ISSN Print: 2394-7500
ISSN Online: 2394-5869
Impact Factor: 5.2
IJAR 2019; 5(11): 68-75
www.allresearchjournal.com
Received: 03-09-2019
Accepted: 06-10-2019

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A study on "Effect of work load on health of women Employees working in IT/BPO sector"

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Abstract
This paper examines the effect of work load on the health of women employees working in IT/BPO sector. Work life balance Policies is used as a moderator between work load and health of women employees. The sample consisted of 413 women employees working in IT/BPO sector of Pune region. The statistical tools used in this study are MANOVA, ANOVA and Factorial ANOVA for moderation. MANOVA was conducted to find the impact of work load on health of women employees. ANOVA was conducted to find the impact of work load on each dependent variable of health. The MANOVA results (p value = 0.000) revealed that there is an adverse impact of work load on the health of women employees. ANOVA results for impact of work load on each dependent variable shows that there is a significant impact of work load on each dependent variable of health - getting tired and exhausted, physical health, can't relax after coming home from work, mental stress level of women employees' and behavioral changes in women employees'. When Work Life Balance Policies was used as moderator between work load and health of women employees, Factorial ANOVA for moderation, results (P value = 0.001) show that work life balance policies reduce the adverse effect of work load of health of women employees.

Keywords: work load, health of women employees, work life balance policies

1. Introduction
The advent of Information technology and BPO had brought a tremendous change all over the world. The global expansion of software and IT enabled services has opened up new areas for women. The major resource required by the software and services outsourcing in India is a steady supply of educated technical labor or 'knowledge workers'.
Most of the women is joining IT/ BPO sector, because of good salary package, sitting job, challenging job opportunities, no gender based selection, performance based promotions etc. But this kind of job requires lot of dedication, A heavy workload causes mood swings, causing poor mental focus, decreased motivation and difficulty concentrating on the tasks at hand and work at home. In the long run, heavy work load will lead to stress, which in turn can lead to migraines, restlessness, irritability, mood swings and cardiovascular events and even may give rise to negative behavior. Here the researcher is trying to find the extent of work load, the women employees are facing in IT/BPO sector and whether it is affecting the health of women employees. The researcher also is trying to examine whether work life support policies are provided by the organizations and does these work life support policies help in reducing the effect of work load on health of women employees.

2. Literature review
(Picincu, 2019) [9] This research examines the effects of heavy workload on the health of employees A survey conducted in 2017 revealed that 60 percent of workers said that work-related pressure has increased over the past five years. Many of them said workloads and tight deadlines as their biggest concerns which is causing tem Anxiety, depression and mental stress. These factors have been shown to double the risk of depression and anxiety in young people. In the long run, they may fuel destructive behaviors, such as drug or alcohol abuse. Excessive workloads increase stress, which in turn can lead to migraines, restlessness, irritability, mood swings and cardiovascular events.
This paper tried to find the occupational health problems of knowledge workers in BPO and KPO industries in Bangalore city the study findings revealed that the health of employees

are severely affected and employers & government should take quick action – to identify the problems – and come with organizational policies to tackle health issues. The policies must include periodic health examination and early diagnosis and very importantly health education about preventive and control of life-style disorders that mainly comes from workplace due to unhealthy habits (Dr. Vinodh Kumar G, Dr. Ramachandrappa, Ravi Kumar, 2016) [2].

This study highlights the impact of Stress on Women Employees working in BPO sector. The sample was taken from 72 women employees working in BPO sector of Vishakhapatnam. Job-related stress is a major challenge for working women. The study revealed that 23% employees are having lot of health issues due to stress facing multiple health issues like (Frequent Headaches and back pains) 26% of the married women are facing child care problems. A good work life balance policies can provide some support to the women employees which should include Counselling session, regular health checkups and frequent yoga classes etc. (T.Narayana Rao, Dr. V. Srinivasa Prasad, 2015) [12].

This paper had found the impact of hectic work schedule, stress and long working hours on decreasing fertility rate of women employees. The evidences are according to established theory, increased female employment is correlated with decreased fertility. However, as female labour market participation has changed, so has the link between fertility and female employment? In the 1970s and 1980s, countries with low female employment rates had higher fertility rates. By 2002 the relationship had reversed: OECD countries with higher rates of female employment also tended to have high fertility rates. This change is directly related to public policy. Castles' analysis of the most recent OECD figures shows that countries with the best developed family friendly policies have in fact been the most successful in counteracting decreased fertility. Thus in 1998, the highest levels of fertility were found where institutional support for gender equality and women's opportunities were greatest, where traditional family values were weakest and where employment structures were most welcoming to women.

A. Kumudha, J. Jancy a research was conducted to find the effect of stress on health of employess working in BPO sector. 120 samples were taken for the study, results revealed that 56% of the respondents suffered from backache, 31% were attacked by frequent cold & headache, continual tiredness is common among 55%, 33% are suffering from throat infection, 50% digestive disorder, a major chunk is suffering from high blood pressure i.e. 60%, 63% of the respondents complaint about feel angry & irritable, 60% experiences eye problem, and sprains & strains are this paper examined the impact of working hours on family well-being and health of women employees working in IT/BPO sector. The sample consisted of 413 women employees working in IT/BPO sector of Pune region. The results from Manova revealed that there is a significant impact of working hours on family well-being and health of women employees. Anova results for impact of long working hours on each dependent variable shows that there is a significant impact of working hours on missing quality time with family members, family members complaining about time women employees spend with family reduce in frequency of conversation with family members, becoming more irritated and impatient due to work, increase in frequency of argument with family members "bonding in relationship" with family members. ANOVA results shows that there is a significant impact of working hour on Women employees' are getting tired and exhausted, physical health, can't relax after coming home from work, mental stress level of women employees' and behavioural changes in women employees. (Kutty, 2018) [6].

3. Research Gap

From the above literature survey it was found that there are lot of researches that is carried out to study the work life balance of employees working in different sectors, all research considered the bidirectional way of work life balance i.e. work interference with family and family interference with work. Most of the studies focused on works impact on relationship (family wellbeing, family conflict) and very few focused on health effects. In western context there were few researches that have been done to study the unidirectional approach i.e. the impact of workload on health of women employees. So *the researcher is interested in a unidirectional approach i.e. work load impact on health of women employees. The researcher is also interested to find whether work life balance policies act as a moderator variable to reduce the adverse effect of work load on health of women employees working in IT/BPO sector.*

4. Problem statement

Many women are opting for jobs in IT/BPO sector due to good salary package, sitting job, challenging job opportunities, no gender based selection, performance based promotions etc. but there is a rising concern on the flip side – work load and stress-filled lives have affected health of women employees. So the researcher want to find out whether there is a significant impact of work load on health and what measures can be taken by the organization to reduce the problems that is affecting the women employees.

5. The significance of the study

This study will help the employers, government and all concerned agencies of IT /BPO sector to understand about adverse effect of work load on health of women employees. Based on this study employers, government and all concerned agencies together can formulate an effective work support policies (with proper implementation of flexible work schedule option), nutrionalists and dietician to create some awareness about the negative effects of bad eating habits and its effect on health.

6. Objectives of the study

1. To find the impact of work load on health of women employees working in IT/BPO sector.
2. To examine whether effective *work life support policies* influence (act as a moderator) relationship between *workloads and health of* women employees, working in IT/ BPO sector.

7. Hypothesis of the study

1. H0: Work load do not affect the health of women employees.
   H1: Work load adversely affect the health of women employees.
2. H_0: There is no impact of work life support policies on relationship between workload and health of women employees

H_1: There is a positive impact of work life support policies on relationship between work load and health of women employees.

8. Scope of the study

1. Women employees working in IT/BPO sector of Pune City.
2. The study tries to find out the impact of work load on health of women employees.

9. Limitation of the study

The data was collected through questionnaire and through interview method, so some of the women employees were little hesitant to reveal information about their health issues. Since women employees of IT/BPO sector are too busy, at the time of interview it was very difficult for them to spare half an hour also, so the researcher could only obtain limited information with some of the respondents.

10. Research design

The Descriptive research design is used in the study

11. Data analysis and interpretation

Frequency distribution, Descriptive statistics and Statistical tool Manova & Anova and Factorial Anova for moderation was used to test the hypothesis

1. Descriptive statistics for variable Work Load

Respondents were asked to comment on "work load" at their organisation, five options were given (1- Very low, 2- Low, 3- Moderate, 4- High, 5 -Very High).

Table 4.1.5 a. Work Load

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very low	2	.5	.5	.5
	Low	3	.7	.7	1.2
	Moderate	89	21.5	21.9	23.1
	High	98	23.7	24.1	47.2
	Very high	215	52.1	52.8	100.0
	Total	407	98.5	100.0	
Missing	System	6	1.5		
Total		413	100.0		

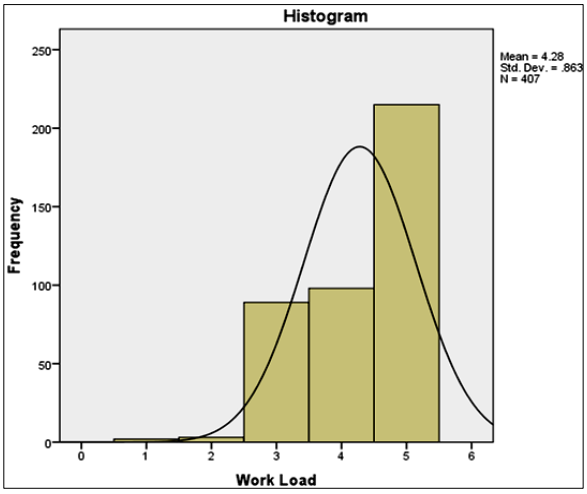

Fig 1: workload

The above Frequency Distribution Table and Histogram shows descriptive statistics for the variable "workload".

Statistics

Table 4.1.5 b: Work Load

N	Valid	407
	Missing	6
Mean		4.28
Std. Deviation		.863
Skewness		-.828
Std. Error of Skewness		.121
Kurtosis		-.268
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.241

Mean= 4.28
Standard Deviation = 0.863
1/3 of mean = 1.42

Since Standard Deviation is less than 1/3 of mean, mean is a representative value.

Skewness = - 0.82

Since Skewness is a negative value, the curve is a left skewed curve. Hence data is piled upon the right side of the curve

Kurtosis = -.268

Since Kurtosis value is negative, the curve is flat and spread

Kurtosis and Skewness further reaffirm the meaningfulness of mean

Hence it can be concluded that the respondents have high workload.

From the Frequency Distribution Table it can be seen that out of 407 responses, 0. 5% of the respondents said that the workload is very low, 0.7% of the respondents said that the workload is low, 21.9% of the respondents said that the work load is moderate, 24.1% of the respondents said that the work load is high and 52.8% of the respondents said that the workload is very high.

2. Descriptive Statistics for the variable Health issues caused due to work

Respondents were asked to comment on "health issues caused due to work ", five option were given,(1 – very less extent, 2 – less extent, 3- some extent, 4-large extent, 5 – very large extent)

Table 4.1.28.a: Health issues caused due to work

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very less extent	39	9.4	9.5	9.5
	Less extent	26	6.3	6.3	15.9
	Some extent	82	19.9	20.0	35.9
	Large extent	139	33.7	33.9	69.8
	Very large extent	124	30.0	30.2	100.0
	Total	410	99.3	100.0	
Missing	System	3	.7		
Total		413	100.0		

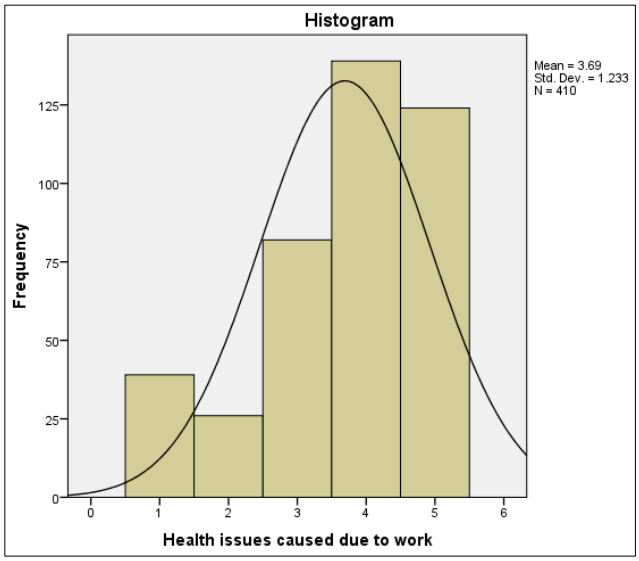

Fig 2: Health issues caused due to work

Statistics

Table 4.1.28.b: Health issues caused due to work

N	Valid	410
	Missing	3
Mean		3.69
Std. Deviation		1.233
Skewness		-.825
Std. Error of Skewness		.121
Kurtosis		-.187
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.240

The above Frequency distribution table and Histogram shows descriptive statistics for variable "Health issues caused due to work"
Mean = 3.69
Standard Deviation = 1.233, 1.23

Since Standard Deviation is equal to 1/3 of mean, mean is a representative value.
Skewness = -0.825
Since Skewness is a negative value the curve is a left skewed curve. Hence data is piled upon the right side of the curve.
Kurtosis = - 0.187
Since Kurtosis value is negative, the curve is flat and spread.
Kurtosis and Skewness value further reaffirm the meaningfulness of mean.

Hence it can be concluded that respondents believe that health issues are caused to a large extent due to work schedule.
From the Frequency distribution table it can be seen that out of 410 responses, 9.5% of the respondents said that to a very less extent health issues are caused due to work, 6.3% of the respondents said that to a less extent health issues are caused due to work, 20% of the respondents said that to some extent health issues are caused due to work, 33.9% of the respondents said that to a large extent health issues are caused due to work, 30.2% of the respondents said that to a very large extent health issues are caused due to work.

12. Hypothesis testing
Research Question
Does Work Load influence Health Problems (Mental health and Physical Health)?
Statistical Test: Manova

Variables and Measurement
Independent Variable
Work Load was measured using nominal scale (1- Very Low, 2- Low, 3- Moderate, 4- High, 5- Very High**)**

Dependent Variable
All dependents variables were measured using interval scale (1– Very Less Extent, 2– Less Extent, 3– Some Extent, 4– Large Extent, 5– Very Large Extent)
1. Tired and exhausted
2. Health Effect
3. Can't Relax
4. Mental Stress
5. Behavioural Change

H_o: Work Load does not affect health.
H_1: Work Load does affect health.
Level of Significance Alpha = 0.05

Table 4.3.d.1. Descriptive Statistics - Work Load on health

	Work Load	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Tired and exhausted	Very low	1.00	.000	2
	Low	2.33	1.155	3
	Moderate	3.18	1.253	87
	High	3.87	.920	97
	Very high	4.10	.948	211
	Total	3.82	1.099	400

Health Effect	Very low	3.0000	.00000	2
	Low	2.3333	.57735	3
	Moderate	3.1149	1.24289	87
	High	3.5567	1.24138	97
	Very high	4.0427	1.11401	211
	Total	3.7050	1.23157	400
Can't Relax	Very low	3.0000	.00000	2
	Low	1.3333	.57735	3
	Moderate	2.6782	.92125	87
	High	3.0722	.81965	97
	Very high	3.5782	1.16181	211
	Total	3.2400	1.10474	400
Mental Stress	Very low	3.5000	.70711	2
	Low	2.3333	.57735	3
	Moderate	3.3218	1.05096	87
	High	3.6495	.91334	97
	Very high	4.2275	.96875	211
	Total	3.8725	1.04833	400
Behavioural Change	Very low	2.5000	2.12132	2
	Low	1.6667	1.15470	3
	Moderate	3.4253	1.26337	87
	High	3.9897	.90709	97
	Very high	4.1422	.99459	211
	Total	3.9225	1.09978	400

A five group between subjects MANOVA was conducted on 5 Dependent variables (Tired and exhausted, Health effect, Can't relax, Mental stress, Behavioural changes).

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity[a]	
Likelihood Ratio	.000
Approx. Chi-Square	426.542
Df	14
Sig.	.000

The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is statistically significant, p value is less than 0.001 indicating sufficient Correlation between dependent variable to proceed with the analysis.

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices[a]	
Box's M	94.127
F	3.069
df1	30
df2	226079.753
Sig.	.000

Sample consisted of 400 respondents Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices was statistically significant (p is less than 0.001).

Indicating that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variable were unequal across independent variable groups, hence a Pillai's Trace was employed to evaluate all multivariate effects. The Pillai's Trace was significant at 5% level of significance.

Table 4.3.d.2: Multivariate Tests[a] - Work Load on health

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
Work Load	Pillai's Trace	.293	6.237	20.000	1576.000	.000
	Wilks' Lambda	.721	6.740	20.000	1297.750	.000
	Hotelling's Trace	.369	7.180	20.000	1558.000	.000
	Roy's Largest Root	.309	24.360[c]	5.000	394.000	.000

Pillai's Trace =0.293 F (20, 1576) = 6.237, p value = 0.000 ***Conclusion since p value is less than 0.05 the null hypothesis is rejected, hence it can be concluded that work load has a significant (adverse) impact on Health problems (mental and physical health)***

Since Pillai Trace was significant, Univariate ANOVA was conducted on each dependent variable separately to determine the locus of statistically significant multivariate effect.

Since impact of work load is examined on each dependent variable separately we use Bonferroni corrected alpha level to avoid alpha inflation, we therefore divide alpha by number of dependent variables. Hence the new alpha = 0.05/5 = 0.01.

From the table labelled Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Table 4.3.d.3: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects – Work Load on health

Source	Dependent Variable	df	F	Error in df
Work Load	Tired and exhausted	4	18.017	395
	Health Effect	4	11.498	395
	Can't Relax	4	15.306	395
	Mental Stress	4	17.241	395
	Behavioural Change	4	11.782	395
Source	Dependent Variable		Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Work Load	Tired and exhausted		.000	.154
	Health Effect		.000	.104
	Can't Relax		.000	.134
	Mental Stress		.000	.149
	Behavioural Change		.000	.107

It can be seen that work load has significant effect on getting tired and exhausted [F(4 .395) = 18.017, p =0 .000], work load has significant effect on health [F (4 .395) = 11.498, p = 0.000], work load has significant effect on can't relax [F (4 .395) =15.306, p = 0.000],work load has significant effect on Mental stress [F (4 .395) = 17.241, p = 0.000], work load has significant effect on Behavioural Changes [F (4 .395) =11.782, p = 0.000].

Research Question

a. Whether work life balance policies influences the relationship between work load and health?

Statistical Test

Factorial ANOVA for moderation (Interaction Effect)

H_o: Work life balance policies do not influence relationship between work load and health. (Interaction effect is 0)

H_1: Work life balance policies do influence relationship between work load and health. (Interaction effect is not 0)

Level of significance α = 0.05

Table 4.7.l: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Health affected					
Source	**Type III Sum of Squares**	**Df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Corrected Model	109.144[a]	7	15.592	39.486	.000
Intercept	324.018	1	324.018	820.561	.000
Ineffective Effective	39.349	1	39.349	99.650	.000
Workload	18.053	4	4.513	11.429	.000
Ineffective Effective * Workload	5.673	2	2.837	7.183	.001
Error	153.606	389	.395		
Total	5744.400	397			
Corrected Total	262.750	396			

Interaction effect F (2, 389) = 7.183

P value= 0.001

Since p value is less than 0.05 the null hypothesis is rejected, hence it can be concluded that work life balance policies has significant impact on the relationship between work load and health.

Results and Interpretation

A. Work Load

Majority of the respondents i.e. 52.8% had very high work load and remaining 24.1% had high workload and very few respondents had moderate, low and very low workload.

From the mean value (4.28) of the respondents it can be concluded that most of the respondents had high work load.

B. It was found that 32.7 % of the respondents to a large extent get tired and exhausted due to work 31.5% of the respondents to a very large extent get tired and exhausted and 25.1% of the respondents to some extent get tired and exhausted due to work.

Findings based on mean value (3.80) pointed out that most of the respondents get tired and exhausted to a large extent because of their work.

C. It was found that majority i.e.43.7% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed to the statement that they can't relax after coming home from work, 21.7% agreed to the statement that they can't relax after coming home from work and 15% strongly agreed that they can't relax after coming home from work.

Based on the mean vale (3.24) it can be concluded that most of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed to the statement that they can't relax after coming home from work.

D. Majority of the respondents i.e. 34.9% said that they were very unhappy about the time they spend in their organisation and 28.8% of the respondents were unhappy about the time they spend and remaining were neither happy or nor unhappy about the time they spend.

Based on the mean value (3.86) it can be concluded that respondents were unhappy about the time they spend in their organisation.

E. It was found that most of the respondents were having health problems like backache, eye problem, diabetes, hormonal imbalance and fatigue.

F. It was found that of 33.9% of the respondents health was affected to a large extent due to work, 30.2% of the respondents health was affected to a very large extent due to work.

Findings based on mean value (3.69) revealed that most of the respondents' health was affected to a large extent due to work schedule.

G. It was found that 54% of the respondents had Master Health Check Ups in their organisation, and 46% of the respondents didn't had Master Health Check Ups in their organisation.

H. It was found that there were behavioural changes in the respondents, they said they are becoming irritated, frustrated and depressed due to work.

I. Majority of the respondents i.e. 44.3% of the respondents and 32.6% of the respondents agreed that to a large extent and very large extent, work has caused change in their behaviours.

Hence based on the mean value (3.91) it can be concluded that to a large extent behavioural changes in respondents were caused due to work.

J. Most of the respondents released stress by listening music, going for outings and entertainment and very few opted for Yoga and meditation.

Findings based on hypothesis testing: 1

A. ***MANOVA*** results show that **"work load"** had a negative impact on Health of women employees [Pillai's Trace =0.293 F (20,1576) = 6.237 and p value = 0.000].

ANOVA results for impact of Work load on each dependent variable of health shows that-

Work load has an adverse effect on women employees' health in following ways:

- "Getting tired and exhausted" [F(4 .395) = 18.017, p =0 .000],
- Physical health is adversely affected ' [F(4 .395) = 11.498, p = 0.000],

- can't relax after coming home from work [F (4 .395) =15.306, p = 0.000],
- Increase in stress level [F (4 .395) = 17.241, p = 0.000],
- Behavioural Changes in women employees' [F (4 .395) =11.782, p = 0.000].

The mean value

The women employees who "have very high work load" their mean value of all dependent variable was found to be highest, i.e.

- To a large extent respondents got tired and exhausted (4.10),
- Physical health was affected to a large extent (4.04)
- To large extent respondents felt they can't relax after coming home (3.57),
- To a large extent increase in mental stress (4.22)
- Change in behaviour to a large extent (4.14).

Hence it can be concluded from the mean value of all dependent variables that women employees who have very high work load, their health is getting affected to a large extent.

a. Work life support policies *as a moderator between work load and health of women employees*

Factorial ANOVA for moderation result showed that

- **work load** and health, [Interaction effect F (2, 389) = 7.183 p value = 0.001]

Moderator work life support policies are positively affecting the relationship between work schedule and health of women employees.

13. Conclusion

This research tried to examine the impact of work load on health of women employees working in IT/BPO sector. The health variables identified for the study were - *getting tired and exhausted, Physical health is adversely affected, can't relax after coming home from work, Increase in stress level, Behavioural Changes in women employees'.*

Statistical tool MANOVA was used to find the impact of work load on health of women employees and ANOVA was used to find the impact of work load on each health variable of women employees working in IT/BPO sector. From the findings it can be concluded that work load is adversely affecting the health of women employees (p value = 0.000). Even the mean value of women employees with high work load on each dependent variables also indicates that the health of women is affected to a large extent (above 4).

Work life support policies of organisation were used as moderator between work load and health of women employees. It was found that effective work life support policies of organisation are having a positive impact on work load and health of women employees [Interaction effect F (2, 389) = 7.183 p value = 0.001]. Hence from the results it can be concluded that effective work life support policies reduce the negative impact of workload on health of women employees.

14. Suggestions

1. Flexible work schedule: Increase in employees control over when and where they work.

a. Flexible time

b. Work from home

A. Flexi-time working

Flexi-time is an arrangement in which organization gives its employees the schedule control of flexible working hours. Under this arrangement, there is a core period in a day which is mandatory for the employees to be present at and the rest is the flexi-time, the employees can choose their own start time and stop time, but when employees select their flexitime at least for some period they should adhere to that timings otherwise it becomes difficult for planning & scheduling the work and for smooth running of the organization. The employees are also benefited from flexi-time arrangements as they have more control over their work, can adjust easily to all the personal work activities.

B. Work from home

(Only few best benchmark companies allow work from home option)

It is an arrangement in which employees can work from home completely without coming to their office or during the project completion stage their working hours sometimes get extended to 12-13 hours and above, during this time after normal working hours in their company they can take their remaining work to home and complete it. Work from home is a program that allows the employees to do their work from home by logging in through company provided laptops. Benefit to the employee is that travelling time is saved and they will not become fatigue so women employees can work more efficiently.

This solution can be provided specially to pregnant women: pre and post maternity leave because the exhaustion and tiredness of travelling will not be there and she can give her best to the company.

2. Counsellors and Nutritionalists or Dietician

a. Counselling programs for employees

Organisations can have tie up with psychologists or professional counsellors who can solve the family related problems, depressions, frustration of women employees. During interview with women employees they demanded that it is good if our organisation can have tie up with counsellors.

b. Nutritionalists and Dietician for the health of women employees

Women employees prefer junk/fast food, which is affecting their health and lifestyle, if there are Nutritionalists and Dietician in the company then they can sent emails or conduct some awareness programs and even suggest canteen to provide healthy foods instead of junk foods.

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