

An executive summary of the final report of work done on the minor research project of Ms. Shamin Elizabeth Issac entitled “Women family and employment in ITES sector:A Study with reference to IT companies in Mangalore District” sanctioned by UGC, vide sanction letter No. MRP (H) – 0174/12-13/KAMA002/UGC-SWRO Dated: 23.09.2013.

Work-life balance is the term used in the literature to refer to policies that strive to achieve a greater complementarity and balance between work and home responsibilities. These policies apply to all workers, not just working parents, and their presence or absence in an organization may have an effect on those facing a crisis pregnancy, particularly in judging their own ability to combine both work and family life.

In this study, descriptive research technique was adopted. Samples of 200 women of ten major IT companies and BPO in Mangalore city were selected. Non-probability convenient sampling technique was used to collect primary data keeping in view the subject matter of research, easy accessibility and convenience of the researcher. The study period was 18 months. Sample units i.e. customers were met at offices, and personally to the residence of customers in Mangalore. Collected data were categorized, tabulated and interpreted. The interpretation recorded was as follows.

The study reveals that most of the respondents that is 68% of the respondents are between the age group of 22-25 while 62 % of them are in the age group of 25-30. The study shows that most of the women in BPO sector are young in age and majority of them 81% of the respondents are not married while 15% are married and remaining 5% are widowed. Regarding educational qualification 78 % are graduate and the remaining falls in the category of below high school, higher secondary and post graduate level.

Among the surveyed women 36% of the respondents live alone, 30% live with their parents, 19% live in rented house or as paying guests and remaining 08% with spouse and 05 % with spouse and in-laws.

Social status of a person can be adjudged from the annual income of her family. Among the respondents 34% of the respondents fall in the income level of 2-5 lakhs and 31% in the category of 5-10 lakhs and 14% above 20 lakhs and 0% belongs to 10-20 lakhs annually. Regarding family support and co-operation towards work 32% of the respondents have a

indifferent attitude ,28% are enthusiastic towards work ,27% of the family are very cooperative and remaining 13% are only hostile towards the work.

Most of the respondents in 97% did not face any marital or family discord due to their work and the oddities attached with it. However, a small percentage has answered the same in the affirmative.

The respondents were divided into four levels according to the number of years in the present organization, i.e. less than one year in the present company has been considered to be the entry level, one to three years as Junior level, three to five years as the Middle-level and more than five years as the senior level. Based on this, majority of the respondents are found to be from the junior level followed by the entry level. In terms of percentage, about 34% of the respondents are in their present organization for less than three years(junior level) and another 31% are working for their company for more than three years but less than five years (middle level) and the remaining 23% are in their organization from more than five years.

The respondents surveyed are from three sections-technical, managerial and others. About 34% work in the technical section of the BPO. The management staff of the BPOs surveyed, including Finance and Human Resource, comprises 27% respondents while about 39 % of the women respondents are in other services of the organization like system maintenance section, general and accounts section.

Among the respondents 12% of the respondents have an experience of more less than one year while 34% are having experience of up to 3 years and 31% has experience of between 3-5 years and the remaining 23% have an experience of more than 5 years.

Among the respondents 23% are permanent employees in their organization and 46.5 are working on long term contract and the remaining 31% are on short term contract.

A majority of the surveyed have replied that , near about 63 %.of the respondents have answered that question in the affirmative indicating that they are required to sign service bonds ranging from one to three years when joining the organization the remaining 37% answered that they do not have a service bond.

When respondents were asked about the various benefits given to respondents by their organizations, about three fourth of the women surveyed reported that they were given

medical benefits and allowances, maternity leave, insurance benefits while very few gets subsidized loans.

When the respondents were asked whether they have a fixed or flexible working hours, 83% of the respondents reported to have fixed working hours and the rest have flexible working hours .

A feature which has been observed that about 49% of the respondents answered that they are getting two days leave in a week while 38% said that they are getting only one day and very less that is 13% said that they are not getting weekly leave. It may be noted that in many cases it has been found that though the respondents are entitled to weekly leave, they have been called to office for work and their leaves have been cancelled, though unofficially. This phenomenon is not uncommon, but in times of more projects or work coming in, the employees are required to put more hours at work.

When the respondents were asked about the annual leave available majority 59% answered that they are getting less than 12 days leave in an year and 33% said that they get annual leave to 10-20 days and the remaining 8% said that they get more than 20 days as annual leave. When the respondents were asked about the availability of maternity leave 100% of them said that they are availing maternity leave and about 50% of the respondents said that they get a maternity leave of 90 days while 27% said that they get more than 90 days and the remaining 23 % said that they are getting less than 90 days

On asking the respondents about the nature of work and its basic characteristic, 28% reported the work being exciting whereas 32% in reported the work to be routine again, 27% in reported the job to be stressful. In both the regions, very few respondents 13 % actually find their work to be enjoyable. Regarding the leisure time availability 77% of the respondents said that they are getting leisure time and the remaining 23% said that they are not.

Three types of facilities, i.e., separate washroom, separate relaxation zone and medico/psycho counseling, were listed as these are recognized to be vital facilities which should be provided by the organizations having female employees and the responses to this question varied widely in the two regions. The largest proportion of women are having separate washroom,

majority of the respondents have separate relaxation zone . It is to be noted herein that the facilities are not similar in all branch offices of the organization. Thus, while the Corporate Head office is well equipped with the facilities, the other offices over the state have few or no facility at all.

An option was given to respondents as regards other facilities they want in the organization which are presently unavailable. The answers are mixed with a significant number of women opting for crèche facilities for infants and children, regular transport facilities to and from home, rest room for the sick, an all time in house woman doctor and better canteen facilities. The respondents strongly feel that since the large portion of the day and night is spent within the office, the organization should take care to afford a more comfortable workplace for women, especially married women with small children. Though none reported any specific sickness or health problems related to work, many have found the work culture strenuous and having an impact on their overall well being, calling for the need of doctors and psychologists to analyze and improve the situation.

Since the study was conducted in Mangalore, where the BPOs are generally situated in specific locations of the city, it was important to know the distance travelled by the respondents in reaching their place of work. In the absence of proper transport facilities by the organization, commutation becomes a difficult task involving long hours in local buses, trains or cars in polluted environments. About 61% of respondents travel less than 5 km every day 24 % of them travel between 5-10 km while 13 % travel 10-15 km everyday and the remaining 02 % travel more than 15 km. When the respondents were asked about the pick up and drop facility 76% said that they are having the facility while the remaining 24% said that they are not. The same is true even in case of late night shifts in the regions, and respondents have strongly vent their feelings against night shifts as well as the callous attitude of the BPOs in not providing adequate pick up and drop-home arrangements. Some respondents have observed that either evening or night shifts should be banned for women or else suitable arrangements must be made immediately.

At the personal level, women employees working in BPOs generally reside with their families, parents or spouse, excepting few who live separately. Families are generally supportive of women , a significant number pointed towards a hostile or indifferent attitude. Marital discord is almost unknown. Nevertheless, the women feel that they are unable to contribute towards family or fulfill social commitments due to work pressure. Several

women, , point towards a difficult situation in handling children since they are unable to give time and new mothers are placed at a even worse situation with no crèches or child care facilities in office and long distances between home and workplace. Life style changes have also been noticed in course of the study with women resorting to late night partying, smoking and boozing. Live in relationships are also not uncommon amongst the women.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

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