Work Life Balance In Today's Organizational Environment

Section 1: Introduction

Work life balance is a phenomenon which attracts a lot of attention in the current world. This is due to the fact that in the current corporate environment, work life balance has been shown to influence the productivity of employees as well as their quality of life. As such, in a scenario whereby there is sufficient work life balance, employees are more likely going to have better quality lives than in scenarios whereby work-life balance is missing (Jaharuddin and Zainol, 2019). As a matter of fact, a lot of social problems among modern employees such as having dysfunctional relationships are often attributed to lack of work-life balance. This literature review will thus review on the topic of work life balance in today's organizational environment.

Section 2: Literature Search Process

In getting the content for the literature review, I utilized the following process. I first had core search terms which are listed as follows:

Main platform of search: https://scholar.google.com/

Search Items

"Work and life", "work life balance", "quality of life", "work and quality of life", "personal life and corporate life", "life and work".

Extended to include: "organizational environment", "work environment and quality of life", "work environment impact".

Limits: post 2018, written in English and peer reviewed academic journals. Citations were excluded from the search. Articles with URL links were preferred.

Screening of 40 abstracts

Discarded items: where the research did not have any conclusive remarks, where the research lacked the required content, and where there were unrealistic approaches and assertions in research.

10 Articles

There were ten articles that were picked from the list of 40 articles which were to be used for the literature review. All the articles had valid assertions and content.

Added 2: Two more articles were added to provide more content and information for the literature review.

Total: 12 for inclusion

Section 3: Literature Review

Kelliher, Richardson and Boiarintseva (2019) defines work-life balance as the desired state of equilibrium whereby a person is able to prioritize the demands of their career and the demands of their personal lives. Work life balance is simply the intersection of personal life and work and some of the aspects of personal life that can intersect with a person's work include

family, health, and leisure. Kelliher, Richardson and Boiarintseva (2019) asserts that work life balance is bidirectional which means that personal life can interfere with work and on the other hand, work can interfere with personal life hence if there is no balance, then either a person's work or a person's personal life will be interfered with. The modern companies have thus realized that the productivity of their organizations is tied to the well being of their employees and in this case, one factor which brings about the wellbeing of employees is their work-life balance (Le et al, 2020). Studies have shown that most cases of employee unproductively such as coming to work late or being unfocused or unmotivated can be attributed to their work-life balance whereby issues at home such as inability to have functional relationships may spill to the workplace and lead to poor results.

Wood, Oh, Park and Kim (2020) defines on what it means to have a good work-life balance. A healthy work life balance is hard to quantify but generally means that the worker feels that they have enough time and energy for both their work and for their personal life. Brough et al, (2020) notes that work-life balance is generally observed with respect to the productivity of workers both at home and in the workplace and majorly entails employees meeting work obligations while at the same time meeting social obligations such as having time for family, for friends and for hobbies. Work-life balance entails having enough time to do ones work and also to have a good night's sleep and to eat properly (Chung and Van der Lippe, 2020). Moreover, having a good work life balance entails not having t worry about work or not having to worry about obligations concerned with work while at home (Rodríguez-Modroño and López-Igual, 2021). Additionally, having work-life balance entails not having to worry about family obligations such as taking care of children while at the work place hence in a good work-life

balance involves having a clear boundary between personal life and work life and being productive in both.

Gragnano, Simbula and Miglioretti (2020) postulates on some of the reasons and factors which may lead to poor work-life balance. Some of the major reasons include increased responsibilities at work which makes a person to have very little time for other social aspects of their lives such as their families as well as other extra curriculum activities such as interacting with friends (Rodríguez-Sánchez et al, 2020). Most people who do not have work-life balance have confessed that they usually have a lot of work on their hands. Working longer hours is also attributed to an imbalance in work-life equilibrium since this does not leave a person with enough time to handle other important things (Chung and Van der Lippe, 2020). On the other hand, increased responsibilities at home and even having children has also been shown to cause an imbalance with work whereby responsibilities at home prove to be overwhelming and thus lead to a situation whereby people are not able to give good results at work. Wood, Oh, Park and Kim (2020) also points out that other factors such as drug abuse and more so alcoholism can lead to a situation whereby workers are not able to report to work on time and are not productive as required (Le et al, 2020). Additionally, bad relationships, both inside the workplace and outside the workplace can lead to negative work-life balance.

There are ways that modern organizations can create a better and an effective work-life balance. The first thing is to have a definite working hours whereby it is noted that the organizations whereby there is poor work life balance do not have defined working hours past which a person is not expected to be working. Some organizations are even noted to call workers with work requests even when they are at home and this has led to imbalanced work-life balance. Brough et al, (2020) notes that it is very important to set boundaries between personal time and

work time. The second approach is to have definite work responsibilities hence a person knows what they can do and what they cannot do hence there is no over lapping between work and family life. The third approach is prioritization of health such as allowing employees to sign up for gym memberships and allowing them to be physically active hence ensuring that they do not contract lifestyle disease. A healthy workforce is definitely a more productive workforce (Le et al, 2020). Another approach to ensuring work-life balance is having adequate time off whereby workers are allowed to unplug and handle other things in their lives without worrying about their jobs and this can be done by giving regular day offs and vacations (Wood, Oh, Park and Kim, 2020). Lastly, modern workplaces are being flexible such as allowing for remote working and this has contributed greatly to work-life balance.

There are benefits which come from ensuring that there is a good and efficient work-life balance especially for modern organizations. Firstly, a good and efficient work-life balance leads to employees having a quality of life and being satisfied with their work and with their personal lives and hence contributes greatly to their general wellbeing (Gragnano, Simbula and Miglioretti, 2020). Secondly, a good work-life balance leads to employees being stable emotionally and thus they have higher capacity of being more productive at work. A good work-life balance also leads to employees having time with their families and hence are able to attend to their family obligations as well as other social obligations such as having quality time with friends and even being able to attend to their hobbies which makes them to be holistic in their lives (Wiradendi et al, 2020). An employee with an effective work-life balance will also be better suited to meet their work obligations and hence lead to a productive work environment and on the other hand, will also be able to enjoy their personal lives accordingly (Sánchez-Hernández et al, 2019).

To ensure that there is effective work-life balance at the work place, the management needs to be supportive and intentional on what needs to be done. There are actions that modern organizations management can take to ensure that there is the needed work such as setting a good example to the employees such as avoiding sending work emails during family times and during weekends since employees are likely to follow the example set by the management (Kelliher, Richardson and Boiarintseva, 2019). It is also important to understand what the employees are striving for and also let them know their options with regards to maintaining a good work life balance since a lot of employees are in need of guidance on the relevant actions to take (Chung and Van der Lippe, 2020). Modern organizations should also monitor the behavior and results exhibited by employees to ensure that issues emanating from home do not lead to imbalanced work-life equilibrium.

Section 4: Conclusion

Work-life balance is very crucial in the modern workplace environment. Work life balance ensures that a person is able to meet all work related obligations while at the same time meeting all personal related obligations. Having a good work life balance ensures that people have the required mental and emotional stability and this contributes greatly to their overall quality of life (Althammer et al, 2021). Moreover, employees who have a good work life balance are more productive at their work places than those without effective work-life balance hence the need for organizations to ensure that their employees are having the needed work life balance.

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