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THE STRUGGLE FOR BALANCE BETWEEN WORK AND HOME: AN OVERVIEW OF ISLAMIC TEACHINGS

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Abstract

The flow of prioritizing work tasks with home responsibilities can become overwhelming when one or the other consistently demands greater preference. So we have to struggle for the balance between home and work so that we have equal attention to both major parts of our lives.

This article aims to discuss and analyze the effect of Work Life Balance in Islamic Perspective followed by some suggestions to make balance .In addition, this article also analyzes the effect and role in mediating the employer employee relationship that may help in constructive environment on workplace for strategic conclusion of organizational progress.

Discussion includes introduction, literature review of work and life balance and discussion about both employer and employee cannot find a point of balance between their careers and their families, and one is given more priority than the other which may lead to several dysfunctional outcomes of physical, mental social and moral lapses. Further some suggestions have been given to make a balance between work and family life.

Introduction:

Post pandemic situation has affected both employer and employee because the mandate for business competition and two years routine of work from home has affected company strategies and policies as well employee's balance of work and home. Work life balance especially after pandemic routine has become a strategic issue because employees will have a good performance if they had a work balance between work and non-work, including personal, family, and hobbies (Prakash, 2018; Clark, 2000). Constantly connected and expected to be present both for "WORK" and "LIFE" at all times, when we are at work we are expected to be reachable by family and friends, and when we are at home we are expected to be on call for work and clients. Despite the efforts of many companies to implement work life balance practices for their employees, it is the individuals themselves who struggle most with juggling their roles in an effective and meaningful way. Trying to achieve work life balance with family, a demanding job, a mortgage to pay off, and being involved in so many other curricular activities really is a challenge (Hill et.al., 2001).

As practical religion Islam has given special importance to work and life balance. The importance to such extent that it is considered as worship in itself. Islam calls us to be responsible to our community and to work hard to provide benefit to others, rather than relying upon begging for charity. One of the ways can be responsible is to provide for others and to instill within ourselves a strong work ethic. It is far better for a Muslim to earn his own living and provide for his family than to rely upon charity of others (Al-Quran, 53:39).

Employees and mostly people doing jobs have to face many problems challenges and problems in balancing the work and life at different levels. When we observe the daily routine of Prophet Muhammad [SAW], one cannot resist but notice how balanced and effective it was during his life. In just 23 years changed the face of humanity with his mission. The Prophet (SAW) once heard that one of his companions was fasting every day and spending all night in prayer. The key lesson for us here is that instead of thinking of work life balance in terms of what others expect from us, we should think of work life balance in terms of fulfilling rights (Bukhari,3235).

Literature Review:

Work life balance is an individual's life in conducting tasks that is his accountability in work, home, family and community (Clark, 2000). it is directly related to one's balance in managing work, personal, and family life, including recreation and hobbies (Prakash, 2018). Pradhan et al. (2016) emphasize that there is a close relationship between WLB and OCB in work. Being an interesting subject with tough challenge, especially for Islamic organizations, employers and

employees. The millennial era where profit maximization and financial image has made organizations even more competitive to retain employees who have good competencies. On the other hand, employees are required to be able to work professionally with high and impulsive work demands based on business principles. Therefore, the discussion of WLB has become a challenge for employees to sustain their personal and family commitments against the workplace performance. While the organizations are facing challenges to properly manage WLB for its employees because it will have significant implications for attitudes, behavior, welfare employee performance against profit maximization (Pradhan, 2016).

From an Islamic perspective Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as role model is best example of self-sufficiency, hard work and responsibility. Prophet Muhammad {SAW} would also serve himself and perform chores for his family, rather than having others work for him. The concept of work in Islam is far broader and has different characteristics and objectives. Many verses of the holy Quran stress the need for work and action by human beings (Al-Quran,5:9, 21:83). Work therefore is regarded not only as a right but a duty and an obligation. Islam extends to the individual the right to choose the type of work he desires, but along with this freedom comes the obligation to consider the needs of the society as well as the selection of the type of work permitted by the Shariah. Similarly it also plays a very important role in the civilized life of a man. It is a small world in itself. An individual is born, brought up, and trained in home atmosphere and this naturally leaves an everlasting impression on him. This is the reason why the Quran has laid so much emphasis on home life. Work and home balance is a concept including proper prioritizing between “WORK” career and ambition and ‘LIFESTYLE” health, pleasure, leisure, family and spiritual development and meditation. Work-home balance is a choice an individual has to make.

Research Methodology:

This study uses a causality relationship on a value-free basis and work ethics guidelines for employees and employer to use a positivism approach (Lutz, 1989). The method of research is descriptive, analytical and historical to provide supporting data of work and home balance situation in today’s global competitive environment and solution from Islamic teachings through focusing on the attention of discussion to explain the existence of the empirical issue being studied (Simonson, et al., 2001; Lutz, 1989). The type of data is primary through discussion and historical information with providing framework as solution.

Discussion:

More often than both employer and employee cannot find a point of balance between their careers and their families, and one is given more priority than the other which may lead to several dysfunctional outcomes of physical, mental social and moral lapses in behavior and may also effect personal, emotional, family and workplace relationships (Kamil, et al. 2015).

Islam is a religion of worshipping the Creator, with an aptitude of working for survival and make use of all the abundant resources that have been created for us. Islam is a religion that orders its

followers to be part and parcel of a working and productive society. However Islam discourages the hustle culture and work more than the physical capacity and compromising emotional and mental health. According to Prophet Muhammad (SAW):

“Your eyes have a right over you, your body has a right over you, your wife has a right over you (Bukhari,2391)

A renowned Islamic scholar Imam Hasan Al-Basri, was once asked about the secret behind his asceticism. He replied four reason for this: “One, I believe that my sustenance will never be hijacked by anybody (so I work to attain it). Two, I know that a work that is mine must be performed by me, so I do not decrease my efforts in performing it. Three, I believe that my Lord is Omnipresent (watching me), so I do not like Him seeing me committing sins. Four, I know that death is somewhere waiting for me, so I prepare for it (Kamal.B 1274).

Some steps to balance work and home:

Experts suggest many steps to balance work and family life. Few of them may be discuss in the light of Islamic frame work.

1. Don't allow stress to overcome your mental peace:

Stress is part of workplace routine and sometimes increases for many reasons. But keep in mind that peace of mind is essential for physical and mental health to perform efficiently on workplace (Heriyadi, et al., 2020). Our minds get congested with stress which may cause disturbance of hormones. One should keep him or her in activities to lower stress. In order to avoid stress one must bear in mind that being Muslim Allah Almighty will make a way to get out of stressful situation as mentioned in Quran: “ Allah is sufficient for us and He is an excellent trustee” (Al-Quran,3:173).

2. Strengthen your bond with family:

Experts suggests that family bond may help in increasing mental compatibility and health (Pradhan,2016). Having strong family bond may increases trust, understanding and support. Family bond has been encouraged by the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) that “Your eyes have a right over you, your body has a right over you, your wife has a right over you (Bukhari,2391).

3. Allow others to help you.

Sometimes in a particular situation when anyone stuck in a critical situation and find no way to get out of it than he or she should consult someone else who can advise sincerely. In most cases family, friend or colleagues are willing to help out (Singh & Khanna, 2011). “Cooperate with one another in goodness and righteousness, and do not cooperate in sin and transgression. And be mindful of Allah.”(Al-Quran, 5:2).

4. Prioritize your mental and physical health:

Without a healthy mind and body, one may not be able to focus on either. Therefore, it is important to prioritize our mental peace and physical health in order to add activities to your routine to help you stay healthy and fit. Such activities include healthy diet, exercise, proper sleep and positive content to read, listen and watch. (Sani & Ekowati, 2019)

5. Make a strong belief system in rituals and practical dealings.

In order to be spiritually and mentally positive one must be focused in meditation and performing religious rituals, As said in Quran: "I entrust my affairs to Allah, truly Allah is aware of His servants" (Al-Quran,40:44)

In spite of the fact that the work life balance model is commonly acknowledged and an ever increasing number of organizations are starting to advance it, there are likewise a few voices who view the idea as risky. One normal analysis sees the work life balance as a legend. It is a perfect circumstance that is for all intent and purposes unachievable in light of the fact that life is shockingly not all that simple to design. The idea disregards the disorderly idea of life, which essentially can't be brought leveled out via cautious arranging. A further purpose of analysis is simply the expression 'work life balance.' This recommends work and life are two totally various fields.

Findings of the discussion:

Followings are the findings of the whole discussion:

1. Islam as exemplified through the Sunnah, the way of life of the Prophet Muhammad [SAW], seeks balance in its purest form.
2. Balance is justice, especially when it is difficult to accomplish. Allah equates His Divinely revealed scripture and the clear evidence of its manifest Truth with balance that maintains justice.
3. The struggle for work home balance was an important goal for everyone But to adapt the idea likewise negates the social estimation of work dedication and devotion, which is the intellectual conviction, moral responsibility, and passionate notability of making work the focal point of one's life.
4. Despite our ethnicity, we Muslims are generally loaded proudly to have a place with our confidence. However, the unfortunately mostly larger part of us carry on with a strained life that is clearly of a lower quality than that of different social orders. Due to our position in the world we have to face a lot of challenges in order to maintain a balance between home and work.

5. For the Muslims entering the working world brings about challenges not only in relation to going from a learning environment into a real world commercial environment but also in how we can conduct our religious obligations and desires.
6. At work places other than in Muslim countries the co-workers don't understand that they need to pray Jummah on Fridays, or that they can only eat halal meat, or even how the Muslims have guidelines on how they conduct themselves with the opposite gender. These issues may be easy to deal but there are also far more challenges.
7. Everyone talks about the importance of achieving the elusive work home balance. In today's fast paced workplace most of people are urged to do more, faster and with fewer resources. Translating that to the bigger picture, there are times when we need to work more than usual and other times when we can take off.
8. There are many tips or we can say solutions in order to balance. Many people who struggle for balance go through different analysis and steps in practical life to find the answer of the questions that always remain a challenge for employees, workers of every field.
9. Islam is a balance way of life it is a system that is optionally balanced in its design by Allah (SWT) based on his ultimate knowledge and absolute wisdom.

Conclusion:

Keeping in view all discussion and findings, it may be conclude that Islam as practical religion instructs us to be moderate and adjusted in work and home life. So if there is imbalance between home and work then it will cause a damage not only to our works and life but also it affect out state of mind and cause stress, which may lead to a effect in both our creative planning about things and psychology. Everyone belong to any type of ethical background knows that our home life is naturally related or connected to us so if we not balance properly than we miss a major duty. Our home needs our proper attention, we cannot leave our home life for work, so sustaining balance is an essential component of a harmonious existence, if we are too heavily weighted by work responsibility, and both our home and professional lives stand to suffer the consequences. Over compensating in either direction creates internal struggle to appease the demands that work and home impose, leaving us distressed and without the fortitude to effectively sustain either one.

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