

A STUDY ON WORK LIFE BALANCE OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES IN BANKING SECTOR WITH REFERENCE TO THOOTHUKUDI

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ABSTRACT

In every organization, employees deal with increasing job pressures. In recent years, women have faced even greater difficulties in such circumstances. This study proposed to investigate how work-life balance (WLB) affects the personal lives of working women in the banking sector of Thoothukudi. The information was gathered via a standardized questionnaire from 75 female bank employees in Thoothukudi. The Garrett ranking results showed that a good WLB generally had a beneficial impact on working women's personal lives. While prolonged working hours (PLWH) had a detrimental impact on women's personal lives (PL), income packages (SP) and marital status (MS) had beneficial effects. A successful work-life balance in the banking industry will increase female employees' commitment and productivity, and our study concluded that any positive work-life policies and practices offered by banking companies present additional benefits. This study offers essential intriguing facts and empirical evidence on this little-studied region Thoothukudi. Moreover, our study emphasizes the practical ramifications of WLB for working women and organizations.

Keywords: work-life balance; working women; banking sector; work-life; balanced lifestyle

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The term Work Life Balance is coined in 1956. The issue of work-life balance has become the hot topic in the current day scenario. Work life and personal life are two sides of a coin. Work-Life Balance focuses on two main aspects called achievement and enjoyment. This means that a woman should be able to have job satisfaction (Employment) and at the same time be able to grow up in her career (Achievement). When a working woman is able to achieve and enjoy her professional and personal life, it means she has a positive Work-Life Balance. Unfortunately working women compared to men are often at a higher risk of work life imbalance. Creating and managing a balance between the work 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 on prioritizing work, professional life and personal life.

Indian banking sector has witnessed explosive growth and expansion ever since the economic reforms were launched nearly two decades ago. This has created a new window of

opportunities for women to find employment in the banking sector. In fact, the nationalization of the Indian banking sector 1969 served as the first major step to reduce gender discrimination against women in banking jobs. The women job-seekers find jobs in banks more attractive and more suitable to their nature. Banks also were not only averse to taking them but even welcomed their entry because women have certain innate traits which fit in with the job requirements. Indian women are placed at the top most position of many major banks and they are proving themselves to be competitive. They are involved in taking major decision; they are introducing innovative ideas and contributing everest towards the development of the economy. The leadership quality, managerial ability and the administrative skills are put together to make things happen.

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 has 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.

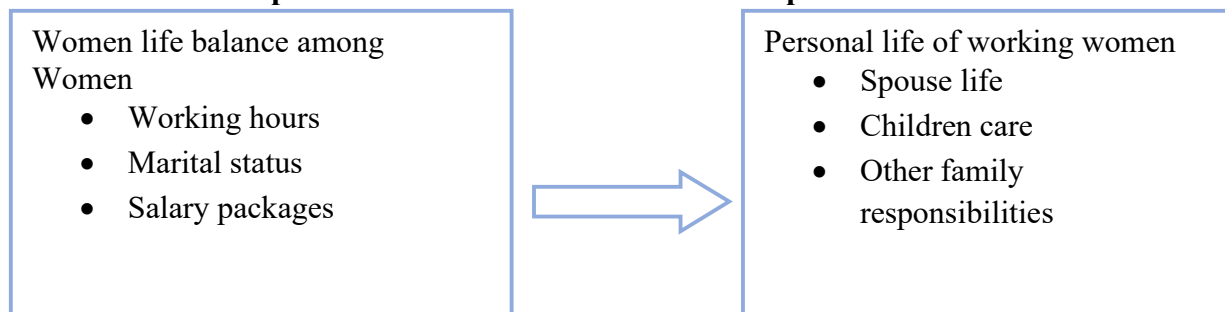
With increase in demand at work place and at home, the work-life balance of women employees is at stake. As working women get married, they have additional responsibilities and when they become mothers, they have to manage the primary care of children and extended family and are thus, under greater pressure to continue on a career path. Working mothers of today fulfill family responsibilities and also try to remain fully involved in their career 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.

The attempt of working women to amalgamate, systematize various problems and activities in their different roles simultaneously puts them under tremendous pressure. It can lead to absenteeism from work, creative stress and lack of focus at work.

1.2 Concept of Work Life Balance

Work life balance can be defined as a balance between professional and person and a relationship between paid work and peoples lives outside of their employment, and the equilibrium between these two can be obtained, based on personal needs, expectations, and aspirations of a person. The work life balance proves to be a necessity for the personal satisfaction. As, now women are also in the corporate world so work life balance has grabbed even more attention.

FIGURE 1.1 Conceptual model of work–life balance and personal life



This is so because for women, its quite difficult and important that they need to balance both their professional and the personal life. The effects of work life balance can be different, and they may be different for both men and women. With the increase in number of professional working hours or the increase in the social activities, work life balance is affected.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Due to industrialization, the pace of economy has been changing its colors. Human resource is also a part of it, affecting the very nature of organization. The various dimensions are practiced by management in maintaining harmonic relation between human resource and organization. It includes various issues at work and outside work. It is common element that the individuals often imbalance state of mind in fulfilling the activities either at work or outside the work environment. Undoubtedly, the work life balance is an essential element to make the worker effective and efficient. Though a number of studies and outcomes have been suggesting various solutions to balance work and life, yet there is gap between these two. The demand for work-life-balance solutions by employees and managers is expanding at an unprecedented rate. As a result, work-life balance is an increasingly hot topic in boardrooms and government halls today. Especially women employees have various roles to play at a time and the better imbalance between work and life can be visualized among women. The place of women employees though increasing in all areas of economy but it has a dominant share in certain activities like education, banking, insurance, IT sector etc. It is mainly because of activities to be performed in those sectors are exactly fit for physical as well as mental features of women. Thus, an attempt is proposed to study the work life balance among women employees in banking sector of Thoothukudi.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study working environment in banks for women employees.
2. To analyze the challenges associating with professional and personal life of the women employees in bank.
3. To find out possible solutions to balance the work and family life of women employees in bank.

4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kumar (2016) mentioned that in the banking sector, workers especially women in the cash have to work in pressure in order to completing account balancing which takes long hours leaving them stressed; the study also pointed out that managing daily household activities, child rearing and looking after the other family members were the prime factors which resulted in stress among female employees in the bank. Hence, these social factors causing stress are likely to have a negative impact on job satisfaction.

Wayne et al. (2017) states that the term 'balance' in 'work-life balance' asserts that it is the effort of individuals to have low conflict level amongst their demands of personal life and professional life. It should also be mentioned that the approach is denounced by a number of scholars by suggesting that adopting these kinds of approach indicates a false work separation,

irrespective whether it is formal or informal, paid or unpaid as those are also a part of life. Hence, it should not be seen separately and it must be balanced along with life.

Lewis and Beauregard (2018) have also noted that the concept of work-life balance will always remain disputed as the balance concept by itself remains complicated. In general, the term balance means that there must be equal contribution required for work participation of both work and non-work activities. So, it can be summarized that for getting a suitable work-life balance there should be a stability amidst the activities related to work and also the non-working tasks being performed by an individual.

Pandey (2019) Objective of the study was to identify the determinants of Work Life Balance of Women bank employees, to study the effects of work life balance on job satisfaction amongst the working in Banking. Both primary and secondary Data was collected. A set of questionnaire was developed to collect the responses from the employees of the banking sector. It was found in the study that majority of the women were not happy with the higher management. 78% amongst the public sector and 93 % of the private sector realized that women employees cannot pursue their career with same velocity after marriage and child break.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study has pre-determined objectives and methodology. An attempt was made to collect comprehensive data on working women through surveys. The sample size for this research is 70 and the sample respondents are women employed in banks of Thoothukudi.

6. SAMPLING DESIGN

The women employees in Thoothukudi, Tamilnadu, constitute universe for the study. Women employees working in banking sector were selected as the sample frame through simple random sampling. The sample size considered for the study is 75 working women. The sample respondents includes only bank employees.

7. SOURCES OF DATA

7.1 PRIMARY DATA

The required data is collected from the sample respondents with the help of a questionnaire designed for the purpose and through personal interviews also. A set of questionnaire was developed to collect the responses from the women employees of the banking sector to perceptualize the opportunities, scope and constraints and grey areas with regard to work life balances. Information on geographic, socio cultural and psychological perspectives of the study area has been collected for preparing this questionnaire. The major dimensions which have been used to measure Work Life Balance (WLB) are namely- gender bias, demographic structures of families of employees, level of hierarchy in the organization, welfare policies of the organization and family and societal commitments of the employees.

7.2 SECONDARY DATA

For requisite details on planning and policies of government and other geographical and socio-cultural perspective of the study area was collected from authentic resources such as books and journals, research papers, Project readings, unpublished reports of government departments and other reliable sources of information broadcast.

8. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The process of data analysis involves processing the gathered information related to the topic by using statistical tools to explore the as per the objectives into a great depth and draw conclusions from it. Once data analysis is completed, data interpretation is done. The data were analyzed by using statistical tools like Inferential Statistics , Percentage analysis and Simple ranking .Data interpretation involves reviewing the analysis done and summarizing the results in descriptive form. It helps to develop informed decisions rather than predictions. The interpreted data is useful for individuals, businesses and researchers. To perform this well-effective research, convenience sampling method was used to collect the data through a questionnaire from the female bank employees in Thoothukudi district. The questionnaire consisted of main parts such as demographic profile including age, educational qualification, occupational and monthly income, specifications of facilities provided to them, their work procedures at bank and at home and the like. The level of satisfaction and discomforts associated with work life balance are also studied.

8.1 Demographic Profile

| Demographic Profile | Category | No.of Respondents | Percentage |
|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Age | 20-30 | 20 | 29 |
| | 30-40 | 40 | 57 |
| | 40-50 | 10 | 14 |
| | Above 50 | 0 | 0 |
| Income | 25,000 to 35,000 | 19 | 27 |
| | 35,000 to 45,000 | 28 | 40 |
| | Above 45,000 | 23 | 33 |
| Marital Status | Married | 47 | 67 |
| | Single | 15 | 21 |
| | Divorced | 03 | 05 |
| | Widowed | 05 | 07 |
| Place of living | Rural | 03 | 04 |
| | Urban | 67 | 96 |

8.2 Family Profile

| Family Profile | Category | No.of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Type of family | Nuclear Family | 45 | 64 |
| | Extended Family | 23 | 33 |
| | Conjugal Family | 02 | 03 |
| | Matrifocal Family | 0 | 0 |
| Dependent members | 1-3 | 40 | 57 |
| | 3-6 | 27 | 39 |
| | Above 6 | 03 | 04 |
| No. of children | 1 | 12 | 17 |
| | 2-3 | 36 | 51 |

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| | | | |
|--|-------------------|----|----|
| | Above 3 | 06 | 09 |
| | None | 16 | 23 |
| Kinder care | Parents | 42 | 60 |
| | Relatives/Friends | 06 | 09 |
| | School Center | 12 | 17 |
| | Husband | 10 | 14 |
| Family time | Always | 25 | 36 |
| | Often | 13 | 19 |
| | Sometimes | 30 | 43 |
| | Never | 02 | 02 |
| Domestic activities | Less than 2 Hours | 16 | 23 |
| | 2-4 Hours | 26 | 37 |
| | 4-6 Hours | 23 | 33 |
| | More than 6 Hours | 05 | 07 |
| Spouse's behaviour towards work | Supportive | 42 | 60 |
| | Non-Supportive | 28 | 40 |
| Attitude of inlaws | Positive | 45 | 64 |
| | Negative | 13 | 19 |
| | Conservative | 12 | 17 |
| Decision maker of children's education | Myself | 36 | 51 |
| | Spouse | 34 | 49 |
| | In laws | 0 | 0 |

8.3 Employment Process

| Employment Process | Category | No.of Respondents | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Selection | Open Competition | 26 | 37 |
| | Talking directly in office | 20 | 29 |
| | Out –Source (Institutions) | 14 | 20 |
| | By Friend | 10 | 14 |
| Reason for joining banking sector | Personal Interest | 36 | 51 |
| | Parents Influence | 13 | 19 |
| | Financial Problem | 21 | 30 |
| Bank employed | Canara Bank | 17 | 24 |
| | Axis Bank | 11 | 16 |
| | SBI Bank | 22 | 31 |
| | HDFC Bank | 0 | 0 |
| | Other Bank | 20 | 29 |

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| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|----|----|
| Designation | Manager | 17 | 24 |
| | Assistant Manager | 13 | 19 |
| | Accountant | 21 | 30 |
| | Cashier | 19 | 27 |
| Duration of training | 1 Day to 6 Days | 20 | 29 |
| | 1 Week to 4 Weeks | 34 | 49 |
| | 1 Month to 11 Months | 16 | 22 |
| | 1 Year & Above | 0 | 0 |
| Working hours per week | Less than 20 Hours | 05 | 07 |
| | 20-30 Hours | 22 | 32 |
| | 30-40 Hours | 29 | 41 |
| | 40+Hours | 14 | 20 |
| Working days per week | 5 Days | 34 | 49 |
| | 6 Days | 33 | 47 |
| | 7 Days | 03 | 04 |
| Procedure to take permission / leave | Pre-Permission | 32 | 46 |
| | Inform through call | 15 | 21 |
| | Written | 23 | 33 |
| Facilities needed in Bank | Proper toilet Facilities | 17 | 24 |
| | Sanitation Facility | 21 | 30 |
| | Child care Facility | 10 | 14 |
| | Breast Feeding Facility | 02 | 03 |
| | Transport Facility | 20 | 29 |
| Work Partition | Work as part of a team | 43 | 61 |
| | Work mostly on my own | 27 | 39 |
| Working Environment | Participative | 35 | 50 |
| | Autonomy | 29 | 41 |
| | Capricious | 04 | 06 |
| | Red Tapism | 02 | 03 |

8.4 BARRIERS FACED BY WOMEN EMPLOYED IN BANKING SECTOR

| Factors | I | II | III | IV | V | VI | VII | VIII | TOTAL SCORE | % OF SCORE | RANK |
|---------|---|----|-----|----|---|----|-----|------|-------------|------------|------|
|---------|---|----|-----|----|---|----|-----|------|-------------|------------|------|

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| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-------|------|
| Family Problem | 10 | 24 | 15 | 28 | 30 | 12 | 140 | 64 | 323 | 13.67 | II |
| Child Care | 13 | 64 | 51 | 36 | 25 | 66 | 21 | 32 | 308 | 13.03 | IV |
| Work Load | 1 | 24 | 9 | 60 | 80 | 12 | 21 | 144 | 351 | 14.85 | I |
| Lack of Training & Facility | 9 | 16 | 60 | 44 | 60 | 30 | 21 | 16 | 256 | 10.83 | VIII |
| Highly experienced coworkers | 4 | 10 | 36 | 40 | 5 | 126 | 14 | 40 | 275 | 11.64 | VI |
| Competitive staff | 7 | 24 | 9 | 32 | 100 | 54 | 35 | 48 | 309 | 13.08 | III |
| Biasness of Boss | 20 | 4 | 24 | 36 | 55 | 48 | 35 | 56 | 278 | 11.76 | V |
| Information of Job | 12 | 28 | 30 | 20 | 65 | 36 | 56 | 16 | 263 | 11.13 | VII |
| Total | | | | | | | | | 2363 | 100 | |

Table 8.4 depicts the ranking given by women employed in banking sector. Accordingly the factor family problem has got II rank , child care IV rank , work load I rank , lack of training & facilities VIII rank , highly experienced co-workers VI rank , competitive staff III rank , biasness of boss V rank , information of job VII rank .

Thus it is evidenced that women bank employees are undergoing work load (I rank) in their work place.

8.5 EFFECTS OF WORK LIFE IMBALANCE

| FACTORS | I | II | III | IV | V | Total Score | % of score | Rank |
|-----------------|----|----|-----|----|-----|-------------|------------|------|
| Family Problem | 7 | 24 | 54 | 80 | 65 | 280 | 26.32 | V |
| Health Issue | 10 | 30 | 18 | 64 | 115 | 237 | 22.27 | IV |
| Mental Pressure | 22 | 34 | 75 | 8 | 20 | 159 | 14.94 | I |
| Work Load | 14 | 10 | 93 | 36 | 55 | 208 | 19.55 | III |
| Time Management | 8 | 38 | 117 | 12 | 5 | 180 | 16.92 | II |
| Total | | | | | | 1064 | 100 | |

Table 8.5 depicts the ranking given by women employees in banking sector. Accordingly the factor family problem has got V rank, health issue IV rank, mental pressure I rank, work load III rank, time management II rank.

Thus it is evidenced that women bank employees are undergoing mental pressure (I rank) in their work place.

9. SUGGESTIONS

The following suggestions could be considered for the better work life balance of women employees in banking sector. These suggestions are derived based on the findings of the study.

1. Although the female respondents agreed with banks WLB policies but they disagreed with overall WLB. Dependent care is a big issue of work life balance. The family members or the spouse can share the responsibility like job sharing, crèche facilities and necessary breaks so that the women employees feel that the organization is helping them and can perform their tasks efficiently in coordinating the family and professional life.
2. Monetary wellbeing affects the work life balance. The banks can make sure that there is enough provisions for the employees for periodical increments of salary and other Monetary benefits based on their participation in work and experience. The Banking sector women employees support the executives and non executives wholeheartedly the achievement of the mission of the organization be facilitated and compensation should have provided with appropriate pay strategies which help to give fair and adequate compensation should be providing on the basis of team performance. Adjust pay scales according to the changes happen in cost of living from time to time should be considered by the management.
3. Extensive Training, Development Programs, Specific Counseling programs on Work Life Balance, Family welfare programs and family counseling programs should be aimed at adopting new technology and skills and they should develop the employees career path. The management should develop leadership skills which would offer women a broader perspective in handling the professional matters and addressing stereotypes successfully. This initiative improves an organisation's ability in retaining its valuable and talented pool of human resources.
4. Advancement opportunities should be provided to the young employees for professional as well as personal growth. Banking organizations should recruit new employees in the existing vacancies in order to reduce the overburden work load of the existing employees.
5. Working environment and logistical facilities are to be constantly upgraded in order to facilitate and increase the efficiency of the employees in the Banking organizations.
6. Proper WLB policies can be designed and implemented with consultation from the employees
7. Employees should be given jobs which motivates them for their work life. As well as jobs should never make them feel overload. Especially case of ladies, overtime for should be avoided.
8. Discrimination against women should be avoided by following equality strategy. Provide training to banking sector women employees which motivated them to work along and equal

with men. Special leave with a lien on service to meet certain contingencies specific to women should be provided.

9. The women employees are given freedom to choose their own work schedules; quality and productivity of the work increases. Because of this opportunity given to the employee will also bring to the responsibility for finishing work within specified time.

10. 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 manifest from the above study that women employees working in the banking industry to maintain a balance of work can have 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 Thoothukudi and also that women 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 women employee specific initiatives to improve work life balance could be initiated by organizations.

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