
**WORK LIFE BALANCE THROUGH FLEXI WORK
ARRANGEMENTS: EMPIRICAL STUDY ON BANK
EMPLOYEES**

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ABSTRACT

Essentially, work-life balance is about helping employees better managed their work and non-work time. The debate on work-life balance must include employers – encouraging them to understand and implement more effective work-life balance strategies. The work-life balance agenda is more inclusive than the previous ‘family-friendly’ agenda which focused primarily on the needs of working mothers. However, many work-life balance policies still focus on the care of young children and fail to address the needs of careers of older children and adults and also those without care responsibilities. Caring and other domestic responsibilities remains one of the key barriers to economic activity for women. This leads to inequality between women and men both at home and at work. There is a huge disparity between statutory paternity and maternity rights. This study was carried out in the Banking sector, more specifically in Lakshmi Vilas Bank in Tamilnadu. The target group was directly engaged with the Administrative work. It identifies the determinant factors of Work life balance and its

impact relationship with Flexi work arrangements. In this article, we review six conceptualizations of work-life balance found in the literature: Multiple roles, Equity across multiple roles, Satisfaction between multiple roles, and Fulfillment of role salience between multiple roles, relationship between conflict and facilitation; and Perceived control between multiple roles. This study have suggested that Flexi work arrangement (FWA) have to be introduced which will relax the mind of the employees to work freely, this will facilitate to achieve the target related work schedule. To conclude, Flexi work arrangement helps employees to balance their work and personal lives better, thereby increasing their motivation and productivity.

INTRODUCTION

The common flexi-work arrangements include: flexi-time, permanent part-time work, job-sharing, compressed work week, teleworking, and annualized hours. The successful implementation of flexi-work arrangements contributes to a conducive and supportive work environment. This enables companies to attract, motivate and retain valued employees who are dedicated and committed to playing an important role in helping their organizations achieve business success. Flexi-time usually refers to a scheduling programme for full-time employees which allow them to choose their starting and finishing times daily, provided they complete a stipulated number of hours. In most instances, all employees may be required to be present during certain “core hours”, which is usually fixed at a period between the latest permissible starting time and earliest permissible finishing time. People are successful when they have the flexibility to meet the demands of their professional lives and accomplish personal goals outside their offices the global economy and corporate life are structured to be competitive, and competition always leads to work pressures. But, equally important, work is life. Work life and personal life are the two sides of the same coin. According to various work life balance surveys, more than 60% of the respondent professionals surveyed said that are not able to find a balance between their personal and professional lives. They have to make tough choices even when their work and personal life is nowhere close to equilibrium. Work life and personal life are inter-connected and interdependent. Spending more time in office, dealing with clients and the pressures of job can interfere

and affect the personal life, sometimes making it impossible to even complete the household chores. On the other hand, personal life can also be demanding if you have a kid or aging parents, financial problems or even problems in the life of a dear relative. It can lead to absenteeism from work, creating stress and lack of concentration at work. Work-personal life conflict occurs when the burden, obligations and responsibilities of work and family roles become incompatible. Obligation of one can force an individual to neglect the other.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Workplace culture is the organizational environment within which working roles are played out and workplace norms are created. The ethos of the organization can determine whether or not work-life balance and maternity/childcare policies are adopted by the organization (Lew .T 2008), According to O’Keeffe, Workplace culture can be either a supportive or inhibitive environment for implementing work-life balance policies, family friendly working arrangements, and provision and acceptance of maternity and childcare commitments. It is therefore an important factor for those facing unplanned reproductive choices, including those who interpret their pregnancy as a crisis, (Erica D. Chick, 2004), A study on workplace cultures demonstrates the complexities of this theme. Studies address attitudinal responses to work policies and practices, from the perspective of employers and employees, as well differences in the public and private sector. There are a number of attitudinal issues within this theme, including perspectives of managers and employees to the commitment and status of flexible workers, the types of flexibility supported in the organization, and who may access them (David Clutter buck, 2003), The workplace culture also addresses pervasive trends in employment practices such as 'presenteeism' and management styles and practices that can support or constrain the implementation and accessing of work-life balance policies and examination of workers involvement in community music organizations (Galinsky and Johnson, 1998 & White 2003). Workplace cultures are shaped by both formal structural policies regulating work life, as well as more informal policies; thus it is important to examine the attitudes and experiences of all levels of staff in order to elucidate trends in contemporary workplace cultures. There is evidence also of what is known as 'the long-

hours culture', a reference to the fact that patterns of working in Ireland (and, indeed, in most of the Western economies) are premised on the traditional model of a male career and lifestyle, stressing long hours, fixed schedules, overtime etc. Long-hours cultures do not incorporate current patterns of working where childcare responsibilities and/or work-life balance needs must be taken into account (Lew .T, 2008). Such norms of working are difficult to challenge, as they have been repeated to such an extent that they are now seen as the 'normal' and expected ways of working. It is evident from the literature that what is needed is a radical change in the structures, ethos and practices of current workplace cultures in order to achieve more work-life balance, and to enhance the economy's adaptability and modernity Fiona Jones has contributed to *Work- Life Balance: A Psychological Perspective* as an editor. "Fiona Jones" is Principal Lecturer in the Department of Psychology, University of Hertfordshire. She is chartered Health Psychologist and conducts research and consultancy as well as publishing extensively on the topic of stress. "Work life balance isn't only about families and childcare. Nor is it about working less. The work-life balance campaign promotes certain types of atypical working to help employees combine care responsibilities with paid employment and employers to meet operational needs. Low state support and the continued gendered division of child care means UK mothers often work part-time to minimize child care costs (Gerkovich. P, 2009).Of the 25% of Scotland's employees who work part-time, 81% are women (Scottish Executive, 2001). The researchers went further in finding out the effect of work life Balance for Generation Y. Results showed that the levels of work life Balance were far from significant for Generation Y. This would confirm research by (Trunk, 2007) that the line between work and home doesn't really exist. Generation Y just wants to spend time in meaningful and useful ways, no matter what they are.

METHODOLOGY

The major objectives of this study is identify the importance of flexi work arrangements for balancing of work and family life of the bank employees and to find out most appropriate factor of Work life Balance on employee's performance and job satisfaction. This study is applicable to bank employees, especially who are in administrative level. Because, banking profession is tedious one needed more patient and

peace of mind. It was more suitable to do this research on balancing of work and family life in banking sector. This study was confined to the permanent employees of Banking sector, especially the employees of Lakshmi Vilas Bank in Tamilnadu. The primary data and secondary data were collected and analyzed the same by using percentage analysis, chi-square and weighted average and other tools for interpretation. A questionnaire is prepared for the purpose of collecting primary data. The questionnaire was of multiple choice types and Likert scale was used as the rating scale in the questions and survey conducted among the employees. The secondary data have been collected from reference books, leaflets and brochures related to this industry.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher has approached both male and female bank employees, who are in administrative work. In which, majority of them are married female bank employees (75%). They are having the primary responsibilities of Child and Elder care at their home. Majority (89%) of the women employees are preferred flexi time and compressed work week in the factors of flexi work arrangements. Nearly 65% of the respondents feel depressed due to work and work culture. It is found that due to the above said depression, the respondents got hypertension and frequent headaches during the working hours, which continues even at home. It is found that the factors severely affecting work life balance are Deadlines and schedules, Nature of work and Hours needed for completion of work, with mean scores of 2.88, 2.86 and 2.65 respectively(Table:1). Another finding clearly state that WLB enables people to work better (mean score: 3.4) and WLB entirely employers, partly individuals responsibility. So, when they able to balance work life surely it will induce them to do better work.

Table: 1 Factors making Work Life Balance Harder

Attributes	Lot Harder	A Little Harder	No Difference	Doesn't apply to my job	Total Score	Weighted Score
Deadlines and schedules	76	138	42	4	260	2.88
Nature of work you do	60	144	54	0	258	2.86
No. of hours you need to work for completion	80	81	70	8	239	2.65
Expectations/attitude of supervisor or manager	56	102	74	5	237	2.63
How easy/difficult it is to take leave	64	78	80	8	230	2.55
Notice you get for extended working situation	80	81	54	13	228	2.53
Having to take home additional work	28	30	46	50	154	1.71
Amount of travel time required	56	63	42	12	173	1.92
How many meeting/ training are scheduled	40	30	74	33	177	1.96
Whether flexibility in timings would help more satisfaction.	56	66	80	14	216	2.4

Source: Primary data.

Correlation co-efficient test identifying a correlation between the Flexi work arrangement and Balancing of work and family life and their legitimate benefits is always clear. This surveys correlates with relative three broad Work life balance measures and Flexi work arrangements with their corresponding benefits. The correlation value in this study is +0.6875 and research shows that “Work life balance” and “Flexi work arrangements” are proved to be significantly correlated to each other. In this study, Chi-square tests were calculated with two hypotheses; one is to find the significant relationship between Employee performance and Work life balance. The calculated

value (11.95) is greater than the table value (5.99). Therefore, there is existing well relationship between Employee performance and Work life balance (Table: 2). Likewise another test calculated with the hypothesis of the significant relationship between Employees’ performance and Flexi work arrangements. Here also the calculated value (6.98) is greater than the tabulated value (3.84), therefore it is significant (Table: 3). It is concluded that through these two chi-square tests, the Work life balance and flexi work arrangements are one among the same induces employees’ performance and both are correlated.

Table: 2 Relationship between Employee performance and Flexi work arrangements

Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	$(O_i - E_i)$	$(O_i - E_i)^2$	$(O_i - E_i)^2 / E_i$
48	40.47	7.53	56.7	1.4
8	11.36	-3.36	11.28	0.99
15	12.07	2.93	8.58	0.71
9	10.83	-1.83	3.3	0.3
8	3.04	4.96	24.6	8.09
2	3.23	-1.23	1.51	0.46
			Total	11.95

(Degrees Of Freedom: $V = (r-1) (c-1) = (3-1) (2-1) = 2$, Table Value = 5.99, with Level Of Significance: 5%)

Table: 3 Relationship between Employee performance and Flexi work arrangements

Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	$(O_i - E_i)$	$(O_i - E_i)^2$	$(O_i - E_i)^2 / E_i$
37	29.93	7.07	49.98	1.66
36	35.77	0.23	0.052	1.45
4	6.97	-2.97	8.82	1.26
13	8.33	4.67	21.8	2.61
			Total	6.98

(Degrees Of Freedom: $V = (r-1) (c-1) = (2-1) (2-1) = 1$., Table Value = 3.84, with Level Of Significance: 5%).

SUGGESTIONS

The concept of Flexi work arrangements is closely related to the concept of the Balancing of work and family life. Both concern the satisfaction of material, biological, psychological, social, and cultural needs and demands of an individual, which are necessary for his satisfaction with work life. A series of case studies of a range of organizations that have implemented work-life balance initiatives to discover their positive and negative experiences. This would build on work previously undertaken through a case study model. It could perhaps follow organizations that participated in earlier studies in order to provide a longitudinal perspective on work-life balance. A review of guidelines and recommendations for enterprise in relation to implementing work-life balance policies through flexi work arrangement are mandatory. The different experiences of work-life balance policies in banks that have either a formal or informal policy on the provision of flexible working arrangements.

CONCLUSION

The result of the study reveals that the age, marital status and having impact over the Work life balance. As the research work depicted with 75 % of female bank employees, the positive result arouse in balancing the work life. But since some of the respondents opinioned that sufficient time is needed to spend with their family. The recent analysis made by banking sector, this study also have to suggested that Flexi Work arrangement (FWA) have to be introduced which will relax the mind of the employees to work freely. Even this will facilitate to achieve the target related work schedule if this FWA is adopted. Many employees opinioned that the organizational successes can be achieved if the employees are really balance their work and family life. Employees are better able to meet their personal responsibilities, for example, those with young children who need to be taken to/from school, or employees who needs to leave early to attend evening classes. This Flexi work arrangement helps employees to balance their work and personal lives better, thereby increasing their motivation and productivity.

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