

WORK LIFE BALANCE: A BRIEF STUDY ON SOURCES OF POLICE STRESS AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

PARTHASARATHI MAHANTA

Research Scholar, Department of Management, Assam Down Town University, Panikhaiti, Guwahati.

HOMESWAR GOSWAMI

Professor, Department of Management, Assam Down Town University, Panikhaiti, Guwahati.

Abstract:

The most important aspect of life is peace. Each and every profession has its own professional hazard impacting peace and work life balance. Some professions have less job hazard and some have over job hazard. In police job profession, the job hazard is maximum for various reasons among other hard core professions leading to major work life imbalance. Thus the work life imbalance is responsible for various consequences in the life of police personnel.

Key Word: Police, Stress, Work, Life, Balance, Consequence etc.

INTRODUCTION

There is no definite definition of 'work-life balance'. It differs according to individual perception. A person's age, gender, attitude, motives, self-concept, interest, expectations, lifestyle, and the environment in which he/she grows up and lives in shapes his / her perception of work-life balance. Therefore, attempts would be made to understand various perceptions of life, approaches to define Work-life balance, and arrive at a universally acceptable definition of work-life balance.

According to Zedeck and Mosier, there are five main models that explain the relationship between work and life apart from work.¹ the **"segmental"** model of **working** and **not working** are two separate **areas** of life **that do not affect** each other. **However**, this hypothesis cannot be justified empirically. In contrast, according to the **"spillover"** model, work and **leisure can influence each other, both positively and negatively. The "compensation model" assumes that what may be deficient in one area can be compensated in another.** For example, if work becomes monotonous, **this can be compensated** for by social and cultural **engagement.** The **"instrumental model" assumes** that activities in one **area promote** success in the other. For example, **some people try** to earn more **by** working longer to buy a home for **their** family. Finally, the **"conflict" model assumes** that **if there is** high demand in all **areas** of life, **one has to make** some difficult **decisions** and **one is in** a conflict situation.

But, David E. Guest points out that these models cannot address what constitutes a balance between work and the rest of life .² **S.C.** Clark also explains in his **"Works |"**.

Family **boundary** theory **suggests** that people **cross borders** daily as they move between home and **work**. **Border restrictions** when **working** from home.

In the essay, "Introduction: The Boundaryless Career as a New Employment Principle", Michael B. Arthur and Denise M. Rousseau promoted the concept of 'boundaryless Career'.⁴ They explain that, **simply put, an "infinite career" is the opposite of an "organizational career," a career designed to thrive in a single employment environment. There are some specific meanings or emphases in the meaning of infinite career as opposed to organizational career.** The most prominent of these is **when careers** like the stereotypical Silicon Valley **career move** across the boundaries of **individual** employers. **The second implication arises when careers such as academics and carpenters receive validation (and marketability) from outside their current employer.** A third **implication is added when careers such as real estate agents are underpinned by outside networks and information.** A fourth **implication arises** when traditional organizational career **boundaries are breached, particularly those involving hierarchical reporting and promotion principles.** A fifth meaning occurs when a person rejects **an existing career opportunity** for personal or family reasons. **The sixth meaning depends on the interpretation of career actors who, despite their structural constraints, can perceive an infinite future. Being independent rather than dependent.**

The analysis of the psychology of individual differences has added another dimension to the study of work-life balance. Researches on 'workaholics' i.e. people who choose to work long hours even when they need not do so and at times at the expense of other activities, have produced some interesting results.⁵ Initially it was viewed as a disease akin to alcoholism.⁶ But in 1980, Machlowity argued that it was a form of extreme work involvement.⁷ Later, Scott et al. Explained it with three personality types – the achievement – oriented, the perfectionist and the compulsive - dependent.⁸ On the other hand, Peiperl and Jones distinguish 'workaholic' who choose to work long hours and perceive some rewards from doing so from 'over workers' who also work long hours but who have little choice in the matter and who do not believe that the returns they receive justify the long hours.⁹

Another interesting approach to defining work-life balance is **to define** what work-life balance is not. It **doesn't mean even** balance. **That doesn't mean equalizing** work and personal **time. Optimal** work-life balance **varies from person to person, from day to day for the same person, and** for the same person **at** different stages of life and career. **Performance and enjoyment are therefore** the two most important factors **in determining** the effectiveness of work-life balance. **Therefore,** this approach defines work-life balance as "meaningful daily **performance and enjoyment** in each of the four quadrants **of life: work, family, friends, and yourself.**"¹⁰

Hudson's research also showed **that,** contrary to **popular belief** that money **attracts** the **best** talent, **what job seekers are looking for is** work-life **balance.** **Hudson's**

Jobs Report: 2015 Australian Employment Situation Shows 70% of Workers Want Work-Life Balance over Salary as Most Desirable Job Attribute.¹¹ About 64% of Australian job seekers are looking for culturally matched talent in addition to 67% of their salary. Organizations, therefore, need to define what work-life balance looks like for specific roles and consider working arrangements for top talent. Interestingly, the move comes at a time when “attracting” candidates is becoming more important in the corporate sector. Cultural fit has emerged as an important aspect of hiring, and many candidates and recruiters alike now view cultural fit as essential. For executives, this is the most important factor in determining the attractiveness of a position, along with work-life balance and salary. Simply put, proper cultural fit means an organization and team with behaviors, values, and motivations that complement and reflect oneself. Therefore, according to Hudson, "work-life balance" is broadly defined as a satisfactory level of involvement or "fitness" between multiple roles in an individual's life. Greenhans defines her work-life balance as "happy, working well at work and at home, and minimizing conflicting roles." Greenhans, Collins, and Shaw investigated the relationship between work-life balance and quality of life for public accounting professionals.¹² they define work-family balance as "the extent to which a person is equally engaged in and equally satisfied with work and home roles." They further divided role engagement into components of time and physiological engagement, and suggested his three components of work-family balance. Engagement in work and family roles; (iii) balance of satisfaction: levels of satisfaction with work and family roles are the same; each element of work-family balance can represent a positive balance or a negative balance, depending on whether the time, commitment, or satisfaction levels are the same or lower. They view work-family balance as a matter of degree, ranging from a strong imbalance in favor of a particular role (e.g. family) on one end to a relatively balanced state (e.g. work) on the other. Viewed as a continuum leading to strong imbalances in favor of) than any other anchor part. They conceptualized balance as independent of individual desires and values. The balance between work and family is generally considered to be good for your health. The concept of working from home or working from home is a new trend in the workplace culture that allows employees to work from home. This concept freed employees from fixed work. Of course, saving time on the commute helped employees improve their work-life balance by spending more time with their families and free time. Therefore, working from home is considered as a work-life balance practice that offers new opportunities for flexibility. Thus, looking at the concept of work-life balance through a variety of theoretical lenses, work includes career and ambition, life includes family, health, pleasure, and leisure, friends, spiritual, cultural and social. Can be said to include social activities.

WORK -LIFE BALANCE: DETERMINING FACTORS

The determinants to define work-life balance, can be discussed as under:

1. **INDIVIDUAL:** The most important factor in determining work-life balance is the individual. Her two American cardiologists, Rosenmen and Friedmen, have identified two different personality types, type A and type B, depending on heart disease and individual behavior. , Patience, calm and sincere. Of course, each has a different way of thinking about work-life balance.
2. **FAMILY:** Family demands and expectations have a significant impact on work-life balance. Those who have to care for children or elderly parents can jeopardize their careers by working less hours, which causes stress. On the other hand, people without children and elderly people who need nursing care at home tend to be less likely to lose their work-life balance.
3. **WORK AND ORGANISATION:** The work environment and the culture in the organization have major influences on work –life balance.
4. **SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT:** The social environment is an important factor in work-life balance. Communities with greater cultural and social responsibility will have a greater demand for more life time.

POLICE STRESS

Stress is a state of mental or emotional tension that results from adversity or difficult situations. In psychology, stress is tension and oppression. In everyday life, stress is the emotion that people experience when they are overwhelmed and struggling to meet their demands. Stress is the body's natural defense against predators and dangers. Rinse the body with hormones and prepare a system to avoid or face danger. This is known as the "fight or flight" mechanism. The environmental factors that cause this reaction in humans are called stressors. A stressor is an activity, event, or other stimulus that causes stress. A stressor is anything that causes the release of stress hormones. There are two broad categories of stressors. Physiological or physical stressors and psychological stressors. 1. Physiological stressors: There are stressors that put a strain on our body. For example, very cold / hot temperatures, injuries, chronic illnesses, pain, etc. 2. Psychological stressors: These are events, situations, people, comments, or anything else that is interpreted as negative or threatening. For example, you can't find a babysitter if your sick child can't take time off from work. 3. Scientists now propose that stressors can be further classified as: 4. Absolute stressors: These are stressors that interpret the exposed person as stressed. These are universal objective stressors. For example, an earthquake or tsunami.

5. Relative stressors: These are stressors that only some people exposed to them interpret as stressful. These are subjective stressors and cause different reactions from person to person. For example, time pressure at work, on the move, paying taxes, exams, etc.

6. Stress is a common factor in **modern** society, but **how stress** manifests **itself** for each individual depends on a **variety** of lifestyle factors. It is generally accepted that people **working in basic** and emergency **services are most exposed**. **7. Arguably**, the **police are** the most important **emergency** and emergency **services, so** we need to discuss the sources of **police** stress.

SOURCES OF POLICE STRESS

Constant **contact with** people suffering from distress and pain: **The job of police officers** is that **they must interfere** in the lives of those who have committed **crimes** or been **victims of crimes**. Spending most of **your work time** with people **who are highly stressed** affects **your** emotional **state**.

1. Threats to **the safety or health of police officers**: The constant **potential for injury** or **exacerbation** by criminals can **put a heavy burden** on **police officers** and cause great stress.
2. **Responsibility to save** the lives of citizens: **Responsibility to be at the forefront of police** can be a **heavy burden for police officers**
3. Need to control emotions even when provoked: **Stoics** and the ability to **resist** provocation are two of the many emotional skills that **police officer needs** to **exercise** on a regular basis. **When** dealing with hostile individuals, **police officers need to curb** and **contain** natural emotional **reactions**. **This** can be very **painful** in the long run.
4. Inconclusive nature of Police work: **Despite the best efforts of police officers**, the **lack of evidence prevented many police cases from reaching logical conclusions, causing** great disappointment.
5. The quickly alternative pace of the job: Police **officers** must **always** be **vigilant** and ready to **fall** into dangerous **situations**. **Such a shift from day-to-day** work to **dangerous** work is a source of stress for **law enforcement officers**.
6. The responsibility of owning a firearm: The responsibility of owning a **gun** weighs heavily on the **hearts** of some **police officers**. The fact that **guns must be stored in family homes** also **increases** their stress.

WORK-LIFE IMBALANCE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Imbalance in work-life balance leads to stress and conflict at work place as well as in other situations as discussed below:

1. **Personal Impact**: An imbalance **between work and personal life affects** the overall well-being of **an individual and causes problems** such as **life dissatisfaction, persistent grief, and drug and alcohol abuse**. **Decreased** family satisfaction, decreased **participation** in family **roles**, etc.

2. **Family Implication:** Inability to sustain work-life balance will result in lower family satisfaction, decreased involvement in family roles etc.
3. **Organizational impact:** If an employee finds it difficult to meet the demands of family and social life, **he/she** will **reduce** working hours

CATEGORIZATION OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE PRACTICES

Work-life balance practices can be categorized into:

1. Policies: Cover the formal and informal ways by which employee's work and leave schedules are handled, including part time work, flexi time, and paternal or family leave.
2. Benefits: Cover different forms of compensation that protect against loss of earnings, payment of medical expenses and sponsored vacation.

Services: Include onsite or near site children centers and medical facilities etc.

CONCLUSION

Family-friendly policies adopted by the organizations can help the employees to decrease the work-family interface and yield benefits for themselves, their families and their employers. Though there is dearth of formal friendly initiatives practiced in the organizations in India, supportive work culture and informal friendly environment can benefit the employees and organizations. Apart from this personal attitude, Indian values, beliefs, life style, time management and spiritual inclination can make a difference and help the employees to balance their work and life efficiently.

REFERENCE

- 1) Zedeck. S and Masier, K. 1990. Work in the Family and Employing Organization". *American Psychologist* 45(2), 240-251
- 2) Guest.D.E. 2002. "Perspective on the study of Work-life balance." *Social Science Information*. Sage Publications (London Thousand Oaks, CA and New Delhi), 41 (2), pp. 255-279.
- 3) Clark S. C. 2000. "Work / Family Border Theory: A New Theory of Work /Life Balance". *Human Relations*. 53(6) :747-70.
- 4) Arthur, M. And Rousseau, D. 1996. Instruction: The Boundaryless Career as a New Employment Principle", *The Boundaryless Career: A New Employment Principle for a New Organizational Era*, pp.3-20. NewYork : Oxford University Press.
- 5) Guest.D.E. 2002 "Perspective on the study of Work-life balance." *Social Science Information*. Sage Publications (London Thousand Oaks, CA and New Delhi), 41 (2), pp.255-279.
- 6) Baylin. L. 1977. "Involvement and Accommodation in Technical Careers: An Inquiry into the Relation to work at Mid-Career", in J. Van Maanen (ed.) *Organizational Careers : Some New Perspectives*. London : Wiley

- 7) Machlowitz, M. 1980. *Workaholic: Living with Then, Working with Them*. Reading, MA: Addison – Wesley.
- 8) Scott, K., Moore K. and Miceli, M. 1997. “An Exploration of the Meaning and consequences of Workaholism”, *Human Relations* 50(3) : 287-314
- 9) Peiperl, M. And Jones, B. 2000. “Workaholics and over workers: Productivity or Pathology?” Working Paper, Centre for Organizational Research, London Business School, London.
- 10) WorkLifeBalance.com. 2003. Jim Bird, Publisher. Accessed: 2nd March 2019.
- 11) Hudson 2015, *Work life Balance: What jobseekers want more than maney*. Au.hudson.com. Accessed: 9th March 2019.
- 12) Devaney.E. August 29, 2017. “The History of the Personal & professional Divide”. <https://blog.hubpost.com>. Accessed on March 1, 2019.
- 13) *ibid*
- 14) Hunnicutt B.K. November 1996. *Kellog’s Six - Hour Day*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- 15) Kanter.R.M. 1977. *Work and Family in the United States: A critical Review and Agenda for Research and Policy*. Russell Sage Foundation. New York.
- 16) Merriam - Webster Dictionary online. Accessed: February 27, 2019.
- 17) Online Etymology Dictionary. <https://www.etymonline.com>, Accessed: February 27, 2019.
- 18) Online Etymology Dictionary. <https://www.etymonline.com>, Accessed: February 27, 2019.
- 19) Online Etymology Dictionary. <https://www.etymonline.com>, Accessed: February 27, 2019.
- 20) Business Dictionary. www.businessdictionary.com>definition. Accessed: February, 2019.
- 21) Merriam Webster Dictionary online. Accessed: February 27, 2019.