

# A Significant Study on HR Interventions for Work Life Balance- Major Evidences from Organizations in Indian Context

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## **Abstract:**

Given the current demographic, technical, market, and organizational developments connected to it, work-life balance has come to be a topic of concern for both academic researchers and corporate leaders. However, there hasn't been much scholarly work done to present a comprehensive picture of the work-life benefits and programs (WLBP) provided by different organizations in India. The present paper has made an effort to analyze the current status of WLBP in Indian organizations and to identify its future possibilities using the foundation of existing literature, primary, and secondary data. In order to help HR managers be cautious before implementing WLBP in their own organizations, the article has explored the difficulties in doing so. Since industrialisation, employers have been concerned about how family-friendliness of employers in India has been reflected in various welfare laws, according to an analysis of the literature and data available. As time goes on, these activities' reach and focus broaden and shift toward supporting family stability and personal development. However, new economy businesses like software and service providers are more likely to employ these rules and practices. Additionally, there is still a long way to go before WLBP become strategic HR initiatives in the majority of organizations. The scope of WLBP differs among organizations. The study contends that in order to assure worker commitment and productivity, organizations need to implement WLBP and foster a culture that supports doing so. Congruence between employee demands and organizational ideals should also be taken into account when establishing WLBP. Intervention is used to manage key HR tasks like recruitment, training, development, pay, performance evaluation, and employee relations. How crucial the integration of IT and HR practices is to the attainment of organizational goals through strategic HR decision-making. The effectiveness of the organization can be greatly impacted by the identification and analysis of external opportunities and risks. It is in a position to provide competitive intelligence that could be helpful in the process of strategy planning. Therefore, prominent organizations in India have developed and successfully implemented the aforementioned HR practices to recruit the greatest personnel and provide them with a pleasant work environment, allowing the company to retain talent.

**Keywords:** Work-Life Balance, Work-Family Conflict, Family-Friendly Policies, Work-Life Benefits, HR decision-making

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## **Introduction:**

Today, both businesses and employees are becoming more and more concerned with work-life balance. An increasingly varied workforce and a higher need for employees to balance their professional and personal lives are the results of demographic shifts, as evidenced by the rise in the number of women in the workforce and multiple career families (Bharat, 2003; Komaraju, 1997; Rajadhyaksha & Bhatnagar, 2000; Ramu, 1989; Sekharan, 1992). Employers have responded to these adjustments by implementing creative procedures that enable workers to achieve

better work-life balance (Friedman, Christensen, & DeGroot, 1998). The need for work-life balance and rising turnover rates has compelled organizations to explore beyond standard HR initiatives. The majority of the corporate benefit programs and compensation packages now include provisions for flexible working hours, alternative work arrangements; leave policies and benefits in place of family care duties, and employee help programs. These programs, policies, and practices are frequently referred to in literature as "work-life benefits and practices" (WLBPs) or "family-friendly policies" (FFPs) (Kopelman et al., 2006; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). There are numerous benefits and effects of such HR actions. According to research, WLBPs influence employee attitudes and behaviors such as organizational commitment (Grover & Crooker, 1995), job satisfaction (Kossek & Ozeki, 1998), and intention to quit (Thomas & Ganster, 1995) in addition to helping workers better balance their work and family responsibilities (Lobel & Kossek, 1996). The provision of WLBPs also enhances organizational effectiveness and performance (Sands & Harper, 2007). This evolving and new role would require Human Resource Development to concentrate on it as a function and as its main driver. Few studies have shown a direct connection between company principles or culture and HRD activities. This study makes an effort to evaluate how HRD practices have affected the growth of the commercial and public sectors in India. Businesses in India believed that both private sector and public sector companies' use of human resource development strategies is a reliable indicator of organizational progress. There is a lot of evidence that support a significant connection between HRD practices and organizational development. It has long been established that information and communication technology (ICT), including the Internet, mobile communication, new media, and similar tools, can significantly aid in the implementation of an organization's personnel policy. Technology development can have a significant impact on an organization's HR division. It gives the business the chance to enhance its internal operations, core competencies, target markets, and organizational structure as a whole. The strategic goals of the organization must be the primary emphasis of human resource management. An organization-wide IT strategy plan must be directed into these strategies. These are activities connected to any advancement in the entity's technological systems, including product design (research and development) and IT systems.

#### **Significance of Human Resource Development:**

As a result, HRD is becoming increasingly important to the success of every industrial company.

Organizations today have come to understand how important human resources are to their ability to develop, function, and achieve their goals. Human resource development (HRD) aims to develop all of an organization's employees in a planned manner, not only to acquire and apply their existing capabilities but also their inner potentials. It also contributes to the creation of an environment with strong interpersonal ties that aid the organization in achieving its goals.

In the past, HRD has been used to describe improving human resources in order to boost economic outputs and, ultimately, a country's wealth, which is strongly related to economic outputs. However, there is increased focus on the human components of HRD in current definitions and discussions, particularly in the context of poor countries. Therefore, the terms "human resources development" and "human development" have very similar meanings when used in the context of development. In order to respond to changes in the organization's peripheral environment, human resource development (HRD) helps to develop the existing human resource in terms of skill and knowledge. Economic, social, and environmental development is all centered on the development of human resources. It also plays a vital role in advancing opportunities for everyone, especially the most vulnerable groups and individuals in society, and in fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals and other globally agreed upon sustainable development goals.

According to one definition, human resources development entails giving people the tools they need to improve their personal quality of life as well as the quality of their families, communities, workplaces, and societies. Through socioeconomic policies, development plans, and strategies, the idea of human resources development has advanced over time from concentrating exclusively on individual potential to also including the development of institutional capacity at the national level. Development of human resources is thus seen as facilitating the growth of national human capacities to achieve inclusive, sustainable, and equitable development while also enhancing the well-being of individuals. Human resources development strategies are therefore an important component of planning for national development and are essential for wise policy.

#### **HR interventions for employee work-life balance (WLBPs):**

Achieving work-life balance may be a focus and desire for a certain person, but that employee is not solely responsible for doing so. The topic of work-life balance has grown in importance for organizations (Tenbrunsel et al., 1995). Employers are seen as facilitating the blending of work and family obligations for employees since they

advocate for establishing workplace norms and circumstances. It is claimed that if a management strategy removes one domain's involvement, the demands of the second domain may be better satisfied and prove to be less disruptive to the first domain (Kirchmeyer & Cohen, 1999). Organizations have developed a variety of policies and practices to address the changing needs and demands of employees and help them achieve a better work-life balance. This is done in opposition to changing demographic trends as seen in the changing participation rates for working women and working mothers, the rise in dual-career couples, and the increase in single-parent families (Goodstein, 1994; Morgan & Milliken, 1992; Osterman, 1995). These initiatives are often referred to as work-life benefits and programs or family-friendly policies (FFPs) (WLBP). WLBP are institutionalized structural and procedural arrangements, as well as formal and informal behaviors, that help people manage the frequently incompatible worlds of work and family (Osterman, 1995). The three main areas of WLBP are policies, benefits, and services. Part-time employment, flextime, and parental/family leave are just a few examples of the official and informal methods by which an employee's work and leave schedules are managed that are covered by policies. Benefits include a variety of forms of remuneration that offer protection against wage loss, reimbursement of medical costs, and sponsored vacations. Services include counseling, medical facilities, and childcare facilities on-site or nearby. WLBP also include optional policies and benefits provided by various organizations, such as flextime, telecommuting, and employee help programs like stress management programs, in addition to statutory policies and benefits enforced by the government, such as maternity leaves and benefits (Ingram & Simons, 1995; Osterman, 1995; Perry-Smith & Blum, 2000; Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). Although companies frequently view the integration of work and family as a parenting or child care issue, many businesses are gradually expanding their policies and practices to encourage employees to take part in a variety of life activities and even personal growth. There is a growing understanding of the need to support all employees at various life phases who may encounter work-life stressors regardless of their family status, not just those with obvious family demands and duties (such as working mothers with child care responsibilities). Prior until now, the adoption of WLBP has mostly been seen as a realistic solution to the growing number of women in the workforce, employees who have caregiving duties, and the issues like absenteeism, turnover, related to those (Lambert, 2000). Adoption of such programs and policies is now, however, viewed as a component of "high commitment work systems" (Osterman, 1995), which are necessary to guarantee high levels of employee dedication and innovation. According to more studies than ever before (Lambert, 2000; Perry-Smith & Blum, 2000; Tenbrunsel et al., 1995), WLBP are strategic, inventive, important, and progressive.

#### **Explanations for WLBP provision differences:**

Work-life balance policies and practices are implemented differently by organizations for a variety of reasons. The sentences that follow go into further depth about each of those:

- **Size, nature and type of organisations:** Regulators, the media, and the general public pay larger organizations more attention and visibility. Large organizations are likely to be more attentive to work-family concerns and give more WLBP as a result of institutional constraints (Goodstein, 1994; Ingram & Simons, 1995; Osterman, 1995). Because their objective is to provide social services and because they are not only accountable to economic standards of performance, public sector organizations, who were early adopters of work-family accommodations, continue to push WLBP (Goodstein, 1994) (Oliver, 1991).
- **Family responsiveness of employers and HR managers:** When senior HR professionals and employers are aware of the importance of work and family concerns, organizations are more likely to offer WLBP (Milliken, Martines, & Morgan, 1998).
- **Saliency to work-family conflict problems:** Employers implement WLBP to address workforce difficulties related to work/family concerns, including as absenteeism, tardiness, and work stress (Osterman, 1995), as well as to address issues brought on by the expanding presence of women in the workforce and the expenses connected with work-family conflict issues (Rodgers, 1992).
- **Gender composition of the workplace:** Work-family issues are likely to be more prevalent in organizations with a higher percentage of female employees. Additionally, management women employees bargain better than their male counterparts with their employers for certain working arrangements (Ingram & Simons, 1995). As a result, organizations with higher percentages of female managers prefer to provide a comprehensive WLBP package, including prolonged maternity leave, scheduling flexibility, and childcare support (Glass & Fujimoto, 1995; Goodstein, 1994; Osterman, 1995).

#### **Challenges to effective utilization of WLBP:**

Even though the advantages of WLBP have been extensively discussed in literature, it is clear that not all employees take advantage of these advantages. The framework of the next part revolves around the justifications for variances in WLBP usage.

**Family-supportive culture:** According to some, managers are crucial to the success of WLBP because they make decisions about workplace policies either explicitly or implicitly. As a result, they can actively support or undermine employees' attempts to balance their personal and professional life (Thompson et al., 1999). When managers are encouraging, staff members are more likely to use WLBP that are offered. Employees are discouraged from using WLBP like working flextime because they worry about damaging their careers. Coworkers believe WLBP users are less devoted, which has a major impact on future incentive distribution, career chances, and pay raises (Allen, 2001). For instance, a worker could be hesitant to take the full amount of maternity leave out of fear of not getting promoted. Such perspectives imply strong explanations for why WLBP are frequently underused by employees. The "time demands" or norms regarding the number of hours that employees are expected to devote to work or activities related to their jobs are another construct that is said to have an impact on the use of WLBP (Thompson et al., 1999). These norms are particularly strong in relation to "face time" and "workaholic hours" (Blair-Loy & Wharton, 2002).

**Congruence between individual needs and organization's solutions:** These initiatives may appear impressive, but they may not actually be helpful to employees who don't perceive their value. For instance, very little effort is made to comprehend staff needs and build programs accordingly. Employees' own values can make them reluctant to use WLBP. An ambitious employee may choose to forego these programs' benefits in order to focus on their career (Glass & Finley, 2002). The success of WLBP is undoubtedly hampered by the conflict between personal work and family values and organizational response to work-family concerns.

#### **History and growth of WLBP in India: Welfare provisions to family-friendly initiatives:**

The history of industrial labor in India demonstrates that, in the early phases of industrialization, the employers were the dominant force in the system and set the norms for the workplace. In a few instances, society felt that those restrictions were excessively exploitative. At that time, the government was under pressure to defend the less powerful group, "the workers." The development of unions, the adoption of many labor laws, and the implementation of some ILO agreements and recommendations during that time all had a significant impact on the nation's industrial relations system. Government labor policy was steadily expanded to include both labor and management. According to India's constitution's directive principles of state policy (Articles 41 and 42), the government is responsible for providing all workers, whether they are in the industrial sector or not, with employment, living wages, working conditions that ensure a decent standard of living, equal pay for equal work for men and women, education, humane working conditions, maternity leave, and public assistance in the event of unemployment. As a result of the government's active involvement, the country now has a large number of labor laws that cover a wide range of employer-employee relations issues, from providing standards for workplace behavior to improving working conditions, welfare programs, and health and safety precautions for employees and their families. Since the latter half of the 19th century, when the Indian industrial landscape first emerged, the idea of employee welfare and perks has been developing. Welfare, which is defined as anything that is done for an employee's comfort and enhancement of their intellectual and social well-being above and beyond the money received, has a comprehensive definition that encompasses all rules and regulations that make it easier for employees to live peacefully. These requirements were either "statutory," which refers to the bare minimum accommodations provided by the organization to comply with labor laws imposed by the government (such as The Factories Act, 1948), or "voluntary," which were the schemes implemented by the employers voluntarily or through negotiations with trade unions and associations (Mamoria, Mamoria, & Ganker, 2000). It was a first of its sort to increase worker productivity, particularly in the textile sector, which at the time was a significant employer. An effort was made to provide better facilities and work environments. Employers were compelled to provide lodging during the early phases of industrialization for workers arriving from far-off communities.

The passage of laws establishing certain welfare measures can be viewed as family-friendly because these policies undoubtedly assisted workers in maintaining their health and safety, which in turn helped them become more effective employees and better parents. Some of the mandatory government aid programs stipulated by labor laws include:

**Working hours:** The Factories Act of 1948 governs all aspects of an employee's working schedule, including leave, holidays, overtime, and the hiring of children, women, and young people. The first law of its type to regulate factory working conditions and provide the fundamental necessities for the welfare, health, and safety of factory workers was passed in India. Adult workers are only allowed to work a maximum of 48 hours per week and 9 hours per day. Additionally, this Act limits the hours that women and teenagers can work in the evening, from 7 pm to 6 am. To ensure that the total number of working days does not reach 10 in a row, it provides for weekly holidays of one day. A worker should be given a compensatory holiday if they must work on a holiday (Secs. 52, 53 and 71).

**Crèches:** The Factories Act of 1948 (Section 40) also mandates the presence of crèches in workplaces with more than 30 female employees to care for their children, which can be viewed as a kind of WLBP since it enables female employees to better balance the demands of work and family.

**Leave Provisions:** Under the Factories Act of 1948, the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act of 1946, and the Employee State Insurance Act of 1948, several leave arrangements and perks are provided. These consist of 1) Paid Time Off (the convenient leave sought by individual employee) 2) Unpaid Leave (leave for some family related purpose e.g. burials, weddings etc.) 3) Sick Leave (usually on a physician's suggestion) 4) Compensation for time off (compensated with leave with wages for the absence from duty against the work performed by worker on any other day than normal working day). Every covered employee is entitled to receive monetary benefits for sickness that occurs during the benefit period and is certified by a validly authorized medical officer under the terms of the Employee State Insurance (ESI) Act, 1948.

**Maternity Benefits:** The maternity benefit offered to working women for a limited time before and after childbirth is another highly praised benefit that is seen as family-friendly. The Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA), passed in 1993, is the widely discussed statutory provision for maternity benefits in western countries. It stipulates that all "eligible" workers of a covered employer may take up to twelve weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave during any 12-month period to care for a newborn child or newly adopted child, to take care of a child, parent, or spouse with a serious health problem, or to recover from one's own serious health problem. The Maternity Benefit Act of 1961 also extends some of these benefits to working women in India. The Act is applicable to all factories, mines, and plantations throughout India (including those owned by the government), as well as to any business or enterprise where 10 or more people are currently employed or were engaged on any day during the previous 12 months. Every woman has the right to receive maternity benefits, which are paid at the rate of the average daily income for the time of the woman's real absence, and her employer is responsible for paying those benefits. According to this Act, every woman has the right to a total of 12 weeks of maternity leave, whether it is taken before or after childbirth. However, in accordance with the 1989 revision to the statute, no one may wait longer than six weeks before the anticipated delivery. Employees with incomes below a particular threshold are guaranteed complete health coverage under the ESI Act of 1948. In the event of confinement, miscarriage, medical termination of pregnancy, early birth of a child, or sickness resulting from pregnancy, miscarriage, etc., occurring or anticipated to occur within a benefit period, a periodic monetary benefit is granted to a covered woman employee. If confinement takes place somewhere where the required medical facilities under the ESI system are not accessible, an insured woman and an insured person for his wife will get a medical bonus or expense in lieu of medical expenditure or confinement charges (up to a specific maximum). In addition to these statutory rules, many more conditions are offered voluntarily by organizations to their employees as a result of collective bargaining agreements or because employers have practical concerns. High standards for working conditions, housing options, all-inclusive benefit packages including health, dental, and life insurance, vacation and leave policies, and investment and retirement plans are some of these elements.

#### **Need to go beyond welfare: From employee-friendly to family-friendly practices:**

In recent years, India has seen significant economic and social development. Nearly 48 percent of the populations are women, and their work force participation has significantly increased (Census of India, 1991, 2001). The family front has also undergone notable adjustments at the same time. Traditional large mixed and extended families are making way for nuclear households in metropolitan India. Couples now have more independence, but family members no longer have the conventional support system for things like childcare and housework (Ram, 1989). Recent studies (Aryee, Srinivas, & Tan, 2005) highlight the cohabitation of traditional and modern gender role expectations, where men are managing to carry domestic chores regardless of their employment status while preserving some level of household duty. The demand on men and women to balance work and family has intensified as a result of these changes to the typical Indian family structure (Komarraju, 1997; Poster, 2005;

Rajadhyaksha & Bhatnagar, 2000). At both the organizational and broader economic levels, the rise of new service-related businesses like Business Process Outsourcing Organizations (BPOs), contact centers, healthcare providers, and software providers has presented HR managers with new difficulties. With the number of employees in these industries nearly tripling every year, they have become the largest employers, but they have also had high turnover rates due to the workload and time demands. Work and family management has become a key issue as a result of changes in working hours, such as night shifts in BPOs and call centers to balance the time zone in western countries and relatively longer working hours in the software industry and private firms. Only the BPO and information technology (IT) sectors are immune to the global work hour's phenomenon. The majority of organizations now have longer working hours as a result of enhanced telecommunications systems. More managers are attending meetings even beyond their regular work hours and on weekends as audio and video conference calls become more affordable and simple to set up. Even if advancements in technology, such as broadband, have given people more flexibility to attain a better work-life balance, not everyone is able to do so due to the increased demand from consumers and senior management. Due to the popularity of these nontraditional, non-standard, and atypical employment patterns and practices, organizations must now comply with various policies and regulations. The information, communication, and technology (ICT) industries are said to benefit from flexible work schedules, a differentiated approach to vacation time, paid holidays, etc (Gayathri & Antony, 2002). Given its near total reliance on intellectual skills rather than physical talents, the ICT sector is regarded as a gender-neutral industry. However, the previous gender biases will continue unless this is backed by family-friendly policies (Gayathri & Antony, 2002). Because of this, it is now even more crucial to include provisions and policies that go beyond basic welfare services in order to address the growing issue of work-life balance within these new economy organizations. Today's commonplace procedures were novel in the past. Welfare must evolve from being a "motivational" factor to becoming a "hygiene" factor

Organizations are adapting to the changing environment by going beyond the legally required welfare measures and paying closer attention to the needs, wants, and development of their employees, their families, and society at large. Businesses are establishing amenities like cafeterias, gyms, and medical clinics on their property that are available twenty-four hours a day.

Companies in India including IBM, NIIT, Intel, Accenture, Cummins, and TATA, among others, have embraced flexible work practices to entice and keep talent while assisting people in striking a healthy work-life balance. As a part of employee remuneration packages, businesses are offering high-quality welfare facilities and benefit programs, and they promote these initiatives as "family-friendly policies" or "work-life advantages and programmes". The policies and benefits that some organizations provide to their employees are described in the section that follows. The information was gathered as part of a bigger study by the authors through interviews and conversations with HR managers at some of the top organizations in India as well as secondary sources including newspaper reports and survey findings that were published in magazines and newspapers.

#### **Current status of WLBP in India:**

Intel India is committed to offering tools and work environment solutions to minimize work and personal life challenges, maximizing employee contributions, and enhancing Intel's "Great Place to Work" value as a strategic response to the significant changes that have occurred in the work and family spheres. In addition to offering flexible scheduling and a five-day workweek, it also offers some advantages to workers and their families. These advantages include 1) Hospitalization Insurance. All employees and their designated dependents (spouse, children, parents, or in-laws) are protected under a floater policy of Rs. 500,000 per year, which reimburses hospital expenditures incurred due to illness or accident. 100% of the premium for employees and 80% of the cost for dependents are covered by Intel. 2) Under the Business Traveler Medical Plan, Intel offers free medical coverage to full-time and part-time Indian employees who are going abroad for up to 90 days on business. 3) Intel pays the entire cost for group term life insurance, which guarantees payment of a lump amount to the insured employee's legal heir in the case of the employee's passing. 5) Starting on day one, employees and their spouses are covered by maternity insurance through Intel India's hospitalization insurance. Each female employee at Intel India is entitled to an 84-day paid maternity leave in the event of pregnancy. 6) Employees at Intel who are in their first two years of employment are entitled to 15 working days of vacation each year under Annual Leave Time. After two years with Intel, workers are entitled to 20 days of vacation annually, excluding 12 paid public or holiday holidays. Other programs are marketed as being global, but they are actually regionally specific and dependent on the market demands and legal specifications of each location. Flexible work schedules, shortened workweeks, alternate work schedules,

telecommuting, working from home, working part-time, childcare aid, resource and referral services, health and wellness benefits, etc. are among the possibilities available. Intel uses a site-based approach to childcare in order to best meet the specific needs of its employees. For instance, in Israel, Intel has teamed up with the locals to promote childcare centers that are close to its facilities and offer services that are suitable for its staff. To assist staff in finding childcare, Intel Ireland has established an on-site resource and referral service. Intel provides pretax dependent care spending accounts, resource and referral services, and discounts at big-name daycare establishments in the US. Flexible workweek schedules, working from home, part-time work, family counseling, and leave of absence programs through WLBP are just a few of the possibilities IBM India gives its employees. According to IBM's policy manual, the company is committed to assisting employees in finding a work-life balance. In addition, there are facilities for study reimbursement, international possibilities, clubs, and assistance for workers dealing with life events, such as getting married or taking a professional hiatus. Work/Life Balance is a strategic program that aids IBM in luring in, inspiring, and keeping the top tech talent. One of the oldest, biggest and most reputable corporate empires in India is the TATA Group. TATA, which is renowned for being the most people-focused business, does well on nearly every welfare metric. TATA employs workers from a variety of strata; therefore projects are designed to meet their particular needs. For instance, as part of a welfare program for its employees, TATA launched adult education programs and family planning courses because a substantial chunk of the workforce in its manufacturing facilities is illiterate and comes from the lower social classes. Where there are more than 20 percent female employees, a crèche facility is offered. By incorporating its staff in charitable endeavors like community development initiatives, the TATA group of firms has expanded the scope of welfare activities outside the workplace. A growing new economy company within the Tata Group, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), has a staff of educated executives. TCS offers its employees the option to work flextime with a set number of required hours and five-day workweeks. It regularly holds workshops on stress reduction, healthy living, and nutrition. The business has promoted the establishment of groups with similar interests to gather together to perform various activities like book reading because it is aware of the impact that long working hours, considerable travel, and desk-bound occupations have on the delicate work-life balance of many TCSers. An effort for employees' wives called "Maitree" has been successful in bringing together families.

For its employees, Zensar Technologies offers child care services including a crèche. It sets up "Pizza and Coke," a loose gathering where associates—they refer to employees as "associates"—can meet with their seniors and talk about anything and everything. It features a service called "Madat Online," a round-the-clock option that employees can use to handle some of their daily personal tasks (including dropping checks, withdrawing cash, paying phone bills, and paying school fees for employees' children). It offers information services such details on kid-friendly housing and educational opportunities. It frequently plans social events including family days and fun days at work as well as stress management programs. Agilent Technologies has been a strong advocate for work-life balance for its employees and was named one of the best places to work in a 2008 study by the Times Group and Great Place to Work Institute. Employees are given independence and flexibility to choose their own work schedules and locations, and performance is rewarded rather than putting in greater hours. The finest firms in India for work-life balance, according to a recent poll by the Great Place to Work Institute, are Intel Technology India Pvt Ltd., Intelnet Global Services, and Qualcomm India Pvt Ltd being a multinational corporation, Shell supports and upholds work-life balance and variety of employees. Flextime and work from home are choices that are available to employees. Every year, the company uses its Annual Global People Survey to evaluate its employees' perceptions of work-life balance and determine where it stands and what it can do to support its workforce in achieving a healthy work-life balance. It recommends using video or teleconferences instead of going on business trips. Additionally, it arranges meetings for the middle of the week to prevent travel on the weekends. It discourages working after hours and working on weekends. In order for employees to use personal leaves for them and their families, personal leaves cannot be carried over to the following year and are not redeemable. These procedures reflect the company's desire for work-life balance for its employees.

Maternity benefits and comprehensive health and medical insurance policies are the most prevalent policies and benefits across organizations in the manufacturing and software industries, according to an analysis of interviews with select HR managers in India. Many companies provide flexible scheduling, leave choices including paternity leaves, and other benefits to employees like daycare centers, video conferencing to cut down on travel, organizing work events outside of normal business hours, and so on. While flexible and telecommuting policies are offered at the discretion of a select few in organizations, they are rarely well recorded (in most cases to the senior managers). Flexitime can refer to arriving at work early or staying late while maintaining the basic working hours in particular situations. In the organizations where we performed our study, policies and practices were found to differ greatly. In

our study, it was discovered that multinational organizations were more receptive to questions about work-life balance and had offered more WLBP. Beyond employer-owned benefits like canteen facilities, livelier, more sociable office decor, and programs for employees' families and children, organizations only offer a limited number of policies for employees. As part of employee wellness programs, regular yoga lessons and stress management seminars are held. However, a small number of employees who took part in our study claim that while holding social events or offering recreational facilities at work may help employees cope with the strains of long workdays, their families scarcely notice a difference. These perceptions seriously call into doubt the noble motives of employers in providing WLBP. We discovered that many employees (study participants) are not even aware of some rules, even if such are accessible in their particular organizations, using a questionnaire survey on perceived organizational work-life balance assistance. It illustrates how poorly organizations have communicated. According to earlier study reports (e.g. Arulappan, 2005), it appears that very few organizations offer a bundle of WLBP, with the exception of organizations in the IT sector, who are probably the first to introduce WLBP. In comparison to businesses in Western nations, Indian employers offer their workers fewer formal family support programs (WLBP), according to other studies (Buddhapriya, 2009; Poster, 2005; Wang, Lawler, Shi, Walumbwa, & Piao, 2008).

#### **Road ahead:**

The analysis of secondary reports and primary data from interviews and questionnaire surveys indicates that Indian businesses have begun to recognize the importance of a work-life balance for their staff members and have begun to offer policies and programs that are more focused on the development of the individual employee and their families than just on employee welfare and safety. Although these policies and programs vary amongst firms, they undoubtedly have given organizations in related industries new guidelines for adopting such progressive HR efforts to recognize and cater to the various demands of the workforce. Since juggling work and non-work obligations is likely to continue to be a major problem in the near future, organizations should find creative solutions to meet the diverse needs of their workforce. These programs shouldn't be viewed as extras, but rather as essential components of core business strategies in both the public and private sectors. However, extreme caution should be exercised before making decisions to adopt and execute these novel approaches because the success of such policies and practices depends on numerous organizational and individual aspects that are covered in the paper's earlier sections. Employees should be properly informed about the various rules and practices and encouraged to use them. In order for an employee to profit from a certain policy or program, their requirements must be given the proper consideration. Despite the unimpressive growth of WLBP in India, senior HR managers in our study have high hopes for the sector's future. They underlined that it would become a stand-alone component of corporate strategy and HR policy within organizations and that it would benefit business. One of their worries is preventing employees from abusing clauses like flextime and cost-benefit analysis.

#### **Conclusions and implications for practice and research:**

We are unable to present a comprehensive picture of the state of WLBP in India due to the lack of well-designed evaluation studies on WLBP in the Indian context and the inclusion of only a few organizations in the current study. Nevertheless, some broad generalizations are possible. The WLBP have their roots in the statutory and voluntary welfare practices provided by many companies throughout and after the industrialization era, according to a critical review of the history and development of employment laws in India. Government mandated rules have continued to pay attention to things like working hour restrictions, maternity benefits, crèches, and leave programs. The main drivers behind the adoption of such rules can be attributed to government action to safeguard workers from exploitative employment terms and conditions set by employers and, in some circumstances, companies' pragmatic concerns for the health, safety, and wellbeing of their workforce. Employers are under pressure from socio demographic and economic changes to go beyond welfare policies and provide more family-friendly services so that workers may manage their personal and professional obligations, maintain a healthy work-life balance, and be productive at work. Organizations are implementing managerial interventions like WLBP as they become more aware of these concerns. However, despite the fact that WLBP would reduce work-family friction, foster a more productive and motivated workforce, and help the organization position itself as an employer of choice, it is evident that many organizations in India lack formal, stated WLBP. In Indian organizations, there is still a long way to go before WLBP are viewed as strategic projects. Political ideologies, the gradual change in socio demographic structure, employer attitudes, and the dearth of empirical studies demonstrating the effects of such initiatives on organizational performance are all contributing factors to India's slower and less consistent policy response than that



of western nations. Despite the methodological constraints, it is recommended that HR managers and organizations treat work-life balance as a strategic issue. However, without a normative shift in the company's attitude and beliefs, implementing HR interventions for work-life balance won't produce the desired benefits. Based on literature that mostly focuses on WLBP in western countries, the paper has made an effort to give the circumstances and difficulties to the effectiveness of WLBP. However, the findings can point HR professionals in India in the right direction as they assess their current work-life policies and practices and restructure them as necessary. Before deploying WLBP, there are a few precautions and proactive steps that should be made in order to get the most out of them. Offering policies and programs in bits may not be helpful in general, and there is no one-size-fits-all approach. Organizations in India should learn from international organizations and build their benefit plans with the industry, workforce profile, gender-specific demands, individual initiated negotiations, local culture and environment, as well as policy consequences, in mind. Although WLBP are found to benefit employees in an increasing number of studies, empirical evidence for the business justifications for investing in such initiatives in India is still in its infancy and need immediate attention from academics. Before discussing the usage and efficacy of WLBP in India, there are a few questions that need to be addressed. The goal of future research might be to determine whether WLBP can minimize work-family conflict and whether they actually improve business performance. It is important to make an effort to learn whether employees believe the organizations that offer these policies are family-friendly and whether implementing such programs is supported by business culture. This essay merely makes an effort to lay the groundwork for future research on this topic in the context of India.

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