

WORKLIFE BALANCE AND PLACE OF WORK PREFERENCE A STUDY AMONG WOMEN EMPLOYEES WORKING AT INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES IN COIMBATORE CITY

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ABSTRACT :

The growth of the IT industry in India symbolizes potential of Indian industry to perform at world-class standards. The Indian IT companies operate beyond the normal 8 hour workday; sometimes, they operate round the clock (Shiri Ahuja,2000). Coimbatore is the next IT hotspot among Tier II cities in South India, with increasing costs in established hubs like Bangalore, Hyderabad, Chennai and Pune, Coimbatore is emerging as the preferred cost-effective destination for leading IT and outsourcing firms in India (NASSCOM-A.T Kearney). Coimbatore is fast emerging as an IT hub mainly for the talent pool it possesses. According to NASSCOM, 40% of the fresher's hiring in the Indian IT industry happens in the 9 districts in and around Coimbatore. The study focus on women work life and the reason why they prefer the city as a work place. Coimbatore climate place prominent role in selection criteria. The study carried out among women employees in working in Information Technology companies in Coimbatore city.

Index Terms: Coimbatore, Information Technology, Work life Balance, Preference

I. INTRODUCTION

Information Technology industry is most preferred outsourcing destination and home to a large number of IT professionals. IT industry is huge employment generation provider which offered several new job opportunities in India and abroad for both men and women. The industry is expected to provide direct employment for 4 million and indirect employment for 10 to 12 million by the year 2015.

Next to Chennai, Coimbatore is the second largest software producer of Tamil Nadu. It is ranked at 17th among the global outsourcing cities map with the launch of Tidal Park, private entrepreneurs and other planned IT parks in and around the city. For huge number of people Coimbatore is a natural choice of work place due to conducive business environment, professional work ethics and a stable political climate as well as moderate infrastructure.

Women bring a different life experience and a different perspective to the innovation process and diversity in innovation leads to the design of products and services that benefit a broader range of consumers as well as business organizations. Women's absence in IT represents a loss of opportunities for corporations and individuals, as well as a loss of talent and creativity for the workforce (NCWIT, 2006). Bartol, Williamson, and Langa, 2006; Riemenschneider, Armstrong, Allen, and Reid, (2006) has identified cultural fit, expectation gaps, mentors, role models, career satisfaction, organizational commitment, role ambiguity, and role conflict as pertinent factors that affect the retention of women in the IT workforce.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Cascio (2003) study focus on enriching the overall quality of life and reframing the focus from work to life and from balance to quality. In respect to career balance there is a conflict between personal life and work, and differences in perceptions of success in life. Barrett (2001) states that Software workers have to work for long hours but they also have a tendency to expect flexible work arrangement coupled with a high degree of autonomy and generous rewards in return for their efforts.

Rutherford (2001) explained the work alcoholic nature of women due to overtime and working hours are also a cause of work life imbalances among women and hence the parameter working hours was considered as a parameter affecting work life balance among working women. Paul and Huws (2002) looked into working hours in a large scale study on call centres in the European Union, particularly breaks, shift systems and overtime. Researchers have also drawn attention to the extended, unsocial working hours, inflexible shift systems and leave arrangements in these workplaces. Preethi and Anu (2005) the study states that night shifts, continuous stress and strain affect the health of women, and as a result, they cannot carry the double burden of work and family effectively. Su (2003). It is found that comparably equal payment, accessible opportunity at work, and protected job security made women aware of their improved situation. A higher level of perceived reward at work may reflect this tendency. Cascio (2003)⁴² study focus on enriching the overall quality of life and reframing the focus from work to life and from balance to quality. In respect to career balance there is a conflict between personal life and work, and differences in perceptions of success in life.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the present working scenario as the employee seek a good Quality of Work Life as they spend most of their time in the work place. Burnout happens faster in IT compared to other industries as the work is monotonous as well as stressful. Women in particular appear to be subject to depression, stress or with other psychological problems because of the difficulties they face in trying to handle both work and domestic roles.

This research is entitled to find out work life balance of women and the reason women prefer Coimbatore city as a place of work.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is significant and timely, as it reveals quality of work life of women working in Coimbatore IT companies. Coimbatore city emerges as an IT hub in the western part of Tamil Nadu which started to attract women from urban and rural places in and around city and neighboring districts. The study is focused to find out the factors that contribute to improve working life of women in organization. It is hoped that the study can make some effective suggestions for positive improvement in existing quality of work life. Moreover improvement would reflect within individual employees, organization and society as a whole.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ❖ To assess the Work life balance of women employees working at IT companies in Coimbatore city.
- ❖ To find out the factors that induces women to prefer Coimbatore as a place of work.
- ❖ To offer suitable suggestions for improving work life balance of women employees working in Coimbatore city based IT companies.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research study primarily focuses on the quality of work life of women at IT industry. The IT industry consists of several segments like Software, Hardware, BPO/ITeS, Education and KPO and LPO. This study focuses only on the software segment as Coimbatore city is the second largest software producer in the state of Tamil Nadu.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

For the purpose of this study, descriptive research is used to obtain information regarding work life balance of women employees working at IT sector and reason to choose Coimbatore as a place of work. Primary data was collected from the sample respondents of 600 through structured questionnaire. The secondary data is collected from direct interview with HR professionals, books, journals, magazines and internet etc. A stratified random sampling technique was adopted to select the sample respondents. 74 IT companies in Coimbatore City are considered for the study. 600 respondents are taken as sample.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic/ Socio-Economic Profile of the respondents

TABLE: 1

Demographic/ Socio-Economic Profile	Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	Below 25	216	36
	26-30	266	44.3
	31-35	90	15
	36 and Above	28	4.7
Marital Status	Married	216	36
	Unmarried	384	64
Experience of the Respondents	Less than 1 Yr	152	25.3
	1 – 5 yrs	300	50
	6 – 10 yrs	122	20.3
	10 yrs & Above	26	4.3
Educational Qualifications	UG Degree	105	17.5
	PG Degree	167	27.8
	Professional	286	47.7
	Others	42	7
Income	Less than 15000	69	11.5
	15001 – 30000	304	50.7
	30001 – 50000	186	31
	50001 & Above	41	6.8
Number of members in the family	2	116	19.3
	3	235	39.2
	4 & Above	249	41.5

Source: Primary data

From the above Table it is found that 266 (44.3%) respondents are 26 – 30 age group followed by 216 (36%) respondents are Below 25, 90 (15%) respondents are 31 – 35 and 28 (4.7%) are 36 and above. It is concluded that 44.3% of the respondents selected for the study are comes under 26 – 30 age group.

The table reveals that out of 600 samples 384 (64%) respondents are unmarried and balance 216 (36%) respondents are married. It is concluded that 64% of the respondents selected for the purpose of study are unmarried.

From the above Table it is found that 300 (50%) respondents are experienced up to 1 – 5 yrs, 152 (25.3%) respondents are experienced less than 1 Yr, 122(20.3%) respondents are experienced between 6 -10 yrs and 26 (4.3%) respondents are belong to 10 yrs and above experience group. Hence it is concluded that 50% of the respondents selected for the study are experienced between 1 – 5 years of experience.

The Table states that out of 600 samples 286 (47.7%) respondents are professionals, 167(27.8%) respondents are qualified up to PG degree, 105(17.5%) respondents are educated till PG degree and remaining 42(7%) respondents are belongs to other category of educational qualification. Hence it is concluded that 47.7% of the respondents choose for the study are professionals.

Out of 600 samples, the table depicts that 304 (50.7%) respondents are earning between 15001 - 30000, 186(31%) respondents earn up to 30001 - 50000, 69(11.5%) respondents income level is less than 15000 and balance 41(6.8%) respondents earn 50001 & above. Hence it is concluded that 50.7% of the respondent's income level is in between 15001 – 30000.

The Table reveals that 249(41.5%) respondents comes under 4 and above family size, 235(39.2%) respondents number of family member is three. 116(19.3%) of respondents size of family is two. Hence it is concluded that 47.7% of the respondents choose for the study are professionals.

Family Members and Work and Non-Work Life Balance

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between the respondents level of work and non-work life balance and family members.

The Table 2 describes the results of ANOVA in terms of personal factors, F values, p values and their significance on the various aspects relating to work and non-work life balance.

Results of ANOVA – Family Members and Work and Non-Work Life Balance
Table 2

Work and Non-Work Life Balance	F values	Degrees of freedom	p values	Significant/ Not significant
To what extend job affect the marriage life	1.386	3	0.246	NS
Miss out any quality time with family or friends because of pressure of work	1.611	3	0.186	NS
Take care of older people, children and spouse	0.315	3	0.814	NS
Time spend with family/children	1.318	3	0.268	NS

Source: Primary Data

*Significant at 5%level (p value<=0.05)

It is found from Table 2 that the hypothesis is accepted (not significant) between family members and work and non-work life balance. Hence the value for p is greater than 0.05. The value for p = 0.246 for to what extend job affect the marriage life, p = 0.186 for miss out any quality time with family or friends because of pressure of work, p = 0.814 for take care of older people, children and spouse and p = 0.268 for time spend with family/children.

Ranks for personal feelings which help to balance work life

Hypothesis: The Ranks for personal feelings which help to balance work life with respect to good feel given to the five factors are the same.

Ranks for personal feelings which help to balance work life

Table 3

Ranking Factors	Mean Rank	Degrees of freedom	Chi – square calculated value	P value
Town priority	5.55	11	117.825	0.000
To be with family members	6.55			
Attractive salary / perks	6.21			
Standardized work life	6.58			
Reduce a family related problems	6.24			
Fast development in IT company	7.15			
Career related reasons only	5.74			
Due to marriage and other social obligations	6.76			
Better education to the children	6.77			
Attractive entertainment during holidays	6.93			
Health care reason	6.68			
Climate / other reason	6.85			

Source: Primary Data

The table 3 denotes the significance (0.000) is less than the (0.05). This means that we reject hypothesis. The ranks given to the five factors are not the same. The most important factor is holidays, casual leave, compensation leave (mean rank 2.64), followed by flexible starting hours (mean rank 2.94), flexible hours, in general (mean rank 2.98), time – off for family engagements / events (mean rank 3.18) and flexibility in doing office work at home (mean rank 3.26).

RANKS FOR CHOOSE COIMBATORE AS JOB DESTINATION

Hypothesis: The Ranks for making to choose Coimbatore as job destination with respect to good feel given to the twelve factors are the same.

Ranks for make to choose Coimbatore job destination

Table 4

Ranking Factors	Mean Rank	Degrees of freedom	Chi– square calculated value	P- value
Flexible starting hours	2.94	4	55.381	0.000
Flexible hours, in general	2.98			
Holidays, casual leave , compensation leave	2.64			
Time-off for family engagements/events	3.18			
Flexibility in doing office work at home	3.26			

Source: Primary Data

The table 4 reflects the significance (0.000) is less than the (0.05). This means that we reject hypothesis. The ranks given to the twelve factors are not the same. The most important factor is town priority (mean rank 5.55), career related reasons only (mean rank 5.74), followed by attractive salary / perks (mean rank 6.21), reduce a family related problems (mean rank 6.24), to be with family members (mean rank 6.55), standardized work life (mean rank 6.58), health care reason (mean rank 6.68), due to marriage and other social obligations (mean rank 6.76), better education to the children (mean rank 6.77), climate / other reason (mean rank 6.85), attractive entertainment during holidays (mean rank 6.93) and fast development in IT company (mean rank 7.15).

FINDINGS

- 44.3% of the respondents are belongs to age group of 26-30 years.
- 64% of the respondents are comes under category of unmarried.
- Half of the respondents (50%) have 1- 5 years of experience.
- Among total respondents 47.7 % of respondents are educated up to PG degree.
- 50.7% of respondents are drawing 15001-30000 per month as their monthly salary.
- 41.5% of the respondents belong to family size of four and above.
- The analysis conclude that holiday, casual leave, compensation leave (mean rank 2.64) is considered as most important factor which helps to balance work life.
- Town priority (mean rank 5.55) is most important factor to choose Coimbatore as a place of work.

SUGGESTIONS

Companies have started to realize how important the work-life balance is to the productivity and creativity of their employees. In order to strike a better balance a favorable HR policy such as flexi time, flexible working hours, suitable time schedules, work from home facility, child care leaves, offer child care and elder care referral services, welfare facilities, strict maximum hours, training, permitting employees to trade shifts amongst themselves etc can be implemented which support women employees to balance their work and life.

Coimbatore is being growing IT hub with high infrastructure, moderate climatic condition, industrial region, fair standard of living, employment opportunity for all cadre of people, leading universities and colleges to undergo higher education etc., gain added value. It is found from the study that town priority is ranked high by women in choosing Coimbatore as a place of work. The advantages that present in Coimbatore make employees to feel flexible to work and live in a place like Coimbatore.

CONCLUSION

Today, a women employee is not looking just a job but they want the company to provide them opportunity to improve quality of work life and care for work life balance and their well being. Women employees tend to feel motivated and encouraged when the organization put extra effort in providing a healthy balance between work and life.

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