

## Work-Life Balance in Transnational Organisations

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### DESCRIPTION

Consistently the adoption of Work-Life Balance (WLB) within organisations is a hallmark of a progressive, human-centric approach to HRM which is essential for employee's health and well-being. Employees motivation, productivity, performance, and effectiveness are enhanced when an organisations offers an excellent work-life balance. Research in business and management, organisational behavior, human resource development has explicated how organisations have managed to retain employees, maintain goodwill, engage, and record a longer-term higher growth if they provided a good work-life balance for their employees. Often the demands from one domain, i.e., paid work competes with the demands of another domain i.e., unpaid work at home resulting in a conflict. This work-life conflict results in a situation which is debilitating and translates into an individual's quality of life and well-being.

The IT sector is associated with a long hour's culture that often promotes a flexible but over worked culture with a blurred boundary between paid and unpaid work. This disproportionately affect employees who undertake the unpaid work on top of the demanding paid work. Numerous health issues associated with the long hour's culture include musculoskeletal symptoms, hypertension and diabetes, dyslipidemia, depression, anxiety and insomnia, and obesity. All mostly related to sitting for long hours in front of the computer, stress due to the nature of the work in different time zones and a tight delivery schedule. Successfully adopting the right work-life balance is not easy, particularly so for large transnational organisations in the IT sector who are considered shapers of the global economy and engines of economic growth in developing and emerging economies.

The diverse yet less uniform nature of the trans-national organisations makes it particularly challenging for adopting an effective work-life balance. The organisations and different geographies of large trans-national organisations are complex and dynamic. Therefore, there is a need to understand the ergonomics early on (not only about physical spaces but how people work in different projects in different time zones with

different clients in different geographies in varied cultures and contexts) to understand how to improve the work environment and the workspaces to design and arrange these, so they are compatible to adopting a good work-life balance.

Without an early intervention there will remain an agency and a capability gap in the possibilities of utilizing the rights and entitlement options for employees in different countries. This agency gap is also dependent upon the differences in customer provider relations in trans-national organisations when work is offshored or outsourced. This agency gap is mediated through the workplaces translating an employee's quality of life and well-being. Work life and family-life are viewed differently in different countries and cultural contexts and these differences also have consequences on work-life conflict and work-life balance. And there are significant differences between how trans-national organisations adopt work-life balance in different geographies, cultures, and contexts. Policies, regulations, and entitlements (structural), and organisational practices, employees' attitude (relational) also encompass agency inequalities in achieving a healthy work-life balance in organisations.

### CONCLUSION

The working conditions and the work environment that may influence work-life balance of employees also greatly differ within the same trans-national organisations operating in different geographies. Transnational organisations operating in different geographies and contexts should also consider the cultural aspects when adopting a work-life balance for the employees. The impact of ergonomics considering both how the work environment is designed keeping a human centric approach to human resource management cannot be overstated. Understanding the different complexities of how trans-national organisations operate across different geographies, in different time zones, cultural diversities and unique contexts is crucial in establishing equal rights for employees, health and well-being for all. The early integration of designing projects that create greater equality agency should be considered as this creates a pivotal role in fostering equality across borders.

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