

WORK LIFE BALANCE – A STUDY OF SALES FORCE IN PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

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Abstract

In this competitive environment, vast majorities of people seems to be working longer and harder than ever before and as consequences are finding it ever more difficult to achieve a much desired work life balance. A balance between work and life is supposed to exist when there is a proper functioning at work and at home with a minimum of role conflict. Therefore, the incompatibility between the demands from the work and non-work domain give rise to conflict and consequently, people experience a lack of work life balance. It is a fact that people entering the sales force today are laying emphasis on the importance of WLB more than their predecessors are. In spite of this, the extent to which this balance is being achieved is far less than what is desired. The current study aims to reveal sales force work life balance practices and to find out whether the opinion of employees on work life balance is different based on their marital status and number of work hours they work. For this study, a sample of 145 respondents in various designations of sales department in Pharmaceutical industry was chosen with convenient sampling technique. Applied statistical tools include Cronbach's alpha, descriptive statistics, cross order correlation and Chi- square analysis.

Keywords: Work Life Balance, Sales Force, Work Flexibility.

Introduction

In today's competitive work environment balance between work and life is increasingly sought after by the employees. The need for a better work-life balance has become one of the growing concerns in modern society. Work life balance become an important issue in sales professionals jobs as their profile is different from other functional people which involves frequent travelling, long work hours, getting frustrated with different kinds of customers, expressing their frustration in un healthy ways. Work life balance plays an important role in retaining a competent sales force. A sales force that is out of balance, highly stressed or dissatisfied greatly decreases full engagement with customers. Lack of work life balance results in ill-health, high levels of stress, family problems, decline in performance, increase in attrition which ultimately affect company performance.

Literature Review

A study conducted by Judy De Villiers, ElizeKotze (2003) to identify the workplace determinants of work-life imbalance found that the most significant work-life conflict arises from complex workplace issues, including managing change, supervisory and technical competences, leadership, roles and accountabilities, and culture. They suggested that employees 'work-life balance should improve by nurturing individual balance-enabling skills as well as developing organizational balance-supportive capabilities and opportunities for individuals to enhance their work-life management skills should be created. This could occur via mentoring and coaching, as well as formal courses on time-management, planning and prioritization, and stress management.

K.G. Senthilkumar, Dr. S. Chandrakumaramangalam and Dr.L. Manivannan (2012) reported that work hours worked is consistently associated with worse work-life outcomes and work-life balance is a joint responsibility of both employees and employers. In a study conducted by Sakthivel Rania, Kamalanabhanb&Selvarania (2011) found that there is strong relationship between work/life balance and employee satisfaction.

In Nigeria, OjoIbiyinka Stella, SalauOdunayo Paul, Falola Hezekiah Olubusayo (2014) conducted a study on three sectors i.e. banking, educational and power sectors to find out the work life balance practices and the barriers to implement WLB initiatives. They suggested that various sectors should provide a variety of flexible working pattern to help improve efficiency and effectiveness of their employees. The adoption of some work-life balance programs would help reduce the high turnover rate, which is currently exists within the banking sector and each sector should undertake pilot scheme to identify which policies best suits individual sectors as specific policies may difficult to implement in various sectors.

A study conducted by Komal Saeed and YasirAftabFarooqi (2014) to investigate the relationship between work life balance, job stress and job satisfaction among university teaches, university of Gujarat revealed that there is insignificant relationship between job stress and job satisfaction whereas work life balance share a moderate positive relationship with job satisfaction.



In Malaysia, a study was conducted by RaduanCheRose, LooSeeBeh,JegakUli,KhairuddinIdris (2006) to determine the level and relationship between quality of work life with career-related variables. The result indicates the most important predictor of QWL is organizational climate, followed by career achievement, career satisfaction and career balance.

In a study conducted by SubhasreeKar, K. C. Misra (2013) in Indian It industry found that there is a significant mediating effect on the relationship between the WLB and employee retention. They suggest that improvements in human resource management practices with a high supportive work culture characterized by work time and work life flexibilities contributes to increased work life balance and make the employees more productive. Corporate culture has a strong role to play between Work Life Balance Practices and the HR issues like recruitment, retention, turnover, commitment, satisfaction and productivity.

In a study conducted by Kumari K Thriveni1, Devi V Rama (2012) in Bangalore city reported that there is significant relationship between demographic variables and work life balance of women employees. Whereas, in another study M. Meenakshisundaram, Dr. N. Panchanatham (2012) reported that there is no significant difference in the work life balance of employees among the respondents of different age groups.

Research Methodology

Objectives

- To find out sales force work life balance practices in Automobile industry.
- To find out whether the opinions of employees regarding work stress, work life balance, work flexibility and flexible timings are different based on their marital status, number of work hours.

Research Hypothesis

- H₁: Opinion regarding Work stress is different among sales force of different marital status.
- H₂: Opinion regarding work life balance policies is different among sales force of different marital status.
- H_{3:} Different opinions are- held by employees of different marital status regarding work flexibility.
- H_{4:} Employees of different marital status have different opinions on flexible timings.
- H₅: Opinion regarding Work stress is different among employees working different number of work hours
- H₆: Opinion regarding work life balance policies is different among employees working different number of work hours
- H_{7:} Different opinions regarding work life balance policies are held by employees working different number of work hours
- H_{8:} Employees working different work hours have different opinions on flexible timings.

Data Collection and Analysis

For this study, a sample of 145 sales force was chosen with convenient sampling technique in various designations of sales department in Pharmaceutical industry. The questionnaire consists of four variables and four questions from each variable. When tested the reliability of questionnaire using Cronbach's Alpha, all four variables in the questionnaire found reliable. Applied statistical tools include Cronbach's alpha, descriptive statistics, cross order correlation and Chi-square.

Reliability Statistics

Table 1: shows the reliability statistics. The Cronbach's Alpha was calculated for each variable individually. Four variables in this study were showing Alpha greater than 0.60. Hence, the questionnaire was found reliable.

Reliability Statistics							
	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items					
Work Stress	0.723	4					
WLB Policies	0.717	4					
Work Flexibity	0.706	4					
Flexi Timings	0.691	4					



	Table	e: 2		ble: 3	
	Gender of	the respondents	Age of the resp	ondents	
	Count	Percentage		Count	Percentage
Male	144	99.30%	18-23	9	6.20%
Female	1	0.70%	24-29	111	76.60%
Total	145	100.00%	30-35	22	15.20%
Education of	the responden	ts	36-41	3	2.10%
	Count	Percentage	above 42	0	0.00%
S.S.C	0	0.00%	Total	145	100.00%
Inter	0	0.00%	Designation of t	the responde	ents
Graduation	61	42.10%		Count	Percentage
P.G	84	57.90%	Executive	114	78.60%
Others	0	0.00%	Sr. Executive	12	8.30%
Total	145	100.00%	Team Leader	0	0.00%
Total experie	nce of the resp	ondents	Manager	19	13.10%
	Count	Percentage	Total	145	100.00%
0-3	82	56.60%	Salary of the res	spondents	
4-7	40	27.60%		Count	Percentage
8-11	18	12.40%	Below 10000	14	9.70%
12-15	3	2.10%	11000-15000	36	24.80%
Above 15	2	1.40%	16000-20000	29	20.00%
Total	145	100.00%	21000-25000	24	16.60%
Experience ir	n present organ	nization	above 25000	42	29.00%
	Count	Percentage	Total	145	100.00%
Below 1	62	42.80%	No. of hours we	ork in a day	
1-3	61	42.10%		Count	Percentage
4-6	16	11.00%	7-8	59	40.70%
7-9	3	2.10%	8-9	50	34.50%
Above 9	3	2.10%	9-10	23	15.90%
Total	145	100.00%	10-12	10	6.90%
			Above12	3	2.10%
			Total	145	100.00%
				-	

Demographic information of the respondents

Majority of the respondents of the study (79 percent) are executives. Only eight percent are senior executives and 13 percent are managers. Of the total respondents, 57 have 0-3 years of experience, 28 percent of the participants have 4-7 years of experience, 12 percent of the participants have 8-11 years of experience, only two percent of the participants have 12-15 years and one percent of the participants were more than 15 years experienced.

Only ten percent of the respondents are paid the salary below Rs. 10000. Nearly 25 percent of the respondents are paid the salary between Rs. 11000 and 15000 per month. 20 percent of the respondents' salary ranged between Rs. 16000 and 20000 per month. Approximately 17 percent are paid the salary between Rs. 21000 and 25000 per month and 29 percent of the respondents are the salary earners of above Rs. 25000.

About 43 percent respondents have below one-year experience in their present organization. 42 percent respondents have 1-3 years of experience and 11 percent of the respondents have 4-6 years of experience in their present organizations. Two percent of the respondents have been working for 7-9 years with their present organizations. Only Two percent of the respondents have more than 9 years of experience in their present organizations.

In Pharmaceutical industry, 41 percent of the total employees work 7-8 hours in a day, 34 percent of the employees' work 8-9 hours. Nearly 16 percent of the employees work 9-10 hours. Seven percent of the employees work 10-12 hours. Only two percent of the employees work more than 12 hours a day.



Inter Item Correlations

Inter Item Corr	elations of Work Stress				
		Work	Work	Work	Work
		Stress 1	Stress 2	Stress 3	Stress 4
Work Stress 1	Pearson Correlation	1	.509**	.436**	.363**
WOIK Suess I	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
Work Stress 2	Pearson Correlation		1	.316**	.336**
WOIK SUESS 2	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000	.000
Work Stress 3	Pearson Correlation			1	.406**
WOIK SUESS J	Sig. (2-tailed)				.000
Work Stress 4	Pearson Correlation				1
WOIK SUCSS 4	Sig. (2-tailed)				
**. Correlation is	s significant at the 0.01 level (2-tai	led).			

Table 3 shows inter item correlation of Work Stress. The cross order correlation among items 1 - 4 is significant at 0.01 percent. I found a significant positive correlation (r = 0.509, Sig. 0.01) between work stress and fatigue at work place.Work stress is significantly correlated (r = 0.43, Sig. 0.01) with stress related health problem. A significant positive correlation is identified between work stress (item no. 1) and quality time with family (item no. 4). A positive correlation is identified between stress related health problem and quality time with family. However, a weak positive correlation is identified between fatigue at work and quality time with family, between fatigue at work and stress related health problem.

Inter Item Cor	relations of Work Life Balance				
		WLBP 1	WLBP 2	WLBP 3	WLBP 4
WLBP 1	Pearson Correlation	1	.737**	.416**	.346***
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
WLBP 2	Pearson Correlation		1	.366**	.283**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000	.001
WLBP 3	Pearson Correlation			1	.161
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.053
WLBP 4	Pearson Correlation				1
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
**. Correlation	is significant at the 0.01 level (2-ta	iled).			

Table 4 shows inter item correlation of Work Life Balance Policies. The cross order correlation among items 1 - 4 is significant at 0.01 percent. I found a significant positive correlation (r = 0.73, Sig. 0.01) between existence of work life balance policies and effectiveness of work life balance. Next, existence of work life balance policies is significantly correlated (r = 0.41, Sig. 0.01) with flexible leave policy. A positive correlation ((r = 0.34, Sig. 0.01) is identified between existence of work life balance policies and employee counseling. A positive correlation is found between effectiveness of work life balance policies and flexible leave policy. However, there is a weak positive correlation between effectiveness of work life balance policies and employee counseling. A weak positive correlation is there between flexible leave policy and employee counseling.

Inter Iter	Inter Item Correlations of Work Flexibility								
		Work Flex 1	Work Flex 2	Work Flex 3	Work Flex 4				
Work	Pearson Correlation	1	.707**	.410***	.396**				
Flex 1	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000				
Work	Pearson Correlation		1	.364**	.303**				
Flex 2	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000	.000				
Work	Pearson Correlation			1	.213*				
Flex 3	Sig. (2-tailed)				.010				
Work	Pearson Correlation				1				
Flex 4	Flex 4 Sig. (2-tailed)								
**. Corre	**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).								
*. Correla	*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).								



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Table 5 shows inter item correlation of Work Flexibility. I found a significant positive correlation (r = 0.70, Sig. 0.01) between work from home facility and part time work facility. Next, work from home facility is significantly correlated (r = 0.41, Sig. 0.01) with term time working policy. A positive correlation(r = 0.39, Sig. 0.01) is existed between work from home facility and alternative work place policy. Part time work facility (item no. 2) is positively correlated with term time working policy (item no. 3). However, a weak positive correlation (r = 0.30, Sig. 0.01) is identified between part time work facility and alternative work place facility. A weak positive correlation is existed between term time working policy (item no. 3) and alternative work place facility (item no. 4).

Inter Item Correlations of Flexible Timings								
		Flexi Time 1	Flexi Time 2	Flexi Time 3	Flexi Time 4			
Flexi	Pearson Correlation	1	.581**	.527**	.344**			
Time 1	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000			
Flexi	Pearson Correlation		1	.346**	.150			
Time 2	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000	.072			
Flexi	Pearson Correlation			1	.227**			
Time 3	Sig. (2-tailed)				.006			
Flexi	Pearson Correlation				1			
Time 4	Sig. (2-tailed)							
**. Correla	ation is significant at the 0.01 1	evel (2-tailed).						

Table 6 shows inter item correlation of Flexible timings scale. The cross order correlation among items 1 - 4 is significant at 0.01 percent. I found a significant positive correlation (r = 0.58, Sig. 0.01) between happiness at work and flexible work hours. Next, happiness at work is significantly correlated (0.52, Sig.0.01) with realistic goals. A positive correlation is existed between happiness at work (item no. 1) and job sharing (item no. 4). There is a positive correlation (r = 0.34, Sig. 0.01) between flexible work hours and realistic goals. There is a weak positive correlation is identified between flexible work hours (item no. 2) and job sharing (item no. 4). A weak positive correlation (r = 0.22, Sig. 0.01) is identified between realistic goals and job sharing.

Employees'	opinion	regarding	Work	Stress

Table 7: Opinion on Work stress									
		SD	D	NAD	Α	SA	TOTAL		
Work Stress 1	Frequency	29	34	23	39	20	145		
WOIK SUESS I	Percentage	20	23.4	15.9	26.9	13.8	100		
	Frequency	27	41	26	29	22	145		
Work Stress 2	Percentage	18.6	28.3	17.9	20	15.2	100		
Work Strong 2	Frequency	48	35	28	23	11	145		
Work Stress 3	Percentage	33.1	24.1	19.3	15.9	7.6	100		
Work Stress 4	Frequency	27	31	30	32	25	145		
	Percentage	18.6	21.4	20.7	22.1	17.2	100		

SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, NAD=Neither Agree nor Disagree, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree

Work Stress 1) The stress level of my organization's work is high

Work Stress 2) I feel tired because of work

Work Stress 3) I am suffering from stress-related health problem

Work Stress 4) I miss out quality time with my family due to work pressure

Table 7 shows the opinion of the respondents on work stress. It shows that one - half of the respondents agrees that the stress level of their organization work is high. Around 46 percent of the respondents disagrees that they are tired due to their work. More than one - half of the respondents disagrees that they are suffering from stress related health problems. However, there is mixed response form the respondents to the statement that they are missing quality time with family.



Employees' opinion regarding Work Life Balance Policies

Table 8: 0	Table 8: Opinion on Work Life Balance Policies									
		SD	D	NAD	Α	SA	TOTAL			
WLBP1	Frequency	28	24	30	49	14	145			
WLDPI	Percentage	19.3	16.6	20.7	33.8	9.7	100			
WLBP2	Frequency	24	34	21	43	23	145			
WLDF2	Percentage	16.6	23.4	14.5	29.7	15.9	100			
WLBP3	Frequency	20	16	25	61	23	145			
WLDP3	Percentage	13.8	11	17.2	42.1	15.9	100			
WLBP4	Frequency	33	38	27	35	12	145			
WLDP4	Percentage	22.8	26.2	18.6	24.1	8.3	100			

SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, NAD=Neither Agree nor Disagree, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree

WLBP 1) My organization has work life balance policies

WLBP 2) My organization's Work Life Balance policies help me balancing my personal and professional life

WLBP 3) My organization has flexible leave policy

WLBP 4) My organization provides employee counseling to address work -life related problems.

Table 8 shows the response of the employees on WLB policies. Around 44 percent of the respondents agrees that they have work life balance policies in their organization. Nearly 45 percent of the respondents disagrees that their WLB policies are helping them to balance their personal and professional life. Around 62 percent of the respondents agrees that they have flexible leave policy in their organization. Majority of the employees (48 percent) disagrees that their organization provides them employee counseling which helps them to balance their personal and professional life.

Table 9: Opinion on Work flexibility									
		SD	D	NAD	Α	SA	TOTAL		
Work Flex 1	Frequency	102	24	6	7	6	145		
WOIK FIEX I	Percentage	70.3	16.6	4.1	4.8	4.1	100		
Work Flex 1	Frequency	83	36	10	9	7	145		
WORK FIEX I	Percentage	57.2	24.8	6.9	6.2	4.8	100		
Work Flex 3	Frequency	63	26	23	23	10	145		
WOIK FIEX 5	Percentage	43.4	17.9	15.9	15.9	6.9	100		
	Frequency	66	31	18	17	13	145		
Work Flex 4	Percentage	45.5	21.4	12.4	11.7	8.97	100		

Employees' opinion regarding Work Flexibility

SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, NAD=Neither Agree nor Disagree, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree

Work Flex 1) My organization provides work from home facility

Work Flex 2) My organization provides part time work Facility when an employee is in special need

Work Flex 3) My organization has term time working policy

Work Flex 4) My organization provides us the option to work from local offices managing our business of another locational area.

Table 9 shows the opinion of the respondents on work flexibility. Majority (86 percent) of the respondents disagrees that their organization provided them work from home facility. Around 81 percent of the employees disagrees that they have part time work facility in their organization when an employee was in special need. Around 61 percent of the employees disagrees that they have term time working policy. Majority of the respondents disagrees that they are provided the facility to work from local offices managing business of another locational area.



Employees' opinion regarding Flexible Timings

Table 10: Opinion on Flexible timings								
		SD	D	NAD	Α	SA	TOTAL	
Flex Time 1	Frequency	18	21	9	65	32	145	
Flex Time I	Percentage	12.4	14.5	6.2	44.8	22.1	100	
Flex Time 2	Frequency	19	19	19	45	43	145	
Flex Tille 2	Percentage	13.1	13.1	13.1	31	29.7	100	
Flex Time 3	Frequency	21	18	23	59	24	145	
Flex Tille 5	Percentage	14.5	12.4	15.9	40.7	16.6	100	
Flex Time 4	Frequency	43	26	25	36	15	145	
FIEX TIME 4	Percentage	29.7	17.9	17.2	24.8	10.3	100	

SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, NAD=Neither Agree nor Disagree, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree

Flex Time 1) I am happy about the amount of time I spend at work

Flex Time 2) We have flexible work hours in our organization

Flex Time 3) I am given reasonable work and responsibility

Flex Time 4) My organization allows employee job-sharing when an employee is not around.

Table 10 shows the response of the employees regarding flexible timings. Around 57 percent of employees agrees that they are happy about the time they spent on work. Around 61 percent of the employees agrees that they have flexible work hours in their organization. More than one - half (57 percent) of the employees felt that they were given reasonable work and responsibility. Around 46 percent of the respondents disagrees that their organization allows employee job sharing when an employee is not around.

Hypothesis Testing

Table 11: Chi-Square Analysis- Marital Status of the respondents								
Work StressWork Life Balance PoliciesWork FlexibilityFlexible timings								
48.876	46.228	150.614	57.71					
15	15	15	16					
.000	.000	.000	.000					

Table 12: Chi-Square Analysis- No. of hours in a day respondent works			
Work Stress	Work Life Balance Policies	Work Flexibility	Flexible timings
48.876	46.228	150.614	57.71
15	15	15	16
.000	.000	.000	.000

Table 11 shows the results of Chi-Square test. To test the hypothesis Chi-square technique is applied. Results shown that -

- Opinion regarding work stress is different between married and unmarried employees.
- Opinion regarding work life balance policies is different between married and unmarried employees.
- There is a difference in the opinion regarding work flexibility between married and unmarried employees.
- There is a difference in the opinion regarding flexible timings between married and unmarried employees.
- Employees working different number of hours have different opinions regarding work stress.
- Employees working different number of hours have different opinions regarding work life balance policies.
- Different opinions regarding work life balance policies are held by employees working different number of work hours
- Employees working different work hours have different opinions on flexible timings.

Conclusion

In sum, the study reveals that opinion regarding work stress, work life balance policies, work flexibility, flexible timings are different from married to unmarried employees. Different opinions regarding work stress, work life balance policies, work flexibility, flexi timings are held by employees working different number of work hours.



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On the other hand, the study reveals work stress of sales force in Pharmaceutical industry is high. However, sales force working in Pharmaceutical industry are not suffering from stress related health problems. There is a mixed opinion to the statement that they are missing quality time with family. Work life balance policies for sales force are found in Pharmaceuticals industry. Employees are not provided any counseling to balance their personal and professional life. There is no work from home facility, part time work facility, term time working policy, alternative work place option for sales force working in Pharmaceutical industry. Sales force working in Pharmaceutical industry are happy at their work. They have flexible work hours. Work and responsibility given to them felt reasonable. Job sharing when an employee is not around is not allowed for sales in Pharmaceutical industry.

Work life balance become an important issue in sales professionals jobs as their profile is different from other functional people which involves frequent travelling, long work hours, getting frustrated with different kinds of customers, expressing their frustration in un healthy ways. It is suggested to implement work life balance policies such as flexible work hours, flexible leaves, job-sharing, part time work, work from home and term time working policy, which help employees to spend quality time with their family and balance their work and family matters.

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