Work Life Balance among Women in Banks

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Abstract-

The pace of development for the Indian banking industry has been tremendous over the past decade. As the world reels from the global financial meltdown, India’s banking sector has been one of the very few to actually maintain resilience while continuing to provide growth opportunities, a feat unlikely to be matched by other developed markets around the world. But with this tremendous growth the competition has increased many folds, which lead to long, working hours, pressure of high performance and lot of other factors, which eventually lead to imbalance in their work life. Though lot of study has been conducted for work life balance but hardly any study is found among women employees in the banking sector. Mumbai is considered to be the financial hub having a large number of female employees. As women in banking are more in number such study will effectively help in striking a good work life balance. Work-life programs have the potential to significantly improve employee morale, reduce absenteeism, and retain organizational knowledge, particularly during difficult economic times. In today’s global marketplace, as companies aim to reduce costs, it falls to the human resource professional to understand the critical issues of work-life balance and champion work-life programs. This will also help people realize what they want to do, which in turn will lead to stronger organizations based on stronger values, orientations and ethics. This, study is designed to study the work life balance among women in banking sector.

I Introduction

In today’s dynamic environment around the globe, where every human being has to balance clashing tasks and commitment, work life balance has emerged as a major issue in the workplace. But mounting work strain, globalization, and industrial progression have made it a subject with both the genders, all expert working across all position and all business all over the globe. Attaining “work life balance”, is not as easy as it looks. Managing the amalgamation of work-life strain is a serious confront faced by organizations and a subject of rising significance for organization. Wide-ranging changes have been taken place in the configuration of the economic market, the labor market and the labor force, and in the configuration of government and business organizations, service and work. The variables giving rise to these adjustments are many, such as, identifying the changing role of female in the labor market, the changing structure of families, demographic changes, the effects of technological change on paid work, home production and leisure, changes in the structure of work, various labor market and workplace changes, such as increased workforce diversity, and the limited response of firms to workers increased demands for Work-life balance. The changes at the workplace and family are affecting the Work-life balance of the individuals.

The concept of work life balance is becoming more and more relevant in a never-dynamic working environment. The role played by the individual is as important as that of the organization in managing this tumultuous see saw. The study will help in providing effective mechanism by which work life
balance can be brought about in female working in the organizations and thereby enhancing individual and organization effectiveness.

II Review of Literature

Parasuraman and Simmers (2001) uncovered that service category and gender had visible effects on work-family divergence, job contribution and contentment. Further research found male employees facing problem and higher conflicts than women employees. The female employees being more satisfied and committed to family responsibilities than men and to male employees reported to face higher work life conflicts.

Hudson, (2005) For future commercial sustainability, organizations need to ensure they not just encourage but mandate a practical and workable work/life balance policy, benefiting and meeting the needs of both the organization and its employees. And importantly, organizations not providing real opportunity for employee work/life balance are opening themselves up to increasing numbers of dissatisfied and unproductive employees and hence increased attrition rates. Merely creating a work/life policy framework is not enough; fostering an organizational culture that supports the use of available policies is also of great importance.

Tanuja Agarwal (2007) “Work life balance is the expression used to portray those policies and practices at corporate that recognize and aspire to sustain the requirements of employees to accomplish a equilibrium between their personal life roles and responsibilities and work roles and responsibilities. It could only be done if corporate realizes that the performance could be achieved by striking a balance for individual, corporate and society at large.

Lalita Kumari (2012) tried to find out about the opinions held by employees in a public bank. The study suggested that each factor pertaining to work life balance has its own weightage in prediction of satisfaction level at jobs. Also the researcher stated that there is considerable amount of difference in job satisfaction among male and female employees. Further adds that job satisfaction being strong predictor of work life balance and human resource managers could also support the work life initiative and design in order to promote commitment and productivity among employees. This will have direct impact on the recruitment and retention of the employees.

Sandeep (2012) in a research found lack of communication being an important factor in negatively impacting the work life balance policies implementation. The corporate initiatives in improving work life balance should be communicated properly to the employees in order to improve corporate performance.

Amanjot and Ajay Kumar Singh (2013) acknowledged the aspects influencing the work life balance and well being of employees in a corporate. The study concluded that higher family work balance lead to satisfied employee and improves productivity. Corporate participation on such employee is positive. The better work life balance leads to improved sense of wellbeing. The study also indicated that the link between the demographic factors and work life balance could not be defined directly.

Manisha Purohit (2013) compares and distinguishes the corporate viewpoint on work life balance scheme of corporation from different industrial sectors. The statistics claimed that very few corporate have policies and practices with respect to the work life balance aspect dearly concerning employees.

III Objectives of the Study

To determine the effectiveness of various policies and culture conducted in the organization for work life balance.
IV Hypothesis

H01: There is no significant effect of work life balance culture on work life balance.
H02: There is no significant effect of work life balance policies on work life balance.

V Research Methodology

As the population is indefinite, Convenience sampling was adopted for the study. The questionnaire was administered to a non-probability sample of 400 women bank employees of three nationalized banks and three private banks and two scheduled bank in Mumbai. The study is descriptive and empirical in nature. The primary data of 400 respondents were collected from a sample frame of eight banks using convenience sampling. A structured questionnaire was employed to 421 respondents to generate data, out of which 411 responded back and six questionnaires were invalid. The remaining filled-up questionnaires were 405 and the researcher has rounded off to 400. The questionnaire was based on Hudson case study and consists of questions based on organizational policies and cultures and work life balance that includes 10 questions each on organisational policies and culture. The response was to be given in either yes or no. The validity, reliability and analysis of the data in this study were analysed using Hudson Typology model for organizational culture and policies and SPSS. The tools used are briefly described in detail.

a. Hudson Model- How does your Organization stand up?

Figure 4: Two dimensions and four associated typologies of organisations’ approach to work/life balance.

If we consider ‘policy’ and ‘practice’ as separate dimensions, we can illustrate four categories of organisation, each representing different approaches to formal policies and work/life cultures.

The horizontal dimension represents the formal and informal provision of policy options. At the lower end of this continuum there are few formal policy options to choose from and at the higher end a very diverse and generous approach is taken. An organisation placed highly on the scale provides a wide range of formal work/life options such as flexible start and finish times, telecommuting, part-time arrangements, paid parental leave, etc. In addition, it is likely to have workers using informal flexible arrangements of various types. It is important to note that the extent to which an organisation provides flexible work options may or may not be consistent with the supportiveness of take-up in local work contexts. The vertical dimension in this figure represents how supportive the culture is towards flexible work arrangements and activities enhancing work/life balance. It is fully supportive at one end and non-supportive at the other, and refers to the five aspects of culture described above. Thus, an organisational environment can be viewed as highly supportive when it responds positively to employees’ need for flexibility, values productivity over ‘face time’, supports work/life balance for
groups of employees beyond women with dependent children and minimizes negative career consequences associated with non-standard work practices.

**Doing Well**
Using this framework, optimal organisations or ‘Utopians’ are generous in the options available to staff, and the local work environment actively and genuinely supports people utilising these options. These organisations practice what they preach and subsequently reap the greatest benefits from their employees’ productivity and commitment. They are more than likely implementing creative solutions to address work/life balance for their employees. Ernst & Young, for example, specifies that flexible work schedules will not affect anyone’s opportunity for advancement, at the same time designating certain partners as ‘career watchers’ who track individuals’ progress and monitor the caliber of the projects and clients to whom they are assigned. Credit Union Services Corporation Limited (CUSCAL) also offers standard flexible work options including part-time, job-share, tele-working and compressed work weeks, but also encourages HR consultants to act as mediators between employees and supervisors regarding workloads and working hours. SAAB Systems Pty Ltd provides employees with a childcare subsidy for up to three months after a return maternity leave. ‘Utopians’ must always monitor the effect on business needs of the flexibility they provide, but realise their reputation in wider community is one which attracts high-quality job applicants and keeps them for longer.

The ‘Visionaries’ are organisations that have a supportive culture but do not yet provide many formal policies in place for their staff. They may not have considered fully the wide range of formal and informal options that are available, or they may believe there are constraints on the options they can provide. They are, however, very supportive of people wishing to engage with the flexible work arrangements available. To move into the Utopian quadrant, these organisations would need to understand more fully what options are truly feasible. Often there are implicit assumptions about the suitability of some options, which, if explicitly addressed and challenged, may be countered.

**Could Do Better**
On the less supportive end of the culture continuum are the ‘Braggers’ and ‘Laggers’. The Braggers theoretically provide a range of flexible work options, and consequently look good to outsiders, but do not follow through with support at the ‘coalface’. Braggers may also introduce Work/life measures for reasons other than the enhancement of work/life balance. For example, flexibility that is solely employer-driven, and has not been developed through a process of negotiation over the needs of employees and employers, may be more detrimental to work/life balance than no formal options at all. Examples of potentially problematic policies include increases in the spread of hours over which ordinary time is worked (thereby limiting access to penalty rates); a freeing-up of part-time work conditions with decreased minimum hours and an ability to ‘flex-up’ as required (thereby achieving a casual flexibility paid for at ordinary time); decreases in casual and penalty loadings; and changes to start and finish times. There is also an important distinction between policies, which provide time for work, and no work activities. For example, telecommuting and flexible work schedules are arrangements that may, without associated support; result in high-status employees working very long hours.

The Laggers have neither the formal options available, nor the support of the day-to-day work environment. With an ageing workforce and skilled labour shortages in many industries and occupations, these organizations will be increasingly left behind, experiencing high turnover and negative employer branding. Laggers need to work on developing formal policy options that publicly state their commitment to the work/life balance of employees, and develop strategies to support these policies in practice.

**Hudson model of typology followed**
Identify which of the following four-work/life balance categories your organization falls into based on your scores for both lists.
VI Limitations of the study
1. The present study is confined only to women employees of Mumbai city and not covered other states of India. It excludes male employees of banking sector as well as male and female employees of other sectors.
2. The analysis is based completely on the responses given by the respondents in the questionnaire. The authenticity of the responses is the limiting factor.
3. The findings are based on the data collected from three public sector banks and three private sector banks and two scheduled bank hence the results of the research study are applicable only to banking industry cannot be generalized for all other industries.

VII Findings

As per Hudson typology the organizations fall under four different categories on the basis of culture and policies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Lagger</th>
<th>159</th>
<th>39.8</th>
<th>39.8</th>
<th>39.8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visionary</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bragger</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utopian</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is observed-
40% organizations are laggars which means neither formal policies and nor support of work environment.
18.5% organizations are visionary which has limited policies but supportive culture.
15.5% organizations are braggers, which look to outsiders with policies but have unsupportive culture.
26% organizations are utopians, which has both generous policies and culture.

H 01: There is no significant effect of work life balance culture on work life balance.
T-Test
Table 1.1 Group Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work life balance &gt;= 6.00</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>99.4481</td>
<td>11.17967</td>
<td>.82642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work life balance &lt; 6.00</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>96.3733</td>
<td>8.81937</td>
<td>.59870</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.2 Independent Samples Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work life balance equal variances assumed</td>
<td>9.17</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work life balance equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here $t_{cal} = 3.073$ and $t_{tab} = 1.96$ at 5% and so the null hypothesis is rejected. Also it is observed that $p$ value <0.05.

It is concluded that there is a significant effect of work life balance culture on work life balance. From table 1.1 it can further be inferred that women having higher mean value of work life culture are having higher value of work life balance is concerned.

**H 02:** There is no significant effect of work life balance policies on work life balance.

T-Test
Here $t_{calc} = 3.249$ and $t_{tab} = 1.96$ at 5% and so the null hypothesis is rejected. Also it is observed that p value $< 0.05$.

It is concluded that there is a significant effect of work life balance policies on work life balance. From table 2.1 it can further be inferred that women having higher mean value of work life policies are having higher value of work life balance is concerned.

**VIII Suggestions**

- All the banks should establish some set up for dealing with the issues of work life balance. A committee can look after the matters related to work life balance. On regular basis this committee can meet the employees and help them to maintain work life balance. This will definitely help the employees to increase the productivity and morale of the employees. This committee can focus on the main key dimensions of work life balance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work life balance</th>
<th>$\geq$ 6.00</th>
<th>16</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>99.7301</th>
<th>11.47464</th>
<th>.89876</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 6.00</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>96.4388</td>
<td>8.76007</td>
<td>.56903</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2.2 Independent Samples Test**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work life balance</th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>12.97</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Women employee should prepare a list of work activities and personal life activities priorities them and perform accordingly. The incidents, which are difficult, could be made as a record in diary, the ideas and suggestions to overcome the situation could be implemented in future. They can schedule their time by estimating time needed for work activities and life activities. These activities can be scheduled for normal working day and holidays. On normal working days, both activities should be given equal importance. On holidays, more or full time may be allotted for life activities and few or less hours may be spent for work activity, if necessary. This estimation must be filled in a monthly calendar and followed. Any discrepancies faced during the actual implementation will be accumulated and at the end of the month those discrepancies will be considered as exceptional areas to give more time for these activities for the next time.

As the organizational policies and culture plays a strong role in work life balance, banks should list out the work life balance policies and make them to have clarity in the policies. They can conduct training programs to understand them properly by creating healthy and communicative work environments so that their satisfaction towards work will get increased.

IX Conclusion

The policies framed and the culture, both have a significant effect on the work life balance. As per the policies are concerned it affects only the work dimension and the impact on personal life dimension of work life balance, while culture affects work, impact on work, impact on home and self dimensions of work life balance. The work place support along with sound policies plays significant role in getting work life balance among women in the banking sector.

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