Work-life struggle of a working woman

Swati Minz*¹, Dr Pradeep Munda**²

*¹Research Scholar, Birla Institute of Technology, Mesra, (Lalpur Extension), Ranchi (email: minz0320@gmail.com, minz_bit20@yahoo.co.in)

**²Assistant Professor, Birla Institute of Technology, Mesra (Lalpur Extension), Ranchi

Abstract:

In today’s business world work-life balance plays a very significant role. Work-life balance plays an important role in every individual’s life. It’s the situation to cope personal and professional life. Needs and demands have grown up in everyone’s life. Tremendous Increase in economic and financial needs have forced everyone out of their safe domain to work, especially it’s a challenging decision taken by women to move and work for their livelihood. The study focuses on the challenges and factors which are responsible to deal in work-life struggle of a working women. The sample of 250 working women questionnaire has been thoroughly examined to highlight the challenges they face in struggling between demands of family and work. Every organization need to work on certain policies and regulations to have steady work place culture and have certain concern for every female employee outside of work. An attempt to create peace and harmony in every female’s lifestyle who is juggling between work and lifestyle.

Keywords: work-life balance, women, struggle, challenges, stress, family, lifestyle.

1. Introduction

The economic growth of our country can’t ignore the contributions which are done by women of our country. As the literacy rate of female recorded in year 1951 was 8.86% and at present 2011 is 65.46% (Govt of India Ministry of Home Affairs Census of India). The increase of literacy not just made them educated but also made them aware the better lifestyle and stepping forward to make their career and make use of the knowledge, talent and skill to outside world. They are actively enrolled in very various professions limiting the role of just being a housewife. Their participation and performance have made them secure best positions in many organizations. The best part about women participation in career building is that they are aware about their family responsibilities and work duties. Women work have to juggle and create peace in maintaining both the roles of her life. It’s the story of every working women who juggle between work and home. It’s not just for fun they opting career but for better life style and help family financially they are opting career. Due to this step even some of the organizations framing policies suitable for working women to cope in both the situation. Just telling to balance work and family is not easy; it’s actually a complicated task and should be handled patiently. It’s one of the important struggles which every women face while opting any career. A balance between work-family is very important. Only a woman can plan the strategies to deal in this situation. And the basic
support from spouse, parents, children, colleagues, and supervisor is important. Absenteeism and stress and can be reduced and job satisfaction can be increased work-life balance is properly scaled. Being at home, struggling with household works and home making was the job considered for women but now they are bread earner of the family too. No distinguished quality between a men and women can be figured out. As they are moving to work even the counterpart should understand duties and responsibilities towards home. If this understanding creates it becomes great help of any working women. Home is just a start, the real struggle and challenges are faced at work station.

Work-life balance can be maintained if only working women figures out challenges by their own and priorities responsibilities and duties. Career oriented women have to self monitor their performance and accordingly work on it to have a balance lifestyle. Time management with family and work is important. It keeps them physically and mentally fit which increases their job satisfaction. This is important to give their career a new turn. Stressful life can hamper both work and family which would later give many negative attitudes and can be harmful for everyone. Individual self realization and priority fixing of work is important. As women is considered as home maker so making of career if hampers the home will be greatest failure. This would give negative impact of women moving out and opting career. How it can be managed? How work-place responsibilities need to be fixed? How to deal with family and friend? How to show outside world that they are no less than men? How to deal and juggle this challenging position? These all questions are the milestone of every working woman. And overcoming these milestones is a step ahead towards economic contribution towards country and step ahead towards their career.

Women are born goddess; they are inbuilt with extra ordinary features. When it comes to prove them they are no less in any field. They can efficient in soft in their nature and bold in their work. They are the one who has been seen coping in multiple roles as per the demand of situation and demand of work. Also there is a huge difference in coping this life style. Being at home and playing role of home maker brings out gentle, care and motherly attitude and as the situation and place changes with respect to the work it becomes tough and equipped role as per as professional designation and roles. Because of this role splitting the stress and pressure increases a lot. It’s not an easy task to cope with this twin personality of being a career oriented women. Facing the challenges and dealing with every possible scenario.

Life of a woman has never been easy. Being a daughter to being a mother and serving so many associated relationships, it’s always been challenging to be best and deal in every situation. Challenges turns bigger when they have to move to new place for the role of home making. New place and new people and definitely new responsibilities. Life of fairy tale stuck with reality check and showing up every real face. In this situation the family support, care and love is very important. After this change if woman wants to share responsibility of running a house is very bold and challenging decision. Some of them it’s their wishful desire and some of them it comes mandatory in order to improve the lifestyle. This study has tried to figure out every challenges which a working women faces while struggling with work and lifestyle. It seems easy to say but it needs self motivation, determination to struggle to obtain work-life balance.

Work-life balance:

It’s the balance between work and lifestyle, basically analyzing the when, where how to
work. Prioritizing work and fixing certain responsibilities to individual’s interest with respect to self, career and society. It’s something which can be achieved by individual’s realization and effort to cope between work and lifestyle in order to possess mental peace and harmony in life.

**Work-life balance: The challenges ahead**

It’s the societies who have accepted the decision of women to work for better livelihood, whereas it’s the society which creates challenges for working women too. The struggle between conflicting responsibilities and commitments, which gives rise to maintain work-life balance to be mentally fit and healthy to deal in this dual responsibilities. The work challenges are managing duties, managing workforce, job responsibilities, upcoming competition, new technology enhancement, global competition and individual’s interest in personal/family life values. Expected job requirements from every employees are not met it gives birth to stress and chaos situation, which ultimately increases stress in mind due to organization pressure. Stress is mental and physical response occurs due to some underworked work. Once the employee gets surrounded by stress it starts affecting physically and mentally, deteriorating health and giving the reason to unbalance the work and family. Work stress gives many reasons for a working woman to deal with it. There may be many reasons for work stress like work load, discrimination in workplace, high pressure, targets and many more. If ignored at the initial stage it can lead to low productivity, poor quality of life, absenteeism, low interest, poor job satisfaction, health issues and ultimately no interest to work. It’s not just individual’s effort to deal with it, whole family support, organizations policy for betterment of work-life self determination to fight with self can lead a women into a determined fighter women to fight with stress of work-load and balance their work and family. A smart move towards society and organization can give her strength to deal with every challenge that comes in her way. The study focuses on many aspects which create hindrances and their lifestyle. It also throws light on how the things should be molded as per the responsibility of society towards every working woman. A little support and words of encouragement can make every woman to fight with the developing work stress. Working women do understand the value of quality of life. The path of moving out and being a bread winner on stake of family is very bold decision of working women. Such that decision should be encouraged later in life and be an example for others. Women are achievers and they come up with proper balancing of lifestyle and career with overcoming all hurdles.

**The influencing factors in work-life balance**

In order to increase retention of employees and giving benefits to working women many practices to serve work-life balance have been issued by the organizations. These practices involved have been so helpful for women employees to balance work and life in a balanced way. This could increase retention of employees and help them benefit them no. of ways. There are so many factors which are responsible for female employee to take care of like job responsibilities, commitment towards job and family, working hours, challenges at workplace.

**Importance of work-life balance to women**

Today’s competitive world everyone needs their best to come out in their career to match up with others and for showing their skills. Such that maximum business can be done and employees sucked up to their fullest. Employees maximum potential and work is required to come up
with maximum business. In order to achieve that every employees are rugged hard. Considering women employees and their commitments towards work and family increases to last extend. Which give arise to work stress and family stress simultaneously. Many factors are responsible to attain proper balance in work and family. Every time pressurizing women employees and getting them involved in work can increase their stress level to great extend. Importance of women in organization and in home both should be equally analyzed. Things can be under control when at the beginning of stress the root cause of stress can be examined and accordingly the moves of life towards family and organization should be practiced.

Life becomes challenging but it is necessary to understand work-life balance in working women life. It can benefit there life in many aspects. Not just job’s commitment but also family responsibilities. A stressful life leads to nowhere; it just lowers the involvement and showing full concentration towards work.

The current study:

Through the study conducted by noharika and supriya(2010) it throws light on work-life imbalance experienced by both men and women with different aspects. By practicing certain liberalization many organizations have come up with various changes adopted for maintaining work-life balance like flexibility of time, work from home, part time work. In spite of organization efforts still imbalance of life has been noticed in every working individual among both the genders. Samuel and Vivinne (1996) there contribution stated that work-life balance of a working between family and work can be obtained by encouraging or trading –off individual’s roles. Men accepting roles related with work and family. Astrid (2008) through his studies he highlighted that behavior and attitude of men towards pregnancy, childbirth and child –caring. and came up with conclusion that male have different prospect towards them. According to his study he considered mother to be the main parent for child as their role for child care is more and they do breast feeding to the infants. Infants are totally dependent on their mother and hence their role is insignificant in child care. Elizabeth (2005) her studies examined gender and tenure status in coming up and facing parenthood. Resulting women developed into greater career and more family stress, also the support and guidance from organization would be received less compared to men in the organization. Grossman (1981), He acknowledged society and economy acceptance for greater access for women with factors such as smaller families and marital patterns. This gave tremendous increase of working women and hence working mothers. Study in IT industry and finding out the factors responsible to attain work-life balance and job satisfaction as targeted with women respondents are majorly factors influencing work-life balance. The practices launched by organization like recreation play ,child care and flexibility working time played secondary role while provisions of welfare measures played primary role(santhis and sunder ,2012). Thriveni Kumari (2011) her study found difference impact of stress and compared to different sectors .Study was conducted was on BPO and education sector on working women performing both the dual role as a home maker and household duties along with the paid domestic works. Meenakshi and Ravichandran (2012) there study was done among working women teachers of engineering college and their work-life balance. Apart from the working environment and attaining work-life balance flexible time schedule also plays an important role to gain stability and gain balance. Janet (2003) study concluded that work-life balance can be obtained by certain programs arranged in the organization and basically profit making program provides competitive
compensation, flexibility in work arrangements, advancements of men, women, minorities, saving benefits program, profit sharing programs and the most important organization’s involvement in setting up resources to help day care, elder care etc. Rincy and Panchanatham (2011) study conducted on women entrepreneurs and their work-life balance, the related issues concerning work-life balance. Study throws light on work stress, dependent care issues, health issues, quality of life, time management issues and lack of support system from the family and role overload which increases the imbalance in work-life of a working woman. M. Collins & Jason D. Shaw (2003) studied that individual’s quality of life can be obtained by an equally his investment of time and involvement in work and family would decrease work-family conflict and stress. And hence, they concluded work-life balance maintenance of every working woman is necessary and important to have quality of life.

Findings and Suggestions:

Sample:

The respondents and collection of questionnaire was done by 4 districts of the state Jharkhand in India. The respondents selected were working women of different field like bankers, teachers, doctors, nurses etc. Respondents considered under the study were married and unmarried both. Respondents were basically above the age of 25 years and academic qualification at least intermediate.

Measures:

The study was conducted by the formation of questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed totally for the study purpose only. It was simple questions in five point Likert scale where 1 indicated strongly agree 2 agree 3 neutral 4 disagree and 5 strongly disagree. The reliability measurement thoroughly checked through cronbach alpha coefficient for 22 items is .847 which signifies high internal consistency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.847</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis:

- Working women considered within the sample size 250 was between the age group 25-25 years.
- They basically belong from the districts Hazaribagh, Bokaro, Ranchi and Ramgarh.
- Among 250 working women 84% were married and 16% were unmarried. Among married 76.6% had children 23.4% had no children.
- Only 23% of married group were satisfied with the life they live and the time given to self relaxation like resting, spending time to read, watching TV staying at home. Rest 77% was not satisfied.
- Among married women 55% belongs to nuclear family.
- 20% of respondents earned more than 25000 and preferred keeping fulltime household help.
- 65% of the respondents had more career aspiration, maintaining family and job continued with higher education and willing to take promotions and move to new location.
- The satisfaction level of private sector working women are more than the public sector. Due to new practices involved in private sectors for the ease of working employees in order to maintain work-life balance. Private sector gives more emphasis to reduce employee’s retention plans and having
proper business communication where freedom to speak are appreciated.

- 25% of respondents were having work experience of 1-5 years.
- 48% of the respondents could deal with balancing with work and lifestyle.
- 47% of working women more than hours for travelling.
- Respondents were basically of pay scale between 20000-45000.
- 12% of respondents are comfortable with any kind of job.
- 13% are career oriented and can speak for promotion with their senior.
- Among 250 respondents only 25% can speak and make spouse/parents accept the job demands.
- 24% respondents give priority to family and cancel plan at work and come and spend time with spouse/parents/children.
- 67% of respondents manage self and work stress by involvement of various practices started at private organization to balance work–life balance.

Weighted Average Method:

- Organization pressure and the respondents having parents/in-laws responsibility have more priority.
- According to weighted average method work stress and family responsibility have more priority.

Correlation Analysis:

- There is clear significant relationship between work stress and family pressure.
- There was significant relationship between work culture, working hour and family time.

Chi-Square Analysis:

- There was relation between family support and the work stress.

Suggestions:

In order to ease life of working women proper practice of work–life balance should be practices. On behalf of working women certain policies and regulations need to be framed to have quality time with family and reduced work stress without hampering their career growth. Timely medical checkup could be initiated with proper consultant of counselor who can give proper guidance to cope with work stress and job challenges. Flexibility in their working hours and proper climate need to be developed for working women’s family members. Proper family support can reduce work stress and help them to think for higher education and option for promotions. Stress buster program frequently organized in organization can help to come up with more learning enthusiasm as well as better working performance too. Researcher need to broaden their study in order to cover work–life balance of both working men and women. As there variations may be different as per their individual roles being practiced in family and job.

2. Conclusion:

The study conducted and concluded that working women balancing work and life is a tough job, both managing career and personal life in same platform. Due to its existence being important with working women the policies and practices are being launched and practiced for women employees to balance their work and lifestyle. Work stress is considered to be major factor affecting quality of life, if proper measures taken carefully at the initial stage high productivity, maximum input of employees, absenteeism reduced, healthy employees. Also family support played an important role in supporting working women to move out and
come up with their skill. Work place and colleague’s acceptance also make them feel secure working and made them come with their great performance which would benefit their organization. Working women whose children are adults are less stressful compared to women whose children are kids. Quality of life is aspired by every working women. If they are taking decision to move out and choose a career it’s the duty of society and organization to make them feel secure and give them healthy environment to work peacefully. It’s important to be their part and supports them. Their best can be squeezed only with little support and care. And they can give their best in every respective field. Hence, work-life balance plays an important role in any working women in order to have quality of life.

3. References


