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Creating Work-Life Balance: A Critical Study in Telecom Network of Passive Communication

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Abstract: The increasing prevalence of work-life conflicts and increasing concern about work-life issues in the corporate arena present both a challenge and opportunity for Human Resource (HR) professionals. Work-life conflicts affect employee well-being in a myriad ways. Work-life balance initiatives designed to help employees balance their work and personal lives are not only an option, but also a necessity for many employers today. There is a need for organizations to adopt human resource strategies and policies that accommodate the work-life needs of a diverse workforce in the current business environment. This paper presents the results of the study on organizational policies and provisions regarding work-life balance of the employees, which was carried out among a cross-section of leading corporate entity (N=150) in J&K representing telecom infrastructure provider industry. The results reveal the commonalities and differences in work-life balance provisions across the telecom IP industry. Work-Life balance has been a challenging issue for all sectors in India. Telecom sector has witnessed radical changes since last few years. Because of transformational changes constantly occurring with some constant up gradation in telecom sector, employees are under huge pressure to give their best. Work-life balance highly affects job satisfaction of employees.

I. INTRODUCTION

Work-Life balance is an important area of Human Resource Management that is receiving increasing attention from Government, Researchers, Management and employee representatives and the popular media (*pocock et al., 2001*). Factors contributing to the interest in work-life balance issues are global competition, renewed interest in personal lives/family values and an aging work force (*lockwood, 2003*). *Sverko et al. (2002)* attribute the growing relevance of work-life balance in industrialized societies to changing technology, changing values and changing demographic trends. Others factors include increasing complexity of work and family roles, the increased prevalence of dual income households and the expended no. of women entering the workforce. Though work balance was initially construed as the concern for working mothers, it has been recognized as a vital issue for all classes of employees (*Bird, 2006*). Despite increased interest in work-life issues, the organizational philosophy towards work-life concerns is varied. Many organizations still see them as individuals' not organizational concerns. Some organizations resonate the sentiment "work is work and family is family – and basically, the two do not mix" (*Bailyn et al., 1997*). Other organizations view work and personal life as competing priorities in a zero-sum game, in which a gain in one area means a loss in the other (*Friedman et al., 2000*). Hence, it would be interesting to study organizational perspectives on work-life balance.

Work-life balance is adjusting one's day to day activities to achieve a sense of balance between work life and personal life. Work-life balance is the term used to describe the balance that an individual needs between times allocated for work and other aspects of life. Areas of life other than work-life can include personal interests, family and social or leisure activities. The term 'Work-Life Balance' is recent in origin as it was first used in UK and US in the late 1970s and 1980s respectively. More recently the term has drawn on some confusion, this is in part due to recent technological changes and advances that have made work and work objectives possible to be completed on a 24 hour cycle. The use of smart phones, email, video-chat, and other technological innovations has made it possible to work without having a typical "9 to 5 work day".

II. RELATED STUDIES

Relationship between Work Life balance and Job Satisfaction

Nadeem & Abbas (2009) conducted a study in Pakistan to analyze the relationship between work life and job satisfaction. Data is collected from 157 employees of public and private sector through questionnaire. Data is analyzed through Correlation, Regression and Descriptive analysis. The research results indicate that work overload does not influence job satisfaction and there is a positive relationship exists between Job autonomy and job satisfaction.

McNall et al. (2010) conducted the study to analyze the relationship between flexible work arrangement and job satisfaction. Data is collected from 220 employees. Data is analyzed through regression analysis. Results of the study indicate that greater the flexible work arrangements provided more will be the satisfaction employee will have from their jobs.

Fatima & Rehman (2012) conducted research to examine role ambiguity and role conflict effect on employee's job satisfaction as well as leaving intention. Data is gathered from 120 teachers from Rawalpindi and Islamabad universities in Pakistan. SPSS and regression analysis are used to analyze the data. The results indicate that job role conflict and role ambiguity are negatively related to job satisfaction and positively related to job leaving intentions.

Varatharaj & Vasantha (2012) conducted the study to examine relationship job satisfaction have with work life balance in women. Data is collected from 250 Service Sectors working women in Chennai city through questionnaire. Data is analyzed through, Correlation, Chi-Square test, Wallis Test and Kruskals. Result shows strong positive relationship exists between job satisfaction and work life balance.

Yadav & Dabhade (2013) conducted research to analyze the relationship that exists between work life balance and job satisfaction of the working women. Sample is collected from education sector and banking sector. Data is collected from 150 women employees 75 women from each sector. Authenticity of data is analyzed through application of standard deviation. The results indicate that work life balance and job satisfaction share significant relationship.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Title: "Creating Work life balance: A Critical study in Telecom Network of Passive Communication."

Sub Title: "A Study on Work Life Balance among 30 Operations & Maintenance Engineers Working with Telecom Infra Provider in J&K."

A quantitative approach with an exploratory and descriptive design encompassing the survey method is used.

Significance of the study:

Human Resource Management which has become the concern of many international Organisations, national government, industrial organizations, trade unions, social worker and others. After all, man behind the machine is more important than the manmade machine.

In present time more and more organisations are recognizing the importance of human Resource and viewing it as the investment in capital assets.

The emotional stress is mainly because one has the responsibility of a family and at the same time people are expected to deliver at workplace. One needs to walk on a tight rope and take the right decision to strike a balance. Each one of us goes through this emotional stress at our work place. How we deal with it, how we go through it, how we come out of it and how we experience it is what needs to be looked upon. Work-life balance is a measure of control; on how, where and when one needs to perform and strike balance between work and home. While recruiting people, they aren't asked about their family life. They are only asked about their education, experience and previous work place.

Thus this study attempts to explore the various challenges that employee face to strike balance between work and family life.

Objective of the study:

- ❖ To study work & family balance of the employees.
- ❖ To draw strategies to improve balancing work & family life.

Hypotheses of the study:

Likewise, in an attempt to study relationship between age of employees and Job satisfaction towards WLB variables of the employees, the following hypotheses were developed:

- H1: There is a significant relationship between Working hours and employee job satisfaction
- H2: There is a significant relationship between Working conditions and employee job satisfaction.
- H3: There is a significant relationship between Work pressure and employee job satisfaction.
- H4: There is a significant relationship between Change of job and employee job satisfaction.
- H5: There is a significant relationship between Work-life balance programs and employee job satisfaction.

Research design:

Research design refers to blue print for the research. It is a plan through which observations are made and data is assembled. It provides an empirical and logical basis for drawing conclusions and gaining perfect knowledge. To accomplish the above objectives of the study, both primary and secondary data will be applied.

The study attempts to explore the various aspects of Quality of Work Life and various challenges that employee face to strike balance between work and family life working in telecom sector. Therefore it is exploratory in nature while it describes the various aspects such as organizational climate, working condition, interpersonal relationship, health, social, economic and psychological parameters that contribute to stress are looked in. Therefore research design is Exploratory cum Descriptive.

Universe of the study:

The universe of the study would be all employees working with Telecom Infra provider of J&K.

Sample and sampling:

The sample of the study would be 30 employees working with Telecom Infra provider of J&K. The data was collected from the employees who have working experience of six months or more in Telecom Infra Provider by adopting simple random sampling.

Variables:

Independent Variables; include all personal information of the employee such as Employment history, i.e. Age, education &.qualification dept, designation, marital status, total work experience etc.

Dependent variable; include various aspects related to working condition, interpersonal relations, health, social, psychological parameters that study Quality of Work Life and family life balance of the executives.

Collection of Data:

The research plan can call for gathering secondary data as well as primary data.

Secondary Data: Secondary data are data that were collected for another purpose and already exist somewhere. It provides a starting point for research and facilitates the comparison of the research with the existing data.

The analysis of present study is based on primary as well as on secondary data. However, more emphasis will be laid on primary data.

Primary Data: As stated above, primary data are original in character and are collected afresh for some specific purpose. The primary data will be collected through under mentioned methods.

Questionnaire: A well structural schedule of questions containing different aspects of the study will be developed and circulated to the persons concerned

Tool of data collection:

Primary source of data collection is

- Structured Interview

Secondary source

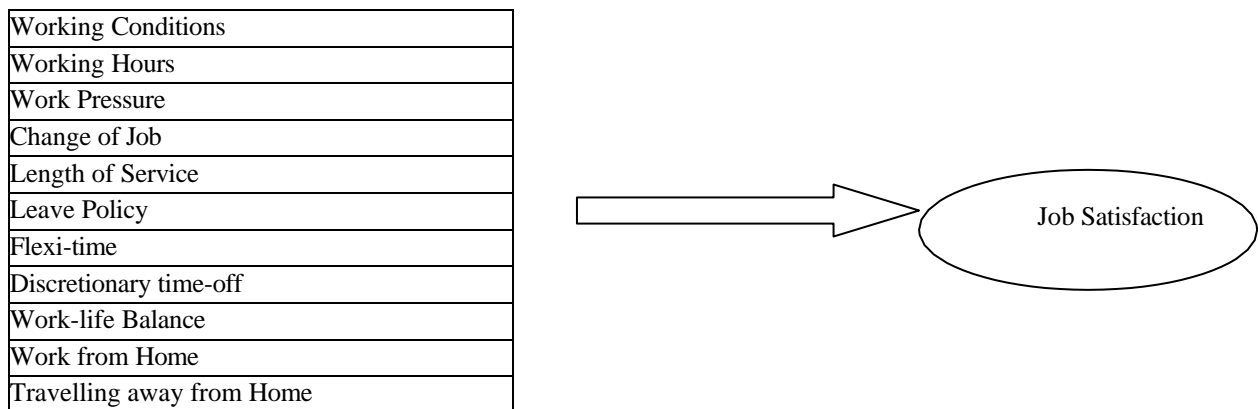
- Annual reports
- Website of Organisation

Statistical Tool:

- Appropriate statistical tool would be used for the analysis of data.

IV. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Figure1.Research framework for the study about Impact of work-life balance on employee job satisfaction.



Work life Balance of Employees in Telecom Industry: An attempt has been made to study the work life balance of employees working in telecom industry.

Table1: Responses for Work-life balance in Telecom industry of J&K

Sr.No.	Variables	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	Working conditions are suitable to the employees	14 (9.9)	13 (9.2)	18 (12.8)	73 (51.8)	23 (16.3)
2.	Employees are satisfied with the working hours	14 (9.9)	13 (9.2)	40 (28.4)	51 (36.2)	23 (16.3)
3.	There is moderate work pressure on the employees	14 (9.9)	6 (4.3)	18 (12.8)	80 (56.7)	23 (16.3)
4.	Change of job affects satisfaction level of employees	14 (9.9)	30 (21.3)	6 (4.3)	68 (48.2)	23 (16.3)
5.	Length of service of the employees with The current organization affects job satisfaction	27 (9.9)	96 (68.1)	18 (12.8)	-	-
6.	Leave policy are supportive to the employees	13 (9.2)	14 (9.9)	-	55 (39)	59 (41.8)
7.	Flexible time schedules are available to the employees	13 (9.2)	45 (31.9)	29 (19.9)	29 (19.9)	23 (16.3)
8.	Discretionary time off is given to the employees	14 (9.9)	24 (17)	28 (19.9)	51 (36.2)	23 (16.3)
9.	Management conducts effective work-Life balance programs for the employees	27 (19.1)	73 (51.8)	41 (29.1)	-	-
10.	Work from home after office hours Practiced by employees	14 (9.9)	7 (5)	42 (29.8)	55 (39)	23 (16.3)
11.	Travelling away from home	13 (9.2)	41 (29.1)	-	43 (30.5)	42 (29.8)

Note: Figures in parenthesis indicate the percentages of the row total

Source: Various Questionnaires from Respondents

The overall response of the voters for Work-life balance and Job satisfaction in the organization is not much satisfactory. The respondents, however, vouched to the fact that length of the service of the employees with the current organization affects Job satisfaction of the employees. There are mixed response so far as flexible time schedules available to the employees. 56.7% employees have disagreed to the fact that there is moderate work pressure. Telecom sector has undergone radical transformation by which work pressure of employees in general has increased a lot. 'Work from home' options are available to the employees as many employees have shown satisfaction to this variable. It ensures employees that employees can maintain balance between personal and professional life. Management of telecom industry should conduct effective work-life balance programs for the employees.

Table2: Descriptive Statistics for work—life balance in Telecom industry

Questionnaire	N		Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	MeanRank	□ ² Asymp. Sig
	Valid	Missing					
Working conditions are suitable to the employees	141	0	3.55	1.168	-.950	8 th	.000
Employees are satisfied with the working hours	141	0	3.40	1.164	-.574	5 th	.000
There is moderate work pressure on the employees	141	0	3.65	1.115	-1.222	9 th	.000
Change of job affects satisfaction level of employees	141	0	3.40	1.264	-.593	5 th	.000
Length of service of the employees with the current organization affects job satisfaction	141	0	1.94	.563	-.018	1 st	.000
Leave policies are supportive to the employees	141	0	3.94	1.300	-1.247	11 th	.000
Flexible time schedules are available to the employees	139	2	3.01	1.268	.167	3 rd	.001
Discretionary time off is given to the employees	140	1	3.32	1.225	-.424	4 th	.000
Management conducts effective work-life balance programs for the employees	141	0	2.10	.690	-.132	2 nd	.000
Work from home after office hours practiced by employees	141	0	3.47	1.131	-.731	7 th	.000
Travelling away from home	139	2	3.67	1.182	-.826	10 th	.001

The overall response for most of the variables used in the present study to measure Work-life balance and Job satisfaction in the organization is negatively skewed. This makes it clear that the company needs to work on its work-life balance practices.

Standard deviation is maximum for 'leave policies are supportive to the employees' while it is least for 'length of service of the employees with the current organization'. The χ^2 test for goodness of fit also depicts a significant difference in the distribution of opinions of the respondents at 5%.

The above analysis is compatible with the study of **Delery & Shaw (2001)** which highlighted the fact that, while certain individual work-life balance practices are viewed as superior to others, a single superior work-life balance practice without other supporting practices in the system is inadequate as a driver of sustainable performance outcomes.

Table3:-Kruskal Wallis Ranks Test for Age-wise Comparative Study of Respondents

Questionnaire	Age	N	Mean Rank
Working conditions are suitable to the employees	18-25	18	82.00
	26-35	75	80.11
	36-45	34	71.24
	46-55(above)	14	7.50
Employees are satisfied with the working hours	18-25	18	72.78
	26-35	75	86.71
	36-45	34	61.56
	46-55(above)	14	7.50
There is moderate work pressure on the employees	18-25	18	78.50
	26-35	75	82.53
	36-45	34	67.74
	46-55(above)	14	7.50
Change of job affects satisfaction level of employees	18-25	18	84.50
	26-35	75	86.72
	36-45	34	55.32
	46-55(above)	14	7.50
Length of service of the employees with the current organization affects job satisfaction	18-25	18	75.50
	26-35	75	83.44
	36-45	34	64.65
	46-55(above)	14	14.00
Leave policies are supportive to the employees	18-25	18	112.00
	26-35	75	82.99
	36-45	34	49.00
	46-55(above)	14	7.50
Flexible time schedules are available to the employees	18-25	16	84.19
	26-35	75	81.47
	36-45	34	63.76
	46-55(above)	14	7.50
Discretionary time off is given to the employees	18-25	18	74.44
	26-35	74	82.26
	36-45	34	68.76
	46-55(above)	14	7.50
Management conducts effective work-life balance programs for the employees	18-25	18	64.00
	26-35	75	79.85
	36-45	34	78.65
	46-55(above)	14	14.00
Work from home after office hours practiced by employees	18-25	18	91.00
	26-35	75	72.87
	36-45	34	82.44
	46-55(above)	14	7.50
Travelling away from home	18-25	18	97.22
	26-35	75	81.61
	36-45	32	54.81
	46-55(above)	14	7.50

The responses of respondents belonging to different age groups are quite mixed. A clear cut first mean rank could not be accorded to any age group for variables applied for measuring satisfaction towards work-life balance practices. However, the

respondents falling in the age group of 46-55 (and above) got last mean rank for all variables used for measuring satisfaction towards work-life balance practices.

Table 4: Kruskal Wallis Test Statistics: Grouping Variable–Age for Work-life balance

Questionnaire	Chi-Square	df	Asymp.Sig.
Working conditions are suitable to the employees	45.562	3	.000
Employees are satisfied with the working hours	50.632	3	.000
There is moderate work pressure on the employees	50.174	3	.000
Change of job affects satisfaction level of employees	59.479	3	.000
Length of service of the employees with the current organization affects job satisfaction	52.211	3	.000
Leave policies are supportive to the employees	78.887	3	.000
Flexible time schedules are available to the employees	45.166	3	.000
Discretionary time off is given to the employees	43.107	3	.000
Management conducts effective work-life balance programs for the employees	39.179	3	.000
Work from home after office hours practiced by employees	45.084	3	.000
Travelling away from home	57.465	3	.000

As the associated p-values (sig) are 0.000 for all variables applied for measuring 'Work-life balance' in the organization and as these figures are less than 0.05, we fail to accept null hypothesis and we can say that the difference in mean ranks of respondents belonging to different age group is statistically significant.

The Work and Families Act: What are employers doing in practice about flexible working? 27 March 2007, this article first appeared in Personnel Today magazine.

Flexible working is high on the agenda, thanks to the Work and Families Act, but what are employers doing about it in practice? Our exclusive work-life balance research reveals that awareness is high, but staff feels organizations could do better.

Research found that 74% of respondents believe the Work and Families Act will have at least some impact on employees' work-life balance, while 92% believe that offering flexible working hours to staff improves their job satisfaction.

Almost 70% of respondents believe their employer addresses work-life balance to some extent, but only 19% think they address it to a great extent, according to our survey. Almost half think that the flexible benefits on offer at their organization are not enough, and this includes those where their employers already offer a range of flexible working options.

Sixty-five per cent of employers offer no family-specific working practices, such as family experience days or childcare vouchers, according to our survey.

While 95% agree that family-specific benefits would be attractive to staff, few actually offer them increasing holiday allowance for workers with families would have the greatest impact on work-life balance.

And only 14% would consider offering vouchers for family members as a benefit. In fact, 75% strongly agreed that flexible working

According to our survey, most staff (87%) leaves an employer for career progression, closely followed by salary. Only just over one-third (35%) leave for family reasons.

The *Personnel Today* / Red Letter Days research was carried out among 1,015 HR professionals during early March 2007.

Almost one-third of respondents were from organizations employing more than 5,000 employees.

Flexible facts:

➤ The benefit staff would find most motivating is free travel to work (33% of respondents), closely followed by private health insurance (27%).

➤ 58% of respondents don't know how much their organisation spends on staff incentives.

- Only 2% of organisations surveyed currently offer 'duvet days'.
- Of staffs who leave an organisation for family reasons, 78% are women.
- Christmas parties are the most popular way to encourage staff to socialise with each other (71%).
- Only 33% of organisations offer a formal wellbeing programme.
- Employer recognition has the most impact on staff satisfaction, chosen by 94% of respondents.

Work-life balance benefits offered by organization.

- Flexible working hours: 74%
- Home working: 54%
- Family-related benefits: 48%
- Wellbeing programme: 33%
- Duvet days: 2%
- None: 13%

Work-life balance benefits organizations consider:

- Wellbeing programme: 26%
- Home working: 17%
- Family-related benefits: 15%
- Flexible working: 13%
- Duvet days: 9%
- None: 52%

Important factors that improve work-life balance in organization:

- Enabling staff more quality time with family/loved ones: 52%
- Reducing working hours: 21%
- Stress management schemes: 15%
- More holiday benefits: 8%
- Flexible hours: 1%

Satisfaction level of flexible working benefits offered by organization:

- There are too many: 2%
- It's about right: 52%
- Not enough: 46%

➤ *Work/non-work relationship and Family-life balance:*

It is hard to get time off to take care of family/personal matters	62%
My job prevents me from spending enough time with family/partner	71%
I feel exhausted after work	74%
Poor shift patterns adversely affect my social life	72%
My sleep is disrupted by work concerns	81%
My work keeps me from spending enough time with friends	66%

V. FINDINGS

(Correlation between work life & Family life Balance).

Aspects that help in Balancing Family & Work life and Quality of work life.

- There is significant association (sig-0.01) between family& work life and Quality of work life.
- With reference to the aspects that helps in balancing work and family commitments a significant association was found flexible starting time, flexible finish time, flexible hours (sig-0.000), weekend work & shift work (sig-0.041), support from manager & supervisor (sig-0.003), support from colleagues and team members (sig-0.000), encouragement to use paid & unpaid leave (sig-0.045). The second hypothesis has been proved i.e. an association is found between Quality of work life & Family life Balance

Aspects that hinders in Balancing Family & Work life and Quality of work life.

- With reference to the aspects that hinders in balancing work and family commitments a significant association was found in negative attitude of the managers (sig-0.021) & use of technology such as laptop or cell phones (sig-0.001) The second hypothesis has been proved i.e. an association is found between Quality of work life & Family life Balance Steps taken by organization in balancing work & family life.
- (N- 15) 50 % of the respondents felt that organization can go for flexible working hours in order to maintain the balance between work & family life Perception of the respondents regarding good work-life balance if provided by the organization.
- (N-25) 83.4% of the respondents felt helps in increasing job satisfaction which helps in increasing productivity.

VI. CONCLUSION

It is found that there is correlation between work – family life balance &Age, Marital status and work experience respectively, with respect to Encouragement to use paid &unpaid, support from colleagues &team members &managers / supervisors.

Thus it could be perceived that meeting / training &long working hours hinders in balancing work &family life. Meetings &long working hours it is difficult to give time or rather to spend time with the family due to commitment of the work.

Further it also can be seen that the support from colleagues, team members &boss for getting parental leave help in balancing family life.

It is also found that bringing children to the work place provides for a congenial feeling of family at the work place too. Thus these practices assist in balancing one's work and family life.

In terms of Family Life Balance and Quality of Work Life there is a correlation between Family life and flexible working hours. This shows that flexible working hours, improves QWL, which in turn helps in maintaining family life balance.

In terms of helping to balance family life & quality of work life, there is correlation between above parameter and support of the managers support from colleagues and team members and encouragement to avail paid and unpaid leave.

There is a correlation between negative attitude of colleagues as a hindrance of work and family life.

Thus in terms of organization contribution to balance work and family life, few respondents have felt to reduce workload, maximum respondents prefer to have flexible work, few preferred paid leaves, while rest said to give proper allowances. In terms of employers attempts to improve good work life balance in organisation it is seen that majority of the respondents have said to increase job satisfaction, helps to fulfil the given targets, & increase quality of work life and foster good working atmosphere.

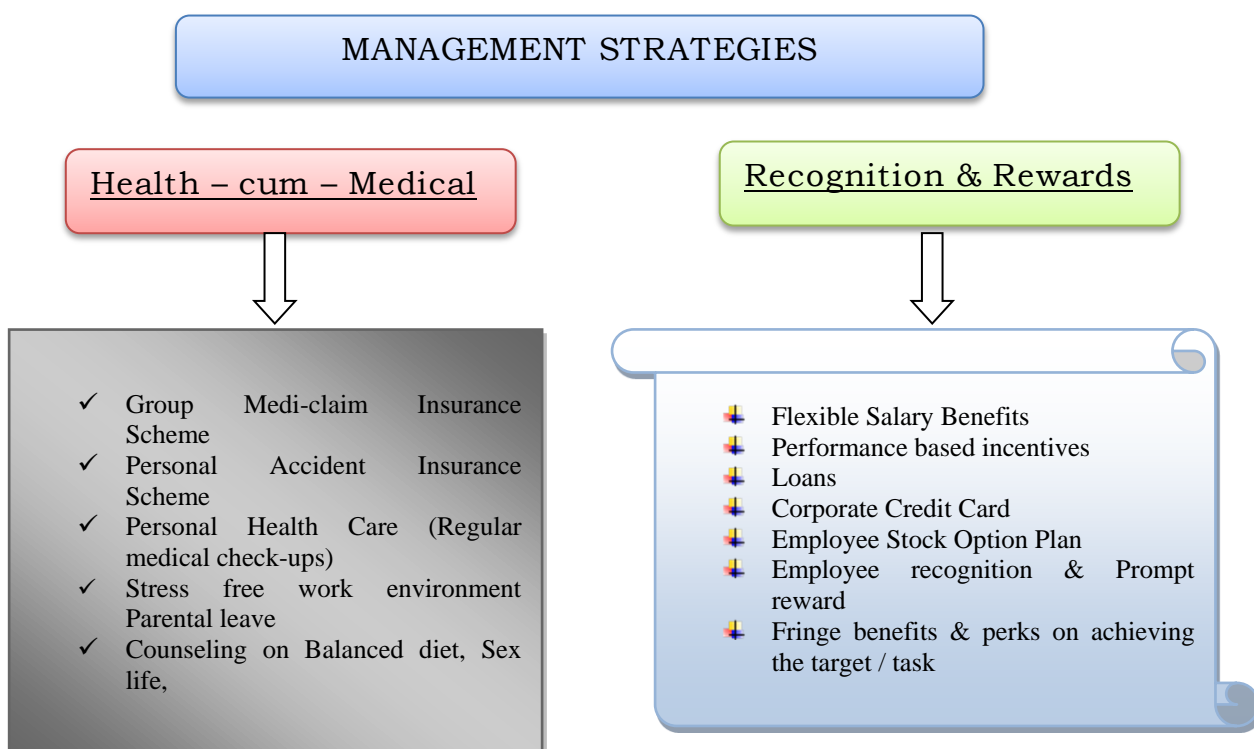
Age wise analysis of employees shows that employees in the age group between 26-35 are coping up with the pressure of work-life balance. Whereas overall analysis suggests that employees above the age of 40 are not much satisfied with the working conditions and working hours in the industry. With the increase in age, employees expect management to be more supportive and sensitive to the needs of the employees. Whereas majorly employees in the age group 18-25, 26-35 are satisfied with the working hours and working conditions. However, overall analysis from all age group suggests that employees expect management to perform effective work-life balance programs that will boost up morale and efficiency of the employees. Young employees are receptive to changes whereas senior age group employees expect stability in their jobs, workplace and working patterns. Management should take these points in to consideration and should distribute tasks and responsibilities accordingly. Age and experience both should be captured in the most effective manner which will benefit to the employees and the organizations as well. Work stress, work-life balance and job satisfaction are the burning issues which should be given due consideration to improve satisfaction level of the employees as satisfied employees are more productive employees of the organizations.

VII. ACTION MODULE

Human Resource Management Strategies

HRM methods can be utilized and applied as remedies for better work life balance. Family being the important component of the society it is really a matter of concern that the employee should have happy family life along with the better quality of work in short there should be positive work – life balance.

Thus HRM methods can be an important tool to formulate strategies/remedies.



Communications - Getting Your People to Care

Right person at the right time for the right place

Career development & growth

Motivating Creativity & innovation

Implementing competency model

Employee Assistance Programme

Employee Development

Flexi Working
Time

Subsidized Food & Transportation

Cellular Phone/Laptop

Flexi Work Environment

Healthy work environment

Recreation, Cafeteria, ATM & Concierge facilities

Others

- Job Enrichment
- Employee Referral Scheme
- Education Benefits
- Loans
- Company Leased Accommodation

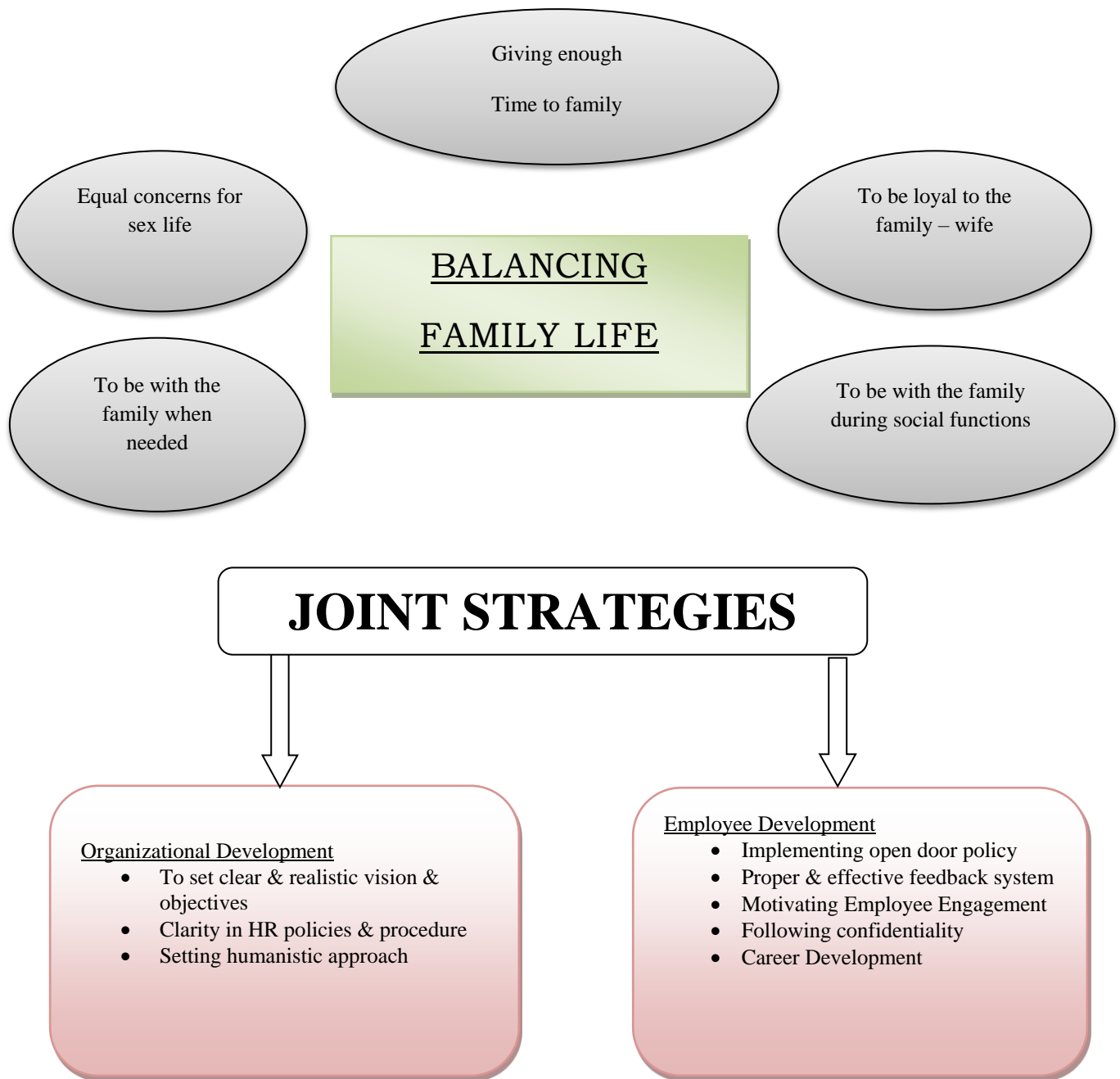
EMPLOYEE STRATEGIES

Organizational development

Behavioural development

- ✓ Organizational Commitment
- ✓ Considering task to be important for organization
- ✓ Utilizing creativity & innovation
- ✓ Proper utilization of working hours
- ✓ Team work

- Maintaining harmonious work environment
- Appreciation & motivation of the achievement of the task of colleagues
- Maintaining harmonious interpersonal relationships
- Enjoying the task / assignment to be achieved



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