

**ANALYSIS OF WORK LIFE BALANCE (A STUDY AT THE
TARGETED CORPORATE SECTORS IN AND AROUND NAGPUR
WITH A SMALL NUMBER OF SAMPLES)**

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ABSTRACT

The nature, characteristics of Indian business scenario have been changing drastically due to globalization, liberalization, high degree of competitiveness and change in paradigms of the customers, work culture of the business organizations.

The present research study deals with the WORK LIFE BALANCE of the corporate level employees in different corporate sectors in order to determine the level of their work life balance which is having very high importance on their total wellbeing and hence their productivity and entire business growth. Work-life balance is about people having a measure of control over when, where and how they work. It is achieved when an individual's right to a fulfilled life inside and outside paid work is accepted and respected as the norm, to the mutual benefit of the individual, business and society. Striking a balance between professional and personal commitments is a common dilemma for many of today's workers. Organizations believe in providing a balanced life for their employees as they know that today's knowledge workers are less concerned about just financial security which earlier bound them to their employers. But they are definitely drawn towards employers who possess the brand of caring for their employees' well-being—personal as well as professional.

This kind of approaches have already entered in the Indian industries, some of them already started some measures for the balance in work as well as personal life.

Keywords: Work life balance, Occupational/Job stress, Family life, Well being, Working life.

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METHODOLOGY

The samples of the research study are the senior corporate executives of age above 35 years from four corporate sectors in and around Nagpur drawn on the basis of random sampling. Their designations are general manager, manager, assistant manager, senior executive officer. The research study is based on the secondary data interpreted from the feed back of the samples. Their feed back as the response of the questionnaire and interview were quantified by using Likert –Scale as data and these were analyzed and interpreted by using statistical techniques. The variables determined are level of Work Life Imbalance, Occupational stress. The correlation of Work Life Imbalance with Job Stress were found out and interpreted. The tools adopted for the study are the test for significance or 't' test, coefficient of correlation between the variables by using Karl Pearson's Method.

OBJECTIVE

Indian business scenario have been changing enormously due to globalization, liberalization, high degree of competitiveness and change in paradigms, characteristics of the customers, work culture of the business organizations.

The present research study deals with the WORK LIFE BALANCE of the corporate level employees in different corporate sectors in order to determine the level of their work life balance and also to find out the correlation of Work Life Balance with occupational stress.

INTRODUCTION & SCOPES

The expression "**work-life balance**" was first used in the late 1970s to describe the balance between an individual's work and personal life in U.K. In the United States, this phrase was first used in 1986. As the separation between work and home life has diminished, this concept has become more relevant than ever before.

Work-life balance is about people having a measure of control over when, where and how they work. It is achieved when an individual's right to a fulfilled life inside and outside paid work is accepted and respected as the norm, to the mutual benefit of the individual, business and society. Striking a balance between professional and personal commitments is a common dilemma for many of today's workers. Lean staff levels and rising workloads require longer hours on the job, making it difficult to juggle deadlines and dinner plans, presentations and trips to the gym, business travel and family vacations.

Effective work-life balance policies are valuable to businesses and organisations for a number of reasons, including:

- reduced staff turnover rates

- becoming a good employer or an employer of choice
- increased return on investment in training as employees stay longer
- reduced absenteeism and sick leave
- improved morale or satisfaction
- greater staff loyalty and commitment
- improved productivity

The Better Work-Life Balance survey can help the organisations improve and promote work-life balance in the workplace by:

- identifying areas of policy development and implementation where change may be required (e.g. improvement of awareness; change in workplace culture);
- monitoring the effectiveness of organisational changes by readministering the survey after changes have been made;
- responding to the changing needs of the employees and ensuring employees are aware of existing and changed policies by readministering the survey periodically.

The concept of work-life balance is based on the notion that paid work and personal life should be seen less as competing priorities than as complementary elements of a full life. It is important for employers to support work-life balance to comply with legal requirements that afford working parents the right to request to work flexibly, to promote equality of opportunities by ensuring that staff with caring responsibilities are not disadvantaged in the workplace, and to widen access to paid work and career opportunities. There is also a strong business case in support of work-life balance. Evidence from independent research as well as from employers' own assessments of flexible working practices shows that helping staff to strike a balance between paid work and personal life can lead to improved recruitment and retention, reduction of absenteeism, and an improved staff commitment and productivity. In current practice the corporate employees and employers believe that it is important to achieve a balance between paid work and personal life. All have commitments and responsibilities outside of work. Sometimes it is difficult to manage these and a job. It is necessary finding out if there are particular areas that cause problems and, if so, to consider what are the factors which help make life easier.

Everyone faces the issue of time management at one point or another, but as more and more people deal with working at one or more jobs, fighting long commutes, managing a household, attending school or other training, raising one or more children, responding to increasing work and time pressures of the shrinking workplace, and dealing with aging

parents, the days often seem to last long into the night and vacation and leisure time seem to be consumed with issues other than relaxation and personal fulfillment.

In fact, a recent study of more than 50,000 employees from a variety of manufacturing and service organizations found that two out of every five employees are dissatisfied with the balance between their work and their personal lives. The lack of balance "is due to long work hours, changing demographics, more time in the car, the deterioration of boundaries between work and home, and increased work pressure," says the study's author, Bruce Katcher, president of the Discovery Group, a management consulting firm.

How much is work invading the employees' personal lives and how much of their personal life is affected by the stress of trying to balance all the many responsibilities in their life- this is the most significant point to maintain their work life balance.

Most organizations take great pride in claiming to have systems in place for a better work-life balance for their employees. It is also a strong retention strategy, particularly for people in the 30 plus age bracket who want to enjoy a good quality of life, take care of their family responsibilities and are keen to balance their professional aspirations with personal needs. It is also true that these work-life programs **are not just welfare measure but are driven by business needs—greater retention and productivity.**

It is firstly important to dispel the myth that work-life programs are only driven by goals of employee well-being. The final objective is business in nature and it is in an organization's own interest to implement such programs. Srinivas Kandula, Global Head-HR, iGate Global Solutions, concedes that work-life balance is an integrated approach to work, "It is not a welfare program. It is a quality of life program. We also impart project planning skill for employees, so they can spend quality time with their family. We strongly believe that if we want to achieve high quality and productivity at the workplace, there has to be a work-life balance." Evidently, without such measures there will be greater stress among employees, low morale and of course less productivity. It is not a welfare program. It is a quality of life program. We also impart project planning skill for project planning skill for employees, so they can spend quality time with their family." A According to Vedha Bopaiah, H.R. executive, Marlabs Global Training And Delivery Centre, Mysore, One of the standard methods that we follow to understand the level of impact or to obtain employee feedback is through questionnaires / surveys."

Increased productivity is important for every company working in a competitive global market. It is true that many people believe they will not be regarded as star performers unless they work for more than the required office hours. "However, that is a myth. People are

fatigued and tired. Many are talking about pre mature retirement. Hence organizations have to come up with initiatives for work-life balance, else they will run the risk of losing employee productivity. This is the reason why work-life balance programs are important,” stated Kandula.

Ernest Louis, Senior Vice-president, HR, Zenta India, asserted why every organization should implement work-life programs for their employees, “In today’s context employees value leisure and are willing to pay a price for the same. We are dealing with GenX and not the baby boomers, who were very concerned about basic security issues, which is hardly a matter of concern for today’s generation.”

Organizations believe in providing a balanced life for their employees as they know that today’s knowledge workers are less concerned about just financial security which earlier bound them to their employers. But they are definitely drawn towards employers who possess the brand of caring for their employees’ well-being—personal as well as professional.

“The Indian IT industry is becoming increasingly conscious of the work-life balance and have therefore devised several initiatives that would help strike a balance in improving employee commitment, productivity and motivation,” said Rosita Rabindra, Executive Vice-president and Head of HR, NIIT Technologies. She pointed out that work-life programs and policies are designed to create more flexible, responsive environments to support a productive workplace by maximizing employee work-life effectiveness.

These initiatives are almost common to most organizations and range from stress reduction programmes (like meditation, yoga classes, etc.) to telecommuting, five-day week, flexible working hours, sabbaticals, hobby clubs and other fun activities. Sources of work life imbalance have been well documented since the late 1970s. Ivancevich and Matteson (1980) identified four categories of work.

stressors: physical environment, individual level (a mixer of role and career development variables), group level (primarily relationship-based) and organizational level (a mixture of climate, structure, job design and task characteristic) Schuler (1982) also identifies seven categories of work stressors in organizations: job qualities, relationships, organizational structure, physical qualities, career development, change and role in the organization. Quick and Quick (1984) proposed four categories of stressors: task demands, physical demands and interpersonal demands. Stress is involved in an environmental situation that perceived as presenting demand which threatens to exceed the person’s capabilities and resources for meeting it, under conditions where he or she expects a substantial differential in the rewards and costs from meeting the demand versus not meeting it (Mc Grath,1976). From the

documented evidence, it is clear that as far as work life is concerned extreme stress is so aversive to employees that they will try to avoid it by withdrawing either psychologically (through disinterest or lack of involvement in the job etc.) Physically (frequent late coming, absenteeism, lethargy etc.) or by leaving the job entirely (Beehr and Newman,1978). It predisposes the individual to develop several psychosomatic illness, in contrast, the absence of extreme stress would result in more satisfied, happy, healthy and effective employees. However, the stress one experiences in the job vary from mild to severe depending one's physiological, psychological and social make up (French and Caplan, 1970, Margolis et al., 1974., Miller 1960 and Wardwell et al., 1964). Stressors at the individual level have been studied more than any other category. Role conflicts, role ambiguity, role overload and under load, is widely examined individual stressors (McGrath 1976; Newton and Keenan, 1987). It is also reported by many researchers that the low job satisfaction was associated with high stress (Hollingworth et al., Abdul Halim, 1981; Keller et al., 1975; Leigh et al, 1988).Experience can be explained in the terms, that the individuals matured personality disposition related to the attainment of developmental tasks specific to each developmental phase and its influence on individuals perception of the situations as stressful or otherwise.

In Today's scenario, workplace stress is becoming a major issue of increasing concern to employees and organizations due to high degree of competition in the market due to globalization and also for fast life style. It has become a part of life for employees, as life today has become so complex at home as well as outside that it is impossible to avoid stress. Experts opine that stress is the main cause for all the problems of the modern world and that it affects both the individual and the organizational health. Stress has been defined by many in different ways, as it takes different forms depending on the situation. According to Douglas (1980), stress is any action or situation that places special physical or psychological demands upon a person. According to Van Fleet (1988), stress is caused when a person is subjected to unusual situations or demands that are difficult to handle or extreme expectations or pressures.

Workplace stress can be defined as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur within a human being when the requirements of the job do not match his capabilities, resources, or even needs. Some experts argue that a moderate amount of stress, both physical and mental, is required for normal and healthy growth. A little degree of stress at the workplace energizes the employees psychologically and physically, as it motivates them to learn new skills and master their jobs, resulting in increased productivity. The problem arises only when stress is not managed properly and if the functional strategies and activities are not

appropriate and effective, entire business or its parts get adversely affected. At the era of Globalization and high degree of competition, the organizational pressure on the corporate sectors have increased to a great extent and due to this the corporate executives' Job demands have increased enormously.

HYPOTHESES

1. Work Life Balance exists in the targeted employees. (Null Hypothesis Ho1)
2. Occupational Stress exists in the employees. (Null Hypothesis Ho2)
3. Work Life Balance and Occupational stress are negatively correlated. (Null Hypothesis Ho3).

DATA OBTAINED

The research study is based on the secondary data interpreted from the feed back of the samples.

METHODOLOGY

The samples of the research study are the senior corporate executives of age above 35 years from four corporate sectors in and around Nagpur drawn on the basis of random sampling. Their designations are general manager, manager, assistant manager, senior executive officer. Their feed back as the response of the questionnaire and interview were quantified by using Likert –Scale as data and these were analyzed and interpreted by using statistical techniques. The variables determined are level of Work Life Imbalance, Occupational stress. The correlation of Work Life Imbalance with Job Stress were found out and interpreted. The tools adopted for the study are the test for significance or 't' test, coefficient of correlation between the variables by using Karl Pearson's Method.

ORGANIZATIONS WHERE THE STUDY WAS CONDUCTED

- 1) Associated Cement Company (Marketing Office), Ramdaspath, Nagpur.
- 2) S.K.G. Refractories Ltd. , Butibori, Nagpur.
- 3) Adani Power Maharashtra Ltd, Tirora, Gondia.
- 4) Artefact Project Ltd., Dhantoli, Nagpur.

RESULTS

The properly structured questionnaires on WORK LIFE IMBALANCE and OCCUPATIONAL STRESS were distributed to 16 employees and their feed back points were converted to secondary data for calculation and interpretation.

1) TABLE FOR 't' TEST OF WORK LIFE IMBALANCE SCORES.

CALCULATED SIGNIFICANCE TEST OR 't' TEST VALUE OBTAINED FROM THE CALCULATION	OBSERVED 't' TEST VALUE FROM THE DISTRIBUTION TABLE AT 25% SIGNIFICANCE LEVEL FROM SINGLE TAILED DISTRIBUTION TABLE.
0.5564	0.691

DATA SOURCE:- Required Questionnaires were given to the targeted executives and their feedback was converted to data by quantifying the feedback answers, using likert scale.

Observed t value is greater than calculated t value.

So, WORK LIFE IMBALANCE is significant and WORK LIFE BALANCE is insignificant.

Hence the null hypothesis Ho1 is proved.

2) TABLE FOR 't' TEST OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS SCORES

CALCULATED SIGNIFICANCE TEST OR 't' TEST VALUE OBTAINED FROM THE CALCULATION	OBSERVED 't' TEST VALUE FROM THE DISTRIBUTION TABLE AT 25% SIGNIFICANCE LEVEL FROM SINGLE TAILED DISTRIBUTION TABLE.
0.26	0.691

Observed 't' value is greater than calculated 't' value.

DATA SOURCE:- Required Questionnaires were given to the targeted executives and their feedback was converted to data by quantifying the feedback answers, using likert scale.

So, 'OCCUPATIONAL STRESS' is significant.

Hence the null hypothesis Ho2 is proved.

3) TABLE FOR THE 'COEFFICIENT OF CORRELATION' 'r' BY KARL PEARSON'S METHOD ON THE BASIS OF SCORES OF 'WORK LIFE IMBALANCE' & 'OCCUPATIONAL STRESS' OF THE RESEARCH STUDY.

WORK LIFE IMBALANCE SCORES FOR 16 SAMPLES. (SUMMATION OF 'X')	OCCUPATIONAL STRESS SCORES FOR 16 SAMPLES (SUMMATION OF 'Y')
688	549

'r' = 0.905 (i.e.90.5%)

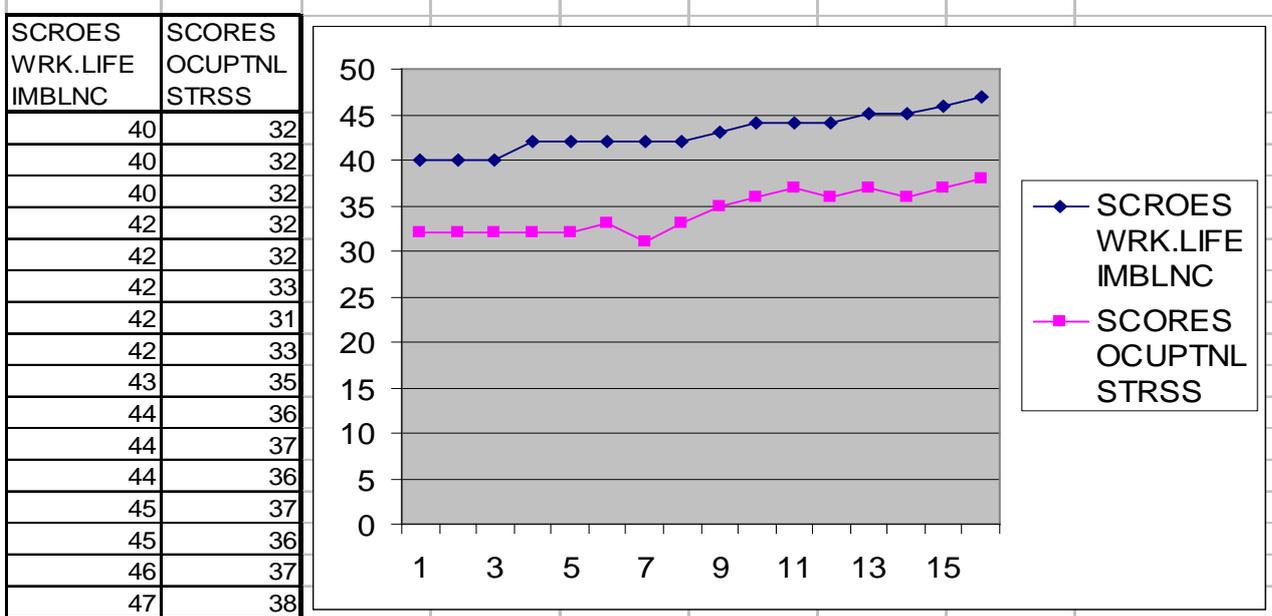
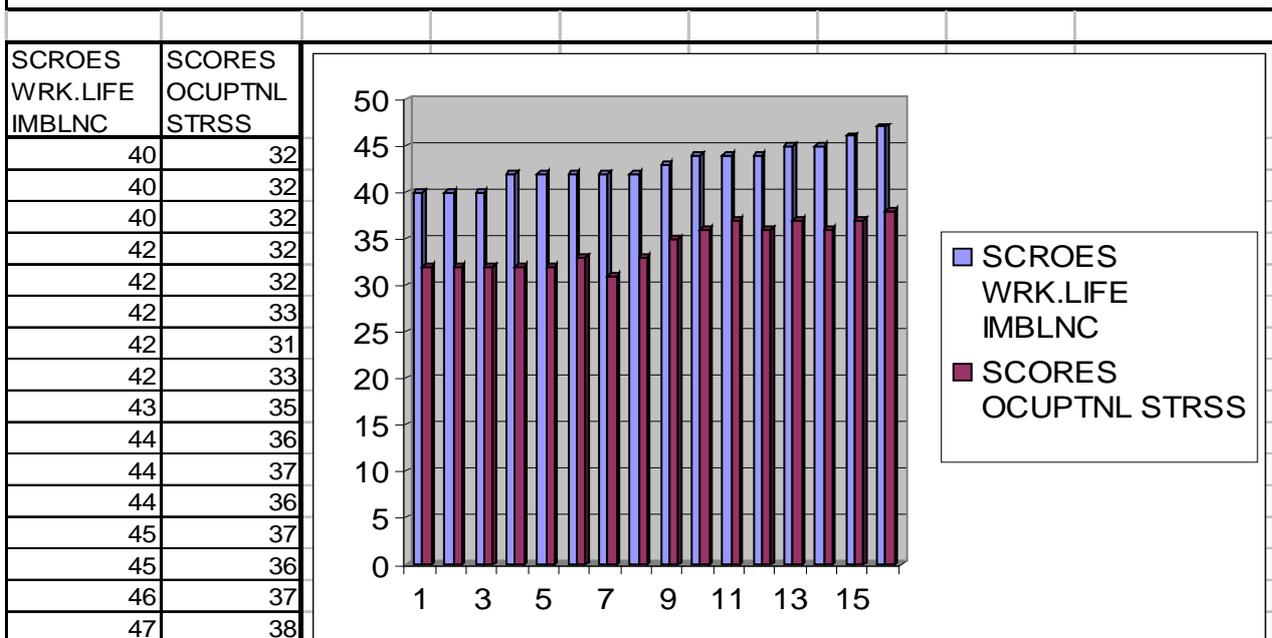
DATA SOURCE:- Required Questionnaires were given to the targeted executives and their feedback was converted to data by quantifying the feedback answers, using likert scale.

It is evident that, the correlation between Work Life Imbalance and Occupational Stress is very high and positive.

Hence the null hypothesis Ho3 is proved and it is also evident by the following graph. (almost same pattern of the two variables, X and Y.)

So, the correlation between Work Life Balance and Occupational Stress is negative. i.e. if Occupational /Job Stress increases, Work Life Balance decreases and vice versa.

GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION TO STUDY THE RELATION BETWEEN WORK LIFE IMBALANCE & OCCUPATIONAL STRESS ON THE BASIS OF THE DATA OBTAINED.



LIMITATION OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

1. The study is based on the secondary data.
2. The sample size is small.
3. The place is only Nagpur in and around.

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

From the research study and analysis of the obtained data it is clear that, the targeted executives' work life imbalance and job stress are obvious. Job stress is positively correlated to work life imbalance. So it is evident that, if the job stress can be reduced, work life balance will be improved.

In this age of globalization and high degree of competition, it is very much understood that, job stress and work life imbalance must exist ; as there is no other alternative at the present scenario, the focus must be on some other factors as follows-

1. From the organizations' end these can be like-(a) incorporation of yoga classes at the office at the employees' break time, (b) arrangement of office clubs for recreation, (c) yearly once excursion with family at the cost of the companies,(d) focus should be given by the management so that, within the organizations superiors' behaviour towards the subordinates and vice versa must not be strained, proper grievance redressal mechanism should be there, (e)regular health check up arrangements must be there for the employees, (f)executives'(with family) total health check up package must be compulsory every year in reputed diagnostic centres, (g)job rotation, job restructuring must be done periodically,(h) working climate should be improved with time, (i) flexi time working can be incorporated.

2. From the employees' ends-

(a) He/ She should cultivate the habit of being self disciplined, meticulous, sensible, sensitive to the family members, (b) if there is any reason of his/ her problem or stress at the office, that can be communicated to the spouse for sharing, (c) regarding family matters/problems regular discussion with spouse, children and parents must be there, (d) once/twice in a year long term tour with the family should be compulsory.

Some trivial affairs like listening to good music, cultivation of hobbies, regular light physical exercise, practicing yoga, meditation, avoidance of excessive late night parties, mixing with good friends, avoidance of high consumption of alcohol, watching good movies sometimes , avoiding too much watching of television etc can enhance the positivism of life and hence job stress and family related stress must be reduced which in turn improve work life balance of the employees.

From the overall discussion it can be concluded that the samples (selected corporate sector employees) of the research study have work life imbalance because of occupational stress. If work/ occupational stress can be reduced, obviously work life imbalance is supposed to be reduced hence work life balance can be achieved to some extent which will contribute to the employees' well being and enhancement of their productivity; as a result the business growth will be increased which is highly beneficial to the organizations.

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WEBSITES

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