

INCREASED DEMAND FOR WORK-LIFE BALANCE PRACTICES IN INDIA

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Abstract:

Work-life balance entails balancing work-place stress with routine pressures from family, friends, and oneself. Maintaining a balance between one's personal and professional lives has become a hot topic in Indian society. Peace is the most important aspect of life. Every profession has its own professional risk that affects peace and work-life balance. Some occupations have low job hazards, while others have high job hazards. The work-life imbalance is to blame for a variety of life outcomes.

Key Word: Demand, Balance, Work, Life etc.

INTRODUCTION:

Work-life balance entails everything related to quality of life and striking a balance between work and all other aspects of life. Work-life balance is a modern concept that acknowledges that the quality of life is more important than both work and life.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY:

The concept of work-life balance is a by-product of the modern economic system. The question of work versus life never existed in the pre-modern era. Until the Neolithic revolution that occurred 12,000 years ago, humanity was a society of hunters and gatherers. The transition of human society from small nomadic groups to a stationary existence based on agriculture and livestock during this period is considered to be the first major economic revolution in the history of mankind. But the main purpose of agriculture during and even during the middle Ages was to produce enough food to avoid famine. The modern age, however, was a period of unprecedented development of science and technology and of significant transformations in the economy, culture and social behavior. The agricultural revolution that took place in the 18th and early 19th centuries, when European agriculture began to adopt new techniques and methods of production, resulting in greater crop productivity, contributed to unprecedented population growth. At the same time, new agricultural practices have reduced the need for agricultural labor, leading to rural-urban migration and an increase in the supply of labor in

urban centers. With this surplus of work, the Industrial Revolution (1760 AD to 1840 AD) took place in Europe and the United States, what was a major turning point in history that led to several revolutionary changes in society? The factory system developed and supplanted the craft industry which gave rise to capitalism. Factory owners and others who controlled the means of production became more powerful, but the working and living conditions of the working class deteriorated. Many slums emerged during the first sixty years of the industrial revolution. In 1849, cholera killed 10,000 people in three months in London alone. Tuberculosis claimed the lives of 60,000 to 70,000 people in each decade of the 19th century.¹

In the absence of any law during this period even the children and women were also exploited. For example, during 1860s, 20% of the labourers engaged in Britain's textile industry were children.² Generally speaking also, from 1790 to 1840, the wages remained almost constant. However, there was a 50% increase in the wages by 1875.³

In reality, in order to keep production increasing, an increase in demand was necessary, that is, the cycle of more consumption and more production had to be maintained. This led inexorably to the rise of materialism and consumerism. The dominant ideology of the industrial revolution was centered on individualistic values such as classical liberalism and laissez-faire capitalism. As such, there were very few government regulations protecting workers and the condition of the working class became a serious cause for concern. From this arose various socialist movements aimed at improving the lives and conditions of industrial workers. Therefore, the idea of a union became very popular and workers started forming unions to raise their voices on issues such as wages, working hours, safe working conditions, basic education and health care. Meanwhile, towards the end of the 19th century, there is a gradual rise of the middle class. As the need for suitable people for white collar jobs grew with the establishment of new industries, this middle class has grown steadily. An important trait of the middle class was that family was extremely important to them and women played a central role in raising children and maintaining the home. This has led to the emergence of strong family values and a new awakening to the importance of quality of life. At the same time, the role of the private sector has steadily grown in almost all countries of the world and has become an important factor in economic development as the main engine of employment and provider, especially after the outbreak of the USSR and the growing acceptance of the concept of liberalization and globalization. The private sector also plays a vital role in the Indian economy, and it has grown by leaps and bounds, especially since 1991-92, following the adoption of the Government of India's divestment policy and its investment policy. In fact, India has become a reservoir of skilled labour for American and European multinationals. But in the absence of effective labour laws, Indian workers suffer at the hands of these companies due to the availability of a vast surplus of human resources. The fate of industrial workers in

Britain and the United States was similar. In fact, they had long ago witnessed what has happened in India over the past four decades. During the latter part of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, after numerous union strikes and lockouts, several companies formed the personnel administration department. Initially, for several decades, the role of personnel administration was limited to the hiring, evaluation and training of employees and their remuneration. In their effort to remain affordable to cope with growing competition, over time companies have begun to recognize "people" as a "tool" and have begun to focus on performance management and employment relationships. Gradually, several surveys and studies were conducted by different companies on the work-related problems of their employees, which, together with a growing concern among employees to improve their working and living conditions, was reflected in the concept of reconciliation between work and private life in private.

INDIA: WORK-LIFE BALANCE PRACTICES

Two types of work life balance practices are found in India: Statutory and non-statutory.

Statutory practices are the compulsory and minimum benefits given to an employee under Indian Labour Law. Statutory benefits found under Indian Labour Legislation are:

1. Factories Act, 1948:

- a) Section 51 prescribes that no adult worker shall be required or allowed to work in a factory for more than 48 hours in any week.
- b) Section 54 stipulates that subject to the provision of Section 51, no adult worker shall be required or allowed to work in a factory for more than 9 hours a day.
- c) Section 52 of the Act states that no adult worker shall be required or allowed to work in factory on the first day of the week i.e. weekly holiday.
- d) Section 53 of the Act, further states that if the worker is deprived of any of the weekly holidays for which provision is made in Section 52, he shall be allowed, within the month in which these holidays were due to him or within the two months immediately following the month, compensatory holidays of equal number to the holidays so lost.
- e) Section 55 of the Act lays down that the periods of work of adult workers in a factory each day shall be so fixed that no worker shall work for more than 5 hours before he has had an interval for rest of at least half an hour.

2. Maternity Benefits Act, 1961 & the Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017:

Provides for paid leave for delivery, miscarriage and adoption to a working women.

3. The Indian Penal Code Section 509: Word, gesture and act intended to insult the modesty of a woman is punishable with simple imprisonment for a term up to one year and with fine.

4. The Sexual Harassment of women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013: provides protection to the working women at workplace.

Non-statutory benefits are optional in nature. It is upto the employer whether he/she is interested to give it to his/her employees. For example, most IT industries have initiated flexi time, compressed work week, work from home, vacations, child day care facilities etc.

FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR INCREASED DEMAND FOR WORK-LIFE BALANCE PRACTICES

In the context of this particular study, it would be imperative to examine the reasons for the increased demand for work-life balance practices in India. The disintegration of the united family system and the emergence of the family unit changed the Indian way of life in the last quarter of the twentieth century. Families have become very small. 88% have three to four members with no elders and only 11% have more than two children.⁶ As a result, the responsibilities of husband and wife increased many times over. This has gradually led to the need for more revenue. At the same time, the number of women entering the labor market has also increased. This has culminated in the development of the dual career family over the past four decades in India. With husbands and wives earning, while dual career families are doing better financially, it has also opened up new areas of conflict. Dual career family situations are totally different, especially for the "wife" or "wife" as she still has to fulfill the family role and take on household responsibilities. Therefore, the growing number of women in the workplace has forced organizations to rethink the question of work-life balance. According to census reports in India, the female employment rate increased from 49.1% in urban areas in 1981 to 53.8% in 2011.⁷ the increase in the number of working women is not typical only in the private sector. Indeed, with some state governments implementing a 33% reserve for women in government jobs, there has been a notable increase in public sector workers. Assam is also not left behind. For example, in 1993 there were only five female officer-level officers in the Assam police force, which increased to 51 in 2016.⁸ another development contributing to the work-life imbalance is the increase in the number of single-parent families. While it is difficult to estimate the number of single-parent households in developing countries such as India, it cannot be denied that the number is increasing, albeit slowly. The increase in the number of divorces and separations is also an indication. According to available statistics, 1.36 million people in India are divorced.⁹ But the number of those who are separated is almost three times greater than the number of those who are divorced. The majority of these single parents are

women and it is extremely difficult for them to juggle responsibilities. At the same time, the attitude of the private sector is also changing as concerns about the health and well-being of workers increase. With growing concerns about worker dignity, human rights and democratic values, an organization's public image also depends on the work-life balance of its employees. Work-life balance practices have proven profitable for the private sector, as cost-benefit analyzes have shown that it is less costly for an organization to keep new parents happy than to find new employees. As a result, there is a general increase in the demand for work-life balance.

CONCLUSION

Work-life balance is a major issue of modern life. New inventions, new innovations and faster economic development open up new challenges making work life more difficult. Therefore, it is only likely that there will always be an imbalance in the work life of each working person, and, hence, the notion of work-life balance is essentially a dynamic concept for a working person that evolves continuously.

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