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A STUDY ON WORK LIFE BALANCE OF EMPLOYEES IN FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRY IN KERALA

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Work life balance is a concept including proper prioritizing between work and life style like health, pleasure, leisure, family and spiritual development. Work life balance is about creating and maintaining supportive and healthy work environments, which will enable employees to have balance between work and personal responsibilities and thus strengthen employee loyalty and productivity. It is trying to schedule an equal number of hours for each of employees work and personal activities are usually unrealistic. The work life balance is different from each other because we all have different priorities and different lives. Work life balance is essential to combat stress ensuring both individual and company success. The stress associated with unbalanced lifestyles is costly; it damages productivity and increases individual health risks. Employees who have the tools to balance their professional and personal lives are happier, healthier, and more productive. In addition to improving performance, many younger employees place a high value on work life balance. A healthy or good balance between work and family should be very important for everyone. A healthy work life has many advantages like it helps to increase the productivity and work performance. Personal and professional relationship are strengthened and conflicts are avoided when there is a good work life balance and this also helps to improve the mental and physical health of the employees. Absenteeism is one of the sign of unbalanced work life. The main objective of the study is to evaluate the work life balance of employees in food processing units. For the purpose of study, ten food processing units like milk and milk processing units, sea food processing units were selecting from Ernakulam district in Kerala. Five employees were selecting from each food processing units. Total fifty employees were interviewing for the study by using a structured questionnaire.

Keywords: Work life balance, Food processing units, Productivity, Performance, Work level satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

Work-life balance is about creating and

maintaining supportive and healthy work environments, which will enable to have balance

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between work and personal responsibilities and thus strengthen employee loyalty and productivity. Workers have many competing responsibilities such as work, children, housework, volunteering, spouse and elderly parent care and this places stress on individuals, families and the communities in which they reside. Work-life conflict is a serious problem that impacts workers, their employers and communities. Long work hours and highly stressful jobs not only hamper ability to harmonize work and family life but also are associated with health risks, such as increased smoking and alcohol consumption, weight gain and depression. Work life conflict has been associated with numerous physical and mental health implications.

The Six Components of Work-Life Balance

Self Management

Self-management is the recognition that effectively using the spaces in our lives is vital, and that available resources, time, and life are finite. It means becoming captain of our own ship; no one is coming to steer for us.

Time Management

Effective time management involves making optimal use of your day and the supporting resources that can be summoned you keep pace when your resources match your challenges. Time management is enhanced through appropriate goals and discerning what is both important and urgent, versus important or urgent. It entails knowing what you do best and when, and assembling the appropriate tools to accomplish specific tasks.

Stress Management

By nature, societies tend to become more complex over time. In the face of increasing

complexity, stress on the individual is inevitable. More people, distractions, and noise require each of us to become adept at maintaining tranquility and working ourselves out of pressure-filled situations. Most forms of multi-tasking ultimately increase our stress, versus focusing on one thing at a time.

Change Management

In our fast-paced world, change is virtually the only constant. Continually adopting new methods and re-adapting others is vital to a successful career and a happy home life. Effective change management involves making periodic and concerted efforts to ensure that the volume and rate of change at work and at home does not overwhelm or defeat you.

Technology Management

Effectively managing technology means ensuring that technology serves you, rather than abuses you. Technology has always been with us, since the first walking stick, flint, spear, and wheel. Now, the rate of change is accelerating, brought on by vendors seeking expanding market share. Often there is no choice but to keep up with the technological Joneses, but you must rule technology, not vice versa.

Leisure Management

The most overlooked of the work-life balance supporting disciplines, leisure management acknowledges the importance of rest and relaxation- that one can't short-change leisure, and that "time off" is a vital component of the human experience. Curiously, too much of the same leisure activity, however enjoyable, can lead to monotony. Thus, effective leisure management requires varying one's activities.

Benefits of Healthy Work Life Balance

- People who successfully implement work life

balance improve their sense of fulfillment at work and at home.

- A healthy work life balance decreases the risk of health problems.
- A healthy work life balance increases productivity and improves work performance.
- Personal and professional relationships are strengthened and conflicts are avoided when there is work life balance.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Nancy Lockwood (2003), in her article deals human resource professionals with an historical perspective, data and possible solutions for organizations and employees alike to work/life balance. Work/life programs have the potential to significantly improve employee morale, reduce absenteeism, and retain organizational knowledge, particularly during difficult economic times. The study also mentioned that increasing level of stress can rapidly lead to low employee morale, poor productivity and decreasing job satisfaction. The study concluded that Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) offered by many employers are an excellent resource for employees under stress. EAPs provide myriad of services, from drug and alcohol abuse counseling to addressing family and marriage problems, financial and legal difficulties and stress related problems.

Simonetta Manfredi and Michelle Holliday (2004), conducted a study titled 'Work life balance: An audit of staff experience at Oxford Brookes University', the study presents the findings of a university-wide audit that was carried out to gain information on staff experience of work-life balance policies and practices at Brookes. The audit was conducted

through a staff survey and a series of focus groups. The report also outlines the meaning of work-life balance in the context of employment relations and the importance of work-life balance for employers. In total 492 questionnaires were completed. The sample is broadly representative of Oxford Brookes University's staff population in terms of age, gender and employees with childcare responsibilities. Results indicate that over 90% of respondents believe that it is important to achieve a balance between paid work and personal life and that this enables them to work better. The study also suggested that, ensure fairness and consistency in the way university policies that support work-life balance are implemented, Promote a work-life balance culture and encourage innovative approaches to flexible working through staff development, Share and extend existing good practice, Consider the implications for work-life balance in relation to workloads and work outside conventional hours.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To test significant difference between gender with respect to work life balance and work level satisfaction of employees in food processing industry.
2. To test whether significant relationship between work level satisfaction and work life balance of employees in food processing industry.
3. To test significant difference among age group with respect to work level satisfaction and work life balance of employees in food processing industry.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

H_{0_1} : *There is no significant difference between*

male and female with respect to work level satisfaction.

H_{0_2} : There is no significant difference between male and female with respect to work life balance.

H_{0_3} : There is no significant difference among age group with respect to work level satisfaction.

H_{0_4} : There is no significant difference among age group with respect to work life balance.

H_{0_5} : There is no relationship between work level satisfaction and work life balance.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Secondary data has been collected from various books, journals, websites, etc. For the purpose of the study primary data has been collected from the employees of food processing units like sea food processing units and dairies in Ernamkulam and Thrissur district. Ten units were selected for the study and interviewed five employees from each unit. Fifty employees were interviewed by using a structured questionnaire. Statistical tools like t test, Kruskal Wallis test, and correlation coefficient were used for analyzing data.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Hypotheses Testing

H_{0_1} : There is no significant difference between male and female with respect to work level satisfaction.

P value in between 0.051 to 1.000, the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significant. Here it is concluded that the differences in gender is not effecting the work level satisfaction. Based on mean score of 32.43, female with respect to work life satisfaction is above average level.

Table 1: The Result of Independent Sample t Test on Gender with Respect to Work Level Satisfaction

Gender	Mean	Standard Deviation	t value	P value
Male	30.95	3.66	0.684	<1.000
Female	32.43	4.09		

H_{0_2} : There is no significant difference between male and female with respect to work life balance.

Table 2: The Result of Independent Sample t test on Gender with Respect to Work Life Balance

Gender	Mean	Standard Deviation	t value	P value
Male	11.045	2.32	3.905	<1.000
Female	11.535	2.08		

P value in between 0.051 to 1.000, the H_0 is accepted at 5% level of significant. So, it is concluded that, there is no significant difference between male and female with respect to work life balance.

H_{0_3} : There is no significant difference among age group with respect to work level satisfaction.

Table 3: The Result of Kruskal Wallis Test

Age	Mean Rank	Chi Square	P value
20 – 30	29.5	4.704	0.95
30 – 40	27.61		
Above 40	19.13		

P value in between 0.051 to 1.000, the H_0 is accepted at 5% level of significant. Hence, there is no significant difference among age group regard to work level satisfaction. Based on mean rank the age group between 20 and 30 has better work level satisfaction than other age groups.

H_{0_4} : There is no significant difference among age group with respect to work life balance.

Age	Mean Rank	Chi Square	P value
20 – 30	27.91	0.688	0.709
30 – 40	24.14		
Above 40	24.63		

P value in between 0.051 to 1.000, the H_0 is accepted at 5% level of significant. Hence, there is no significant difference among age group regard to work life balance. Based on mean rank the age group between 20 and 30 has better work life balance.

H_{0_5} : There is no relationship between work level satisfaction and work life balance.

	Work Level Satisfaction	Work Life Balance
Work level Satisfaction	1	.937**
Work life balance	.937**	1

Note: ** Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels.

The correlation between work level satisfaction and work life balance is 0.937. It indicates 93.70% highly positive relation between work level satisfaction and work life balance is significant at 1% level.

FINDINGS

1. The difference in gender is not effecting the work life balance and work level satisfaction.
2. The age group in between 20-30 has better work level satisfaction and work life balance than other age groups.
3. Work life balance and work level satisfaction are highly correlated.

CONCLUSION

Quality of Work Life plays a vital role in Human

Resource Management. QWL creative awareness of workers in successful Organization. An assured good Quality of Work Life will not only attract young and new talented people but also retain the existing employees. Work-life balance programs have been demonstrated to have an impact on employees in terms of recruitment, retention/turnover, commitment and satisfaction, absenteeism, productivity and accident rates. Companies that have implemented work-life balance programs recognize that employee welfare affects the “bottom line” of the business. Parameters are required to ensure that programs are having the desired effect on both employees and the company. Finally, self-management is important; people need to control their own behavior and expectations regarding work-life balance.

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