifestyle of employees, are creating lot of stress and pressure on them. People in general are finding it difficult to manage and cope up with the demands of both personal as well as work. This is leading higher level of job dissatisfaction and also affecting their personal life, leading to burnouts, depression among the people. This leads to reduced performance at the work place. In order to avoid these effects of unbalanced work-life, organizations and individuals have to take necessary initiatives to manage proper Work - Life Balance. This would not only improve the morale of the people but also would help the organizations in improving the performance

at work place. This study aims at identifying the factors affecting the work life balance, and the steps taken by the organizations to manage work-life balance. For this study Descriptive research approach is used, with selection of Bangalore as Place of Research. The pharmaceutical companies in the Bangalore city are taken as the population. Systematic random sampling is used to select the companies for our study. Further conveyance sampling approach was used to conduct the survey among the employees of selected companies. Due to limitation of time and resources only 50 samples were used for the study. Respondents belong to various functional departments of these organizations, including skilled and semi skilled employees. Structure questionnaire was used a tool for collecting the primary data. Secondary data was collected from past research articles published in Journals, ongoing research, magazines and newspapers, and reports of the Industry. Due to the lack of availability of time and resources, the study was restricted to Bangalore City only. Further the responses from the respondents may be biased or lack in clarity as the concept is new, and respondents may not have clear understanding of the same and also the initiatives that are being taken by the organization in managing work-life balance.

Analysis of the Data

From the Table 1, shows the nature of job performed by the respondents. It can be observed that 38 per cent of the people feel that their job involves creating something new and 24 per cent of the respondents feel their job is challenging.

Table 1: Nature of the job

Attribute

No of respondents

percentage

Repetitive

10

20

innovative

19

38

Challenging

12

24

Research based

7

14

Others

2

4

Total**50****100**

Source: Primary Source

The Table 2 presents the data regarding the stress level of respondents at work place. From the table it can be observed that around 42 per cent of the total respondents feel their job is moderately stressful and 36 per cent of the total respondents felt that their job is highly stressful.

Table 2: Stress Levels at work place

Attributes**No of respondents****Percentage**

Highly stressful

7

14

Stressful

18

36

Moderately stressful

21

42

Little stress

3

6

No stress

1

2

Total**50****100**

Source: Primary Source

The table 3 shows the numbers of hours employees working in the office.

From the table it can be observed that the majority of respondents that is 64 percent of the respondents work for 8 – 10 hours in a day.

Table 3: Working hours at Office

Working Hours**No of respondents****percentage**

8 hrs

4

8

8-10 hrs

32

64

10-11 hrs

8

16

11-12 hrs

4

8

More than 12 hrs

2

4

Total

50

100

Source: Primary Source

It can be observed from Table 4, 52 percent of the respondents felt that sometimes work is impacting their personal life. And only 20 percent of the respondents felt that the work is not impacting their personal life.

Table 4: Work affecting personal life

Options

No. of respondents

Percentage

Always

14

28

Sometimes

26

52

Never

10

20

Total**50****100**

Source: Primary Source

From Table 5, it can be observed that 50 percent of the respondents felt sometimes they are able to manage both work and personal life. And 40 percent of the respondents were always able to manage their work and personal life effectively.

Table 5: Managing work and personal life

Options**No. of respondents****Percentage**

Always

20

40

Sometimes

25

50

Never

5

10

Total**50****100**

Source: Primary Source

From Table 6, it can be observed that 58 percent of the respondents felt sometimes they are able spend time with family and friends. And 32 percent of the respondents felt they are always able to spend time with family and friends.

Table 6: Time for family and friends

Options**No. of respondents****Percentage**

Always

16

32

Sometimes

29

58

Never

5

10

Total**50****100**

Source: Primary Source

From table 7, it can be observed that 72 percent of the respondents feel that long working hours is affecting their personal life, 96 percent of the respondents feel that working on weekends has affected their personal life. And around 32 percent of the respondents feel that working in shifts has impact on their personal life.

Table 7: Factors affecting Work-Life Balance

Factors**Number of Responses****Percentage****Percentage of Cases**

Long Working Hours

36

36

72

Working on Weekends

48

48

96

Working in Shifts

16

16

32

Total**100****100**

Source: Primary Source

Table 8 shows the response for the initiatives by the organization towards work life balance. Around 70 percent of the respondents said company offers facilities for managing work-life balance.

Table 8: Work life balance initiatives offered.

Options

Number of respondents

Percentage

Yes

35

70

No

15

30

Total

50

100

Source: Primary Source

Table 9 shows the measures offered by the organizations in helping the employees to manager work-life balance. 90 percent of the respondents, mention time off for emergencies are one of the initiatives which will help them in managing work-life balance. Around 82 percent of the respondents feel flexible working hours would encourage the employees in performing better as well as to manage their work life balance. 60 percent of the respondents feel that the company must offer compensatory leave for

working on Sunday's or any other holidays, in order manage their personal life.

Table 9: Initiatives taken by the organizations

Factors

Number of Responses

Percentage

Percentage of Cases

Compensatory Leave

30

22

60

Flexible Work Hours

41

31

82

Five Day Work / Week

17

13

34

Time off for Emergencies

45

34

90

Total**133****100**

Source: Primary Source

Discussion

Work-life balance is crucial for the success of an individual employee as well as an entire organization, as it would affect the morale of an employees and his/her attitude towards the organization and work. Employees who are able to manage their work-life balance effectively are able to contribute in better way to the organization. From the survey, it was found that majority of the respondents were stressed because of the nature of the job and working hours in the organization. As most of them were spending 8 to 11 hours in the office. The majority of the respondents around 50 percent felt that they were sometimes able to manage the work-life. And around 58 percent of the employees felt sometimes they were able to spend good quality time with their family and friends. The major factors which are affecting the work-life balance of employees are working on weekends and long working hours.

Majority of the employees responded that they are aware of the initiatives taken by their organization in helping them to manage the work life balance. The initiatives such as time off for emergencies, flexible working hours and compensatory leaves for working on weekend (Sunday) or any other holidays were the major initiatives which have helped the employees to manage their work life balance.

Conclusion

In a constant changing and demanding sector like pharmaceutical, it is important to have proper work-life balance initiatives. Most of the respondents are able to manage their work-life balance. Also most of them felt the need for further initiatives were required from the organizations in further improving the facilities to effectively manage their work life balance particularly in terms of working days and work timings, as these were the factors which were majorly contributing to the imbalance in their work life balance. The improvement in technology has contributed to the great extent to the stress levels in the individuals, as work has become 24/7 activity for the organizations, to serve their clients. This has led to working in shifts, which again has impact on the performance as well as stress on the employees. The current study mainly focused on the factors such as long work hours, working in shifts, working on weekends, affecting work-life balance. Also about the initiatives such as time-off for emergencies, compensatory leaves, that is taken by the organizations in addressing the issue of work-life balance. Further detailed research is required to understand the impact of the various factors on work-life balance and its

negative influences on the individual as well as on the organizations, and to suggest the strategies to resolve these issues.