

Effect of Working Conditions on Work Life Balance of Workers in Textile Industry



Sanjeevni Gangwani, Shweta Sharma, Shanoo Sheikh

Abstract: Indian textile industry is one of the prominent contributors in the overall country export and national economy. It provides enormous employment opportunities for Indian labour. Textile industry is ranked as the second largest source of employment in India following agriculture. Thus, the growth and the all round development of this industry plays a direct role in the progress of the economy of the nation. Any Industry can face the current global competition and achieve higher productivity if its workforce is committed. To ensure effective performance of all workers towards organization goals, industry must provide proper working conditions, work environment and adequate facilities. Improper work environment and working conditions are not only the reason behind job dissatisfaction increased turnover, reduced performance and productivity but also directly or indirectly impacts the work life balance of workers. So as to retain its skilled workers, it's important to maintain their satisfaction level in the industry and identify the areas to improve the WLB of workers. The aim of this research is to analyse the satisfaction level of workers with respect to the working conditions in the textile industry and to measure its effect on the work life balance of workers. The population for study consisted of factory workers working in the textile industry of Madhya Pradesh. Managers and supervisors were excluded from the study. The present research was carried out so as to offer an insight and recommend on the ways in order to enhance the WLB by making the working circumstances better for the workforce employed in the textile industry. Findings depict that most of the work-environment allied factors had a negative effect on the work life balance of workers. Results also throw light on the fact that employed workers are not comfortably placed in their workplace and this has rigorous implications on the families, organizations and society in general. It is exceedingly recommended for organizations to follow worker-friendly policy along with more supportive and thoughtful families, so that workers have harmony and their work-life balance could be maintained.

Keywords: Work Life Balance, working conditions, family life, workers, Textile Industry.

I. INTRODUCTION

Favorable working conditions have a positive effect on the efficiency and productivity of the workers, by protecting his health and well being. Poor working conditions such as dim lighting, poorly ventilated and crowded work place can cause more fatigue, lack of interest towards work, negligence in roles and responsibilities, indiscipline,

absenteeism and lack of coordination among the workers. Organizational goals can be achieved much faster if favourable working conditions prevail in the organization.

For maintaining a proper balance between professional and personal life of workers, sufficient time for work allocation and time to handle personal responsibilities must be maintained. It requires proper scheduling of working hours. But it could not be achieved by workers themselves; rather it requires the efforts of the organization as well. Leading a balanced, happy and satisfied life will not only benefit the individual worker but will also benefit the industry with improved performance as well as the job satisfaction of workers. A good WLB can increase the employee morale, improve the communication and understandings among the worker and the employer resulting into better cordial relations and can bring a positive attitude in the minds of the worker towards the industry. It can also minimize the attrition rate, control the labor turnover and absenteeism in the industry. It also helps in building the brand image of the industry and in turn, encourages entry of new talents in the industry. From these results, it is quite understood that organizations can be benefitted by adopting WLB, wherein the employees feel more responsive towards the support provided to them, which in turn adds to their performance. Work Life Balance is broadly a person's control over the responsibilities towards the workplace, family, friends and self. A maintained work-life-balance strategy reduces stress levels along with raising the job satisfaction of the employees. WLB is concerned with organizational programmes, techniques, theories and the management style through which businesses and jobs are designed, so that additional autonomy, responsibility and authority can be empowered to workers when compared to what was typically provided. Greenhaus et al (2003) stated that, being balanced means approaching each role both in profession and family with an approximately equivalent level of attention, time, involvement, and commitment. Following are the factors influencing work life balance: family, organization, society, administration, regulator, employee and the industry itself. When workers are not provided with sufficient facilities and proper working conditions it does affect their performance. The research conducted by Madhavi Challa in the year (2014), stated that employee satisfaction was found to be associated with the work life balance of employees. Work Life Balance (WLB) of employees in industries have been severely studied earlier but this study offers an general idea about Work Life Balance of workers in textile industry because the kind of work in apparel factories demands prolonged fixed posture, repetitive movements and physical hazards like inappropriate lighting, noise,

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heat and cold stress, humidity, poor air quality and circulation.

These drivers extensively influence the health, productivity and performance of an employee. The aim of this paper is to find out the effect of the working conditions on work life balance of workers in textile industries located in Madhya Pradesh. This research aimed to analyze how improvements in working conditions affect the lives of workers, and their families.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The work life balance of workers is one of the major areas, which have to be taken care of so as to make them satisfied and sustained. Work-life balance could be stated as the reflection of a person's orientation on their range of roles, along with admiration to other social actors implicated in such roles (Tausig & Fenwick, 2001). A winning work life balance strategy reduces stress levels and elevates job satisfaction of the employee along with increasing productivity and health care issues for the employer (Thompson, Andreassi, & Prottas, (2003). At present, industries are mostly concerned about work life balance, so they are offering new friendly work life policies (Yasbek, 2004). Luthans (1973), in his research basically focused on effect of WLB on the overall climate of the work. It studied how work affected people as organisational effectiveness and an implication of involvement in solving organisational problems also in making decisions in Private Sector.

Working conditions comprise work timings (hours of work, break periods, and work schedules), along with the physical conditions and mental demands that prevails in the workplace. Harsh working conditions in apparel factories emerged as a large and rising debate in the era of globalization and labor standards (Arbor & Stern, 2005). Kavoussietal (1978) the author carried out his study in two textile factories in Iran. He explored that meager working conditions in the factories leads to high rate of absenteeism, which according to the author possibly will be made better by improving the quality of working life, as absenteeism have prevalent consequences across the factory. Kalaiselvi K.T., Muruganandam D., Sakthi Suganya R. (2010), did their research on work life balance amongst managers of the garment units in Tamilnadu State of India. Results clearly pointed out that managers are not able to attend success because of their present working hours, working environment and increase in products prices, work load, responsibilities in work and decline in the job security due to recession. They mostly underline the strategies in order to realize work life balance: Allocated time, control disruption and distraction, seize the week end, schedule the actions, and drop the discrimination. The outcomes of the study have been identified as reduced staff turnover, reduced absenteeism and increased return rate from parental leave.

Robert Half International found working environment as a crucial factor that will impact the workers' satisfaction (as cited on Lawson, 2012). Studying Public Sector, Aggarwal in 2012, investigated the work life balance amongst the workers in the Gujarat refinery named Indian Oil Corporation Limited located in Vadodara (Gujarat). The chief constructs used in the research were employees' perception towards life, effect of stress producers in work

place as well as at home, impact of constructs which effects professional and personal life, also the state of mind of the employees towards the system of the organization. Meenakshisundaram and Panchanatham in 2012 did their research on work life balance of employees employed in garment industry- unit and explored that the organization plays an important role in the career life of the employees. The work load should be kept reasonable, by properly allocating the duties and responsibilities among the employees.

(Valarmathi & Hema, 2013), in their study reckoned the effects of quality of work life in textile sectors at Coimbatore district. The factors that were considered were salary, fair compensation, authority, opportunities, and job rotation activities, prospects for the future, job security, training and wellbeing. The study revealed that respondents were not satisfied with salary and compensation. The ANOVA test exposed that there was no noteworthy difference in the mean opinion on training and job rotation but an important difference was found in opinion for job security and authority at the workplace. The correlation test implied an affirmative correlation between fair compensation and opportunities in the career. Anand 2013 in his study assessed the quality of work life among employees in Indian Textile industry using Walton's model. With respect to fair and adequate payment, the results implied that among employees opinion this component was lower than the average and their salary was not found to be satisfactory as well as not associated with their profession.

Hence, wide-ranging literature offers both theoretical and empirical evidences that employees are open to the elements of adverse psychosocial factors (e.g. high work load, conflicting load, an uncooperative or hostile working surroundings, work pressure) and to low levels of control (lack of skill development and skill use, lack of decision-making authority, inflexible time programs) mostly results in unfavorable performance outcomes (e.g. lower job satisfaction and augmented turnover) (Avey, Luthans, and Jensen 2009; Bambra, Rourke and Albrecht 2014), and reduced well-being (Bakker, Demerouti and Bakker 2011). From the literature review, it was revealed that there are many benefits of work-life balance, as it impacts the job performance and job satisfaction of workers. If positive working conditions are provided to factory workers it definitely improves their work life balance and overall well being.

Research Objectives:

- 1) To study the effect of commuting time on WLB of workers.
- 2) To study the impact of time spent with family members on WLB.
- 3) To study the effect of good physical settings on WLB.
- 4) To study the effect of workload on WLB of workers.
- 5) To study the effect of job security on WLB of workers.
- 6) To study the effect of skills and abilities utilized at workplace on WLB.
- 7) To study the effect of open door communication on WLB.

- 8) To suggest suitable measure improving Quality of working conditions.

Research Hypothesis:

- H1.** There is no significant effect of commuting time on Work Life Balance (WLB) of workers.
- H2.** There is no significant effect of time spend with family members on Work Life Balance (WLB) of workers.
- H3.** There is no significant effect of good physical settings on WLB of workers.
- H4.** There is no significant effect of workload on WLB of workers.
- H5.** There is no significant effect of job security on Work Life Balance (WLB).
- H6.** There is no significant effect of skills and abilities utilized at workplace on WLB of workers.
- H7.** There is no significant effect of open door communication on WLB of workers.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design	Descriptive
Data Collection Method	Convenient sampling method
Data Sources	Primary & Secondary
Sample Area	Workers of textile industry in M.P.
Sample Size	200
Type Of Questionnaire	Structured Self Designed Close ended questionnaire
Research Instrument	Questionnaire
Statistical Tools Used	Mean, Percentage, Standard Deviation, correlation, Linear Regression
Scaling techniques	Likert’s five point scale

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

For analysing the effect of working conditions on WLB certain factors were identified and their effect on WLB were studied. Following interpretations were found. All the variables had a significant effect on WLB as (p=.000) in all the cases. The correlation coefficients in table1 signifies that commuting time (r= -.506) and problem with workload (r= -.592) shows negative correlation with WLB whereas quality time shared with family members (r=.352), good physical settings (r=.409), job security (r=.553), skills and abilities utilized at place of work (r=.604) and open door communication (r=.420) had a positive correlation with work life balance. On analysing the coefficients of correlation it can be concluded that skills and abilities utilized has the most significant effect followed by security at the job, open door communication, good physical settings. Trouble with the workload has the maximum inverse relationship with the WLB followed by commuting time. Table2 shows the Model summary of the regression analysis in SPSS. The value of R is .821 and R square is .674 which

shows that there is 67% variation in WLB due to working environment factors. This implies a very significant effect. Table3 shows the regression coefficients. The significance value of p for time with family members is .266 which is greater than .005 indicating that it does not have significant effect on WLB. All other factors have value <.005 indicating significant effect on WLB. The value of Standardised coefficients of Beta for commuting time is (B= -.271, t=-5.825) and for problem with workload is (B= -.262, t= -5.387) signifies a negative impact on WLB. This may be due to the reason that as the time taken for travelling to the workplace and back to home increases, there is an increase in exhaustion and tiredness in the employees and they get less time for other activities and for their family members. As the workload increases, it leaves the worker in a state of fatigue and burnout resulting in weakness and frustration resulting in disturbed and unbalanced life. The value of Beta for good physical settings was found to be (B= .203, t=4.215) indicating that if the ambience of the workplace is pleasing and the worker is offered with all the essential resources as per the requirements of the employees, would definitely in turn bring work life balance. As far as job security is concerned its values is found to be (B=.187, t=3.840) signifying that it has a positive effect on WLB. If a worker has a secured job, he/she performs the job without any pressure; they are able to give their best. Skills and abilities utilised has the value (B=.184, t=3.461) showing that if a worker is allowed to utilize all its potentials and skills at its workplace, he intrinsically becomes motivated and engaged with the organisation and with the work itself.

V. CONCLUSION

Work life balance is an imperative subject matter, as it has an impact on the level of job satisfaction, commitment, engagement, performance, Quality of occupational life, organizational commitment and etc. Looking at the study it can be concluded that working environment factors such as physical settings at the workplace, commuting time, job security, open-door communication, skills and abilities utilized at the workplace and problem with the workload had a deep effect on the work life balance of the workers. Furthermore, it can be perceived that proper management of time and workload could help in the recovery of the stress due to working hours and occupational pressure. To endorse physical and mental health all the way through time management, stress management, leisure engagements; focus should be made on developing more optimistic attitude towards employees increasing their healthy behaviors, and making their quality of life pleasant and competitive. Hence, employers must guarantee that there is a work life balance in their organization, which will pave the approach for better performance, enhanced morale resulting in superior job satisfaction, which will eventually help to better the organization’s performance and profitability. Work places must be created and bring into practice those benefits and strategies so as to help employees balance their work and lives. (Thompson, Andreassi, & Prottas, 2003).



LIMITATIONS

1. Convenient sampling has been used in the study and it has its own limitations.
2. Results of the study may not be generalized to areas other than textile production.

VI. SUGGESTIONS

Effective work-life balance policies are precious for businesses and for other attributes like reduced staff turnover rates, becoming an excellent employer or an employer of choice, lowered absenteeism and sick life, enhanced morale or satisfaction and better productivity. The employees expected the organizations to be additional worker-friendly and understanding to the troubles of the employees' needs and provide them with good work-life balance (WLB) and relaxing atmosphere. To deal with this pressing issue, organizations should introduce 'Work Life Benefits' Programme initiatives, where they offer means of flexible working hours, alternative work provisions, leave policies and benefits in lieu of family care responsibilities. These will have a direct effect on employee attitude and behavior, organizational commitment and retention rate of workers. This way all employees will be able to manage their work and their family roles in a better way simultaneously. The company should keep a proper account and concerned about employees work load to balance the work life. The management should also identify other problems which may be hindering the work life balance. Better recreation facilities, work environment, counseling and increments for over-time and other additional responsibilities to motivate the employees must be offered by the companies. This will also help in the overall professional growth of the worker. Work-life balance is all about generating a productive work culture where the probability for stress between work and other parts of people's lives could be diminished. If an organization takes into consideration the happiness quotient of its employee's domestic lives as well, it will directly result in better productivity and smooth flow of work throughout the organizations. With the Organization Comes First mantra outliving its utility, it is high time we realize that the focus is actually needed somewhere else. Flexible work schedule: It does not mean that the employee can come and go according to his own will and wish. It simply means that there can be flexibility regarding the starting and the ending time. So, that they can engage their time to other important issues outside their work as and when required. Employers can assist employees in maintaining work-life balance by offering opportunities of flexible work schedules, paid time off (PTO) policies, transparent time and communication expectations, and company-sponsored family programmes and activities. Work-life balance programs can also help by reinforcing recruitment, raising employee retention, decreasing absenteeism, restrictive late comers, powering up yield, encouraging participation in training, challenging competition and engaging the emerging labor market (Better Balance, Better Business., 2004. The administration should recognize the problems which are holding back the Work-life balance. The company should make available better

recreation facilities, work environment, counseling to inspire the employees. These steps can advance the productivity of the organization also.

1. **Commuting Time:** By reducing commuting time organisation could save an employee's hundreds of hours and expense along with less burnout and fatigue in its employees. It also facilitates them to have extra time for all of life's other needs.
2. **Paid Time Off:** This policy treats employees as mature ones who are capable of deciding about how, when, and why to use the paid time off provided by the employer. Paid Sick leave, Paid Personal days and Personal Vacations can be offered by employers so that the employees can avail them in case of requirement.
3. **Time Off literally means no work:** Work and life balance is a challenge with the employees who are electronically connected to the workplace 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, whether in the office or not. Make it a point that if she/he is on vacation, it means they are on vacation by very restricted contact with them via phone or e-mail and that too would be in case of emergency only.
4. **Unpaid Leaves for Life Cycle Needs:** In case of serious, life-changing and unavoidable circumstances, necessary family needs, and requirements for exploring life and career opportunities; Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and other policies provided by the employer are not up to the par. So many employers permit their employees to avail an unpaid leave under special state of affairs.
5. **Not expecting overtime and working at weekends all the time:** Working overtime or coming to the office at weekends is ok at the times of product release but it is not ok to expect it all the time. This would result in burnout and stress on the part of employees.
6. **Organise Monthly Events:** Organise employee and family events and activities on monthly basis in order to encourage team building, friendships among employees, and the inclusion of families in work events. Outdoor and indoor games, movies, family outings, kids day at office so that the kids can have a glance at their parent's workstation. These small activities can imbibe attachment in the employee with its organisation and a feeling of happiness and satisfaction.
7. **Opportunity to work part time:** There are some jobs that don't require a full time employee or at times due to some personal issues an employee is not able to work full time, so in such special cases part-time job should be allowed.
8. **Project of their preference:** Organisations must provide some time in a day to its employees so that they can devote that time to do the project of their interest and preference. This would make the employee to continue with its work of his passion or his hobby.

9. **Work from home:** Organisations should allow its employees to work from home at least one or two days a week in case of requirement. Also in case of relocation due to marriage or some other reasons they would be allowed to work from home for some time.

Therefore, organizations should offer recreation time to the employees and suggest tips to balance their personal and professional lives. They should not hurt employee’s personal and social life by forcing demanding working hours on them, business travel, untimely transfers etc. The

textile industry should make safe and healthy working conditions as their priority as these factors have a greater impact on the productivity and performance of the employees. **Thompson, Andreassi, & Prottas, 2003,** Management should adopt welfare measures and programs to satisfy the demands of workers. Industries must design and implement those practices and policies that help workers balance their job and personal lives (e.g., flexible work schedules, dependent care supports).

Table1. Correlation coefficient

		WLB final	commuting time	time with family mem.	physical setting good	prob with workload	secured job	Skills n abilities utilized	Comm..	Sig.	N
Pearson correlation	Work life balance final	1	-0.506	0.352	0.409	-0.592	0.553	0.604	0.42	0	200
	commuting time	-0.506	1	-0.085	0.005	0.269	-0.31	-0.362	-0.234	0	
	time with family mem.	0.352	-0.085	1	0.344	-0.255	0.244	0.321	0.23	0	
	physical setting good	0.409	0.005	0.344	1	-0.276	0.237	0.374	0.022	0	
	prob with workload	-0.592	0.269	-0.255	-0.276	1	-0.429	-0.402	-0.212	0	
	secured about job	0.553	-0.31	0.244	0.237	-0.429	1	0.333	0.301	0	
	Skills n abilities utilized	0.604	-0.362	0.321	0.374	-0.402	0.333	1	0.389	0	
	communication	0.42	-0.234	0.23	0.022	-0.212	0.301	0.389	1	0	

Table 2. Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.821 ^a	0.674	0.662	7.63302

a. Predictors: (Constant), communication, physical setting good, commuting time, time with family mem., prob with workload, secured about job, skillsn abilities utilized

b. Dependent Variable: Work life balance final

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Table 3. Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	60.366	3.792		15.919		0
commuting time	-2.806	0.482	-0.271	-5.825		0
Time with family mem.	0.657	0.588	0.051	1.117		0.266
1 physical setting good		2.427	0.576	0.203	4.215	0
Prob with workload		-2.838	0.527	-0.262	-5.387	0
secured about job		2.223	0.579	0.187	3.84	0
Skills n abilities utilized		1.839	0.531	0.184	3.461	0.001
communication		2.213	0.662	0.157	3.344	0.001

a. Dependent Variable: Work life balance final

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