



A STUDY ON WORK LIFE BALANCE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ROLE OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF INDIA

Dr. Vijaya Jacqueline, Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Nirmala Memorial Foundation College of Commerce and Science
Nikshit Suresh Nallapagari, Employee at Infosys

Abstract:

Growth helps build a nation. Both men and women form a part in it. Gone are the days when women were considered no match for all powerful men in this world. The male dominated world was always reluctant to even acknowledge the fact that women were as good as men on parameters of hard work, intelligence quotient (IQ) and leadership traits. However, with a changing socio-cultural environment and an increase in educational opportunities, women have started recognising their inherent talents and business skills. In India, entrepreneurship has traditionally been considered a male prerogative. Many women entered the world of business and they have become successful entrepreneurs in various business activities. These women entrepreneurs are assertive, persuasive and willing to take risks. Their relentless zeal, incessant quench for success and willingness to walk the extra mile has broken all myths about their inborn limitation. However, in the existing domestic and societal setup where, emphasis is more given to family and relationships, entrepreneurial women are overburdened and find it increasingly difficult to balance their work and life roles. Thus, the major focus of this empirical research is to develop and validate an appropriate tool to illustrate the work-life balance (WLB) issues and to explore the major factors faced by women entrepreneurs in Mumbai city. The present research provides recommendations to practitioners and academicians and women entrepreneurs themselves to deal with the major WLB issues faced by Indian women entrepreneurs. Hence this study elucidates the relevance of women and their contribution in nation building through entrepreneurial activities. This paper validates that the path is difficult for women to make a mark in the business world but this walk is essential for them to be a part of inclusive growth, where both men and women make an equal contribution.

Keywords: Women Entrepreneurs, Work-Life Balance, Inclusive Growth, Social Support Network.

INTRODUCTION:

The past decades of Indian economy makes it evident that the structure of ownership in the industrial sector, in agriculture, in trade and commerce sectors has changed drastically. Today, India is witnessing the emergence of a large number of entrepreneurs, but there is definitely potential for many more.

An entrepreneur can be defined as one who initiates and establishes an economic activity or enterprise. Entrepreneurship thus refers to the general trend of setting up new enterprises in a society. In India, entrepreneurship is considered as one of the best means of triggering economic and social development. The impact of entrepreneurs as the engine for the economic growth is well recognized globally. As the early history of entrepreneurship in India is intimately associated with the country's culture, customs and traditions, entrepreneurship often evolved along with societal etiquette.

The existing scenario is that women form an important part of the labour force and the economic role played by them cannot be isolated from the framework of development. The working environment of corporate world is however not very conducive for achievement-oriented women, so they move towards the entrepreneurship field. A woman entrepreneur is an enterprising individual having a clear vision to identify market opportunities, immense potential to take risk, commercial acumen, and achievement motivation to run business (Vinze, 1987). The contemporary women entrepreneurs have emerged as strong economic contributors in global prosperity and growth (Davis, 2012). Therefore, involvement of women is required in an increased manner for overall socio-economic and cultural development of the country. In past times only the males are considered capable of being an entrepreneur but as the time and trend is changing the women is also coming forward in entrepreneurship as like other sector with the male. Women Entrepreneurs may be defined as the women or a group of women who initiate, organize and operate a business enterprise. The Government of India has defined women entrepreneurs as an enterprise owned and controlled by women having a minimum financial interest of 51 per cent of the capital and giving at least 51 per cent of the employment generated in the enterprise to women. The transformation of the Indian society, in terms of increased educational status of women and varied aspirations for better living, necessitated a change in the life style of Indian women. Hence, women participation in entrepreneurial activities is less than the requirement of the fast growth of India.

STATUS OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA

- In India, growing industrialization and urbanization and revolutionary developments in the information technology (IT) sector have played key roles in changing the career patterns and professional roles of women.
- The government has also emphasised the need for special entrepreneurial training programmes for women to enable them to start their own ventures.
- Some of the agencies involved in this effort are the Federation of Ladies Organisation (FLO), the Technology Development Board (TDB) of Department of Science and Technology, the Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDI) and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).
- To encourage women entrepreneurship in India, selected financial institutions have also established special cells to assist female entrepreneurs.

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE (WLB) ISSUES:

Work-life balance means maintaining balance between work and life style of an individual. In UK, the term “work-life balance” was first coined in the late 1970s which illustrated the balance between an individual’s work and personal life. Work and family are two essential aspects for both men and women. By earning money for betterment of family, women are also playing the role of bread winner, as a result of which, it disturbs the balance of their family. The involvement of women in entrepreneurial activities, maintained the balance between work and family. This paper reviews extant literature on women entrepreneurship to exhibit how women have contributed to their entrepreneurial success by maintaining work-life balance.

In the past, women are taken only as house managers but with the change of time, change in thinking and spread of education the role of women in society also changed. In recent years, women have been taking interest in income generating activities, self-employment and entrepreneurship. In addition to their challenging entrepreneurial work, many of these women also perform several roles in their families. Women's family obligations also bar them from becoming successful entrepreneurs in both developed and developing nations. In Indian context, having primary responsibility for children, home and older dependent family members, few women can devote all their time and energies to their business. Women also face the conflict of performing of home role as they are not available to spend enough time with their families. The married woman entrepreneurs have a major challenge to make a perfect balance between domestic activities and business activities. The woman

entrepreneur cannot succeed without the support and approval of spouse. Their success in this regard also depends upon supporting husband and family. Thus, occupational backgrounds of families and education level of husbands have a great influence on the growth of married women entrepreneurship. Women also must take care of their own health and other personal activities, which are often neglected because of role overload as well as time limitations. All of these situations lead to the absence of WLB and manifestation of many WLB issues. They spend long hours in business and as a result, they find it difficult to meet the demands of their family members and society as well. Their inability to attend to domestic work, time for education of children, personal hobbies, and entertainment adds to their conflicts.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Khanka, 2010; Mann & Phukan, 2010; Anitha & Lakshmi, 1999 were of the opinion that the studies on women entrepreneurship became prominent from the 1980's when the focus of development shifted from women the „objects“ to „subjects“ of development. It was important to analyse the WLB issues faced by women entrepreneurs of India where societal etiquette, male dominance and deep-rooted discriminatory socio-cultural values and traditions persist. There are very few limited studies available from India on women entrepreneurship which either concentrate on the reasons for female emancipation or highlight the contributions of the few successful women entrepreneurs.

Surthi and Sarupriya (2003) investigated the psychological factors affecting women entrepreneurs. They examined the role stress experienced by women entrepreneurs on the effect of demographic variables, such as marital status and type of family, and how women entrepreneurs cope with stress.

C.f. Mathur 2011; Singh N.P. 1986 highlight that as Indians, most of the women are very serious about family obligations but they do not equally focus on career obligations and are not concerned with their self-development. Women's family and personal obligations are sometimes a great barrier for succeeding in business career. Only few women are able to manage both home and business efficiently, devoting enough time to perform all their responsibilities in priority. Singh, Sengal, Tinani and Sengupta (1986) carried out an exploratory study of successful women entrepreneurs and examined their identity, expectations, and motivations, types of problems encountered by them to reach the level of success and to identify the operational problems they were confronting.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Significance of the research:

Majority of the literature revives highlight on the major critical issues of WLB of women entrepreneurs. Meanwhile, there are limited research studies on the WLB issues of married women entrepreneurs. The issue of WLB for married women entrepreneurs thus need to be recognised and hence this study.

Statement of the problem:

Married women entrepreneurs face greater challenges when compared to single women entrepreneurs. WLB issues are more critical for married women entrepreneurs. Thus the study was carried out in Mumbai city where freedom of women is not restricted and Mumbai is also known for its diverse social culture.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To explore the WLB challenges faced by married women entrepreneurs in Mumbai City. The specific aim was to develop and validate an appropriate research instrument to assess these issues.
2. To study the important factors influencing the WLB of married entrepreneurial women in Mumbai city.
3. To study if women entrepreneurs are good at balancing work and life.

4. To test the significance differences of WLB issues of entrepreneurial women belonging to different sectors.

Scope of the Research:

The scope of the study was restricted to married women entrepreneurs of the city of Mumbai city. For the study the samples with monthly income of Rs.25, 000 to Rs.1,00,000 were selected. The primary data was collected through structured interviews and a questionnaire.

Research Design:

The present study is exploratory in nature. This also includes the descriptive study which involved the researcher in collecting the primary data by making use of the questionnaires as a research instrument to a very large extent for the purpose of the study.

Sampling Design:

Sample design is a plan for drawing the samples from the population. For the purpose of sampling the various concepts that are important are as follows.

Sample Size:

A total of 100 women entrepreneurs belonging to the various locations of Mumbai city were contacted personally to participate in this survey. These entrepreneurs were engaged in various types of business activities. Hence, for the data collection of research study, they were divided into five categories as follows.

S.No	Type of business	sample
1	Garments	26
2	Home Foods	15
3	Beauty Clinic	44
4	Educational Institutions	10
5	Others	05
	Total	100

TOOLS USED FOR ANALYSIS OF DATA

The collected data have been tabulated and analyzed in a systematic manner with the help of SPSS software package. The tool used for the analysis is Chi square test

FINDINGS

- Regarding the age 65 % of respondents were in the age group of 31 - 40 years old. 35 % of respondents were in the age group of below 30 years, so the majority of the women entrepreneurs are in the age group of 31-40 years.
- According to the Educational Qualification the distribution shows that 38 % of the respondents are graduates. 25% of the respondents are diploma holders, so most of the women entrepreneurs are educated and they have enough skills to run a business.
 - Experience wise distribution of the respondents reveals that 60 % have 1 to 5 years of experience, 38 % of the respondents have below 1 years of experience, so the highest percentage was in the experience of 1 to 5 years.
- Regarding the Marital Status the distribution shows that 88 % of the respondents are married and remaining 12% of the respondents are unmarried, thus the highest percentage are married and most of the married women starts business to meet their economical needs.
- According to the Family Type 52.5 % of the respondents are from nuclear family. 47.5 % of the respondents are from Joint family. Thus the highest percentage of family type is nuclear family. So

obviously the women entrepreneurs will not have elders to take care of their children when they are engaged with their work.

- Regarding the Monthly income (Rs.) 60 % of the respondents have Rs: 25000-50000 40% of the respondents have monthly income of Rs: 10000-25000, so the highest percentage of monthly income is 25000-50000.

- 45 % of the respondents were not able to give justice to family and social obligations due to entrepreneurial career and Majority (72.5 %) of the respondents are living an ideal life, which means they can support their family economically.

- There is association between the profile of respondent namely Type of business, Experience (years), Age, Educational Qualification, Marital status, Size of family, Family type & Monthly income of the respondent and a fair opinion about having elders to look after the home and children.

- There is association between the profile of respondent namely Type of business, Experience (years), Age, Educational Qualification, Size of family, Family type & Monthly income of the respondent and a fair opinion about - Able to give justice to family and social obligations due to entrepreneurial career.

There is association between the profile of respondent namely Type of business, Experience (years), Age, Educational Qualification, Marital status, Size of family, Family type & Monthly income of the respondent and a fair opinion about Living ideal life.

- There is highly significant difference in the mean scores that was found regarding the Work life balance and family commitments with respect to age.

- There is highly significant difference in the mean scores that was found regarding the Work life balance and family commitments with respect to Type of business.

- There is highly significant difference in the mean scores that was found regarding the Work life balance and family commitments with respect to Experience (years).

- There is highly significant difference in the mean scores that was found regarding the Work life balance and family commitments with respect to Educational Qualification.

Limitations and Implications for Future Research:

The present study included women entrepreneurs who were married and who were doing business activities in Mumbai city. Hence there is a scope for including all women entrepreneurs of other life statuses for better derived results. The respondents themselves are in the midst of an array of WLB issues, they were probably not objective when they studied and answered the questionnaire. Although the feedback related the direct behaviour of the respondents to a WLB issues, there exists a high possibility that the respondents might actually reveal an ideal response rather than their actual behaviour to a given context. The study focused on married women entrepreneurs who belonged to different sectors. Thus there is wide scope for future research to incorporate. To conclude, study may be applicable only to the prevailing social setup of the Indian entrepreneurial sectors because of its unique blend of culture and etiquette. Finally, as India is a multilingual, multiethnic, multi-religious and hierarchical society comprising various economic groupings, research across all states in the country may result in more conclusive data.

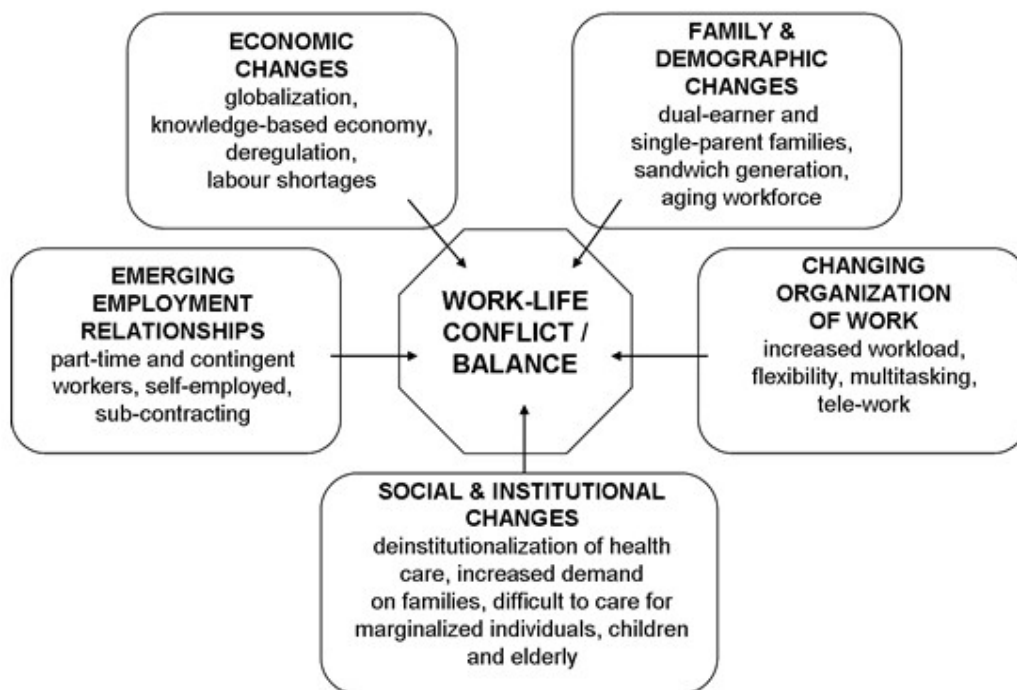
The suggestions for maintaining the work-life balance are as follows:

- The present study says that women entrepreneurs experience a high degree of work overload and associated work life balance issues. So they need a proper guidance in order to balance their work and family life.
- Majority of the women enters into entrepreneurship due to economical reason rather than passion. So their spouse and family members should support them by taking care of children and helping them in business.
- Women entrepreneurs should manage work and life style by proper time management;
- Women entrepreneurs can delegate responsibilities among their employees;

- Encouraging and supporting employees through effective communication and development programs would help them to maintain a healthy work environment and their personal life;
- Women entrepreneurs should enhance technical competence of employees to facilitate the pace of work;
- Women entrepreneurs should encourage involvement of family members in their entrepreneurial venture so that they get enough time to spend with their family;
- They should not bring back office work to home or vice versa;
- They should spend their vacation time with family members to prevent stress;
- Women should hold work and family responsibilities on proper time schedule to avoid procrastination.
- As salary increases, it is quite natural that women can attain more support both at home and at the workplace, in the form of helpers, servants and workers, ultimately leading to better work life balance. So they should get appropriate social support
- They should improve their personal (self-confidence, self-control, personal goals, stress management, and listening skills), social (communication, effective relations, change management, responsibility, flexibility, and development skills), and professional (planning, problem solving, information gathering, analytical thinking, creativeness, and time management) competencies through various development programs to accomplish their business venture successfully.
- Majority of the women entrepreneurs are living in nuclear family so they are suffering to manage their children and work simultaneously. If they live in joint family they can obtain a social support from the elders
- The temper and stress can be reduced by doing meditation and physical exercises that will also help them to maintain their health
- On the basis of above discussion, a conceptual framework has been developed on maintaining work-life balance of women entrepreneurs

(Figure 1)

Why Is Work-Life Balance so Important in Today's World?



CONCLUSION:

1. The present study incorporates the results of an empirical analysis of the WLB issues faced by the married women entrepreneurs using factor analysis. Processing the data through this statistical tool revealed a number of issues related to WLB, including the fact that women entrepreneurs struggle to juggle between highly demanding familial, entrepreneurial, personal and societal duties and needs.
2. The following are the prominent WLB issues i.e.,
 - Time management
 - Support
 - Self-management.
 - Family factors.
3. When entrepreneurs balance the above four major factors, healthier WLB is experienced by them. When this happens families revive and in turn the society experiences a favorable happiness index. This transition in society adds to the growth index of the nation. When a country aspires inclusive growth, women are a part of it and women entrepreneurs form the crux.
4. This study elucidates the relevance of women and their contribution in nation building. This paper validates that the path is difficult for women to make a mark in the business world but this walk is essential for them to be a part of inclusive growth, where both men and women make an equal contribution.

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