Work-Life Balance in the IT Industry – A Case Study

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Abstract: With the advent of globalization, the demands of workplace are highly increasing day-by-day. In the current business world, people and organizations are working round the clock to meet the ever-growing demands of the organization. Employees are spending more time on workplace and not able to balance their work-life. To avoid delays & failures, employees are working hard and giving their heart & soul to achieve work-life balance which is creating an enormous pressure on them & hence they are forced to finish their jobs irrespective of time limit. Because of this pressure, large number of suicides, divorces, disturbed families and relationships, outrage or conflicts in the organizations etc are the reflections of disturbed work-life balance of the employees. To maintain Work-life balance, many IT companies are offering options to the employees like flexible working hours, compressed workweeks, family leave etc. It is high time for employers to draw out strategies or plan to cope with the problem & help the employees to enjoy their work & live life to the fullest. Most of the IT organizations recognize the role of women in workplace and are keen on providing a conductive work environment. Marriage, children, family, relocation etc makes it difficult for most women to pursue a long term career goal. Facilities provided by the IT organizations are: Pick-up/drop facilities from home, flexible work timing, option to work from home, company run crèches are the new-age facilities to retain more and more women in our workforce. This will help them to retain their jobs & maintain work-life balance as well.

Key words: Work-life balance, Stress, Job analysis, Workplace

Introduction

In the highly competitive global scenario, society and organizations are filled with conflicting commitment and responsibilities. Hence, work-life balance has become an important issue at the workplace. This is further fuelled by the renewed interest in the personal life and family values, and the ageing workforce (Lockwood, 2003).Work-life balance is a state of equilibrium in which the demands of both a person's job and personal life are equal.

Work–life balance is a concept which includes proper prioritizing between "work" (career and ambition) and "lifestyle" (health, pleasure, leisure, family and spiritual development/meditation). "work–life balance" was first used in the United Kingdom in the late 1970s to describe the balance between an individual's work and personal life.

Work life balance is having positive correlation with quality of life. It plays a significant role in the organization to improve individual and organizational performance.

Work – Life Balance: A Conceptual Background

Work – Life Balance is about creating supportive, healthy work environments for employees who are striving to better integrate their work and personal responsibilities.

Rosabeth Moss Kanter's in their seminal book (1977), brought the issue to the forefront of the research and organisations.

Greenhaus, Collins and Shaw (2003) define work-family balance as "the extent to which an individual is equally engaged in – and equally

satisfied with – his or her work role and family role" (Greenhaus et al., 2003, p.513).

Greenhaus et al. (2003) operationalised the concept of work-family balance as comprising three components. These are:

Time balance, whereby equal amounts of time are devoted to work and family;

Involvement balance, whereby an equal level of psychological involvement in work and family roles exists; and Satisfaction balance, whereby an equal level of satisfaction is derived from work and family roles.

Time Management + Stress Management = Work – Life Balance

For example: IBM is Committed in providing to its employees an attractive and comfortable working environment to maintain a healthy and productive lifestyle. This initiative will help employees deal with the demands of home and family better in these times of hectic schedules and work pressure. Work-Life Balance is a strategic initiative that helps IBM attract, motivate and retain the best talent in the technology industry". The resource center houses a library, activity based games, pottery classes, computer classes, etc. IBM employees can also attend parenting workshops.

Harmonizing work & life becomes more important in this century. When it is not balanced, then organization & employees performance is also affected. Work-life balance helps in creating job satisfaction & able to give their best to achieve the targets.

Work-Life balance of women employees in the IT industry

IT sector is providing the safe environment & facilities to the women employees. Some factors like long working hours, offshore support leading to night shifts or rotational shifts and stringent project deadlines resulting in tremendous mental pressure, it makes difficult for women to maintain a work-life   balance.

Women in the age group of 28-35 either tend to leave their job or take a break due to their family commitments. Today, organizations understand the challenges that women face and are changing their policies to make the work environment more flexible.

Work – Life Balance is about adjusting working Patterns. Many IT Companies are providing these facilities to their employees.

- Flexible timings

- Staggered hours

- Time off in lieu of meetings attended

- Compressed working hours

- Shift Swapping

- Job-sharing

- Pick-up/drop facilities

- company run crèches

- Term-time working

- Working from home

- Maternity Benefits

- Flexible & Cafeteria benefits

Objectives of the Study

The present study aims to achieve the following objective:

To evaluate the Work-Life Balance of the IT employees.

Research Methodology

Data sources

Both Primary & Secondary Data are used in the present study. The primary data is collected through a structured questionnaire & secondary data is collected through internet, journals & business magazines. Data Collection is done from cities Mumbai and Pune.

Sampling

A Random sample of 20 respondents is taken from different IT organizations irrespective of their designation & years of experience.

Data Analysis

Data was key in MS Excel for analysis & interpretation.

Tabulation & Codification of Data

To achieve the objective of measuring the work-life balance in the IT industry, a total of 20 variables are selected and responses is measured by using a 5-point Likert Scale (Strongly agree, agree, indifferent, disagree, strongly disagree).

Designation wise Table

S.No	Designation
1	Software Engineer
2	Help Desk Support
3	System Administrator
4	Associate Manager
5	System Engineer
6	Senior QA Engineer
7	Team Lead
8	Sr. System Engineer
9	Sr. Software Engineer
10	Jr. System Engineer
11	AVP
12	Deputy Manager – IT
13	Founder and CEO
14	Channel Account Manager
15	Technical Consultant
16	Technical Analyst
17	Business Analyst
18	Software QA
19	Group Manager

1. **Sample Distribution Age wise**

Age Groups		
Range	**No. of Respondents**	**Percentage**
20-25	1	5
25-30	6	30
30-35	11	55
35-40	2	10
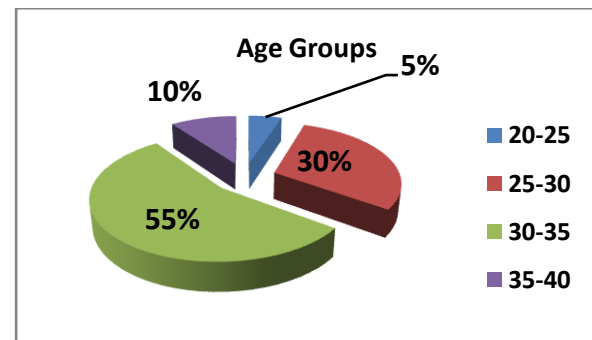
2. **Sample Distribution Gender wise**

Gender wise		
Range	**No. of Respondents**	**Percentage**
Female	3	15
Male	17	85
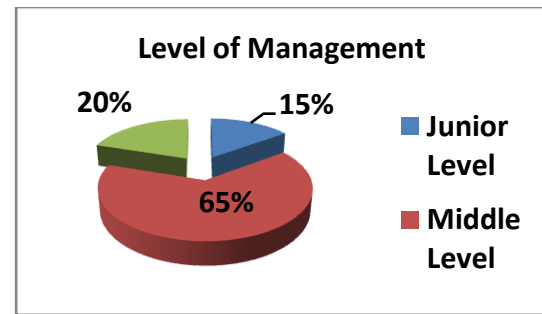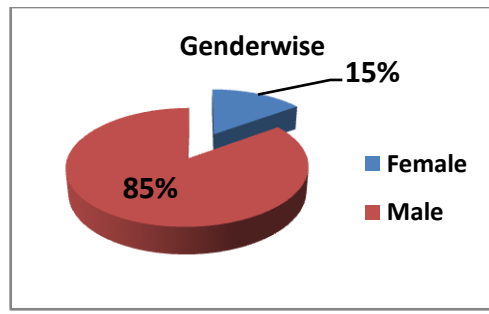
3.   Sample Distribution Experience wise

Experience		
Range	**No. of Respondents**	**Percentage**
0 to 5	8	40
5 to 10	11	55
10 to 15	1	5
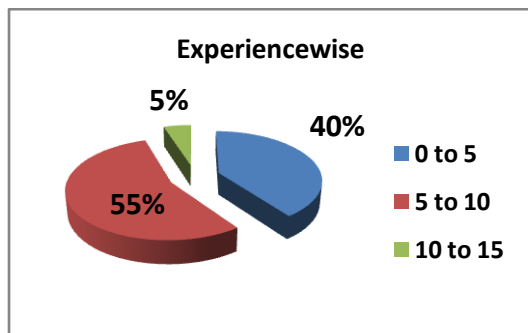
4.   Sample Distribution Level of Management wise

Level of Management		
Particulars	**No. of Respondents**	**Percentage**
Junior Level	3	15
Middle Level	13	65
Senior Level	4	20

5.   Sample Distribution on Working Number of Days in a Week

How many days in a week you normally work:		
Particulars	**No. of Respondents**	**Percentage**
Less than 5 days	0	0
5 days	16	80
6 days	3	15
7 days	1	5
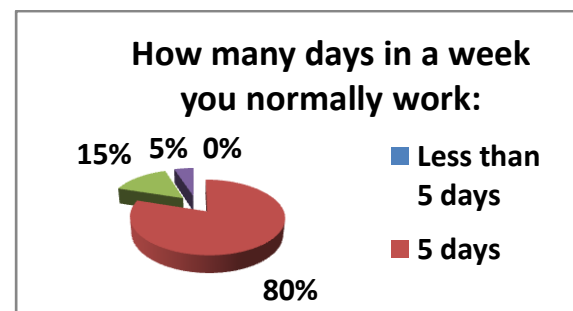
6.   Sample Distribution on Working number of hours in a day

How many hours in a day you normally work:		
Range	**No. of Respondents**	**Percentage**
7-8 hours	3	15

8-9 hours	10	50
9-10 hours	5	25
10-12 hours	2	10

How many hours in a day you normally work:
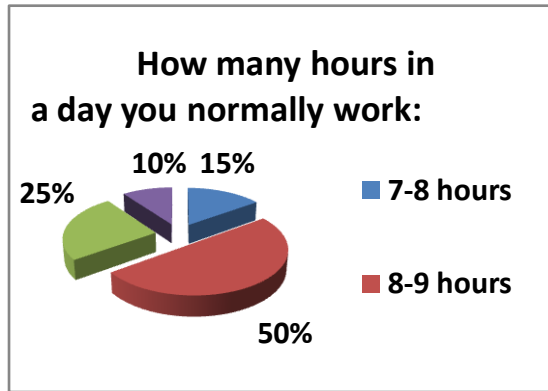
7.   Sample Distribution on Hours required while travelling to reach workplace

| How many hours in a day do you spend while travelling to reach workplace:		
Particulars	**No. of Respondents**	**Percentage**
30 min	2	10
Nearly 1 hour	10	50
Nearly 2 hours	8	40
<2 hours	0	0

How many hours in a day do you spend while travelling to reach workplace:
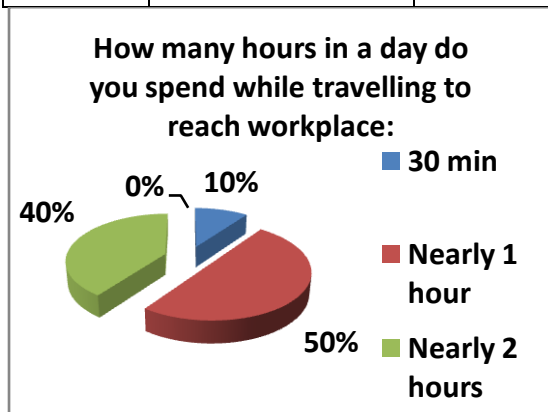
8.   Sample Distribution Shift wise

Do you work in shifts:		
Particulars	**No. of Respondents**	**Percentage**
General shift/day shift	17	85
Night Shift	1	5
Alternative shift	2	10

Do you work in shifts:
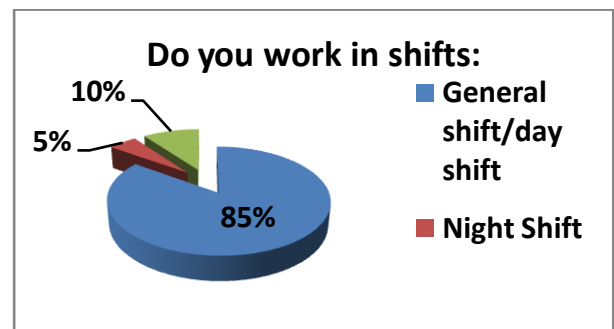
9.   Sample Distribution on Marital Status

Marital Status		
Particulars	**No. of Respondents**	**Percentage**
Yes	13	65
No	7	35

Maritial Status
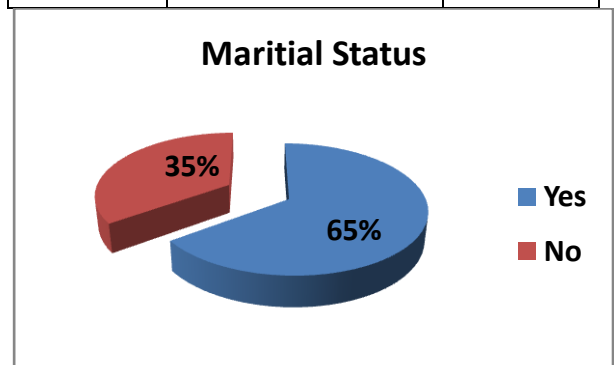
10. Sample Distribution on factors affecting Work-Life Balance:

How the following factors hinder or affect you in balancing your work and family commitments?									
Factors	Never	%	Rarely	%	Sometime	%	Often	%	Always	%
Working Hours	1	5	6	30	9	45	3	15	1	5
Overtime	1	5	9	45	8	40	2	10	0	0
Working on holiday	2	10	5	25	10	50	2	10	1	5
Work from home after office hours	5	25	5	25	7	35	2	10	1	5
Travelling away from home	7	35	6	30	4	25	0	0	3	15
Negative attitude of supervisors	4	25	6	30	8	40	1	5	1	5
Negative attitude of colleagues	3	15	8	40	8	40	1	5	0	0
Negative attitude of spouse/ family	9	25	9	45	2	10	0	0	0	0

Conclusion

Work-Life Balance is a major concern for today's competitive environment. Human resource is an important asset of any organization & to balance their work-life, organization has to formulate some strategies which help them to work efficiently & effectively.

This study indicates that all the IT employees are able to balance their work-life irrespective of workload, level in management and number of hours they work. Sometime they feel tired or depressed about their work, not able to spend quality time with their friends & family or relatives, overtime, work from home, and need to travel for official work.

To manage their stress, IT employees would prefer to go out for movies, watching TV etc. (Entertainment) Sometimes, Negative attitudes of superiors and colleagues also affect their work-life balance. Most of the IT employees would like to have some organizational policies to maintain work-life balance according to the individual needs. To conclude, it will be of great help from the respondents to understand their work-life balance and impact on their personal life.

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