

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE & MANAGEMENT

International
Journal
of
Research
in
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A Monthly Double-Blind Peer Reviewed (Refereed/Juried) Open Access International e-Journal - Included in the International Serial Directories

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NEED/IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

OBJECTIVES

HYPOTHESES

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS

CONCLUSIONS

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IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON WORK LIFE BALANCE IN IFFCO, AONLA, BAREILLY

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ABSTRACT

In the era of globalization, the word 'Work-life balance' has become a undividable part of any organization. The study of Work life of any organization comprises three factors—global competition, personal lives/family values, and an aging workforce—present challenges that exacerbate work/life balance. On the other hand, researcher try to offer a holistic picture of work-life steadiness benefits and programmes (WLBPs) offered by IFFCO Aonla Unit, Bareilly. With the basis of present literature, primary and secondary data, the researcher try to understand the current status of WLBPs at IFFCO Aonla Unit, Bareilly, and find out its future implications. The paper has discussed the challenges for effective implementation of such policies, which can help HR managers to be careful before introducing WLBPs in their respective organisations. After analyzing the factors, it is found that family-friendliness of employers at IFFCO Aonla Unit, Bareilly have been reflect in a variety of welfare provisions which has been a matter of concern for employers since industrialization. Moreover, the variety of WLBPs varies transversely organisations and there is still a long way to go when WLBPs will become strategic HR initiatives in most organisations. The paper suggests that IFFCO company need to include WLBPs and encourage such programmes which results increase in productivity and ensure employees loyalty & commitment towards organization and while making WLBPs, similarity between employee needs and organisational values also should be taken into consideration.

KEYWORDS

Globalization, Work-Life Balance, Work-Family Conflict, Family-Friendly policy, Work-Life Benefits, Orgnization Culture.

INTRODUCTION

Life is a complementary act, and it is probably right to say that everyone is looking for work/life balance in Indian society. But the question is, what is exactly meaning of work/life balance?

Work life balance is a concept including proper prioritizing between work (Career & Ambition) & Lifestyle (Health, pleasure, leisure, & spiritual development). Search for work/life balance is a common topic of conversation.

Demographic changes as seen in the increasing number of women in the workplace and dual career families have generated an increasingly diverse workforce and a greater need of employees to balance their work and non-work lives (Bharat, 2003; Komaraju, 1997; Rajadhyaksha & Bhatnagar, 2000; Ramu, 1989; Sekharan, 1992).

In reply to these changes, employers have introduced inventive practices that permit employees to discover greater work-life balance. As a result, initiatives such as flexible working hours, alternative work arrangements, leave policies and benefits in lieu of family care responsibilities and employee assistance programmes have become a significant part of most of the company benefit programmes and compensation packages.

This type of policies and benefit programmes are usually termed as 'family-friendly policies' (FFPs) or 'work-life benefits and practices' (WLBP).

However, employers' concern for employees' family lives is not a recent phenomenon. Employers have been providing various welfare measures such as good working conditions, health, safety, and security provisions to employees since industrialization.

These welfare practices became norms of most factories and organisations either as a result of employers' pragmatic concern for employees and their families or unions' conscious bargain for employee welfare. In true sense, World War II brought a considerable interest in employee work-family issues worldwide because of the increase of women employees in defense industries which led the federal government to provide facilities such as child care facilities.

Post war era saw the increase of government mandated provisions being offered to employees such as health and life insurance, social security like pension plans, and disability protection in forms of worker's compensation for accidents, and diseases institutionalizing the notion that employers had at least some obligations to provide security to employees' families (Glass & Estes, 1997). In due course of time employers' family-friendliness has gone beyond providing mere welfare provisions.

Though, work-life balance as a concept has got considerable attention and as a campaign has been practiced by various organisations as a matter of policy and strategy, still we are not sure of what constitutes WLBPs. Some organisations provide a bundle of policies and programmes such as alternative work arrangements, leave policies, child-care centers while some provide services such as gymnasiums and recreation facilities at work in the name of WLBPs.

We are not sure if the policies and practices are similar across organisations. Since employee work-life balance as a concept has got recognition from employers and HR managers in India only in recent years, the organisational initiatives in this regard are hardly known. Given this, the present paper has made an effort to understand the meaning and concept of WLBPs, prevalent policies and practices across the countries.

Moreover, despite the numerous benefits of such initiatives as demonstrated in empirical studies across countries, only a few organisations have introduced WLBPs. It raises the question: what are the reasons behind an organisation's decision to introduce WLBPs? Furthermore, among those organisations that have implemented WLBPs only a few have reaped the acclaimed benefits. Unless and until we have an understanding about the contextual as well as individual factors that might influence effective implementation and use of WLBPs, it will be difficult to advocate such practices.

To address the above concern, the present paper has made an attempt to identify the factors, which influence the adoption, implementation and utilization of WLBPs on the basis of extant literature to provide suggestions and a road map for organisations in India. Finally the paper discuss the origin, growth and current status of WLBPs at IFFCO Aonla Unit, Bareilly and their future prospects.

FACTORS INCLUDED IN WORK LIFE BALANCE

Factors of work life balance vary from one organization to other in their implementation because of many reasons. Some of main factors are discussed below:

1. ORGANISATION'S CHARACTERISTICS SUCH AS SIZE, NATURE

Big organisations are more visible and receive more attention from regulators, media, and public.

2. FAMILY RESPONSIVENESS OF EMPLOYERS AND HR MANAGERS

Organisations are more likely to recommend WLBPs when work and family issues are most important to higher-ranking HR staff as well as employers.

3. SALIENCE TO WORK-FAMILY DISAGREEMENT PROBLEMS

Employers approve WLBP in order to respond to workforce problems linked to work/family issues, such as non-attendance, delay and work stress.

4. GENDER COMPOSITION OF THE WORKPLACE

Work-family problems are possible to be more in organisations where female employee population is more. Likewise, managerial women employees negotiate certain working arrangements from their employers in a better way as compared to their male counterpart (Ingram & Simons, 1995). Hence, it is observed that organisations with greater percentage of female managers offer a complete WLBP package such as extended maternity leave, schedule flexibility, and childcare assistance.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Type: Descriptive & Exploratory Research

Research Area: IFFCO Aonla Unit, Bareilly.

Sample Size: 100(80 Male & 20 Female)

Sample Unit: Middle level & lower level Employees of IFFCO company

Data collection Technique: Primary data through questionnaire & sec. through internet & journals etc.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Name:

Gender:

Designation:

Marital Status:

Q1. Are you satisfied with flexible working hours, providing at your organization?

a) Yes 72 b) No 28

Q2. Do you get the facility of alternative work arrangements?

a) Yes 64 b) No 36

Q3. Are you getting all types of leave according to HR policies?

a) Yes 59 b) No 41

Q4. Are you getting benefits in Lieu of family care responsibilities?

a) Yes 58 b) No 27 c) Can't say 15

Q5. Does organization conduct employee assistance programmes?

a) Yes 47 b) No 35 c) Don't Know 18

Q6. Are you satisfied with compensation packages provided by company?

a) Yes 72 b) No 19 c) Don't Know 09

SOME PROVISIONS MADE BY GOVERNMENT FOR EMPLOYEES WELFARE (as given by labour legislations)**1. NO. OF WORKING HOURS**

The Factories Act, 1948 regulates the working hours of employees including leave, holidays, overtime, and employment of children, women and young persons. This is the first of its kind legislation in India that has regulated the working conditions in factories and has ensured basic minimum requirements for the safety, health and welfare of factory workers. The working hours for an adult worker are prescribed not to exceed 48 hours in a week and 9 hours a day. This Act also restricts the working time of women employees and adolescents during evening that is 7 pm to 6 am. It provides for weekly holidays of one day so that the total workdays do not exceed 10 consecutive days. In case of requirement to work on a holiday a worker should be allowed a compensatory holiday (Secs. 52, 53 and 71).

2. CHILD CARE

The Factories Act, 1948 also requires having crèches in factories employing more than 30 women workers to take care of their children (Sec. 40) which can be considered as a kind of WLBP since it helps women workers to better integrate their work and family demands.

3. PROVISIONS FOR LEAVE

Various kinds of leave provisions and benefits are available under Factories Act, 1948, Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946 and Employee State Insurance Act, 1948. These include, 1) Earned Leave (the convenient leave sought by individual employee) 2) Casual Leave (leave for some family related purpose e.g. burials, weddings etc.) 3) Sick Leave (most times with doctors' recommendations) 4) Compensatory leave (compensated with leave with wages for the absence from duty against the work performed by worker on any other day than normal working day). Under Employee State Baral and Bhargava / International Journal of Business, Management and Social Sciences, Vol. 2, No. 1, 2011, pp. 33-42 37 Insurance (ESI) Act, 1948 every insured employee is entitled to get cash benefits for the period of sickness occurring during the benefit period and certified by a duly appointed medical officer.

4. MATERNITY BENEFITS

Another much acclaimed benefit considered to be family-friendly is, maternity benefit provided to working women for certain periods before and after childbirth. In western countries much talked statutory provision for maternity benefit comes from the Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA), 1993 which mandates that all "eligible" employees of a covered employer can take up to twelve weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave during any 12-month period to care for a newborn child or newly adopted child; to take care of a child, parent, or spouse with a serious health problem; or to recover from one's own serious health problem. Some of these benefits are also provided to working women in India under Maternity Benefit Act, 1961. The Act extends to the whole of India and is applicable to every factory, mines or plantation (including those belonging to Government) and to every shop or establishment wherein 10 or more persons are employed or were employed on any day of the preceding 12 months. Every woman shall be entitled to, and her employer shall be liable for, the payment of maternity benefit, which is the amount payable to her at the rate of the average daily wage for the period of her actual absence. As per this Act, any woman shall be entitled to maternity leave of 12 weeks in all whether taken before or after childbirth. However, one cannot take more than six weeks before the expected delivery as per the amendment made in the act in 1989.

The ESI Act, 1948 ensures comprehensive health coverage for employees below a certain income level. A periodical cash benefit is payable to an insured woman employee, in case of confinement, miscarriage, medical termination of pregnancy, premature birth of a child, or sickness arising from pregnancy, miscarriage, etc., occurring or expected to occur in a benefit period. Medical bonus or expense in lieu of medical expenditure or confinement expenses (up to a certain limit) is paid to an insured woman and an insured person in respect of his wife, if confinement occurs at a place where necessary medical facilities under ESI scheme are not available.

Apart from these statutory provisions, many other provisions are provided by organisations voluntarily to their employees either as a result of union's bargain or as pragmatic concerns of employers. These provisions include high standards of working condition, housing facility to more encompassing benefit packages that include health, dental and life insurance, vacation and leave policies, investment and retirement plans.

THE PATH TO THE LEAD

After analyzing secondary reports and primary data collected through questionnaire surveys suggest that IFFCO, Aonla, Bareilly have certainly realized the need for work-life balance of employees and has started offering policies and programs that are more employee growth oriented and family-friendly than mere welfare and safety oriented.

Even though, these policies and programs differ one organization to other, but it surely has provided new directions for organisations in similar sectors to adopt such progressive HR initiatives to recognize and accommodate the diverse needs of the employees.

However, highest care should be taken before taking decisions to approve and implement these inventive practices as the success of such policies and practices are reliant on many individual and organisational factors which are discussed above. appropriate communication should be made to employees about various policies, practices and they should be encouraged to use them. Appropriate significance should be given to employees' needs such as their child education medical, compensation etc to cope up with global challenges.

FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

Significant analysis of the history and growth of employment policies IFFCO, Aonla, Bareilly suggest that WLBP have their roots in the statutory and voluntary welfare practices offered by employer during and post industrialization era. requirements such as:

- working hour regulations,
- motherhood benefits,
- crèches, and
- leave policies

have received continued attention in government mandated provisions.

Government's interference to protect employees from unfair workplace terms and conditions made by employers and in some cases employers' realistic concerns for their employees' health, safety and welfare can be considered as the major reasons behind introduction of such policies.

The socio demographic and economic changes have pressurized employers to look beyond welfare practices and provide more humane and family-friendly concerns so that employees can accommodate both their family and work needs thereby maintaining a healthy work-life balance and being productive at the work place.

However, the results are in a position to provide some directions to HR professionals in India to review their present policies and practices regarding work-life balance and redesign them accordingly. Certain cautions and proactive actions should be taken before implementing WLBP in order to reap the benefits of the same. Policies and programs offered in pieces may not help in general neither a common program fits for all.

IFFCO, Aonla, Bareilly need to take lessons from organisations across countries and design their benefit plans keeping in mind the nature of the industry, profile of the work force, gender specific needs, individual initiated bargains, local culture and environment as well as policy implications.

While a growing number of studies find that WLBP benefit employees, empirical support for the business cases in India for investing in such initiatives is less developed which needs immediate concern of researchers. A few questions need to be answered before talking about the effectiveness and use of WLBP IFFCO, Aonla, Bareilly.

Future research program could be to understand if WLBP are able to reduce work-family conflict and if they really add to company underneath line. Efforts should be taken to understand if employees recognize their organisations providing these policies to be family-friendly and whether the culture of the company is supportive towards using such programs. This paper is just an attempt to set the base for further research in this area in the Indian context.

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