

Work life balance among women employees in banking sector of commercial banks in Kerala

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Abstract- In the present situation, due to many changes occurring in the work place and family systems, a vast majority of women are finding it difficult to achieve a desired Work-Life Balance. In comparison with men, women have more responsibilities at home. Though there are studies on Work-Life Balance, relatively there are fewer studies on work-life balance of women employees. The studies were more curbed to the banking sector. Therefore there is a need to study how women are balancing their work and family life in banking sectors.

The Private Sector and public sector Banks which pool under the services sector are the main drivers of economic growth in India and it forms the largest Component of the company too. This service sector heavily depends on people who are proficient of handling it and as a consequence of this person from the basic asset of this sector. Employees working in this sector are young, view their careers as supreme and have a different mindset relating to social norms of life Balance etc. These employees typically work in intensifiers result-driven culture. They work long hours and often must accommodate their working hours the time zones of major financial hubs. With many banks extending operating hours there is a need for work, life practices as well.

In work life, the life describes a persons or groups standard of living environment, public health, safety and general surroundings while work life encompasses things that affect their wellbeing such as salary and benefits. Significant work life programs for banks include part-time work, telecommuting and flexible benefits. Workplace life is increasingly a significant part of the total benefits package.

Index terms-work life balance, commercial banks, family

Introduction

Now a day's managing work life balance is a challenge for different lives, a good working definition of Work- both employers and employees particularly in service Life Balance is: industry where employees are loaded with work at workplace and at the same time they have to balance their Meaningful daily Achievement and Enjoyment in each personal life. Work life and personal life are two sides of the of the four life quadrants: same coin. Creating and managing a balance between the Family, Friends, Self and personal life is considered to be a work life balance issue. Increasing work pressure, globalization and Work-life balance is a concept which includes proper technological advancement has an impact on balancing prioritizing between "work (career and ambition) and professional life and personal life."Lifestyle“(health, pleasure, leisure, family and spiritual development/ meditation) Work-life balance does not means that the concept that there must be equal balance across all aspects of an of work-family balance as comprising the individual's life. The best work-life balance will be different components. These are: for each person. There is no one size fits all in work-life Time balance, whereby equal amounts of time are balance. Devoted to work and family; All over the world the organizations are demanding more ÿ Involvement balance, whereby an equal level of and more from their employees; parallel to this, these are psychological involvement in work and family focusing more on the motivation and recognitions of the roles exists; and employees to enhance productivity. Present workforce consists of many working fathers and mothers; whose aim is Satisfaction balance, whereby an equal level of to find a balance between work and family roles is a matter satisfaction is derived from work and family roles.

“Work-life Balance is a continuous stylish designing of an employee’s life with achievement and enjoyment along with organizational changes”. Thus, Work-life Balance is an individual responsibility of proper designing of a time frame boundary between one’s work and personal life. Work-life Balance is now a vital driver of career success and job choices for both men and women, and therefore it is an important consideration for organizations. Working hours, varied hours, and rotating shift work makes Work life Balance a lot harder. The notion of Worklife Balance has taken its part from shifting women’s social role in the society. Women at present need to occupy herself in diverse roles at different points of time, i.e., for example mother versus worker. For working women equalizing a demanding career with life outside work is a complex task. The present study makes an effort to compare the Work-life Balance of employees working with Public and Private banking sector organizations.

Over a period of time women accomplished remarkable progress in every walk of life and made a noteworthy mark in the respective fields. Education has not only empowered them but also has given them robust careers. With brain power being the requisite skill in this knowledge era, rather than endurance or physical strength, the women workers seem to flood into every industry on par with men. But there is no significant change in performing the role of home maker. In majority homes, the women still does household work, cooks, takes care of the family members and manages the house. With increase in demands at work place and at home, the work- life balance of women employees is at stake. As working women get married, they have additional responsibilities and when they become mothers, they have to manage the primary care of children and extended family and are thus, under greater pressure to continue on a career path. Working mothers of today fulfil family responsibilities and also try to remain fully involved in their careers coping up with the competing demands of their multiple roles. The caring responsibilities that working mothers lays a heavy stress on them when it is combined with their professional duties.

Women in Banking Sector

Indian women are getting themselves out of the constructive frame works of housewives or teachers. They are placing themselves in diversified areas. During the early nineties we can hardly find an Indian woman at the top of a banking or financial institution. But now, the situation has changed so far. The growth in the banking sector has created new windows of opportunity for women to find employment in the banking sector. Indian women are placed at the top most positions of many major banks and they are proving themselves to be competitive. They are involved in taking major decisions; they are introducing innovative ideas and contributing something towards the development of the economy. The leadership quality, managerial ability and the administrative skills are put together to make things happen any major Indian banks are hiring highly qualified young Indian women to their administrative levels and they are showing remarkable growth over the years. ICICI bank, India’s largest private sector bank is a perfect example of this new trend. Of the overall 40000 employees at ICICI, a quarter is women. The bank has placed women officers at its higher levels. The CEO, Chanda Kochhar herself is a representative of the women work force of the bank. Many other banks have also moved towards the concept of engaging more women at crucial points. Not only in the higher levels that we can see the involvement of women. In the clerical levels also women are more attracted. Secured family life, attractive salary, favorable working conditions and the stability in work are some of the reasons that make this sector more preferable to women. Women, who generally have a clerical working mindset, will be more attentive and keen in doing their work. There is much smaller incidence of being involved in corrupt and fraudulent activities against banks. At the same time, women employees in the banking sector are criticized for their clerical working mindset. They are not much innovative as men. In fact, they are not ambitious as men are and are not ready to undertake heavy risk.

Now the scenario is changing. Women are realizing the need for making things happen. The bangle wearing hands have experienced the power of putting signature on important documents. The decisions that are approved by their fingertips are indirectly making waves in the economy. The women in the country are

moving towards the wider opportunities that the banking sector offers and they are climbing the ladders to reach the peak where fame, recognition and responsibilities are waiting for them.

Factors affecting work life balance

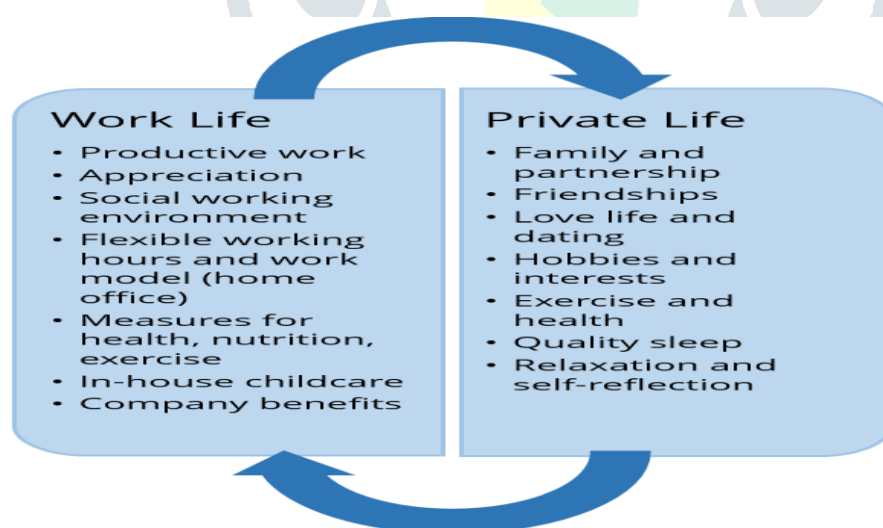
Burden of excessive work: Working women are often confronted with tasks involving children, home, in-laws, parents and their social circle. To add to this they must also take up multiple roles in their personal lives. With the increasing demands on the job, working women have to spend long hours of work and sometimes even carry their work home. Therefore majority of them are burdened with excessive work in both their personal and work spaces. This is a contributing factor to work life imbalance and may lead to conflict.

Interference of work with family life: work interfered with family life. This may be attributed to the fact that mostly work hours are not limited to 7 or 8 hours a day and the private sector employees spend 12-16 hours at work. This leaves them with very little time for family. As more that one half of the women's are employed in the private sector, there may be interference of work with family life due to long hours spent in completing official work.

Fulfil others' expectations: A large majority of women's are under pressure to fulfil other's expectations. As working women are constantly juggling between two full time jobs, taking multiple roles in both domains, there is a lot of work pressure resulting in work life conflict. While, there is a lot of expectation from family to fulfil social roles, the organisation also expects them to perform effectively. Both domains expect the working women to do full justice to all their roles thereby exerting tremendous stress and strain. The above analysis suggests that in trying to fulfil others' expectations, working women are often left with very little space for themselves to pursue their personal interests.

Longer work hours: Working women have to put in longer hours of work as they need to compete with their male counterparts in their work domain so as to remain in the race for advancement and promotions. In the Indian context, women remain the sole caretakers of children and older dependents which will entail longer hours of work at home thus jeopardizing their work life balance. It is observed that working women are left with hardly any time to pursue personal interests.

No time for oneself: Most of the women have no time for themselves and they also had no family support, they had to commute long distances every day to work. This robbed them of precious time that could be constructively spent for their personal growth or spiritual pursuits.



SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The suggestions pertaining to WLB issues of female bank employees are divided in three parts:

1. to the women employees-

- a) Planning the activities and prioritizing the tasks can help to take out some free time which can be utilized for other purposes.
- b) Drop activities that sap your time or energy.
- c) Manage your time
- d) A little relaxation goes a long way
- e) Learn to say no
- f) Use the facilities available for WLB in organizations

2. to the organizations-

Long working hours of employees must be avoided as far as possible.

- a) Should involve Women participation in strategy making.
- b) Part time working during early stage of Child Care must be given.
- c) Childcare Centres at workplaces must be there.

3. To the Government- a) Creating and strengthening an accurate and authentic data-base on women workers. b) Protecting employees from long hours of work. c) Realistic work life culture must be promoted amongst the employees.

CONCLUSION

Women constitute an important section of the workforce. However, the present situation of a large number of well-qualified women who due to various circumstances have been left out of their jobs needs to be addressed. The problems faced are several but; significantly, most often the "break in their careers" arises out of motherhood and family responsibilities." Work-life Balance (WLB) has become an added dimension and a critical factor in the management of changes. Many research studies also indicate that the millennial generation entering today's workforce have a preference for organizations that support Work-life Balance. They are reluctant to sacrifice their personal lives for enormous work demands and are more likely to leave jobs with poor Work-life Balance. They are more willing to do the jobs that are rewarding, have flexible environment and that create a well-built personal life outside work.

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