

## Impact of Work Life Balance on Job Satisfaction With Mediating Relationships of Employee Engagement and Organizational Commitment

Dilhara Shyamadanthi<sup>1</sup> and Indika Priyantha Kaluarachchige<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Master of Business Administration in Human Resource Management,  
The Open University of Sri Lanka

<sup>2</sup>Senior Lecturer, University College of Matara, Sri Lanka

<sup>1</sup>[dshyamadanthi@gmail.com](mailto:dshyamadanthi@gmail.com), <sup>2</sup>[indikapri@gmail.com](mailto:indikapri@gmail.com)

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**Abstract:** *Work Life Balance and its impact on Job Satisfaction is a burning topic in the field of HRM due to its implications on Human Capital. Defining the ‘right’ balance between “Work” and “Life” is indeed a challenge since it differs according to the person and the context. Similarly, Job Satisfaction is also a highly subjective phenomenon. This research work examines the effect of Work Life Balance on Job Satisfaction with the mediating relationships of Employee Engagement and Organizational Commitment with reference to the non-executive staff of a government bank in Sri Lanka in order to gain insight on designing HR policies in boosting job satisfaction leading to better performance. Primary data was collected from 202 respondents and bivariate and multivariate analyses were used to analyse the responses. The findings indicate a negative and significant relationship between Work Life Balance and Job Satisfaction. It is assumed that it may have occurred due to the prevailing economic condition of the country. Thus, inflation and uncertainties may have pushed the need for other humane work-related conditions to the background. Further, Employee Engagement mediates the relationship between Work Life Balance and Job Satisfaction. A negative and insignificant relationship is depicted between Work Life Balance and Organizational Commitment whereas a positive and significant relationship is depicted between Organizational Commitment and Job Satisfaction. According to the findings, maintaining the favourable Work Life Balance Policies effectively, while enhancing Employee Engagement and Organizational Commitment would help boost Job Satisfaction. Organizations may also take measures to avoid employee burnout in the long run due to work life imbalance and thereby maintain a sustainable level of job satisfaction to reach the expected level of employee performance in business organizations.*

**Keywords:** *Employee Engagement, Organizational Commitment, Job Satisfaction, Work Life Balance*

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### Introduction

With the new global challenges, the economies are distressed, and employees are in a continuous struggle to maintain a healthy balance between work and life (Alshaabani, Naz, Magda & Rudnák, 2021). It is observed that the work demands are moving up at an incremental trend where family demands are being pushed back to a corner (Adikaram & Jayatilake, 2016). Under such

circumstances, it is perceived that employee job satisfaction is at stake. Challenging business environment which demands hard work, salary cuts or elimination of additional allowances and the inflationary effect on current remuneration packages seem to have reduced the level of job satisfaction of employees alike (Dharmawansa & Madhuwanthi, 2020). Hence, employees

focus more on balancing work with life, requiring HR Managers and organizations to pay more attention to the very same (Batarliene et al., 2017). According to Ngari and Mukururi (2014), Job satisfaction drives employees to remain productive. Therefore, it is important to make sure that the employees experience the expected level of job satisfaction. Accordingly, the expected level of job satisfaction that results in employee productivity is a concern of every employer. Work Life Balance is an important concept which is researched with regard to its implications on employee job satisfaction.

This research work examines the effect of Work Life Balance on Job Satisfaction with the mediating relationships of employee engagement and organizational commitment with special reference to the non-executive staff of a government bank in Sri Lanka. With the impact of the Easter attacks, Covid 19 pandemic and the economic recession, the pressure on bank employees have been significant. As Literature suggests there is evidence that current trends in employment conditions in banking sector has eroding levels of job satisfaction (Mukururi & Ngari, 2014). Accordingly, a preliminary survey has been conducted and the findings reveal that the job experience of 58% is dissatisfaction which triggers the need to research on the matters that result in job dissatisfaction in order to eliminate such causes. Since we are in a very dynamic business environment, the organizations cannot simply ignore the impact that job dissatisfaction could have on employee performance (Batarliene N. et al., 2017). Therefore, this research focuses on the gap witnessed between the expected and the current level of job satisfaction which is a problematic situation in many of the current organizations in Sri Lanka (Rifadha & Sangarandeniya, 2015). On the other hand, it is seen that the employees who are engaged to the work may not be committed to the organization

while some of the employees who are very much committed to the organization may not be engaged to their work (Sahni, 2019). Therefore, the researchers undertake this study to determine the effect of work life balance on employee engagement and organizational commitment towards job satisfaction of aiming at providing an insight to the management of the subject organization as well as to the human resource practitioners in general.

## Literature Review

In academic consideration, there has been so much emphasis on identifying how the employees think and behave in the organizational context. Hence, there are many theories and research work on human behaviour in organizations. Unlike some of the other topics in the area of “Organizational Behaviour”, “Job Satisfaction” directly translates into monetary terms in the organization and affects physical and psychological well-being of individual employees (Alshaabani, Naz, Magda & Rudnák, 2021).

There has been much research work conducted on the factors affecting Job Satisfaction. Among such factors is Work Life Balance. Earlier, it was of the belief that the employees should keep all their personal commitments aside and be fully committed to work despite of their personal well-being (Kumari, 2012). However, with the new learning and understanding it has been revealed that a fine balance between commitment to work and life alike would bring achievement at work and in life alike. It is assumed that the concept of job satisfaction which predicts better employee performance is triggered with a fine balance between Work and Life (Sahni, 2019). According to Kumari (2012) each of the Work Life Balance factors on its own is a salient predictor of job satisfaction. The positive correlation indicates that job satisfaction

is an important indicator of WLB. It is an ongoing challenge for any organization to create and maintain job satisfaction among its employees.

As Chalofsky and Krishna (2009) explains “Organizational Commitment and employee engagement have developed as a vibrant construct in business research on account of their constructive relationships with employees’ behaviours, which endorse organizational performance and profit-making”. Therefore, with due reference to such available literature this research paper also analyses the existing knowledge on the mediating effect of both Employee Engagement and Organizational Commitment towards the relationship between the two concepts of Work Life Balance and Job Satisfaction.

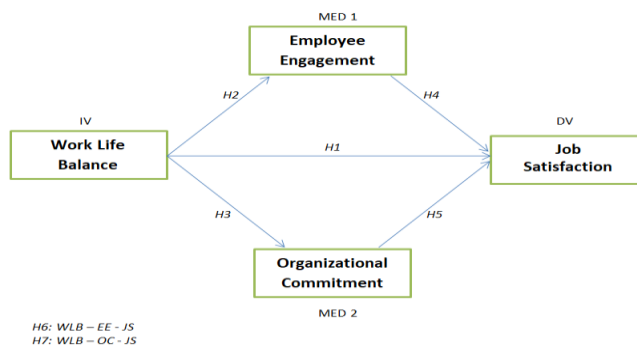
As explained by Jones (2018) in her research work, it is essential to have efficient and effective business performance to stay competitive among many business players. Under such circumstances, it is a vital performance factor that the employees effectively engage in their work to avoid wastage of resources while voluntarily choose to engage both physically and mentally to demonstrate the required level of performance at each juncture of business change or changing business environment. The literature suggests that an employee who has achieved a fine balance between

work and family would have a higher level of engagement at work resulting in job satisfaction. Therefore, it is argued in much research works that Employee Engagement will mediate the relationship between Work Life Balance and Job satisfaction. (Agha, Azmi, & Irfan, 2017). Organizational commitment is an employee’s desire to remain with the organization and the commitment to the organization’s goals (Albdour & Altarawneh, 2014). Employees that successfully engage and commit can come up with higher levels of job satisfaction resulting in equally higher levels of employee performance. It is perceived that such performance can sustain for a longer period.

Organizations require dedicated, satisfied, and committed employees to work for them because these employees understand how they help meet the goals of the organization (Dobre, 2013). Hence, the variables; Work Life Balance, Job Satisfaction, Employee Engagement and Organizational Commitment are conceptualized with their prospective relationships for this research work.

## Methodology

The conceptual model which suggests the relationships between the different variables in the study along with the research hypotheses are given below.



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

*Source: Conceptual framework developed by the researcher based on Dharmawansa and Madhuwanthi (2020) and Cao, Liu, Wu, Zhao and Jiang (2020)*

Based on the literature and the conceptual model; the following hypotheses were developed.

- H1 - There is a significant relationship between WLB and JS
- H2 - There is a significant relationship between WLB and EE
- H3 - There is a significant relationship between WLB and OC
- H4 - There is a significant relationship between EE and JS
- H5 - There is a significant relationship between OC and JS
- H6 - There is a significant mediating relationship of EE between WLB and JS
- H7 - There is a significant mediating relationship of OC between WLB and JS

The sample frame includes 421 non-executive staff from 24 branches in the

selected bank and is drawn using convenience sampling method. The basis for determining the sample is the Krejcie and Morgan table (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970; Cohen, 1969 as cited in Sekaran & Boogie, 2016). Accordingly, the targeted sample is a 47.9% from the total population. Therefore, the sample size was 202 and data were collected by means of an online questionnaire. The respondents come from a wide range of areas of activities and branches diverse in the size and capacity of the branch they are working in. Thus, the sample represents the entire country effectively. Data were analyzed by using correlation and regression analyses.

### Data Analysis and Results

The Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha is used to test the degree of the inter-item consistency in this research work. As per the Reliability Analysis run for the main survey, coefficients of Cronbach's Alpha are more than 0.7 in all variables where the main survey is considered reliable.

**Table 1: Reliability Analysis**

| Variable                  | No. of Items | Cronbach's Alpha |
|---------------------------|--------------|------------------|
| Work Life Balance         | 4            | 0.783            |
| Employee Engagement       | 6            | 0.872            |
| Organizational Commitment | 5            | 0.800            |
| Job Satisfaction          | 6            | 0.856            |

According to the correlation matrix (Table 2), Work Life Balance is significantly associated with Employee Engagement,

Organizational Commitment and Job Satisfaction. Strong positive significant associations are shown in between

Employee Engagement and Job Satisfaction as well as between Organizational Commitment and Job Satisfaction. The correlation between Employee Engagement and Job Satisfaction is found significant at the 0.01 level. The correlation coefficient is 0.689 at a 0.01 significant level. ( $r = 0.651$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The correlation between Employee Engagement and Organizational Commitment is found significant at the 0.01 level. The correlation coefficient is 0.651 at a 0.01 significant level. ( $r = 0.651$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Compared to the relationship between other variables, these two sets of variables have a higher level of relationship.

A Negative relationship with weak magnitude is recorded in the relationship

between Work Life Balance and Job Satisfaction. The correlation between them is viewed significant at the 0.01 level. The correlation coefficient is -0.231 at a 0.01 significant level ( $r = -0.231$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The correlation between Work Life Balance and Employee Engagement is found significant at the 0.05 level. The correlation coefficient is -0.150 at a 0.05 significant level. ( $r = -0.150$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). It is a negative relationship with a weak magnitude. The correlation between Work Life Balance and Organizational Commitment is 0.074 which is beyond 0.05 level. Therefore, the relationship is statistically not significant. The correlation coefficient is -0.126 while statistically no relationship is proved.

**Table 2: Correlation Analysis Summary**

|                                |                     | Correlations |        |        |         |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------|--------|---------|
| Variable                       |                     | WLB          | EE     | OC     | JS      |
| Work Life Balance (WLB)        | Pearson Correlation | 1            | -.150* | -.126  | -.231** |
|                                | Sig. (2-tailed)     |              | .033   | .074   | .001    |
| Employee Engagement (EE)       | Pearson Correlation | -.150*       | 1      | .651** | .689**  |
|                                | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .033         |        | .000   | .000    |
| Organizational Commitment (OC) | Pearson Correlation | -.126        | .651** | 1      | .696**  |
|                                | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .074         | .000   |        | .000    |
| Job Satisfaction (JS)          | Pearson Correlation | -.231**      | .689** | .696** | 1       |
|                                | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .001         | .000   | .000   |         |

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Linear Regression technique is used in order to test the hypotheses. Accordingly, this section mathematically explores whether each independent variable would have an impact over the dependent variable and to what extent. Baron and

Kenny (1986) method which mainly includes four steps (Baron & Kenny 1986; Pardo & Roman 2013) has been utilized to test the mediating effect. Results are summarized in the following tables.

**Table 3: Regression Outcome for the relationship between Work Life Balance and Job Satisfaction mediated by Employee Engagement**

| Step<br>s | Relationships                           |                     | R <sup>2</sup> | $\beta$ | T      | Sig. |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|---------|--------|------|
|           | IV/s                                    | DV                  |                |         |        |      |
| 1         | Work Life Balance                       | Job Satisfaction    | .053           | -.190   | -3.352 | .001 |
| 2         | Work Life Balance                       | Employee Engagement | .022           | -.113   | -2.142 | .033 |
| 3         | Employee Engagement                     | Job Satisfaction    | .474           | .753    | 13.433 | .000 |
| 4         | Work Life Balance & Employee Engagement |                     | .491           | -.107   | -2.550 | .012 |
|           | Employee Engagement                     | Job Satisfaction    |                | .731    | 13.081 | .000 |

**Step 1 –Work Life Balance (IV) on Job Satisfaction (DV)**

A negative and significant relationship is depicted between Work Life Balance and Job Satisfaction. Regression coefficient is -0.190 at a 0.01 level of significance. R<sup>2</sup> value is 0.053 and it indicates that 5% of the variation Job Satisfaction is explained by Work Life Balance.

**Step 2 –Work Life Balance (IV) on Employee Engagement (MED)**

A negative and significant relationship is depicted between Work Life Balance and Employee Engagement. The regression coefficient is -0.113 at a 0.05 level of significance. R<sup>2</sup> value is .022 and it indicates that 2% of the variation in Employee Engagement is explained by Work Life Balance.

**Step 3 –Employee Engagement (MED) on Job Satisfaction (DV)**

A positive and significant relationship is depicted between Employee Engagement and Job Satisfaction. Regression coefficient is 0.753 at a 0.01 level of significance. R<sup>2</sup> value is 0.474 and it indicates that 47% of the variation in Job Satisfaction is explained by Employee Engagement.

**Step 4 – Work Life Balance (IV) and Employee Engagement (MED) on Job Satisfaction (DV)**

A Positive and significant relationship is depicted between Employee Engagement and Job Satisfaction. Regression coefficient is 0.731 at a 0.01 level of significance. Next, a negative and significant relationship is depicted between Work Life Balance and Job Satisfaction. Regression coefficient is -0.107 at a 0.05 level of significance. R<sup>2</sup> value is 0.491 and it indicates that 49% of the variation in Job Satisfaction is explained by Work Life Balance and Employee Engagement.

If, only the first three steps of Baron & Kenny's procedures are satisfied, then full mediation is observed in the data (Baron & Kenny, 1986). If all four of these steps are met, then the data is consistent with the mediational hypothesis and partial mediation is established. Employee Engagement partially mediates the relationship between Work Life Balance and Job Satisfaction.

**Table 4: Regression Outcome for the relationship between Work Life Balance and Job Satisfaction mediated by Organizational Commitment**

| Steps | Relationships             |                           | R <sup>2</sup> | $\beta$ | T      | Sig. |
|-------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|---------|--------|------|
|       | IV/s                      | DV                        |                |         |        |      |
| 1     | Work Life Balance         | Job Satisfaction          | .053           | -.190   | -3.352 | .001 |
| 2     | Work Life Balance         | Organizational Commitment | .016           | -.104   | -1.797 | .074 |
| 3     | Organizational Commitment | Job Satisfaction          | .480           | .691    | 13.726 | .000 |
| 4     | Work Life Balance         | Job Satisfaction          | .506           | -.119   | -2.890 | .004 |
|       | Organizational Commitment |                           |                | .673    | 13.501 | .000 |

**Step 1 –Work Life Balance (IV) on Job Satisfaction (DV)**

A negative and significant relationship is depicted between Work Life Balance and Job Satisfaction. Regression coefficient is -0.190 at a 0.01 level of significance. R<sup>2</sup> value is 0.053 and it indicates that 5% of the variation in Job Satisfaction is explained by Work Life Balance.

**Step 2 –Work Life Balance (IV) on Organizational Commitment (MED)**

A negative and insignificant relationship is depicted between Work Life Balance and Organizational Commitment. Regression coefficient is -0.104 and there is no significance. R<sup>2</sup> value is 0.016 and it indicates that 1% of the variation in Organizational Commitment is explained by Work Life Balance.

**Step 3 – Organizational Commitment (MED) on Job Satisfaction (DV)**

A positive and significant relationship is depicted between Organizational Commitment and Job Satisfaction. Regression coefficient is 0.691 at a 0.01 level of significance. R<sup>2</sup> value is 0.480 and it indicates that 48% of the variation in Job Satisfaction is explained by Organizational Commitment.

**Step 4 – Work Life Balance (IV) and Organizational Commitment (MED) on Job Satisfaction (DV)**

A negative and insignificant relationship is depicted between Work Life Balance and Organizational Commitment. A Positive and significant relationship is depicted between Organizational Commitment and Job Satisfaction. Regression coefficient is 0.691 at a 0.01 level of significance. Next, a negative and significant relationship is depicted between Work Life Balance and Job Satisfaction. Regression coefficient is -0.119 at a 0.01 level of significance. R<sup>2</sup> value is 0.50 and it indicates that 50% of the variation in Job Satisfaction is explained by Work Life Balance and Organizational Commitment. Only Step 1, 3 and 4 are met according to the Baron & Kenny's procedures. Accordingly, Organizational Commitment does not mediate the relationship between Work Life Balance and Job Satisfaction.

Accordingly, the findings suggest that there is a direct relationship between Work Life Balance and Job Satisfaction, and it is a negative and a significant relationship. There is also an indirect relationship between the two along with the mediating effect of Employee Engagement. Therefore, there is no full

mediation since the total effect of the independent variable on a dependent variable is not transmitted through the mediators. The mediating variable: Employee Engagement has a mediating effect over the indirect relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. However, there is no indirect relationship between Work Life Balance and Job Satisfaction through the mediating variable, Organizational Commitment. Thus, the independent variable has a direct effect on the dependent variable as well as there is an indirect effect which suggests a partial mediation through only one mediating variable which is Employee Engagement.

### Discussion of Findings

The findings of the current research work primarily suggest a negative relationship between Work Life Balance and Job Satisfaction as in Shujat and Bhutto (2011) on “Impact of Work Life Balance on Employee Job Satisfaction in private banking sector of Karachi” which suggests that work life balance has very less impact on employee job satisfaction in private commercial banking sector of Karachi. Under Practical Implications of this research by Shujat and Bhutto (2011) mentions; “The result of the research shows that even in the metropolitan city like Karachi, employees are not aware of issues like job satisfaction and work life balance that is undoubtedly a basic right. People are contented as far as they have job, rest of the things do not seem important to them.” In fact, Sri Lanka is also experiencing a similar economic situation at this moment characterized with uncertain conditions, high inflation and unemployment rate.

On the other hand, as per the work by Rifadha and Sangaradeniya (2015) the relationship between Work Life Balance and Job Satisfaction is low among the managerial level employees, particularly the female employees. It creates justifiable

understanding of the demographical distribution of the sample in the current research findings where majority of the respondents is female (64.9%). It is not a biased sample since the Bank’s majority staff representation is also female (Annual report, 2021). Therefore, despite of having no work life balance, the majority female workers do not seek to look for better job conditions than what they already enjoy in the given economic scenario of the country and at the cost of financial wellbeing of their families.

The age group of the majority of the respondents represented is 31 years to 40 years (72.3%). Accordingly, it can be assumed that most of the respondents are at least with over 10 years of banking experience and in the brim of climbing the ladder as executives. Further with the time spent in continuous service over many years, employees build expertise and also build significant acceptance within the internal environment of the institution. Therefore, it is highly unlikely that an employee who seeks advancement within the organization would develop dissatisfaction about job due to difficulties in maintaining a balance in work and family. As a matter of fact, an individual being a part of a socio-cultural background where one chooses a lifetime career path early in life would remain tolerant in thick and thin.

It is revealed that these employees are accustomed to the general nature of their work life which is bound to have less work life balance but a healthy relationship with the co-workers due to several reasons. Banking operations at branch level is very much a teamwork. No leader is supposed to attain the targets without the fullest support of the team. No team member is able to go for individual targets without the support of the other team members and the leader. In fact, the day end operations cannot be closed without each and every member being cooperative and successfully performing the assigned

duties. Further, mutual trust and understanding is very much needed between co-workers since the work associated with is closely related to money matters.

The finding of the research regarding having a significant relationship between Work Life Balance and Employee Engagement, a study by Hallberg et al. (2007) is supportive. They proved that increased workload was related to higher level of engagement. The findings of Hallberg et al. (2007) are very much in line with the findings of the current research work. The findings also reveal that there is a significant relationship between Employee Engagement and Job Satisfaction and therefore, Employee Engagement partially mediates the relationship between Work Life Balance and Job Satisfaction. However, the type of relationship explored in the current study suggests a different direction in relationship where a decreased level of Work Life Balance may increase Employee Engagement and there by boost job satisfaction. If explained with reference to the context, the bankers who may have reduced work life balance would show higher levels of employee engagement since they find themselves happily engrossed into work which brings meaning to their lives, leading to higher level of job satisfaction.

It is “Job Satisfaction” we focus here NOT “Life Satisfaction”; hence this can be justified where employees spend most of the time at work with co-workers who are satisfied with the work-related achievements. Still, one can argue whether these respondents have life Satisfaction. One can also question the employee burn out issues in the long run.

The relationship between Organizational Commitment and job satisfaction is found to be significantly positive in the current research work findings as well as in the previous work. As revealed in Jones

(2018) there is a significant relationship between Organizational Commitment and Job Satisfaction. However, there is no relationship between Work Life Balance and Organizational Commitment. Further, there is a no significant mediating effect of Organizational Commitment on the relationship between Work Life balance and Job Satisfaction. Accordingly, with a decrease in work-life balance, job satisfaction may increase.

With reference to the context, we may understand that the emotional attachment the respondents of the survey have towards their organization is so strong that they have a strong sense of belongingness and a willingness to remain with the same organization for the rest of their career life. The belief that a job makes a positive difference in life and believing in growing along with the company are two opinions one can have about a job. In a highly materialized society as in today where high inflation is suppressing everyone down factors such as, being a part of a well-established financial institution backed by the government, receiving a lucrative salary, perks and other benefits such as medical scheme, Availability of a high level of job security, having a job with a pension scheme and being a professional who receives acceptance of the society are important as per the study findings. Hence, the concerns for work life balance do not come to the surface in this context.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

The field of Human Resource Management sets forth the knowledge and practices required for effective and efficient management of people in an organization in order to create a sustainable competitive advantage for a business to reap benefits on behalf of its stake holders and society at large. In a time where the world of business is characterized by risks and uncertainties, business organizations do look forward to

finding better ways to overcome these challenges and move forward. Thus, work Life Balance and its impact on Job Satisfaction has grasped the attention of the human resource practitioners today. The findings of this research work also will add to the existing literature in a context where there is comparably less research done with special focus on the banking sector in developing economies like Sri Lanka.

Conclusions are made based on the findings analyzed alongside the available literature and most importantly in the light of the practical scenario, so that the banking sector in particular will benefit. Firstly, the negative relationship between Work Life Balance and Job Satisfaction revealed here is perceived as an outcome of the prevailing economic condition of the country where inflation and uncertainties have pushed other much humane work-related conditions and requirements to the background. The findings also imply that Employee Engagement and Organizational Commitment are driving forces to boost Job Satisfaction while maintaining the existing levels of Work Life Balance policies of the bank in an effective manner. Since the majority of the respondents of the research work are between the ages of 31 to 40 years, their vitality and maturity in banking service alike would have suggested these levels of relationships and hence there can be a point where the relationships would be directed to a different direction over time. In fact, every employee would long for a well-balanced work and family life while being able to enjoy the monetary and non-monetary benefits from employment. But

there can be instances where the employee may find them accustomed to the general nature of their work environment which they think unquestionable and also tolerable since they value the available gain than the loss otherwise.

On the other hand, the satisfaction that may result due to loyalty or emotional attachment to the organization might fade away at a point where the work life imbalance become intolerable resulting in distress leading to eroding levels of job satisfaction. As a whole, when it appeals to Human Resource Practitioners, attention should be paid to long run effects of work life imbalance of employees which may affect the physical and psychological well-being of the employees due to employee burnout owing to long-term stressful situations. It is obvious that the negative impact on employee well-being would directly have its negative impact on the organization as well. Therefore, it is implied that implementing effective work-life balance policies as well as introducing individual coping strategies to employees through effective Employee Work Life Balance Programmes will have to be carefully carried out to avoid employee burnout and to maintain a sustainable level of job satisfaction on employees to reach the expected level of performance in business organizations. Further research could be undertaken to improve the applicability of findings by generalizing the implications to a larger sphere. Further, the concepts of Work Life Balance and Job Satisfaction may be analysed with close reference to Employee Turnover Intention, Employee Burnout and Life Satisfaction.

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