

Work Life Balance of Healthcare Professionals after the Outbreak of COVID-19: A Study with Special Reference to Ernakulam District

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Abstract: *Work life balance refers to efficient way of managing profession, family and personal wellbeing. A positive work life balance of individuals can contribute towards the success of any organisation. But it is difficult to establish the right balance between work and family in healthcare sector. After the outbreak of COVID-19, Healthcare employees are mostly under a lot of work pressure. In their busy schedules of serving others they often forget about themselves. The fact that they forget is that we can't be at our best when we are unbalanced. So a proper work life balance is of at most importance for service industry like Healthcare sector. The study focus on the work life balance of healthcare employees with special reference to Ernakulam district.*

Keywords: Work life balance, COVID-19, health care professionals, work stress, personal life, professional life

1. Introduction

The outbreak of Corona virus disease has shaken the entire universe. Governments have been implementing social distancing practices, Lockdown and quarantine to reduce the spread of disease. India reported the first confirmed case of the coronavirus infection in Thrissur district of Kerala. Health care profession was considered high risk in the spread of COVID-19. But there was no way that healthcare employees could escape from doing their work. Rather they were more honestly working to reduce the evil effects of Corona virus infection and hence they were striving to strike a balance between work life and personal life. Work life balance refers to efficient way of managing profession, family and personal wellbeing. A positive work life balance of individuals can contribute towards the success of any organisation. But it is difficult to establish the right balance between work and family in healthcare sector. After the outbreak of COVID-19, the job became even more tiring and restless. Healthy work life balance will create a positive attitude in the minds of employees towards their work. This helps to reduce stress and health issues. It is not only important for health and relationship but also for employee's productivity and ultimately performance. Healthcare employees are mostly under a lot of work pressure. In their busy schedules of serving others they often forget about themselves. The fact that they forget is that we can't be at our best when we are unbalanced. So a proper work life balance is of at most importance for service industry like Healthcare sector.

2. Significance of the Study

COVID-19 pandemic has brought big challenges and issues to health care workers. Widespread of the disease has led to the increased work for them. They are the primary caregivers of COVID positive patients. Thus they will be struggling to meet the demands of family, and thus it will be adversely affecting their mental wellbeing. Female employees are the ones who are most affected as

they have huge responsibility of taking care of the family. So in this critical situation health care workers will be trying hard to find equilibrium position. So the study become an significant to know how much effect COVID has on the work life balance of health care employees

3. Objectives of the Study

- 1.To study the impact of COVID-19 on work life balance of health care employees
- 2.To check whether work life imbalance affect job performance
- 3.To study whether work life imbalance affect job satisfaction

4. Methodology

The study focuses on finding out the impact of COVID-19 on work life balance of health care employees with special reference to Ernakulam district. It identifies the extent to which the employees are able to balance their personal and professional work. In today's condition healthcare employees are very much struggling to find a proper balance between their work and life and in this scenario the study is very much relevant. The outcome of this research will help us to know how the employees' working conditions during pandemic affects their work-life balances. The extra workloads may cause some imbalances in their work life and their perceptions towards work during the current situation can be revealed through this study.

The data is collected by using two sources it is primary and secondary source full stop the primary data is collected with server technique using questionnaire. The data was collected from a total of 100 healthcare employees by distributing questionnaires. Secondary data is collected from several sources such as websites, magazines, books, journals, dailies, published works etc. The sample of the study Comprises of comprises of

employees working in different hospitals, healthcare centres in Ernakulam district. The data collected was used for further analysis to arrive at a proper conclusion.

5. Analysis

The study conducted among the healthcare workers in Ernakulam district provided the following results. First

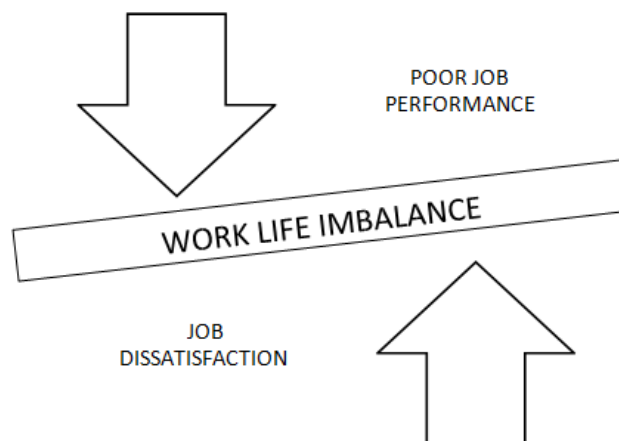
demographic information was collected so as to know their social background. Majority of the respondents were female. The workers belonged to age group between 30 and 40. Few belongs to below 30 and above 40 categories. Eighty five percent were government employees and the remaining were employed in private sector. More than sixty percent were married and most of them have dependent children and aged parents at home.

Table 1: Percentage of response on statements related to work

Statements	Before COVID Outbreak		After COVID Outbreak	
	YES	NO	YES	NO
I have satisfactory salary	16	84	5	95
My job location is convenient and safe	91	9	42	58
I am always interested in my work	72	28	60	40
I have enough holidays	10	90	2	98
I have career developmental opportunities	2	98	5	95
My job location is convenient and safe	51	49	7	93
leave arrangements are satisfactory	88	12	21	79
I have job security	80	20	80	20
I have to work overtime	2	98	88	12
I get overtime allowance	10	90	12	88
I feel emotionally exhausted at work	9	91	87	13
I can spend enough time with family	40	60	20	80
I have time for social involvements	60	20	18	82
I consider my work as a burden	20	80	58	42
I have to work continuously for long time without break	30	70	75	25
I have work related stress	45	55	81	19

Work related information was collected by providing statements related to work. Majority of them replied that they are not satisfied with their salary before and after COVID outbreak. The job location was convenient and safe for most of the employees till the outbreak of corona. It can be seen that the employees’ interest in the job reduced afterwards. Only few were having enough vacation or holiday. Career development opportunities were not provided to the healthcare employees in general.

Most of them have job security. But the employees were not satisfied with their leave arrangements and they feel exhausted at work. Most responded that they never get time to involve in social gatherings of family functions. After COVID outbreak about 90 percent of the employees had to work overtime but no corresponding allowance were provided to them. Corona pandemic has increased work related stress among the health care employees.



The pandemic situation has created issues in the family life and work life of healthcare employees. Most of them spend less time at home due to workload. Work issues bother them at home and vice versa. Employees feel dissatisfied with their role at home as they could spend little time with family and friends. Half of the respondents opined that their work has caused some health related issues either to them or their family after COVID. They often feel unsafe about their family as the healthcare employees are directly dealing with COVID positive patients. Majority said they feel a sense of pride for the work they do in the pandemic situation. Even though due to imbalance in family and work about 40 percent had at some point of time a thought of quitting or changing their jobs. It was also revealed that COVID-19 has created imbalance in their personal as well as work life. Employees were striving to manage their life and work since the outbreak of the virus. This has also impacted in poor job performance and dissatisfaction in work done.

6. Conclusion

Work life balance is an essential requirement for every working person. Everyone has a role to play at work and at home. No compromise should be made while performing these roles. So in order to manage this employee should always maintain an equilibrium position. It may be difficult in situations like COVID so effort must be taken by the respective authority to ease the situation. Healthcare jobs are service oriented and better services are required for the betterment of society at whole. The employees must be provided proper return for their efforts. Better salary, better facilities, appreciations, rewards, medical facilities should be available to them. In serving the society they are sacrificing their personal life. Government and authorities should value their service in the best possible manner. Only when employees are able to manage their personal and work life they will be able to perform their maximum and they will feel satisfied with their work. Dissatisfaction will lead to poor service and will affect the balance of the entire environment. During the pandemic situation the duties of healthcare providers move apart from daily routine. This causes imbalance in their work and life. Employer must find a proper balance between work and personal life in order to be more productive. In case of health care workers it is highly required as their mental wellness has heavy impact in the service provided to the society.

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