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PSYCHOSOCIAL FACTORS AFFECTING WORK-LIFE BALANCE

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Abstract

Work life balance has become the need of the hour and all the organisations are implementing measures so as to provide an environment where the members can happily thrive and prosper together alongwith the organisational growth. Human resource being one of the most prominent assets for the organisation so measures are being implemented to mitigate any kind of hindrance faced.

It is clearly evident that job satisfaction increases when there is a work life balance and as a final result the organisations gets benefitted significantly. There are many factors which affect the work-life balance and one such factor is psychosocial factor. In this paper we will discuss about the various psychosocial factors and the actions and measures the organisation may implement to effectively balance the work and life aspects.

INTRODUCTION

It is clearly understood that the word **Psychosocial** word is a combination of two specific words psychological and social. Both the words have distinct meaning and are very relevant in our course of study.

Therefore, the psychosocial factors include psychological and social factors which effects one's conduct, behaviour, social environment, expressions and emotions.

Now we will see the various **psychological** and **social** factors and its effect on the work life balance.

Psychological factors

Literally psychological factors mean the factors related to several aspects of a person's personal trait which can limit or boost the way they think. Few examples of psychological factors include:

- **Personality:** It is just the way one reacts to any situation and circumstances and can make tasks like interaction with others difficult or easy
- **Phobias:** It is the fear of unknown which exists within each of us. It can be irrational and irrepressible fear which limits or control how one thinks or reacts
- **Intelligence:** It is the ability to learn new aspects of life, understand and think logically.
- **Attitude:** It is the way of thinking, feeling and reacting.
- **Interest:** It is one's inclination and liking.
- **Aptitude:** The natural ability and skill to access a situation.
- **Motivation:** The inner zeal and enthusiasm.
- **Learning:** The ability to adapt to the changing circumstances. Ability to grasp new things and implement.
- **Socialization:** The process by which people develop knowledge and skills that make them more or less able members of their society
- **Beliefs:** Notions a person holds about something



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Operations are also impacted by Psychological factors, for example how the people are affected by the environmental conditions. These factors are based on the responses of the individual. How one reacts to certain situations.

Data on psychological factors can be collected through various methodologies i.e interviews, questionnaires, and observations.

These factors are basically personality traits that can restrict or assist the ways of ones thinking. Our personality can make a conversation look extremely difficult or easy based on the perception and reaction.

It refers to the distinct characteristics and various mental aspect which relates to individual's experience affecting perception and reaction. Various factors including stress, depression, anger, anxiety etc affects mental condition.

Psychosocial factors, such as social support or isolation, occupational stress, mental health, and sleep quality, are shaped by economic, racial, and other societal structures

Social factors

These are general factors at the societal level that has the affect on the individual. Examples social processes, social structure, support system and various social networks.

The various aspects of individuals like life, health, behaviour and other daily activities are influenced by these factors. Few of the factors are as appended below: -

- **Demographics:** These are various characteristics of population like age, sex, race etc. Study of these factors can provide details of changes in births, deaths, and migration from one region to other.
- **Income and wealth:** The factor affect the individual habits as well and the way of living.
- **Education:** It is one of the most important factors which influences the perception and overall assessment of situations.
- **Employment:** Nature of work which an individual does affect their health and well-being
- **Community safety:** Factors of social and economic nature such as affordable housing, medical care other basic amenities generally decides the selection of the community.
- **Social support:** To improve cognition and wellbeing of individuals support from family, friends, and other well-wishers is required. In addition, a good company also reduces chronic ailments.
- **Religion:** The moral and values which one learns while following a religion decides how an individual react to day to day situations.
- **Culture:** Groups are being formed in a society based on the culture and subculture. It further decides the way and style of living within the group

Psychosocial factors can have a various kind of impact on one's mental health. It can be positive, negative, or neutral. In addition, it can result in contacting of various health concerns.

Few examples of psychosocial factors are as follows: -:

Occupational stress, Social support or isolation, Sleep quality, Loneliness, Marriage status, Social disruption, Bereavement, Work environment, Social status, and Social integration.

These factors in the workplace can affect the work-life balance.



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Workload management

Efficient management of time and prioritising of work can lead to effective workload management and reduce the burnout amongst the employees. Employers too need to consider the existing workload on the employees and should devise some mechanism to reduce the workload and equally divide amongst all the employees.

Organizational culture

A positive environment can drastically improve the performance of the entire team. In addition, it will increase the trust, fairness and honesty. All the employee members will own responsibility of their work and shoulder any additional responsibility as and when it is entrusted upon them.

Recognition and reward

Recognition and reward are kind of motivation for employee members who are dedicated towards work. It encourages and motivates each and every member to work towards to achieve the organisational goals.

Civility and respect

A workplace with equal treatment and respect for all employees leads to better psychological safety and health of employee members. Employers need to inculcate these values amongst all the team members.

Protection of physical safety

Physical safety of employees at workplace is of prime importance. The workplace should be free from harassment, stigma, and discrimination. Everyone should be aware of punishments in case of occurrence of any such incidents.

Psychological support

Employers should pay adequate attention the mental well-being of the employees at work. They should be supportive and should attend to the concerns of the employees. Workshops and awareness programs to be organised to sensitise the employers and the employees.

Growth opportunities

Equal opportunities for growth and advancement to be provided for all employees. Career growth is a motivating factor which keeps the moral of the employees high. As the career growth results in financial increment so these factors positively affect the employees.

Work Life Balance: -

Literal meaning of work-life balance is the balance between professional and personal life. It is basically one's ability to manage the demands and requirements of job and personal life. It includes the amount one spends on the work and time one spares for his family and other leisure activities.

Work life balance helps to maintain the appropriate sharing on time on work place and at home. It leads to improvement of overall well-being of the individual.

Various ways to improve work life balance is: -

Managing your time and prioritising your time at workplace. Effectively and efficiently dedicate yourself for completion of task at the workplace.

Providing adequate time to your family members and well-wishers. Staying in company of positive and like-minded people. Provide some time daily for physical and mental fitness of body.



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Maintaining emotional and physical balance by practicing yoga and meditation. In addition, one needs to try to master the ability of not getting affected by external environment. Not getting provoked by situations around.

There are certain initiatives which Institution can formalise to help employees manage a better work life balance. These can be providing additional welfare measures in form of flexible working, transportation and medical facilities, employee welfare programs etc.

Statement of Problem

There are several factors which affect the work life balance of employee within the organisation. This study focusses on the various psychosocial factors which affects the work life balance.

This study will fill in the gap of the existing literature review pertaining to various psychosocial factors. It will also briefly describe the various psychosocial factor.

Review of Literature

Several literatures pertaining to the Psychosocial factors affecting work-life balance were reviewed and few selected ones have been included in the literature review.

Shamir, B., & Salomon, I. (1985). The study discussed the various aspects of telecommuting. It results in increase of job autonomy, decreased home autonomy, task significance etc. It has resulted in social isolation and social connect. Dhas, Babin & Karthikeyan, P. (2015). Work/Life programs conducted at regular intervals have significantly improved the employee's morale and as a result reduced absenteeism. It even helps in retaining of the skilled manpower with the organisation. Swarnalatha N(2017) concluded employee welfare factors, work arrangement factors and family benefits factors are the three most relevant factors which affects satisfaction level of employees. In addition, it also studied the work family conflicts and it effects on the performance of the employees.

Neeti (2018) study brought out the various effects of life style of individuals on work life balance. The motivation for all the employees at the work place was the laid down career development rules which needs to implemented based on the requirements of the staff members. Khemani Monika(2018) formalised a patriarchal model of three factors like job stress, work family balance and glass ceiling are interlinked and leads to gender diversity and inequality. The most common cause of job stress for women respondents as stated by author were gender discrimination, inability to balance the personal and professional life lack of promotional aspects and lack of support of the family members. For men it was the organisational politics and nature of job. Both of them cope up with the stress with different ways, men resort to recreational activities whereas women seek the support of the family members.

Johanim (2018) the study has revealed the dependence of job performance on autonomy, workload and work life balance. It further highlighted that autonomy and work life balance is more import and enhances the job performance. Sánchez-Hernández, (2019). provided additional information pertaining to the work life balance and the generational diversity. In addition, it advocated that organisations can design attractive work life balances practices which will have affect organisational performance, social welfare and health. Purohit, Rudri C(2019) discussed the relationship between usage of technology and work life balance. It further stressed on usage of technology to the maximum extent to so as effectively balance the work and life parameters. There are several ways by which technology can be used to reduce the work load and pressure. Kasbuntoro,(2020), study directly correlated the work life balance and job satisfaction. It stated that an ability to effectively manage the work life balance will increase the job satisfaction amongst individuals which is directly co related to the productivity. Madhavi.Challa(2020) study established the fact the quality of work life environment leads to satisfaction motivation and work life balance. Organisation can devise or introduce various measures within the system to improve the work environment and subsequently motivating the employees.



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Onyema (2020). It highlighted the fact that the study had an adverse effect on the education. It affected the educational institutions, educators, students and parents. Kasbuntoro (2020). brings out that work life balance is the most important factor in human resource management and leads to job satisfaction which finally affects the performance of the employees. Wolor (2020) the study concluded that e-training, e-leadership, motivation and work life balance results in a positive impact and provides a boost to the employee engagement.

Kaushik, M., & Guleria, N. (2020). The study highlighted the innovative ways the management and HR managers adopted to adapt to the adverse situation. In addition, the study also highlighted the need of enhancing the skill set of the workforce. Sifat, R. I. (2020). mentioned that behaviour of the people changed from social to isolated. Study also revealed that there was a sharp increase in the cases of anxiety, mental and depressive disorders. Hasna, Afra & Wibowo, Mungin & Mulawarman, Mulawarman. (2020) The study established the relationship between self-efficacy and social support with work life balance. It also highlighted the complex problem of students who are married and working.

Yildirim, Tevfik & Eslen-Ziya, Hande. (2020). The study showcased the effects caused by the pandemic on Men and Women in different ways. Several factors affected the work conditions i.e gender, children, perceived threat from COVID 19 and environment at the work place. Althammer (2021) conducted a three-week training to showcase the positive effects of psychological detachment on work life balance and satisfaction. Mindfulness trains an individual to segregate the personal and professional work. This can be included in organisational joining training program. Hjalmsdóttir (2021), highlighted that there was an uneven division of labour at home when the lockdown was enforced because of spread of COVID 19. It led to the increase in the stress level of personnel affected due to the lockdown.

Attar (2021) study revealed the effect role of work life balance on reducing the job stress and increasing the job satisfaction. It also highlighted job stress negatively impacts productivity, effectiveness, safety health and job satisfaction. Jichang Ma (2021) study concludes that techno stressors severely affect the work life balance and as a result it affects the performance of the employee. The organisation needs to effectively take actions to minimise the effect of techno stressors on the employees.

Irawanto, D. W., Novianti, K. R., & Roz, K. (2021). The study brought out the adaptation of the organisation to new way of working i.e teleworking or work from home policy. Job satisfaction and work stress during the period of work from home was also studied. Ipsen, C., van Veldhoven, M., Kirchner, K., & Hansen, J. P. (2021). study highlighted the advantages and disadvantages of working from home. The main advantages highlighted were work life balance, greater work control and increased efficiency. The disadvantages which were highlighted were home office constraints, work uncertainties and inadequate tools. Prokes, C., & Housel, J. (2021). The study surveyed the effect on the pandemic on learning and confidence. The results of study showed a decline in confidence. It also brought out that the younger age group faced additional mental health problems and more decline in confidence as compared to the older group.

Putri, A., & Amran, A. (2021). Highlighted that communication amongst the members was the most affected during the period. The management needs to pay attention on the duration and working hours of the employees. Muthu (2022). established a direct relation between the emotional intelligence and job engagement on ability to balance the work life. In addition, it also derived that the organisational support does not affect the relation between the emotional intelligence and job engagement and Work Life Balance. Waterhouse, P., Samra, R., & Lucassen, M. (2022). Study brought out the need to balance the work and family roles effectively. It also concluded that most of the students were satisfied with methodology of students.

Afrianty, T. W., Artatanaya, I. G., & Burgess, J. (2022). The study determined the factors which affected productivity while working from home. Various organisational factors like IT training, digital infrastructure and other factors which affect productivity were discussed. The study highlighted the need of digital orientation. Garzillo, E. M., Cioffi, A., Carta, A., & Monaco, M. G. L. (2022). There has been a significant change in most of the occupational health and safety activities post



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pandemic. Return to work from remote working needed specific changes in the workplace and change in mindset of employees. Bruggeman, B., Garone, A., Struyven, K., Pynoo, B., & Tondeur, J. (2022). The qualitative study to elaborate the experiences of teacher while adapting to the offline mode. The study highlighted six tension fields which affect the experiences of mentors and scholars. It has been established that the radical shift has caused both enthusiasm and techno stress. Robinson, L. E., Valido, A., Drescher, A., Woolweaver, A. B., Espelage, D. L., LoMurray, S., & Dailey, M. M. (2023). Due to the change in the methodology of teaching, teachers experienced various stressors related to diminished boundary between the personal and professional space. There was additional job-related stress, adherence to safety measures which added to the existing stress. The study also brought out that adequate support and favourable policy implementation can reduce the stress.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of the research is to study the influence of various psychosocial factors on work life balance of employees in an organisation. This study will also propose measures which may be adopted by the organisation to mitigate the effect of these factors on work life balance.

Research Methodology

The research work is based on the experimental research design.

Limitations of the Study

1. The staff members of the organisation may not give full and proper response due to paucity of time.
2. There are lots of organisation which do not give much importance to the terminology of work life balance hence their information may be ambiguous.

Results:-

A survey was conducted amongst approximately 200 professionals regarding the effect of psychosocial factors affecting work life balance. A detailed questionnaire was prepared and shared to get the responses. As per the responses received following were the inferences: -

Around 40% of the respondents were from the age group of 25-35 and annual income of more than 60 % individuals had annual income less than 5 lakhs per annum.

35% individuals raised concerns pertaining to the extended working hours and the related stress. Around 40% considered the work environment as the most important factor which each employee focuses upon.

Conclusion

These responses were later analysed and it was found that there are several psychosocial factors which affect work life balance. The survey also inferred that workplace environment and stress are the most important factor which affects the work life balance and finally the satisfaction.

It also suggests that each organisation should conduct seminars and workshops to spread the awareness regarding the need of work life balance. In addition, efforts should also be made to make the staff members aware of its impact on the mental health of the employees.

It is also suggested the management to frequently keep general body meetings with all the employees to hear to the problem and initiate the measures to resolve the problems being faced by employees



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