
Work-Timings and its Effect on Work-Life Balance in the Ritz-Carlton, Bengaluru

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Abstract:

The paper provided throws light on the topic of work life balance, and the effects that work timings have on the aforementioned concept. Work timings vary from place to place, industry to industry. In the hotel industry, work timings are far more stressful because of the round the clock functioning of hotels. The study was conducted with the help of the managers and employees at The Ritz-Carlton, Bangalore in the span of five months. The employees were asked various questions pertaining to their personal and work life. Through the questions asked, an image about the work life at hotels was developed. Using an online questionnaire, the employees were able to express the degree to which they believed the work timings in the hotel industry had an impact on their personal lives. The data was transferred onto a statistical tool and through the regression and correlation analysis, a result was arrived at. The analysis created many questions and conclusions that can be drawn about the hotel industry. Recommendations were made for future researchers and for a more detailed study.

Key Words: *work-life balance, work stress, shift timings*

Introduction:

Based mainly on my experience at the hotel I interned at in the summer (The Ritz-Carlton, Bangalore), I had taken a keen interest in the lives of the employees in the hotel. I realized that most of the employees work for very long hours and for multiple shifts in a day. The question arose – how do they have time for their personal lives? With this, I decided to study just how much of an impact the work timings at the hotel had on the employees lives outside of the hotel. I was curious to know if the employees were able to balance their work and personal life, or if there were some who were cracking under the intense pressure of the work they had.

The concept of renting out premises to a visitor first started in ancient times, and laid the foundation of what would become the hotels of today. The first hotel that opened was the City Hotel in New York. This hotel was critically acclaimed for being the first hotel opened for accommodation purposes. After this, other hotels followed this trend and opened in cities like Baltimore, Boston and Philadelphia.

The industrial revolution in the 1760s has led to the strong emergence of hotels everywhere, mainly in places like America, Europe and the UK. Through the emergence of new forms of transportation, resorts and lodges were constructed in major cities and they began attracting tourists from far and near. The vacation concept came into being and became available to more and more people in the world. In the 1920s, there was a boom in hotel construction everywhere. From that period on, hotels sprouted in America and in the rest of the world with world class brands such as Marriot, Hilton and Radisson coming in to being.

The Ritz-Carlton Investing Company was formed and established in the United States of America by Mr. Albert Keller, who had franchised and bought the company. In the early 1900s there were many hotels in and around the country known by the name The Ritz-Carlton, in cities such as Boston, in Atlantic City, in

Boca Raton and Pittsburgh. However, in the year 1940, none of the hotels were operational except for The Ritz-Carlton, in Boston. This hotel symbolized the highest form of a luxurious experience, traditional ingenuity of the Yankees and the local sensibilities of Boston. The service standards, the dining facilities and other amenities of this great landmark hotel served and laid down the benchmark for the future of Ritz-Carlton hotels and for other company's worldwide.

In the year 1998, The Ritz-Carlton had gained so much name and success that it had attracted the attention of the hospitality industry, and subsequently, the company was purchased by an organization called Marriott International. Ever since this purchase, The Ritz-Carlton has grown and grown, and continues to provide exceptional service and care to all their guests around the world. In the year 2000, The Ritz-Carlton Residences opened their first building in Washington D.C., which was followed by their first Destination Club property in Aspen Highlands, Colorado, in the year 2001. As dozens of hotels opened around the globe, in the year 2008, the company opened its first Ritz-Carlton Reserve property, which offers a private sanctuary experience in Phulay Bay, Krabi, Thailand. Now, this organization is continually growing and pushing to inspire life's most meaningful journeys in some of the most desirable destinations in the world.

Review of Literature:

Finding an Extra Day a Week - The Positive Influence of Perceived Job Flexibility on Work and Family Life Balance

According to Hill (2001), the results from the survey showed that the perceived amount of job flexibility is very strongly related to an increase in work life balance post control for paid work timings, unpaid domestic labor shifts, sex, marital status and occupational level

Work/Family Border Theory - A New Theory of Work/Family Balance

According to the author, this theory shows us concepts like domain integration and segmentation, as well as concepts like management and border creation, the border crosser participation process, and relationships among border-crossers and other people at home and work affects the work/life balance.

The Relation between Work-Family Balance and Quality of Life

According to Greenhaus (2003), the article says that for those individuals who spend a substantial amount of time collectively in their work and family roles, those people who end up spending a greater amount of time on family as compared to that on work had experienced a greater quality of their lives than even that of balanced individuals, who also did experience a greater quality of life as opposed to those who spent more time on their work.

Sources of Conflict between Work and Family Roles

According to Beutell and Greenhaus (1985), the examination suggests that work and family conflicts exist when: i) the time spent to the various requirements of one role would make it difficult to fulfill the duties of the other; ii) the strain produced from one role would make it extremely hard to satisfy the other; iii) the particular behaviors of one role create a difficulty for the other role.

Work Cultures and Work/Family Balance

According to CampbellClark (2001), the various results of the articles have shown that the flexibility of the work being carried out was associated with a greater amount of work satisfaction and greater amount of wellbeing in the family. The flexibility of the work hours was unrelated to any personal or work related outcomes.

Family-Supportive Work Environments: The Role of Organizational Perceptions

According to D. Allen (2001), the results show us that the FSOP acts as a mediator between the family friendly benefits and the various depending variables of work and family conflicts, effective commitment and the satisfaction of the job. The FSOP also acts as a mediator between the family and work conflicts and support from managers.

Construction and Initial Validation of a Multidimensional Measure of Work–Family Conflict

According to Carlson, Kacmar and Williams, (2000), the studies of these three reports have ascertained the degree of adequacy of content, the multidimensionality, the reliability, the factor structure invariance, and it all built the validity of the given scale.

Impact of Family-Supportive Work Variables on Work-Family Conflict and Strain - A Control Perspective.

According to Thomas and Gangster (2005), the findings of this study suggest that the companies can take various steps to raise the employees' stronghold on family responsibilities and that this control will allow for greater management of work and family conflicts.

Relationships of Gender, Family Responsibility and Flexible Work Hours to Organizational Commitment and Job Satisfaction

According to Scandura and Lankau (1997), the various results of the study have shown that the women who believed their organizations had offered flexibility in terms of work timings have spoken about greater commitment to the organization and satisfaction in terms of their jobs than ladies who did not.

Formal Organizational Initiatives and Informal Workplace Practices - Links to Work-Family Conflict and Job-Related Outcomes

According to Anderson and Coffey (2001), the results have shown that a negative decline in career consequences and the huge lack of support from managers were strongly related to work and various family conflicts.

Research Gap:

The study seeks to find the cause and effect relationship between work-timings and the work-life balance of employees. From all the literature reviews, a conclusion can be drawn that there is no perfect way to go about providing for work life balance activities, be it in the hotel industry or any industry for that matter. Yet, there are certain best practices that can be followed to make sure the employees are taken care of by their organizations and that there is a give and take relationship between the employer and employee.

Objectives of the Study:

- € To understand the relationship between work-timings and work-life balance, if any
- € To come up with solutions to better handle work-life balance in the hotel industry

Hypothesis:

H0 – There is no relationship between work timings and work life balance

H1 – There is a significant and strong relationship between work timings and work life balance

Research Questions:

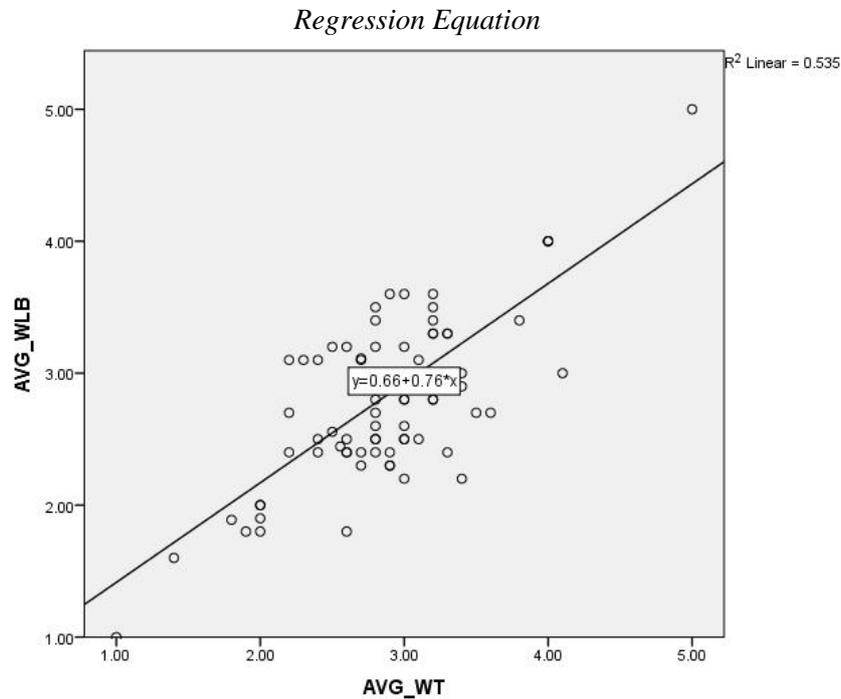
- € What are the factors affecting work-life balance of the employees in the hotel industry?
- € Should organizations invest in activities and programs to help employees manage their work and personal lives?

Data Collection and Analysis:

Collection – through an online questionnaire

Analysis – regression and correlation

Analysis and Results:



The chart shows the regression equation and the regression line. Work-life balance is shown on the y-axis and work timings is shown on the x-axis. The shows how work life balance is affected by work timings and this is shown by the line where $y = 0.66 + 0.76x$.

Anova

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	16.370	1	16.370	112.629	.000 ^b
Residual	14.243	98	.145		
Total	30.613	99			

a. dependent variable: AVG_WLB

b. predictors: (Constant), AVG_WT

The One-Way ANOVA also known as analysis of variance helps in comparison of means of independent groups to determine the statistical evidence that the population means vary or are different. It checks whether the means are significantly related. The variables used in this test are the dependent variable which is work life balance and the independent variable which is work timings. The information needed for this presentation are df, F and significance value. $F(1, 98) = 112.629$, $p < 0.05$ showing that the relation is statistically significant.

Recommendations:

We can see from the above analysis that there is an inverse relationship between the work timings at the hotel and the work life balance of the employees. Therefore, the longer the work hours at the hotel, the harder it will be for employees to balance their work and personal lives. This was measured with the help of regression and correlation analysis. The work hours are affected by factors like the quantity of work of each employee, seniority level in the organization and the shifts in which each employee works. The findings

agreed with most of the literature reviews stating that the longer the work hours, the more difficult it becomes for employees to balance their personal and professional lives.

As per the findings, we see that most of the employees are finding it difficult to manage their personal and professional lives. Therefore, the HR and management need to address this issue and change HR practices to benefit the employees. The organization should invest in activities that help to balance the personal and professional lives of the employees. The management should into the problems that the employees face on a day to day basis and find ways to ease the tensions they have, being in such an intense and monotonous work environment.

The hotel does have its fair share of activities to help break the monotony of work and give the employees some leisure time, and this is encouraged, it should be faithfully carried out and should grow with time, as with more and more activities, the employees would feel like they are being taken care of by their employer and this would slowly but surely, create a sense of loyalty and belongingness in the mind of every employee.

We find quite a few respondents reported that they feel depressed about their work and are unable to finish their work before their shift ends, often resulting in them working overtime, which further causes them to lose out on time with their families and lose out on sleep. The management should look into this matter and find ways to reduce the work an employee has without compromising on overall productivity of the hotel.

The hotel industry is such that employees don't really have a fixed holiday and are required to come into the hotel as and when needed. This means that the employees would be working almost every day of the week, and this can cause a great deal of stress for them. This would also mean that the employees would lose out on time with their families over the weekends and on national holidays. The management should, as far as possible, try and accommodate the needs of the employees and take into consideration the fact that they would need at least one day off in a week. For this purpose, the hotel can bring in processes like comp-off and casual leaves. This would give employees that much needed break from work and would enable them to catch up on their personal lives.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, according to the findings of this paper, the longer the work hours of the hotel, the harder it will be for the employees to balance their work and personal lives. The Ritz-Carlton hotel must take into consideration the various factors that affect an employee's work life and channelize their efforts towards making it easier and stress free. In addition to this, the organization needs to have the right HR practices in place taking into account the needs of every employee so that they can find a way to provide for all their personal needs, and should try their level best to turn the office into a stress free environment – a home away from home.

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