

IMPACT OF COVID 19 ON WORK-LIFE BALANCE OF ASHA WORKERS AT ERNAKULAM DISTRICT, KERALA

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ABSTRACT:

In India, women are the more challenged to work equal to the men and even moving towards doing the male-dominated jobs. Such kind of challenging jobs can be seen in transportation industry like bus drivers and conductors. Work Life Balance (WLB) is a major driver in the organization that helps to achieve higher productivity. It is a healthy blend of both employee's work life and personal life. This study analyses the work-life balance of Asha workers at Ernakulam district and relates its impacts on the work environment, individual issues, workload, and personal life. The obligation of Asha staff has increased massively as the pandemic goes out of hand. Asha workers are deployed to perform door calls, keep an eye on migrant employees, touch tracing, etc. The pandemic has meant more working hours and personal risk. The changing roles of women in India have led to their greater contribution in the employment sector and changes in many aspects of Indian life. The typical Indian family today is the dual-earner family.

Keywords:-Covid-19, Pandemic, Asha, Work-Life Balance, Work Environment, Individual Issues, Workload, Personal Life

INTRODUCTION

ASHA (Accredited Social Health Activist) a primary healthcare figurehead acknowledged in 2005 by Indian Ministry of Health and Welfare, which creates knowledge and capacity for local health and promotes the use of existing health services and their accountability. Through a robust selection process involving different community heads, officers at District, Block and village levels Asha are selected. There are 859,331 ASHAs in 32 states and union territories. By July 2009 in Kerala, 30909 ASHAs were selected and 27904 ASHAs were trained and deployed in the field. Asha workers are more in field work reaching nook and corner of each ward in a village for periodic check-ups and scheduling immunisation for babies, TB patients,

pregnant ladies, prevention and control of communicable and non-communicable diseases, palliative and Mental Health care units. Asha finds it hard to balance her job and personal life over the strain of work and inadequate transport.

Work-life balance is a concept that supports the efforts of employees to split their time and energy between work and the other important aspects of their lives. Work-life balance is a daily effort to make time for family, friends, community participation, spirituality, personal growth, self-care, and other personal activities, in addition to the demands of the workplace. Achievement and enjoyment are the front and back of the coin of value in life. Person can't have one without the other.

According to various surveys conducted on Work-Life Balance near about 60 percent of respondents said that they are not able to find out a balance between their Life and Work. Achieving Work-Life Balance is easy. Work-Life Balance is about effectively managing the juggling act between paid work and other activities that are important to us, including spending time with family, taking part in sports and recreation, volunteering or undertaking further study. Organizations have started introducing various schemes to attract, retain employees and increase productivity.

The work-life balance of female workers is at risk, with increasing demands at work and home. The obligation of Asha staff has increased exponentially as the pandemic goes out of control. Asha staffs are also a vital part of the medical supply chain, especially for pregnant mothers, and have been given the task of taking medications from the clinic and dropping them off at the doorsteps of patients if necessary. It confirms the fact that Asha employees feel burdened and stressed because of the nature of their job, which has increased in the current circumstances in many ways. Whatever Kerala has accomplished in its struggle against Covid 19 it is mainly due to its health workers in the health system.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The earliest view of the job-home relationship was that they are segmented and autonomous and do not influence each other. This notion was extended to blue-collar workers by **Blood and Wolfe (1960)**. They asserted that the division of work and home is a rational process for workers in unsatisfactory or uninvolved jobs. Work and family exist as separate entities in the principle of segmentation; there is no connection between job life and family life. The principle of segmentation perceives work and family to be different entities and perceptions in one will not impact or influence experiences in the other. In **2012, Dan Wheatley** undertook a study in

UK organizations on work-life balance and trips to women's standards and policies. He found that workgroup culture and discharge among work and non-work tasks avoided them from achieving the desired work-life balance.

2010 N.krishna reddy etal. In his article “work life balance among married women employees” Family–work conflict (FWC) and work–family conflict (WFC) are more likely to exert negative influences in the family domain, resulting in lower life satisfaction and greater internal conflict within the family.

A study was undertaken to relate the personal and professional lives of women in the service sector of Chennai city by **V. Varatharaj and S. Vasantha in 2012**. The result of the study showed that most women workers regardless of their trivial personal and organizational irritants, feel secure in their workplace, and to achieve an everyday life goal, better control of emotion is also important. **B. S Kadam in 2012** undertook a study in Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation on the work-life balance of women drivers, where he inferred that most of the women drivers can balance personal and professional life except some who needed some flexible working policies and arrangements.

Narayanan and Savarimuthu in 2013 suggested that family dispute has increased with increased job participation for working women professionals in IT companies in India. Women with children and dependents needed the help of family members and friends to handle work-life conflict-related issues. The study concluded that the women workers work-life balance depends on the child's life stage, which determines the overall work-life balance level.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

ASHA is a voluntary community wellbeing leader who raises awareness about health. The population is mobilized towards local health planning and its social determinants and increased use and transparency of current programs in public health. She is a member of the promoter of good practices for wellbeing. Their service reach is mainly in the rural area, where even proper road and transportation facility could not be found.

The pandemic Covid -19 has affected every person has even affected the Asha personally and professionally. The amount of time and pressure on work has increased tremendously that managing and balancing personal and professional life has become difficult.

This research was carried out to understand the effect of Covid-19 on Asha workers' work-life balance.

OBJECTIVES

- To examine the effect of the workload and work environment on the work-life balance in the Ernakulam district of Asha employees.
- To analyse the association between family type and Asha workload in the district of Ernakulam.
- To understand and correlate between the impact of job loss and Individual Issues during the pandemic of Asha workers in Ernakulam district.

HYPOTHESIS

H₀₁= The workload and working environment have no major effect on the work-life balance of Asha workers.

H₀₂= Asha's work-life balance is not influenced by individual issues and personal life.

H₀₃=There is no correlation between the impact of job loss and Individual Issue during the pandemic of Asha workers

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The analysis is inherently descriptive. primary and secondary data are used in the study. Different official websites provide secondary data while primary data are collected directly from various offices through direct interviews and well-defined questionnaires. The district of Ernakulam is considered to be an area for data collection. 50 Asha employees have been selected from the central and the southern portion of Ernakulam district. For selecting sample data, a simple random sample method is employed.

The statistical tools used in the study are two way ANOVA, Simple Regression, Multiple Regression and Correlation.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Testing of Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1:- The Work Load and Work Environment influence on Asha Workers Work Life Balance

H0_{1.1}= workload has no major effect on the work-life balance of Asha workers .

H0_{1.2}= work environment has no major effect no Work-Life Balance.

H0_{1.3}=workload and working environment have no major effect on the work-life balance of Asha workers .

H1_{1.1}= work load has major effect on Work-Life Balance.

H1_{1.2}=work environment has major effect on Work-Life Balance.

H1_{1.3}=work load and work environment have major effect on Work-Life Balance .

Table No.1:-Tests of Between- Work Load and Work Environment

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected model	.786 ^a	23	.034	1.914	.058
Intercept	225.567	1	225.567	1.264E4	.000
Work load	.181	6	.030	1.686	.166
Work environment	.265	5	.053	2.970	.031
Work Load Work environment	.195	12	.016	.912	.549
Error	.446	25	.018		
Total	422.592	49			
Corrected Total	1.232	48			

Table 1 states that

- The significant value for Total work Load is 0.166 greater than 0.05, indicates that the Total work Load does not influence WLB.
- The significant value for Total Work Environment is 0.031 less than 0.05, indicates that total work Environment influences WLB.

- The significant value for Total work Load * Total Work Environment is 0.549 greater than 0.05, indicates that total work Load and Total Work Environment do not influence Work Life Balance.

Hypothesis 2:- Individual Issues and Personal Life Influence on Asha workers Work Life Balance.

H0₁= Asha's work-life balance is not influenced by individual issues.

H0₂= Asha's work-life balance is not influenced by personal life.

H0₃- Asha's work-life balance is not influenced by individual issues and personal life.

H1₁= Asha's work-life balance is influenced by individual issues

H1₂= Asha's work-life balance is influenced by personal life.

H1₃ = Asha's work-life balance is influenced by individual issues and personal life.

Table No.2:-Tests of Between-:- Individual Issues and Personal Life Influence

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected model	1.127 ^a	31	.036	5.844	.000
Intercept	218.322	1	218.322	3.511E4	.000
Individual issue	.312	8	.039	6.267	.001
Personal life	.411	7	.059	9.450	.000
Individual issue * Personal life	.116	16	.007	1.163	.379
Error	.106	17	.006		
Total	422.592	49			
Corrected Total	1.232	48			

Table 2 confirms that

- The significant value for Total Individual Interest is 0.001 less than 0.05, indicates that total individual interest influences Work-Life-Balance.
- The significant value for Total Personal Life is 0.000 less than 0.05, indicates that total Personal life influences Work-Life-Balance.
- The significant value for Total Individual Interest* Total Personal Life is 0.379 greater than 0.05, indicates that total individual interest and total Personal life does not influence Work-Life-Balance.

Hypothesis 3:-To analyze the correlation between the impact of job loss and individual issue during the pandemic

Table No. 3:-Correlations of job loss and individual issue

	Effect and impact of job loss of family members	Individual issues
Effect and impact of job loss of family members	1	-.208
Pearson Correlation		.148
Sig. (2-tailed)		
N	50	50
Individual issues	-.208	1
Pearson Correlation	.148	
Sig. (2-tailed)		
N	50	50

Table 3 shows the correlation as -.208 and p-value .148 reveals that there exists a negative relationship between the variables. The outcome also specifies that exists an insignificant and negative relationship between the effects of job loss of family members on the Total Individual Issue of Asha Workers.

MAJOR FINDINGS

- Covid 19 has affected the working environment of the Asha workers, as they come in more contact with the society by coordinating with the local authority in supplying essentials to the covid patients and contact tracings etc.
- This study points that personal life influences work-life balance
- The work environment is unsafe as they come in more contract with covid patients, negative attitude of some make emotionally drained, even safety measure should be made more available.
- As covid also has resulted in job loss, so based on that a relation of job loss of a family member and the personal issue is undertaken. The outcome specifies a negative relationship between them as compensations were paid to Asha workers even during the lockdown period.
- . Individual issues of Asha too influence the Work-life balance as longevity at work has disturbed the systematic flow of work which made them stressed and emotionally drained. This in turn had an impact on the personal life of Asha worker
- This research also shows that the family type and workload of Asha employees are linked in a negative way. The relationship of marital status and family form was also achieved where marital status has a positively significant influence on the process of working life as a family.
- The outcome also specifies that there exists an insignificant and negative relationship between the effect of the job of family members on the Individual issues of Asha workers.

CONCLUSION

ASHA are the foot soldiers of the health department and the grass root functionaries who drive the health policy. The government must consider for appropriate work-life balance as the pandemic has been for a while and in the long run, Asha would find it difficult to balance work and home. This research studies the balance between work and life in four areas such as the environment, individual issues, workload and individual satisfaction. The research shows that Asha employees' work-life balance in the Ernakulam district has an impact on the working environment. There exist a Positive and significant impact of Marital status on Work-life

balance. This study also describes that personal life affects Asha's balance between work and life.

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