

Work Life Balance of Women Entrepreneurs of India

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The study's aims to identify the critical factors that influence the work-life balance(WLB) of Indian women entrepreneurs in the current business environment and the various women's socio-demographic characteristics associated with their capacity to balance work and family life (i.e., age, education).

Design/methodology/approach: The data was collected from 126 Indian women business owners. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was carried out to see if there were any significant mean differences in the attitudes of the women entrepreneurs towards WLB across areas such age, education, time management, work relationships, health, family, and social life.

Findings: According to the study's findings, WLB is negatively predicted by schooling, issues with dependent care, and having too many family/social obligations and responsibilities, while WLB is positively predicted by the age of the female entrepreneur, family and social support, health-related issues, and time management.

Research limitations/ implications: Data was collected from only 126 women entrepreneurs. Other than the variables mentioned there can be other variables which may impact work life balance.

Practical implications : Women entrepreneurs have to develop relevant skills which enable them to maintain healthy balance between work life and personal life. . The various government agencies and NGOs should focus on training programs and entrepreneurial education to enrich skills of women entrepreneurs.

Social implications: Entrepreneurship can help women's economic independence and improve their social status. The development of women entrepreneurship enables society to understand and appreciate their abilities.

Originality: The research looks into the various dimensions which might influence success or failure of women entrepreneurship.

Keywords: *Women Entrepreneurship, Work Life Balance, Family Life, Health, Time Management, Social Life.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Establishing a business or company, purchasing, and selling goods, engaging in public relations, comprehending market dynamics, and marketing, among other business-related activities, are all part of the phenomena known as entrepreneurship (Taneja. B, 2022). A woman can become economically empowered through entrepreneurship, which is the exploration of an idea or vision that enables her to create new jobs. Being an entrepreneur means having control over one's own choices and life (Gundry, Yoseph and Posig, 2002). Women are supposed to carry out the different responsibilities of a wife, mother, daughter, and caretaker by performing domestic tasks like cooking, cleaning, caring for the family, and managing the home. They are discouraged from acting independently throughout their lives (Roomi and Harrison, 2010). Women face greater obstacles for success in the business world, than their male counterparts. Some problems faced by businesswomen, include a lack of funding, masculine dominance, physical limitations, absence of education, unavoidable motherly duties, and absence of success-related incentives. Due to pressure from their communities and society, women are afraid to launch start-ups. Most women's potential stays untapped because of society's rejection of women's empowerment, which can be a significant factor in the economy's expansion.

According to Firdouse (2005), women are recently entering the workforce to gain social prestige and independence. Due to their competence and ability to create innovative ideas, Indian women from all social strata have started their business. Women have started their own businesses where they can exercise autonomy and freedom. Women are dismantling the stereotypical barriers that culture and society have erected. They are open to innovative ideas, capable of taking on challenges, and ready to establish their identities in society (Caudron, 2001). Women entrepreneurs have been recognized as wealth creators, and employment generators. They contribute to the economic growth and social progress of a country. The educational opportunities available to women now are more than they were a few decades ago, particularly in urban

areas. Their education has boosted their self-assurance and encouraged them to help others and find new business opportunities. This has broadened perspectives and enhanced personal development.

The development of female entrepreneurs is seen to be mostly dependent on government support. Various governmental and non-governmental organisations are assisting more women in entering the world of entrepreneurship. The government organisations offer financial assistance, physical infrastructure, and business consulting services to female entrepreneurs. In terms of financial assistance, the government has promoted the establishment of unique funds specifically for female entrepreneurs. Over time, women have achieved considerable progress in every profession and left their imprint in the corresponding sectors. The Indian society has seen some incredibly successful female business owners, like Namita Thapar (Emcure Pharmaceuticals), Falguni Nair (Nykaa), Radhika Agarwal (Shopclue), Kiran Mazumdar Shaw (Biocon India), Aditi Gupta (Menstrupedia) etc.

2. BACKGROUND AND SCOPE OF STUDY

"Maintaining harmony between the professional responsibilities and commitments at home and at work is referred to as "work-life balance." Work-life balance is the ability of a person, regardless of age or gender, to successfully juggle work and family responsibilities. It is an association between individuals' lives at home and their paid work and the balance between the two is determined by the individual's requirements, expectations, and aspirations. An imbalance will manifest as harmful symptoms like weariness, stress, depression, etc. Women entrepreneurs struggle to balance their incredibly demanding societal, familial, and professional obligations.

Working and raising a family have evolved into mutually exclusive worlds that compete for the same amount of time and energy of women. Because of the duties they perform at home, personal life often interferes with professional life. If domestic and professional lives are uncoordinated with one another it results in severe personal and financial misery for both the business and the individual. Constant planning and organising, time management, perseverance, resilience, support from one's spouse and parents, as well as complete time sacrifice for hobbies or other interests is needed in Work life balance. An imbalance will lead to an increase in divorces, strained family relationships, conflicts in the offices, and suicides. Women in executive or managerial roles find it extremely difficult to combine their personal and professional lives, and these challenges are made much more difficult by their demanding jobs. The firms expect more from its employees in the fiercely competitive climate. To meet the employer's demands, employees push themselves and concentrate more on their work, which throws off their ability to balance work and life. Organizations in the competitive era need employees who can maintain a healthy work-life balance since they will be able to contribute more to the success and growth of the business (Naithani, 2010). Many firms today place a high emphasis on the work-life balance of their employees in order to adapt the organisational structures to the demands of the workforce or to comply with regulatory legislation addressing gender equality, integration, and family protection (Susana and Ramón 2013).

3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Women's entrepreneurship, growth, and culture are understudied despite the important role they play in fostering social and economic development and the creation of new jobs in their societies (Brush et al. 2018; Hechavarria et al. 2019). The WLB difficulties faced by female entrepreneurs in emerging and undeveloped nations, where male domination is deeply ingrained, discriminatory socio-cultural beliefs and practises continue. There is no research on how women business owners perceive work-life balance, or how they balance their obligations to their families and their jobs. The objective of the study is:

4. OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

To determine whether sociodemographic traits of women are related to their ability to combine work and family life (i.e., age, education etc).

5. LITERATURE REVIEW

Due to the ingrained view that men should "provide for the family" and women should "take care of the home," work-family roles are mostly affected by stereotyped gender roles (Gutek et al., 1991). Traditionally, women were primarily responsible for taking care of home and family, while males supported the family financially by working outside the home

(Vinnicombe and Singh 2002). Women's access to entrepreneurial opportunities has historically been constrained by these gender role norms (Eagly and Mitchell 2004). Uneven childcare and other household responsibilities fall predominately on women, which poses serious barriers to work advancement (Cross and Linehan, 2006). Women often struggle more than men to balance work and family obligations due to the disproportionate burden of family responsibilities (Bird, 2006)

Reasons for starting business

Daniel (2004) listed several reasons why people leave their professions including a dislike of the workplace, issues with gender, and a desire for more flexibility. Age, employment, position, education, wealth, social relationships, and attitudes are other important determinants to start a business. Women have also been hampered by issues with the glass ceiling, pay inequality, advancement opportunities, and the allocation of important roles and positions in organisations (Kephart and Schumacher, 2005).

A prior study found that social, cultural, educational, vocational, and role-related factors had a negative impact on women's ability to start their own businesses (Bullough et al. 2017; Jennings and Brush 2013). Many obstacles and limitations faced by women business entrepreneurs, according to Nambane and Adom (2018) and Khandelwal and Sehgal (2018), are gender-specific and as a result of cultural views, customs, and practises. Many communities have well ingrained social norms, expectations, and attitudes toward entrepreneurship (Kemp et al. 2015; Marlow et al. 2019; Robinson and Stubberud 2011).

People frequently think that the skills and characteristics required for a given type of activity, such as males in leadership roles, are typical of that person, when they frequently see that type of person engaged in that activity (Jackson et al. 2007). Men are linked to high-growth and leadership initiatives, whereas women are linked to low-growth projects (Elam et al. 2019; Markussen and Red 2017; Shahriar 2018).

Research says men are frequently seen as assertive and controlling, whereas women are frequently seen as feminine, social, and empathetic (Ferriman et al. 2009). This is known as sex role stereotyping (Eagly and Mitchell 2004). When caring for others and nurturing them, contradict the traits that are viewed as indicative of leadership (aggressive and competitive), there is an incongruity between the two (Gupta et al. 2019;). As a result, it raises obstacles to women becoming leaders. To enhance work-life balance and gain more independence and control over their professional and personal lives, women have started working for themselves (Ward, 2007). Due to the following reasons, women choose to start their own businesses: empowerment, to develop their own business as a means of demonstrating their personality and significance, to set their own norms for their work because they did not enjoy working for others, and to address any shortcomings they encountered on the job, due to their husband's death or illness, in order to successfully adjust and run their household and business, equal standing in society, greater flexibility, mobility, and independence, parental influence, economic independence- To share the family's financial load and to improve quality of life.

A nuclear family has emerged as a result of social and demographic trends (Polomeno, 2007). Nock (2001) invented the abbreviation MEDS, whichSocial and demographic trends have resulted in a nuclear family structure (Polomeno, 2007). In the Indian setting, many lower- and middle-class women work because they need to supplement the family income, due to the rise in living expenses. They need to give their family a better life, cover the cost of their children's education, and make plans for a better future for them. The effects of work-life balance may vary for women and men.

Because they closely identify with their family role and may experience guilt when their family obligations interfere with their employment, women find it difficult to participate in business activities (Livingston and Judge, 2008, Twomey et al., 2002). Gender expectations may influence how much people feel their personal and professional life are incompatible, claim Helmlé et al. (2014) and Lawson et al. (2013). This can lead to higher stress levels and a sense of conflict between work and home life.

One of the main barriers to women's career success may be the imbalance between work and life (Twomey et al., 2002). Everyone prioritises their family, which may or may not have a good impact on their profession (Sudha and Karthikeyan, 2014). According to Subramaniam et al., (2013), family life will suffer if one assumes more responsibility at work. A woman who aspires to become a manager will devote more time and focus to her career (Cooke, 2013), which could cause

a conflict between work and family. Some female workers cut back on their work hours on purpose to maintain a balance between their home and professional life (Keeton et al., 2007).

Setting priorities for work (career and aspirations) and life (health, pleasure, leisure, family, and spiritual development) are all included in the broad concept of "work-life balance." In order to be happy in life, a person must find a way to balance the two different roles they perform. These duties include those of job and family (Shaffer et al., 2016). The care of young children and elderly relatives is one of many life tasks that are unrelated to job (Anwar et al., 2013). According to Emslie and Hunt (2009), a balance is attained when job and personal life are in harmony.

Work-life balance refers to how much time an employee spends working and how much time they spend with their family. When work and family responsibilities are out of balance, whether as a result of too much work or too much family time, burnout can happen. Stress and unfavourable attitudes at work may then develop. Greenhaus and Allen (2010) define work-life balance as the degree to which a person's efficacy and happiness with regard to his or her family and work duties are in line with his priorities of life at a given point in time.

According to certain research, people compromise some areas of their personal lives in order to fulfil their obligations to their organisations (Damaske et al., 2014). To avoid work-family conflicts, many women forego having children, which typically results in fewer children living with them than they had originally planned (Ecklund and Lincoln, 2011). Insomnia, poor sleep, and depression can all be brought on by prolonged work hours and increased stress, which can all lead to other health issues (Brand, Hermann, Muheim, Beck, & Tranchsler, 2008; Kerin & Aguirre, 2005;). Health problems have an impact on business as well as making the imbalance between work and family worse.

Women who run their own businesses often feel psychologically and physically exhausted. -life balance and conflict may be related, but there may be other factors at play as well (Landolfi et al., 2020). Work-life conflict is influenced by both work-related factors such as job commitment, role overload, and employment flexibility as well as family issues such as the number of children, stage of life, and childcare arrangements (Greenhaus and Allen, 2011). Workplace burnout, stress, and poor health are brought on by family and work conflict (Grzywacz and Carlson, 2007).

According to several studies, it is difficult for women to "have it all" in terms of financial security, marriage, children, and careers (Bhattacharyya, 2009; 2016; Herman and Lewis, 2012; Lahiri-Dutt and Sil, 2014). Until recently, women in India's workforce were mostly employed in non-management, subordinate, or low-profile professions. Modern women are more likely to engage in entrepreneurship because they are more highly educated, motivated, and conscious of their personal development (Mallonand Cohen, 2001). In order to reach their higher order goals of success, self-esteem, and financial independence, women have entered the historically male-dominated field of entrepreneurship (Raley et al., 2006). Women who are more confident of their talents and who believe they possess the essential knowledge and skills tend to prefer working in business (Smith, 2005). In the last few decades industrialisation, privatisation, self-employment, education, and training have all boosted the number of women entrepreneurs. The expansion of various industries, including those in banking and finance, food, manufacturing, general trading, and personal and public services, has made all of this feasible.

Problems Faced by Females to become an entrepreneur

- Gender role expectations and the entrepreneurial environment- Gender influences how people perceive having a work-life balance (Keene and Quadagno, 2004). Women joining the workforce on an equal footing is not the only aspect of equal chances. It also has to do with giving males the confidence to choose unconventional positions or careers (Nona Walia, 2012). Women can come to an understanding with their husbands over parenting and housework (Kailasapathy and Metz, 2012). Women must successfully juggle work and family obligations, retain a positive outlook, be solid in their self-positioning, and successfully transition into new roles (Sun and Zhang, 2016). They also require the complete acceptance and assistance of society, businesses, and families.
- Support network- Finding suitable, reasonably priced care for children and the elderly is a challenge for women. Working part-time would greatly assist women balance work and family obligations.
- Quality of health- Health problems not only make work-family imbalance worse, but they also have an impact on entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurial women are frequently mentally and physically weary.

- **Role overload-** The majority of women work very hard at both their employment and their households. They make an effort to manage their obligations to their family and their jobs (Mathew and Panchanatham 2009a).
- **Lack of Finance -** Women have a tougher time growing their enterprises than males do because they have smaller professional networks and less access to funding capital (Mitra and Basit 2019; Kalafatoglu and Mendoza 2017; Gupta et al. 2019, etc.). For female business entrepreneurs, raising capital for their enterprises is the most frequent and uncomfortable process. Unfortunately, policies related to capital generation are not supportive for women entrepreneurs around the world. Due to a variety of factors, women entrepreneurs must go through lengthy and complicated processes to raise finance, which deters them from starting businesses and saps their ambition. Bank loans and investment capital have reportedly been given to women at a lower rate (Wilson 2016; Kanze et al. 2017; Balachandra et al. 2019).
- **A favourable entrepreneurial climate** encourages financial institutions to directly market investment funds and loan products to women as well as to develop and allocate specific financial solutions for women entrepreneurs in order to aid women in overcoming these challenges (Bullough et al. 2019). Additionally, culture and societal expectations contribute to this (Surangiet al. 2018).
- **Women company owners** were less likely to own numerous companies, less likely to plan for expansion, and when they did, their strategies were often very different from those of their male counterparts, according to studies (Rosa et al., 1996).
- **Networks for Women Entrepreneurs in Business-** The hardest part of being an entrepreneur, particularly a woman entrepreneur, is networking for business. Women typically establish their businesses using only their own resources and progress in their businesses according to their own schedules. Presently the Female business owners have recognised the value of social networking for promoting their brands.
- **Dependent care-** To pursue a career, women opt to delay having children or choose to remain childless. According to research, many mothers decide to leave their jobs to spend more time raising their children. Because of this, women frequently discover that their work objectives are limited in many communities and that they must change to be compatible with their obligations to their families (Mirick and Wladkowski, 2018).

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study's data was collected from 126 Indian women business owners who participated in semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions, in-depth talks about WLB difficulties, and the distribution of a questionnaire. The empirical information from this study was coded. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was carried out to see if there were any significant mean differences in the attitudes of the women entrepreneurs towards WLB across several areas such as age, education, time management, work relationships, health, family, and social life. Using a thorough literature review and qualitative research methods, findings about the WLB challenges experienced by women entrepreneurs in India were finally reached.

7. FINDINGS OF STUDY

The study evaluates the WLB-related problems experienced by Indian women business owners. The survey was modified from Mathew and Panchanatham (2011). The study's primary data were gathered by a questionnaire survey, on which it is mostly based. 39 questions on a five-point scale with basic random sampling make up the survey questionnaire. A questionnaire survey of 126 Indian women business owners was undertaken. The study's findings raise important questions regarding the WLB of female entrepreneurs. Different types of women entrepreneurs experience various WLB issues, depending on their age, level of education, level of income, and marital status. The likelihood that a woman employee will experience conflict between her work and family is increased by the size and age of the family, the number of hours worked each week, the degree of control over one's work schedule (flexible or non-flexible), the level of social support, and unsupportive family members. According to the study's findings, WLB is negatively predicted by schooling, issues with dependent care, and having too many obligations and responsibilities, while WLB is positively predicted by the age of the female entrepreneur, family and social support, health-related issues, and time management. The details of the different factors are given below.

Age vs Work Life Balance

Table 1: Age vs Work Life Balance

ANOVA					
Sum of Squares		Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6.586	3	2.195	3.007	.034
Within Groups	77.378	106	.730		
Total	83.964	109			

This table presents the findings of the ANOVA analysis and indicates whether there is a statistically significant difference between the group means. As we can see, the significant value at 0.034 ($p = .034$) is less than 0.05 and as a result, there is a statistically significant difference in the mean age and work-life balance. This means that age effects the WLB of females. The more mature a female is, the better she learns to manage her work and her family.

Level of education vs Work Life Balance

The results of the ANOVA analysis are presented in this table along with a determination of whether there is a statistically significant difference between the group means. As we can see, the significant value is more than 0.05 and is 0.761 ($p = .761$). As a result, there is no statistically significant difference between WLB and Level of Education. This means that education does not affect the WLB of females.

Table2: Level of education vs Work Life Balance

ANOVA					
Sum of Squares		Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.952	3	.317	.389	.761
Within Groups	88.156	108	.816		
Total	89.107	111			

Time Management vs Work Life Balance

This table displays the findings of the ANOVA analysis and indicates whether there is a statistically significant difference between the group means. The significant value is, as can be seen, less than 0.05 and less than 0.001. ($p = .001$). Consequently, there is a statistically significant difference between time management and WLB. This means time management is especially important. The result shows that female entrepreneur who are able to manage their time have a better work life balance. They could devote time to social and family responsibilities. Many women arrive at work early and leave on time, allowing them to spend the evenings and weekends with their families.

Table 3: Time Management vs Work Life Balance

ANOVA					
Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
Between Groups	42.286	20	2.114	4.109	<.001
Within Groups	46.821	91	.515		
Total	89.107	111			

Work Relationship vs Work Life Balance

The ANOVA analysis findings are presented in the table along with a conclusion regarding the existence of a statistically significant difference between the group means. As we can see, the significance threshold is 0.290 ($p = .290$), which is higher than 0.05. statistically significant. WLB and the working relationship differ significantly, and as a result. This means that Work Relationship will not affect the WLB of females. Most of the working women have employees/ helping hand at work and at home, so workload in the family and business is divided and they are happy in their life.

Table 4: Work Relationship vs Work Life Balance

ANOVA					
Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
Between Groups	7.764	8	.971	1.229	.290
Within Groups	81.343	103	.790		
Total	89.107	111			

Health vs Work Life Balance

This table displays the findings of the ANOVA analysis and indicates whether there is a statistically significant difference between the group means. The significant value is, as can be seen, less than 0.05 and less than 0.001. ($p .001$). and as a result, there are statistically significant differences between the mean health and work-life balance. As a result, working women may neglect their health and have health problems because they are too busy taking care of their families and jobs to exercise or care for their physical well-being.

Table 5: Health vs Work Life Balance

ANOVA					
Sum of Squares		df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	37.146	10	3.715	7.220	<.001
Within Groups	51.961	101	.514		
Total	89.107	111			

Family and Work Life Balance

This table shows the outcomes of the ANOVA analysis and indicates whether there is a statistically significant difference between the group means. As can be observed, the significance value is 0.00 ($p = .00$), which is less than 0.05. and as a result, there is a statistically significant difference between the mean values of family responsibility and work-life balance. According to the study, 70% of family members were ready to listen to and offer assistance with a loved one's work- or personal-related issues. Most families gave their daughters the fortitude and encouragement they needed to meet the demands of business. In India most of the families have joint family system where parents look after grandchildren in the absence of parents. The supportive role of husband cannot be undermined as they understand and accommodates the female's pre-occupation as an entrepreneur.

Table 6: Family vs WLB

Sum of Squares		df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	30.938	13	2.380	4.010	.000
Within Groups	58.169	98	.594		
Total	89.107	111			

SOCIAL vs WLB

The figure above shows the outcomes of the ANOVA analysis and indicates whether there is a statistically significant difference between the group means and the results of the ANOVA analysis. We can observe that there is a statistically significant difference between social responsibilities and work-life balance because the significance value is 0.00 (i.e., $p = .00$), which is below the 0.05 threshold. Social life will affect WLB.

The females feel that due to their entrepreneurial activity they are respected in the society. But they feel that certain people still do not accept female entrepreneurs as superior to males.

Table 7: SOCIAL vs WLB

Sum of Squares		df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	22.524	8	2.815	4.355	.000
Within Groups	66.583	103	.646		
Total	89.107	111			

8. CONCLUSION

Since their professional responsibilities and their personal and familial roles regularly conflict, female entrepreneurs struggle to balance work and personal life. There are differences in how different women business owners view WLB. This study is crucial, particularly in the context of India, where an increasing number of women are participating in entrepreneurship due to socioeconomic transformation. Indian women business owners can assess their WLB challenges by considering the study's contributing variables. This measure may also be used by management consultants, policymakers, to level out WLB concerns among female entrepreneurs.

The study has some limitations too. The study does have certain restrictions. The psychological factors that can affect women entrepreneurs' WLB were not taken into account in the study. 126 female business owners made up the study's very small sample size, which was used in India. The results of the study might not be generalizable to the complete sample population as a result. Therefore, more study conducted throughout all of the major cities in a country like India, where there are multicultural and multireligious people and societies encompass various economic strata, may result in more representative findings.

In the cutthroat corporate world, entrepreneurship is seen as a key field. It creates jobs and aids in maintaining a nation's economic growth. Globalization has made women-owned businesses more widely recognised, and as a result, they now serve as ambassadors for their countries. They are in charge of increasing income and creating jobs. In an effort to combat gender-based prejudices and achieve work-life balance, women have turned to entrepreneurship and quit their careers. Their entrepreneurial endeavour is hampered by inadequate leadership, government training, a lack of technical understanding, family support, and a weak network. The importance of work and family in working women's lives helps them earn respect and self-assurance. Working women prioritise job and family, therefore female entrepreneurs choose to operate their own businesses from home to maintain control over their professional and personal lives. Their participation in entrepreneurial activity aids in their recognition and confidence building.

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