Chapter 16
Exploring the Relationship Between Organizational Culture and WLB

Smita Singh
University of Lucknow, India

ABSTRACT

The objective of the chapter is to investigate the relationship between organisational culture and work-life balance. Questionnaires for organisational culture and work-life balance were developed and tested, and the relationship between the two was explored. The main findings were 1) organisational culture has a significant impact on work-life balance, and 2) more than rewards, it is support in terms of resources, roles, and empathy that have a significant impact on WLB of an individual. It is the prevailing culture that determines whether an employee does or does not take the benefit of existing family-friendly or work/life policies. While the organization may include policies related to work/life in its human resource manual, it is the culture of the organization that instills confidence in the individual to make use of the offered options. The chapter highlights the issues arising when organisational culture lacks empathy.

INTRODUCTION

Organizational culture has been in the spotlight in the past few years (Schein 1985; Kotter and Heskett, 1992; Deshpande et al., 1993; Hofstede, 2001; Kassem et al., 2017). At the same time the very concept of Organisational Culture is an enigma that few are able to fully decipher. However the ever changing interpersonal equations...
in organisations, the high attrition rates and decreased organisational commitment necessitates that organisational culture be critically examined. Organisational culture is intangible and hence difficult to replicate. In a world heavily dependent on technology and where almost everything tangible can be easily replicated, this uniqueness of organisational culture is what can give an organisation its competitive edge. The better the understanding an organisation has of its cultural dimensions, the better can it mould and control the behavioural aspects of its workforce. Darden (2004) favours developing a strong organizational culture as it builds strong commitment towards the organization and its objectives (Baker, 1980), helps the new incumbents to socialize, create a sense of belongingness, ensures coordination, facilitates good communication and mutual understanding and guides employee behavior. The importance of organizational culture cannot be denied in understanding organizational behavior, particularly the behavior of employees working within it. How employees perceive their work-life balance is one of these behavioural aspects which often goes on to define the job commitment, satisfaction and the performance of an employee. The hectic nature of today’s work schedules has firmly placed the organisational spotlight on encouraging and maintaining the work-life balance of employees. A conflict between work and life, forces one to forgo rewards in one sphere for obtaining rewards in the other. Greenhouse and Beutell (1985) postulate that at times work responsibilities may interfere with family role demands and sometimes family demands may interfere with work responsibilities causing stress in both the cases. The stress could be as much a result of a feeling of guilt about the choices made (Quick et al., 2004) as due to a spillover resulting from worries carried over to work from issues at life or vice-versa. The strain experienced by the individual causes adverse psychological and physical impact and this often spills over to the other areas of an individual’s life (Edwards and Rothbard, 2000). Organisational empathy, which is a function of organisational culture, can help reduce spillovers from work to life sphere. However, it is seen that the impact of organizational culture on work-life balance remains largely unexplored, particularly in developing nations.

The current study seeks to explore the relationship between organizational culture and work-life balance of Indian employees working in banks in order to identify those dimensions of the culture which are most significant and to suggest strategies for enhancement of work-life balance. Banking sector was taken as the area of study as there have been sweeping changes in the working culture of banks in the past two decades. A sector, which till 1991 was mostly given to public sector operations, was opened up for the private sector and foreign banks. Of late computerized core banking operations, financial inclusion, BASEL norms, Unique Identification (UID) projects, increased emphasis on rural banking, demonetization, have all had an unprecedented impact on the organizational culture of banks, especially the public sector banks. Linked with these changes, the working pattern and schedule of an
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