
Study of Women Executives on Public Sector Banks in Thane

District: Problems & Measures

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ABSTRACT:

India is a country with diverse traditions and customs. Unfortunately, since ages, the role of women was confined to household chores and limited to domestic issues. In the male-dominated Indian society, women suffered to extreme levels of exploitation. Some factors – like death of bread winner, sudden fall in family income or inadequate family income – forced women to seek employment in informal sector (small trader, artisan or field laborer on a family farm) but yet, that did not result in women empowerment. The participation of women as workers and women's education was negligible. Indian women is distinct from their western counter parts in that they do not shed their conventional roles as mothers and house wives inspire of their professional responsibilities. They are skilled at blending professional excellence and traditional love for home harmoniously. In a highly competitive global economy, where talent is at a premium, employee diversity offers a proven route to increased innovation and organizational performance. While employers recognize that gender should be no barrier to career progression, women continue to be underrepresented at senior levels across Indian Banks.

The study is purely exploratory in nature and seeks to identify the factors preventing women employees from aspiring for higher post and problems faced by women executives in public sector banks related to work performance.

KEYWORDS: *Career Advancement, Problems faced by women executives, Male dominated society, Women in Banking Industry, Working Women.*

INTRODUCTION :

Indian Banking system has not only made rapid strides in network expansion but it itself has undergone a complete and never-dreamt of transformation in its very avowed objectives,

approaches, and scale of operations. Technology has indeed played a significant role in this sea-change. Nationalization of banks in two spells in 1969 and 1980 was a watershed in the annals of banking sector in India. Banks were required to saunter along a new path untrodden so long. Instead of remaining as mere mobilisers of deposits and purveyors of credit, they began to be used as catalysts for bringing about socio- economic transformation of our country- a goal considered hitherto to be outside the banking arena.

Class banking yielded place to mass banking. The spectacular branch expansion, increased credit flow to the hitherto neglected sectors, purpose - oriented lending in place of security-oriented lending, promotion of growth of small and medium industries and so on are the major off-shoots of bank nationalization which, in turn, called for a thorough change in the attitude and functioning of bank executives.

With the stupendous change in the outlook of the Indian society, girls were allowed to pursue education, resulting in turnout of not merely graduates and post graduates, but even technical graduates. This resulted in women seeking jobs to supplement their family income and to enjoy more comforts of life. In short, increasing women literacy, growing economic pressure, and the burning desire to gain economic and social independence are pushing womenfolk to take up gainful career. On the overall percentage of women corporate employees, India at 23% comes out not only behind the U.S. at 52%, but also behind Brazil at 35%. At the senior management level, India shows only 9% women to Brazil's 16% and the U.S.A.'s 28%. Women are moving into technical, finance, marketing defense and other job functions. Many middle class families have realized the potential of their females and preparing them to compete in the market so that they can contribute significantly to the family income. In the past ten years, there has been a upsurge of corporate interest in diversity and gender-inclusion initiatives. Corporations want to take advantage of new female talent who are ready to take challenging work. From last three decades, the change in the socio cultural environment has opened the gateway for women to enter and lead in the managerial roles in the corporate India.

The phenomenal growth of banks has created massive employment opportunities for the educated unemployed youths of our nation. The women job-seekers find jobs in banks more attractive and more suitable to their nature. Banks welcomed their entry because women have certain innate traits which fit in with the job requirements. Thus the humongous increase in

job opportunities in banks and the abundant availability of qualified women who get selected in job tests paved the way for the large number of women occupying positions in all cadres today in not only public sector and private sector banks but even in new generation banks.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY :

- To study the Problems Hindering the Performance of Women Executives Working in Public Sector Commercial Banks in Thane district.
- To study the factors preventing women executives from aspiring for higher post.
- To suggest measures to solve their problems

NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY :

The study is purely exploratory in nature and seeks to identify the factors preventing women employees from aspiring for higher post and problems faced by women executives in public sector commercial banks related to work performance, studying the impact of family responsibility on career decisions of women employees in banking industry. Further this aims also at finding out the organizational support for women employees to achieve higher ups. The present study intends to survey only women executives who confront challenging situations which demand skills of a higher order for meeting them successfully.

STUDY AREA:

Selected Banks of Thane district is the study area. Thane district is multi-linguistic, multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural. This diversity makes it more attractive for this research. Besides, this, it has branches of all leading commercial banks.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

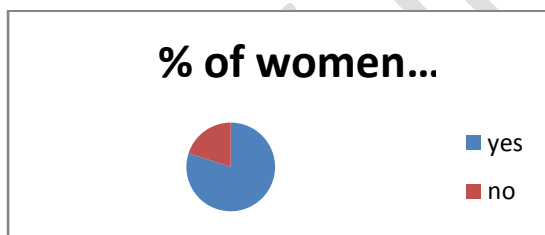
Wentling, R.M. (2003) has shown that the twin roles of women cause tension and conflict due to her social structure which is still more dominant. Change in attitudes of men and women according to the situation can help to overcome their problem. *Sophia J. Ali (2011)* investigated and found that most of the women employees were dissatisfied with career development programmes and women were discriminated in career development opportunities in Kapsabet Municipality, Kenya. The study recommended that organizations should strive to ensure that career development programmes were set to enhance career development amongst women employees.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Data were collected using the personal contact approach. Questionnaires were distributed to a sample of 104 women executives located selected public sector banks of Thane district. Women employees in executives' cadre working in public sector commercial banks were surveyed by administering them a structured questionnaire. The data so collected was analyzed using simple statistical tools such as percentages and the data s analysis is shown using pie diagram. Random Sampling method is used for collection of data. The statements/items for the questionnaire were formed after consulting relevant literature and some relevant research conducted in the area. Besides attitudes scale, the survey questionnaire also included a section to capture the general profile of respondents. They were asked about their demographic background including age, education level, marital status, job level, year of experience etc. to name a few.

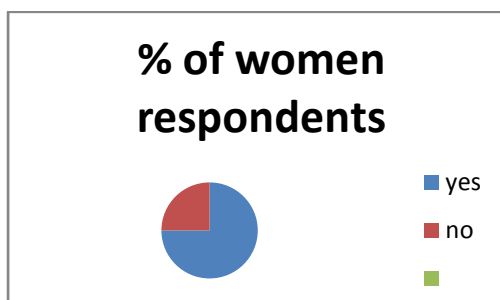
FINDINGS & ANALYSIS:

1. Do you believe any barriers exist to women progressing into senior positions within banking?



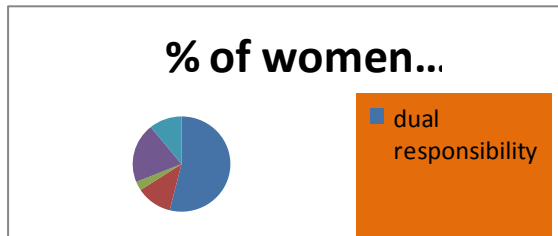
Women, especially those in senior levels, believe barriers preventing women progressing into senior management exist.

2. Do you believe the notion of a 'glass ceiling' exists within your organization?

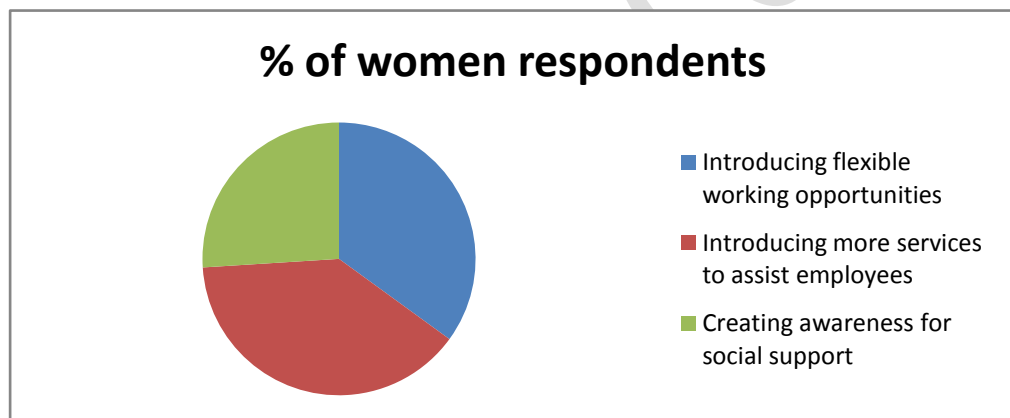


75% of the women employees strongly believed that glass-ceiling exist.

3. What are the barriers identified in progression for women



4. What action is needed in the banking sector to allow women to move into senior positions?



35% of the female employees said introducing flexible working hours and such other flexible measures will help.

39% of the female employees suggested that banks should provide support services such as crèches or day care facilities for children etc.

26% women said that there is a strong need for creating awareness that social support to women is required if we want to utilize the best of their potential.

CONCLUSION:

Stress resulting from dual responsibility of women has been identified as a prime factor of problems to women executives in public sector commercial banks. The second factor namely

exploitation due to submissive nature of women executives has been discriminated as second important factor. The third factor dealing with ignorant customers confronting women executives. The fourth factor was the rigid policies of the banks and lack of flexible working hours and other such policies supporting women employees. All the four factors are highly responsible for the problems experienced by the women executive in public sector commercial banks. All the four major contributory variables are titled as staff management stressors.

Besides this, fear of transfer which disturbs family life and domestic peace followed by the factor Combining domestic work and office work leaves no time for making us fit for higher posts occupying second rank. Lacks of support from family and at work add to the woes. Since the environment in public sector banks is more or less similar, these factors may prove to be great hindrance to women executives working in public sector commercial banks.

SUGGESTIONS:

- **Attract more female graduates**

Another major part of the solution is recruiting more women into banking roles with a clear route of progression. Graduate training schemes, for example, are an excellent way of targeting and recruiting a new generation of talented, ambitious and confident women into the industry.

- **Transparent performance management**

For banks to operate successfully in a talent-driven economy, they need to develop more effective systems of performance management. Both women and men in banking are concerned that the sector is not a meritocracy, so creating and implementing clear and output-focused performance management processes sends a message that banking encourages promotion on merit.

The banking industry, at its more senior positions at least, is still dominated by men. This means the number of potential female role models at senior level is comparatively small. Perceptions are central to tackling the glass ceiling. If women already feel that it is more difficult to make it to the top than it is for men, then a lack of female role models is only likely to reinforce that belief.

Banking employers have an opportunity to raise the voice and visibility of successful female leaders across their organizations. They can actively seek out successful women in senior positions and help build the profile and reputation of those women internally and externally through a targeted communications and PR strategy.

- **Support and encourage flexible working**

Survey reflected a desire for access to flexible and remote working, indicating there is a larger cultural problem in banking around working practices. The need to balance work and family commitments is often identified as a barrier to career progression for women. The research findings suggest this is equally true for women working in banking. As well as the effective implementation of flexible working practices to address these issues, banking also needs to address the management challenge posed by maternity leave and employees returning to work after career breaks. Managers should be encouraged to deal with maternity leave more competently, including ‘keep in touch’ days, access to emails if requested, and a positively handled return to work process. Banks have a real opportunity to improve gender balance in their senior ranks by taking action in the areas highlighted by the research.

- **Providing coaches or mentors for women**

One of the other innovative measures which can be undertaken to promote women employees in the banking sector is to provide them role models who can act as their mentors and direct them to achieve their much coveted positions.

- **Introducing training and development programmes specifically aimed at women**

Introducing training programmes targeted at grooming women to deal with their problems of work overload, dual responsibility and so on will also help the women employees to overcome such situations in future.

- **Using quotas to balance the proportions of men and women in senior roles**

One of the other ways, though, it may seem to be subjective is to use quotas to ensure that equal number of women get their due employments. However care should be taken to ensure the quality and potential of the female workforce at the time of selection.

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