Decoding the Art of Career Management with a View to Unravel the Different Layers of Work-Life Balance

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ABSTRACT

The paper endeavors to comprehend the situation of every individual struggling to create a holistic environment around him that would be fruitful enough to build a balance between one’s professional work front and the private and personal lifestyle in the present day scenario. The undoubtedly relevant position of a considerable amount of personal leisure time cannot be ignored in the wage of structuring a successful career in one’s life span. The soaring need of shaping the professional outcomes to satisfy one’s passion for reaching out the heights to make the best of upcoming opportunities is nevertheless forcing the individuals to cut down their personal time.

The paper also attempts to cater to the needs of individuals aiming to learn the skills of managing the different options offered to them at every step of forming their career ahead over the course of time. The mere presence of knowledge is of no use unless it is coupled with a witty sense of analyzing and utilizing the same in a large pool of opportunities. The true power of a man’s intellect relies on the existence of a sensible decision making skill possessed by him that can overhaul the implications of his career choices further affecting his development.

Keywords-- Career, management, work-life balance

I. INTRODUCTION

‘Career’ is a term covering a wide spectrum of thoughts and ideals ranging from transforming hobbies into profession to opting for big banner professions for the sake of fame and acceptance in society. Nowadays, career is no longer just a matter of choosing the right job, but looking forward to the right prospects and growth opportunities which the initial job would offer. The utter relevance of peace of mind in today’s life encourages one to strive for a workplace embodied with positive vibrations and skill enhancing environment. A workplace offering high packages, high ladders leading towards greater heights of growth in lieu of long working hours may be of greater importance for many persons but a proper work-life balance demands adequate attention to the amount of time one is left with after winding up tasks at work. The never-ending endeavor to fulfill our needs and desires eventually leads us to oblivion where one cannot find the eternal soul of life for ultimate realization of happiness. At this point in one’s life, one can easily recognize the path which was long left back in the race of growing high but is now too late to recall. To forefend this consequence, one should at the right time in life, take forward the right step of realizing the relevant actions and acquire intellect required to maintain the much needed work-life balance.

Work-life balance or “work-family balance” (Hudson Resourcing, 2005) can never be aptly explained in concrete terms, rather it being an abstract term can be varied from “various non-paid activities to catering to other personal activities like study, travel, sport, personal development, leisure or elder care” (European Research Studies, Volume XIII, Issue (1), 2010). Equalizing the time devoted to each activity of our routine needs nothing specialized management skills but accurate sense of prioritization. Priorities make up a man; his life goes around a set of elemental errands and responsibilities sharing the space of his family life.

II. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this paper is to decode the art of career management with a view to unravel the different layers of work-life balance.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research is secondary in nature. It includes the review of various research papers, articles and internet.

IV. CONCEPTUAL DISCUSSION
ANALYSING WORK-LIFE BALANCE BY EXAMINING AND EXPLORING VARIOUS MODELS CONCERNED

Researchers have been digging hard since long to inspect about the causes and consequences of work-life balance coupled with the effective techniques and procedures to implement the same. An effort is made in this paper to effectively ponder over the issues and concepts involved in the various models which have evolved as a result of immense studies in the field of work-life balance to provide for a solution to the problems concerned with the execution and essence of the same.

1. Person-Environment-Occupation Model of Practice - PEOP MODEL

Described first by Law et al 1996, PEOP Model focuses mainly on occupations and performance - which requires the need of a top-down approach. The model is designed keeping in mind the term “occupation” at the forefront of the research which takes forward this concept in a broader sense to investigate the two types of factors affecting work-life balance :-

- Intrinsic factors
- Extrinsic factors

Intrinsic factors: These are as follows –
- Physiological
- Cognitive
- Spiritual
- Psychological
- Neurobehavioral

These factors cover the areas of moral valued roles, personal life activities and tasks. The personal activities to be undertaken by a person highly influence his choices of an occupation and his further performances in that field which lead to his development.

Extrinsic factors

These cover the domain areas of environmental factors like economic system, social support system, cultural environment and technology. Environment is ever changing so does its effects on human behavior which undergoes constant change which has crucial impact on the occupational performances.

This model aims to unearth the various changes that take place in the occupational performances over a period of time enabling the person to improve his ongoing development.


The psychological well-being of a person can effectively influence his performance at work. The levels of satisfaction attained by him, the reinforcement achieved post perfect performance contribute in a major way to his development and increased output. The term “career management” can be easily related to this model since the goals of both finally converge to a person’s development at work and stable personal life simultaneously. It is important to note here that the various social and cultural factors affecting the minds are in a way a result of our perceptions and perspectives towards society and life. The fundamental frame work of the extrinsic factors of this model are shaped by the changes occurring at the societal level and are undergoing constant overhaul to strive for better results.

The inter-relation between career management and work-life balance goes parallel with the occupational performances and quality of life at personal and societal front. Also planning of short term and long time goals enable us to move ahead at a pace which gives a boost to our careers, at the same time gives us room to take out time for leisure, family, friends and other personal activities.

2. Spillover-crossover model

The primary concern of this model is to introduce the relevance of work-life balance and also to investigate the effect of work domain over home domain and vice versa. There are numerous aspects of our personal or home life that can influence our work life in a number of ways. It may either be positive or negative impact. The positive impact includes the job resources such as social support, performance feedback, task identity and negative impact covers the job demands such as emotionally demanding situations, a high workload, and performance pressures, dealing with a variety of colleagues (Arnold B. Baker and Evangelia Demerouti, January 2012). The spillover deals with the different domains that occur within an individual and how they intersect with each other at different
situations. Crossover examines the different roles played by an individual and their impact on different spheres of his life. **Spillover:** Its primary concern is about the inter-role conflict that an individual faces over his life span. The experiences mustered due to different role aspects are transferred from one domain of life to another. There may be positive spillovers and negative spillovers as categorized by their effects on our life.

The positive spillovers refer to the positive outcomes that a job offers such as the job performance, positive feedback, incentives, and positive reinforcement. Such spillovers improve the performances in other roles and leads to the benefits and personality enrichment of the individual.

The negative spillovers refer to the effects of work-role over family-role and vice versa. The negative experiences endured at the work place highly affect one’s behavior with his family and friends, same goes with his strained experiences at home affecting his performances at work place. Also the limited resources possessed by one may lead to the role scarcity which happens due to the consumption of the same resources by different roles of the individual. **Crossover:** This refers to the interpersonal process in which one individual’s strained experiences affect the experiences of another individual in the same social environment (Bolger et al., 1989). It also includes the transfer of positive and negative experiences of one individual over his/her partner. For example, psychological stress due to occupational reasons endured by a person can highly affect the psychological balance of his partner too.

This diagram depicts the inter-relationship between the various negative and positive factors of professional life and family life. The different domains of our life intersect at various points to affect each other.

**3. Segmentation model**

Though this theory has been disregarded due to lack of evidence and non-existence in real life, it is used as an active process model to separate out the domains of work and life. It describes the boundaries between work and life domains and is used to maintain those boundaries stating that they do not influence each other in any way (Edwards and Rothbard, 2000). It is in favor of the thoughts of those people who regardless of any bearable or unbearable experiences of work place remain unaffected by them at home and thus keeps the two domains completely separate from each other. This concept holds no foundation in today’s life where a person’s stress levels at work or home affect its performance at the other. This model is just to be treated as a mere theory required to form demarcations between the two and endeavors to make them unaffected by each other.

**4. Instrumental model**

This model emphasizes on the fact that success and positive outcomes of one sphere of life can greatly affect the other spheres of life in a manner that benefits the individual. It is important to note here that career management can be linked effectively to work-life balance with the help of this model since opting for better choices of profession would bring out the best in the individual, lead to his professional growth, and eventually will lead to a happier behavior and atmosphere at home as well. This model illustrates that one sphere of life prominently affect the other spheres of life in both negative and positive manner. The needs and desires of an individual encourages him to give out his best at the professional front whose outcomes would ultimately enrich his family income and would benefit both the spheres of his life.

**5. Conflict model:**

This model states that the conflicts in one domain of our life can counter affect even the positive experiences of other spheres of life. There is a series of priorities in every individual’s life that demand attention and allocating time and money resources to these priorities can lead to conflict. So the prioritization also plays an important role in one’s life to ease the process of career management and establish a harmonious work-life balance. The conflicts need to be resolved through optimal utilization of resources of an individual to create a balance between family and work. High levels of demands from different spheres of life lead to conflict and overload deteriorating
performance and satisfaction levels. There are two different perspectives of this model:

- Scarcity perspective- when there is limited time and limited resources, people are bound to get involved in conflicts due to presence of multiple roles in life each demanding focus and attention.
- Personality integration- those who are wise enough to behave in a Conscientiousness manner tend to get better adjusted to societal roles and efficiently allocate appropriate amounts of time and resources to the various roles assigned to them.

**Career Management as the Foundation of Work-life Balance**

These models discussed above enable us to understand the relationship between career management and work-life balance. The choices which we make in our professional life have a huge impact on the personal life too. They are the tightly inter-woven parts of our lives that require a wise and healthy state of mind which should be sensible and at the same considerably emotional. One should always explore one’s traits and talents to enhance his growth and conceptualize the heights of proliferation as foreseen by one’s intellect. There are various factors that influence the several aspects of career management such as: setting up goals and objectives to be achieved, formulation of specific appropriate strategies, systematic appraisal and gauging of progress to achieve the selected goals and desires. All these factors are conceived keeping in mind the aspects of work-life balance. The career options should always cater to the needs of family time and personal activities time, as leisure time and quality time with family and friend form an integral part of our lives and is necessary to keep us going actively on the path of progress and development. The work-life balance is often termed as very important since its effective existence makes other aspects of life valuable and reduces all kinds of stress levels induced by the societal pressures.

**V. CONCLUSION**

If one’s experiences strive to influence one’s life in an unacceptable manner then the need for a change comes up. Thus the foundations of career management have build up to shape one’s mind for triggering this change so that the professional and personal life can have a balanced relationship. This implies that an occupation should neither be of compromising nature for the family or for the professional growth of an individual. There many aspects of our personal life that can hamper the professional life and vice versa. One should always put forward his best efforts to seek the best of options available for him to establish an overall growth enhancing environment. At the same time each career option should be weighed effectively as to what effects it will have on one’s personal life as well. Our life is centered on our family and the concept of self growth. It is needless to say that each has its own special place in life but it is a matter of great concern that people forget to maintain a balance between the two which eventually leads to several problems of stress and strain. It should always be kept in mind that without a happy personal and family life, it is impossible to enjoy the success of professional life and without a stable professional it is difficult to lead a happy personal life so both should go hand in hand and given uniform prioritization but as a piece of personal advice; family comes first because family inspires you to be better and better, it encourages you to give your best, supports you in the worst times of life and is always there for you when no one else is.

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