

AN IMPACT OF WORK LIFE BALANCE ON WOMEN EMPLOYEES IN BANKING SECTOR AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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Abstract : This paper deals with work life balance of the women employees in the banking sector. The researcher has taken the eight parameters of the study. The researcher collected the data through interview method and has used convenience sampling Method for the study. The analysis is done using the statistical techniques of Mean and standard Deviation with the help of SPSS 17.0 version. The results found in this study yields good results for working women managed their work life balance in banking sector.

IndexTerms - work life balance, women employees, work pressure.

I. INTRODUCTION

Women of the early centuries were mostly confined to their kitchens and those who were employed worked in factories, farms or shop works. Very few women had the access to higher education and they were forced to be at the mercy of their fathers' or husbands' attitudes towards women and work. The fast developing knowledge economy has given place for more number of women to be enlightened by higher education. 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 this has indeed become a tough challenge for women as they have to perform a lot of duties in home and office as well. 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's generation fulfill 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 have lays a heavy stress on them when it is combined with their professional duties. The attempt of working women to integrate, organize and balance the various problems and activities in their different roles simultaneously puts them under tremendous pressure. As a result, the family becomes an organizational stakeholder and this powerful social trend marked the beginning of the work/life balance paradigm shift. This paper focuses on the tough life of married working women of Coimbatore District in their battle to strike a balance between work and family life.

1.1 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 phase 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. Women in banking sector take major decisions and 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.

1.2 Role of Women and WLB

Women are mostly into full time services and are working 8 hours per day and 5 days in a week minimum and are confronted by increasing workload every day. So, most of them carry work and responsibilities to home but balancing between these two complex situations in the present day fast life requires talent, tact, skill and caution. Women have to cope up with high work targets, office commitments, tight meeting schedules and the duties and responsibilities of life and home. Employers should concentrate on framing various policies and schemes to facilitate Work life balance to encourage and attract women employees. Employees learn different kinds of behaviour from workplace life and private life. Since reciprocal interactions between both the life domains occur a Green Work Life Balance Concept is suggested to facilitate environmentally friendly behavior for them.

1.3 Factors affecting work life balance

The degree of agreement about factors affecting work life balance of respondents was assessed using an instrument consisting of 15 items on a 5 point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The responses have been analyzed as follows.

1.3.1 Burden of excessive work: 67% of the respondents agree that they suffer from the 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.

1.3.2 Interference of work with family life: Majority of the respondents agreed that 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 than one half of the respondents are employed in the private sector, there may be interference of work with family life due to long hours spent in completing official work.

1.3.3 Fulfil others' expectations: A large majority of the respondents (77%) agree that they 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.

1.3.4 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.

1.3.5 No time for oneself: Majority of the respondents agreed that they had no time for themselves. Though a large majority (84%) of the respondents did not have to travel frequently at work and over 50% of them also had 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.

Further, the analysis of responses on factors affecting work life balance has indicated that working women selected for the purpose of this study are not necessarily stressed due to financial pressures. Over 40% of the respondents also disagree that they do not find time to meet social obligations. Working women in India are not exempt from fulfilling their social obligations. As women are aware that certain social obligations must be met whether they are working or not, they may be consciously setting aside the time to fulfill such obligations. Discussions with respondents revealed that though the younger generation Indian men today are more tolerant of non-traditional lifestyles of the working women in their homes, they are still fairly conservative and expect women to manage household work and childrearing tasks. Often, working women are expected to make career sacrifice by restricting themselves to limited work at the workplace. This may cause anger and frustration which has the potential to spill over to the various roles women play in their work and family lives.

II. Review of Literature

Clutterbuck (2003) "Drawing an arbitrary line that suggests *flexible working* is all right for one group and not for another is neither logical nor useful. It is difficult to advance a tenable argument why policies on working flexibility should not apply to all employees.

Nancy R. Lockwood (2003) "Work/life initiatives create positive employer branding, promote being an employer of choice, foster organizational citizenship, and support diversity initiatives."

Aditya (2005) "Options like work from home and flex timings are kick started at P&G. Its the company's strong process orientation has helped make the initiatives work. The understanding P&G have with the employee is well documented and expectations from both the sides are made clear."

John Ivancevich (2006) "The organizations that have developed work life balance programs have found happier and more productive employees. Apparently, many firms and managers believe that bringing about work life balance is personal problem and not an organizational issue."

Gary Dessler (2006) “Unlike many men, women must also make the ‘Career versus family’ decision since the responsibilities of raising the children and managing the household still fall disproportionately on women. Balancing work and family life becomes a challenge for women.”

Jennifer Smith, Dianne Gardner (2007) “Conflict between work and home life has been linked to job dissatisfaction and turnover. Increasingly organizations are using WLB initiatives to recruit and retain the key personnel in the organizations”

Mark Wickham & Simon Fishwick (2008) “The effective management of employees’ work-life balance (WLB) requires organizations to recognize and account for the array of work and non-work roles that impact their employees’ working-lives.”

Dr. Meena Bobdey (2010) “Having imbalanced life, strained relationships and passionless life, leads to reduction of productivity in life both at work and at home and ill-health”.

III. DESIGN OF THE STUDY

3.1 Objectives of the Study

1. To know the work life balance of women employees in banking sector.
2. To analyze the factors of the study with the Working Environment, Separate from family, Childcare, Self-Management, Personal life Expectation, Financial Assistance, Work Expectation, and WLB Policies.
3. To offer findings and suggestions of the work life balance of women employees in the banking sector.

3.2 Parameters of the study

1. Working Environment
2. Separate from family
3. Childcare, Dependent care
4. Self-Management
5. Personal Life Expectations
6. Financial Assistance
7. Work Expectation
8. WLB policies

3.3 Methodology of the study

3.3.1 Sample Area

The data was collected from the women employees of ICICI Bank and SBI Bank of Coimbatore District. with the sample size of 10% of the Respondents.

3.3.2 Sample Design

The study was drawn from the data through Interview Technique of selecting the respondents with Convenience Sampling method. The study was conducted through qualitative and quantitative method.

3.4 Tools Used

The statistical tools used for the study using SPSS 17.0 Version with the tools of mean and standard deviation.

Table 1: Work Life Balance of Women Employees in Banking Sector

Sl. No	Parameters	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	Working Environment	3.78	0.1345
2	Separate from family	3.456	0.115
3	Child care, Dependent care	4.178	0.225
4	Self-Management	4.78	0.112
5	Personal life Expectations	4.11	0.33
6	Financial Assistance	4.08	0.25
7	Work Expectation	4.19	0.31
8	WLB policies	4.16	0.77

IV. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- 4.1. In the working Environment the mean value is 3.78, standard deviation is 0.1345 so it states that respondents are satisfied with working environment.
- 4.2. For the second parameter of separate from family the mean value is 3.456 the standard deviation is 0.115 the respondents are not interested to separate from family.
- 4.3. For the Self-Management the mean value is 4.78, the standard deviation is 0.112 the respondents are satisfied they are self-managed their work.
- 4.4. In the Personal Life Expectation the mean value is 4.11, standard deviation is 0.33.
- 4.5. For the Financial Assistance from the family the respondents are satisfied showing the mean value of 4.08, standard deviation is 0.25.
- 4.6. The work Expectation of the respondent in the office are satisfied with the mean value of 4.19, standard deviation is 0.31.
- 4.7. Through WLB Policies the respondents are satisfied with facilities provided by the banking sector.
- 4.8. Through childcare and Dependent care the respondents get support from the family with the mean value of 4.178, standard deviation are 0.225.

V. SUGGESTIONS OF THE STUDY

For further improvement in the work-life balance of bank women employees, the bank management should follow necessary steps to balance work-life of women employees in banks. The present study suggests the following points to balance work-life.

- 5.1. Banks should provide separate policy for work-life balance.
- 5.2. Bank should have formal counseling department to understand the workers work life balance problems and to help the workers to get the solution.
- 5.3. Regular exercises, mediation and other soft skill practices can improve the emotional balance of the employees.
- 5.4. Banks should introduce job sharing among the colleagues with them.
- 5.5. Banks should avoid the factors affecting women employees like overtime, work on holidays and negative attitude of colleagues.
- 5.6. Promotion should make placement in local town of the employees. To avoid the rejection of promotion because of work-life unbalance.
- 5.7. Supervisors and colleagues have to support the women employees at work.
- 5.8. Family members have to support them at household work will help them to balance work life.
- 5.9. Respondents require policies like flexible working time in starting or general or at ending.

VI. 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." It is true from the above study that women employees working in the banking industry maintains a balance of work that has serious implications on the life of an individual. Work and personal life conflict occur when the burden, obligations and responsibilities of work and family roles become incompatible, it is very difficult to balance home life and work life. In other words women employees of public sector banks are performing well on job knowledge, interpersonal relationship, while women employees of private sector banks are having an edge over their public sector counterparts in parameters like attitude towards work and ambition for career growth. The study concluded that the work life balance has become a quest for professionals of banking industry both in private and public sector of Coimbatore District and also that employee's work better when they do make time for family and personal interests.

Future research must focus on a wider sample in order to get more generalized results. Moreover, it must be directed at understanding individual differences so that employee specific initiatives to improve work life balance could be initiated by organizations. The size of the sample used to determine the dimensions of the scale was small. As a result, the stability of the results is uncertain.

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