"A Study on Work Life Balance of Information Technology Employees Working from Home During Covid-19"

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Abstract

Many IT companies are asking their employees to work from home to remain safe and affected. As corona virus (COVID19) continues to capture headlines in the news and spread rapidly, employees are struggling with finding a sense of calm and stability throughout the ever changing updates and reality. Working from home has many benefits ,some being flexibility ,increased productivity and more quality time with your loved ones. work life balance, especially during uncertain times like COVID19,is essential to employees growth and personal happiness and company retention. When employees are encouraged to find positive work life balance, they tend to be more motivated to produce great work.

This also exibility among the employees over performance increases of work. Work from home enables more autonomy in job, which is likely to be associated with more productivity. Decreased control by colleagues or the supervisors is an important drawback of work from home. This is true for both the organization and the employee. The work avoidance is the result when someone's work is poorly monitored. Work from home will be helpful when there are issues to attend of work should continue. Most of the IT companies included work from home in their leave policy of employees in order to increase the productivity.

Balancing of work and family roles is one of the key issues in the coming years, the organization should improvise and innovate the ways to cater the employees having diverse needs and these should be the integral to core business but not the optional. There should be outmost care taken in taking decisions in adopting and implementing the policies as it impacts both employee and the organization.

The main objective of the study is to examine the influence of the working hours of the employees on their satisfaction on the job. They explain that the overall number of the employees wants to reduce their working hours is influenced mainly by the overtime compensation. Employees has to be given necessary equipment by the organization while working from home during pandemic in order to complete their work effectively and efficiently.

The secondary data has been collected from related articles ,research papers ,internet and related project reports. Amid the covid-19 outbreak situation, it is very vulnerable for employees to experience stress related to working from home. Where working from home requires employees to remain creative but on the other hand, they must gather, take care of the household and family every day during the quarantine. This will drain employees' energy, mind, and psychology where they are accustomed to working in the office every day, but now they have to work at home.

A good human resource practice would encourage all employees to be more involved while enjoying their work. It is the method to motivate the employees to participate in decision making. The Quality of Work Life mainly to enhance and utilize human resource efficiently to satisfy the employee's psychological needs for self-esteem, commitment, and recognition and work involvement. Motivating the employees to balance both the work life and personal life, while working from home, it encourages them to stay with the organization. The organization should focus on low-level employees to enhance employee relations within the organization may lead to higher productivity.

The Organization should give flexible time table to employees to balance work and family life better. better where flexibility in schedule of work is important for job satisfaction. They should also be given good compensation and job security so that they satisfied in their work as well as life

INTRODUCTION

The Indian IT Industry is growing steadily despite the global meltdown in the year 2009. When the whole of the world witnessed the negative growth, Indian IT industry still managed to register a growth of 5.5%. The industry is about to register the historic landmark of U$ $50 billion exports this year, according to NASSCOM President, Som Mittal. The domestic market is also slotted to witness 12% growth, this year. Potential size of Indian's off shoring industry is estimated at U$ $ 120 TO 180 Billion by 2015. The industry currently employs around 1 million people and provides indirect employment to around 2.5 million people. It is expected to add another 1, 50,000 jobs in the next fiscal according to NASSCOM.

Indian information Technology industry is one of the fastest growing industries in the country. The IT industry has built very valuable brand equity for itself in the global markets. The Indian IT industry comprises of software industry and information technology enabled services which even includes business process outsourcing industry. Indian IT industry is considered as a pioneer in software development and a favorite destination for IT-enabled services. In the year 1974, the origin of IT industry in India can be traced, when the mainframe manufacturer, Burroughs asked its India sales agent, Tata Consultancy Services to export programmers for installing system software for a US client.

 The Indian IT industry originated under very unfavourable conditions. During olden times local markets were absent and government policy toward private enterprise was hostile. The Indian IT Industry was begun by Bombay-based conglomerates who entered the business by supplying programmers to global IT firms located

overseas. During 1970's the Indian economy was state controlled and remained hostile to the software industry. Even the import tariffs were high like 135% on hardware and 100% on software. Even the

exporters were ineligible for bank finance. In 1984 Rajiv Gandhi became Prime Minister and the Government policy towards IT sector changed. The New Computer Policy consisted of a package of reduced import tariffs on hardware and software which reduced to 60%.

Even during this time the recognition of software exports as a "DE licensed industry", was done so that banks were eligible for finance and freed from license-permit raj, there was even the permission for foreign firms to setup wholly-owned subsidiaries. All such policies are reasons for the development of a world-class Indian IT Industry. Today, IT companies in India such as Tata Consultancy Services, Wipro, Infosys, HCL are well known in the global market for their IT competency.

Indian IT industry's development and contribution to the world's information technology sector is of highest reputation. Metro cities like Bangalore, Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai and Hyderabad have become the favorite destinations for all the big banners like HSBC, Dell, Microsoft, GE, Hewlett Packard, and several Indian multinational firms like Infosys technologies, Wipro, and Micro land have set up their offices in these cities. As the cities offers good infrastructure, with large floor space and great telecom facilities. This could be reason for the basis of the high growth statistics of India. The Indian IT Industry has grown up to US $ 5.7 Billion in 1999-2000, with the annual growth rate not sliding below 50% since 1991.

INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC

WORK LIFE BALANCE

Do we live to work or we work to live? Research has shown that work and home (or family) are the two most important domains in the life of an employed in

dividual. While some may argue that we realise ourselves through work – being able to self-actualise – attaining unto the very zenith of our chosen career, a truly all encompassing self actualisation however, will integrate both our work and life (family, personal life, community service). When an individual is thus employed in an organisation, he does not give up his life in exchange for work rather he attempts to maintain a balance between them. This balance is necessary for a healthy life.

For many employees, the day is not over when they go home. Often, a second day of work starts at home and for most working mothers, they come home to the second shift (assuming the inescapable role of a wife and a mother). The challenge of balancing work and family (non-work) demands is one of today"s central concerns for both individuals and organisations . People who have better balance have a greater job satisfaction and perform better in their position.

When an individual maintains a balance between his personal and professional life, the phenomenon is called Work-Life Balance. This expression holds worth a lot because it is very important to have a balance between personal and professional life. Work life balance is at the forefront of the world of work. Kaizen, the Japanese philosophy for continuous improvement, along with the role of information technology (IT) helps and guides the management people, to get the maximum output with the help of available resources.

People are more interested in looking for a job that gives them flexibility at work. Necessary arrangements for work life balance are required by all workers at different times in their lives because balance is instrumental in quality initiatives by preparing an individual to deal with the change. An individual can give his best only in a conducive environment e.g. students want to study and work at the

same time; parents want to have time with their children and the older worker approaching retirement to have the opportunity to stay in the workforce on reduced hours. Mostly the employers and the employees agree that organizational objectives are more important, so it is the obligation of the employer to help people in work life balance.

WORK FROM HOME

Telecommuting first gained notoriety in the late 20th century with the advent of home computers and sophisticated telecommunications technologies. Specific research on the patterns and practices of telecommuting first appeared in the 1970s when Jack Nilles coined the terms telecommuting and teleworking and directed the first telework demonstration project with partial funding from the National Science Foundation (NSF). The 1980s brought the initiation of pilot telework programs in the United State and by the 1990s many state, local governments, and private sector corporations had implemented telework programs. In 1996 the federal government introduced a national telecommuting initiative with the goal of increasing both the number of federal teleworkers as well as the number of teleworkers in other sectors.

Telework is defined as work that is performed from different locations (such as home) that enables workers to access to their labor activities by the use of information and communication technologies (Nilles, 1997; Perez etal., 2003). It has been considered as an alternative way of organizing work. By offering the possibility to work anywhere and anytime, telework has attracted the attention of both academics and practitioners. It has been seen as a win-win scenario for employees and employers, making it possible to choose from different talents, to reduce real-estate costs, to motivate employees, and to maintain employee work–family balance.

Work from home as a concept is very important in current times. It helps to keep productivity of the employee same or even better and at the same time supports the employee for being with family or handling some personal work. Also in the case the employee is facing some health issue of self or family, Work from Home (WFH) can be a great tool for helping employee stay at home and work at the same time. in 2020, during Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic, Work from Home enabled many companies to remain productive and keep themselves relevant. Roles like IT, Management, Designing, Media etc. continued to work with the WFH option.

LITERATURE REVIEW

WORK FROM HOME DURING COVID 19: EMPLOYEES PERCEPTION AND EXPERIENCES
Written by ;

Gajendra and Harrison (2007)

Stevenson and Wolfers (2009)

Amabile and Kramer (2013)

The study revealed that it is dificult to monitor a worker's effort at home, especially when occasionally being interrupted by private responsibilities and family members. In a competitive labour market, suchlevel. Evidence on the productivity effects of Work from home is inconclusive, but seems to suggest positive effects more often than negative effects.

This investigated that depending on the interactions between work and private life work from home could be more or less favorable to overall life satisfaction. As illustrated by the paradox of the decline in female happiness, these interactions are likely to differ by parental status and gender.

They found that work from home is helping the employees to balance and differentiate their office work with their routine work. The study also added that work from home saves time, increases the productivity, finishes the targets on time and also helps the employees to give time for their personal life. They stated that focus on major failures and dark side of work from home, the cultural differences faced during webinars by the employees. Work from home creates a big gap in communication between superior and the subordinates.

This article concluded that working from home was not panacea for modern working life. Careful consideration should be given to aspirations and personality skills of those who are thinking of working from home.

1. *ISSUES IN WORK LIFE BALANCE AND ITS IMPACT ON EMPLOYEES*.

Written by;

Senthilkumar (2012)

Pandita and singhan(2017) ISSUES

Studied the difference of opinion for part time and full-time mother's work-life balance.It was found that mothers who are working part-time give more preference to maintaining balance between work-family as compared to mothers who are working fulltime. It was also found that mother who are doing part-time jobs have fewer responsibilities which leads to low stress which makes them spend more family time and are happy in life. The crux of the findings says that it is more beneficial to work part time as compared to full time as mothers are able to manage their both work and family in a balanced way.

They conducted a review for work-life balance in teaching profession to identify the relationship between demographic variables and stress level in balancing teaching profession in terms of work and personal life. It was found that old age and female has underwent maximum level of stress in order to manage and balance their personal and work. It was also suggested that institutions should adopt flexible policies by providing special leave facilities, family support and conducting health care programs at regular intervals.

They investigated the relationship between employee engagement in IT sector with work-life balance. It was found that engaging employees in fast changing environment is difficult without providing them work-life balance in terms of flexible timing, leave policy, compensation etc. Thus, the role of HR has increased to engage its employees strategically in this changing business paradigm to compete and sustain in market.

Issues and Challenges of Work Life Balance in IT sector

Written by;

Modi, Chima (2011)

Lubana Riz V(2013)

Work Life Balance policies and practices are a reality for employees in IT sector. The study also examined if there were any barriers and reasons for mutual adoption of Work life balance policies in IT sector. The study suggested an urgent need to communicate clearly about the Work Life Balance policies and practices to its employees, to raise awareness further and improve the knowledge and understanding of relevant policies.

Studied the Work Life balance of working women in IT sector. They specified that the ultimate performance of its employees which in turn depends on numerous factors. The relationship between personnel and professional life can be achieved through emotional intelligence..Better emotion management is necessary in order to accomplish objective of life.

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 spill over of personal life over work life.

HOW TO MANAGE STRESS EXPERIENCED BY EMPLOYEES WHEN WORKING FROM HOME DUE TO THE COVID-19 VIRUS OUTBREAK.

Written by,

Ahmed & Ramzan(2013)

Rivai & Sagala(2011)

Stress is an undesirable reaction by individuals that must be faced with heavy pressure, work demands, workloads that affect the physical and mental employee.

Job stress is generally defined as a psychologically depressed condition caused by unpleasant physical or psychological experiences. Work stress refers to the pressures or tensions that people feel in life between the external environment and us, which cause emotional and physical stress. Several previous studies mention that with stress an employee will act more than before to work better. However, if the stress is excessive, it will create anxiety, anxiety for employees and the potential to reduce their performance.

There are two approaches to work stress, namely the individual and company approaches. For individuals, it is important to approach because work stress can affect life, health, productivity, and income. For companies, not only because of humanitarian reasons but also because they influenced the achievement of all aspects and effectiveness of the company as a whole.

The source of work stress that occurs to employees according to author, can come from 3 factors;

environmental factors such as environmental uncertainty affecting changing organizational structures and technological advances, organizational factors in the form of high task demands, and individual factors in the employee's factors. Family factors can also affect employee stress ranging from no support from family and lack of stability in household life. Many reasons cause employee stress due to work, family, excessive work conflict.

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY;

To study the work life balance of the IT employees during work from home.

To identify the factors that impact the employees work life balance.

To understand employees attitude towards work from home.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study through 'secondary data'was collected from different websites and Research articles.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study focuses on finding out the factors affecting the work life balance of IT employees.

The study was restricted to IT employees.

The study is focused only on work from home employees.

FINDINGS

From the study it is found that how factors that impact the employees work life balance. As Communication one of the factor and it is part of working from home and it is treated as important to have access to your team members and be able to maintain regularly scheduled meetings. Many IT companies are taking action by allowing their employees to safely work from home and practice social distancing. This option comes as a challenge for many organization that ever facilitated their employees working from home.

From the study it is found that, flexible working hours, increased productivity and more quality time with your loved ones and these things will help the employees in maintaining the good work life balance is, especially during uncertain times like COVID19,and it is essential for employees growth and personal

happiness and employees retention. When employees are encouraged to find positive work life balance they tend to be more motivated to produce great work.

The findings of this study is that the work is having a negative effect on the life ofthe employees and the overtime working demands the work, quality time of the employees is missed with their family because of work and the meetings conducted after the office hour. Growth of the employees and that is family friendly.

The employees who working from home must have the family support to balancing their different roles which are played by them and to achieve the individual goals as well as organizational goals. The employees will experience higher positive affect at home on days when they have experienced higher daily job satisfaction.

From the study it is found that Balance between work and family responsibilities will cause too much stress and emotional disturbances, which will have direct impact on work quality and also the growth of the employees.

SUGGESTIONS

The Organization should give flexible time table to employees to balance work and family life better. better where flexibility in schedule of work is important for job satisfaction. They should also be given good compensation and job security so that they satisfied in their work as well as life.

Welfare facility has to be provided like better compensation and rewards for the employees. The firm should create career growth opportunity within the environment that may lead to better employee performance and increase productivity, and more significant responsibilities can be developed among employees.

Employees has to be given necessary equipment by the organization while working from home during pandemic in order to complete their work   effectively and efficiently .

Motivating the employees to balance both the work life and personal life, while working from home, it encourages them to stay with the organization. The organization should focus on low-level employees to enhance employee relations within the organization may lead to higher productivity.

A good human resource practice would encourage all employees to be more involved while enjoying their work. It is the method to motivate the employees to participate in decision making. The Quality of Work Life mainly to enhance and utilize human resource efficiently to satisfy the employee's psychological needs for self-esteem, commitment, and recognition and work involvement.

Safety is very important for employees who are required to work in shifts during the covid-19 pandemic outbreak. Where, companies are required to provide the latest procedures, medical devices, benefits for employees so that they feel safe and comfortable while working.

CONCLUSION

The work life is an important factor. Every individual has to balance their different roles. There are some factors to balance their roles they have to prioritizing the activites organizational climate, family support and different facilities which are provided by the organization. The balancing of different roles played by the employees in IT sector is very less because they are having lot of pressures and stress on their job when compared to others. So the management has to concentrate on these factors and try to develop the things which are influence the work life balance of the employees and also improve them to balancing easily. It can be said that Work Life Balance is a very important issue in the Human Resource Management field and it has a vital impact on the productivity and growth of both the organization and the employee. Work life is all about a measure about controlling on when, where and how they work. Many factors are acting as supporting elements for employees to achieve balance between work and personal life. While certain elements like employees participation in framing the policies and taking key decisions, effective communication of organizations policies can be strengthened to make work and personal life of employees highly balanced.

Amid the covid-19 outbreak situation, it is very vulnerable for employees to experience stress related to working from home. Where working from home requires employees to remain productive, but on the other hand, they must gather, take care of the household and family every day during the quarantine. This will drain employees' energy, mind, and psychology where they are accustomed to working in the office every day, but now they have to work at home. Through this article, we recommend six approaches that employees can take to prevent uncontrolled stress namely communication with family, communication at work, scheduling, safety. while maintaining health, obey government regulations and limit it to see news about the pandemic covid-19 outbreak. The only flexible work arrangement in organization is working from home. The outcomes of these arrangements consist of both positive and negative. The working from home provides to employees more opportunity to focus on their work tasks. As the employees are experiencing new environment ,and to find out the experience of the employees on working from home when compared to work in office. the study found that willingness to work from home is entirely different and dependent on presence of their children at home, comfortable space at home, quiet environment at home and good internet connectivity.

LIMITATIONS

Time constraints.

Could not collect primary data because of pandemic.

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